

September 26, 2016



# WINGTIPS

Friends of the Migratory Bird/Duck Stamp

## MBCC Decisions Grow Refuges



Bottomland habitat at Felsenthal NWR (USFWS)

Earlier this month, on September 7th, the Migratory Bird Conservation Commission (MBCC) met in Washington, DC to approve expenditures of \$11.7 million from the Migratory Bird Conservation Fund, securing for wildlife and the American public more than 13,000 additional acres at four National Wildlife Refuges.

If you expected to read about this in a nationally-oriented newspaper, or hear about it on the radio, or see a report on your TV, you would have been disappointed. This meaningful and effective MBCC operates pretty much under the radar, attracting little attention. It isn't that "newsworthy" in light of today's media. A body that operates with cooperation and bipartisanship, in contrast to much

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## What Percentage?

Here is a listing illustrating the percentages of property acquired by MBCF/Stamp funds at some popular and well-known refuges:

Eastern Neck (MD)

100%

McFaddin (TX)

100%

Reelfoot (KY)

100%

William L. Finley (OR)

of what happens these days in Washington, simply isn't that exciting to the mainstream press. Yet the Migratory Bird Conservation Commission is serious in its responsibilities, making wise investments for Refuge System growth on a regular basis.

The four refuges enhanced this month:

- McFaddin in Texas,
- Felsenthal in Arkansas,
- Lower Hatchie in Tennessee, and
- Turnbull in Washington.

The biggest expenditure was for [McFaddin National Wildlife Refuge](#) (NWR) in Texas, with 12,376 acres going for \$10 million. The bargain property - the Sabine Ranch - includes a large portion of the Willow Slough Marsh, the largest remaining coastal freshwater marsh on the Texas coast. Its availability was facilitated by the actions of The Conservation Fund (TCF), which is purchasing the property directly from the Sabine Ranch and Cattle Company, Ltd. for over \$30 million and will be transferring it to the USFWS for no more than \$10 million. The property will be especially important for Mottled Ducks, Wood Ducks, Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks, Fulvous Whistling-Ducks, and Blue-winged Teal. Other species, of course, will benefit.

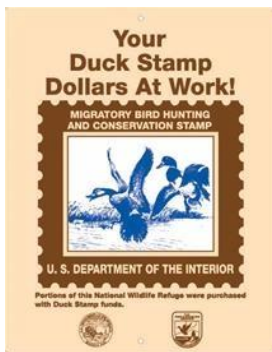
At [Felsenthal NWR](#) in Arkansas, 282 fee-title acres will be secured for \$473,628. This piece is a portion of a larger contiguous 8,940-acre property that straddles the state line and spans the Felsenthal NWR and the Upper Ouachita NWR in Louisiana. It consists primarily of bottomland hardwood forest and has frontage along the Ouachita River. It was previously owned by a real estate investment company that purchased it in 2007 for the purpose of resale. Management of the property will focus on protecting habitats for waterfowl, wading birds, Neotropical migrants, and other wildlife that depend on bottomland forests.

Another parcel at the Lower Hatchie NWR in Tennessee, consisting of 164 acres, was approved. The cost is \$641,300, and it supports large

100%
Tamarac (MN)
99.9%
Sacramento (CA)
99.6%
St. Catherine Creek (MS)
99.4%
Bosque del Apache (NM)
99.2%
Pea Island (NC)
99.2%
Quivira (KS)
99.2%
Muscatatuck (IN)
98.8%
Horicon (WI)
98.7%
Monomoy (MA)
97.8%
Parker River (MA)
97.7%
Bombay Hook (DE)
95.2%
Santa Ana (TX)
94.9%
DeSoto (IA and NE)
90.8%
Anahuac (TX)
87.3%
Montezuma (NY)
86.7%
Okefenokee (GA)
86.2%
Laguna Atascosa (TX)
86.1%
Ottawa (OH)
86.0%
Edwin B. Forsythe (NJ)
84.4%

concentrations of wintering waterfowl and provides stopover habitat for several species of migrating shorebirds. [Hatchie NWR was profiled](#) in the 19 December 2013 issue of *Wingtips*.

In the northwest, an additional 206 acres was approved for the [Turnbull NWR](#) in Washington at the cost of \$610,000. Refuge wetlands represent some of the only remaining quality waterfowl breeding habitat in eastern Washington. These wetlands provide habitat for multiple species of waterfowl, including stopover habitat, as well as providing habitat for wading birds, shorebirds, Neotropical migrants, and other wildlife.



The funds for these four fee-title acquisitions were raised largely through the sale of Federal Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamps (Duck Stamps), currently selling for \$25. The proceeds may be close to \$40 million annually, depending on the expected number of stamps sold. The

collections go into the Migratory Bird Conservation Fund to conserve wetland, bottomland, and grassland habitats for the National Wildlife Refuge System (NWRS) for the benefit of waterfowl as well as other birds and wildlife. These investments of stamp dollars have gone into securing habitat at 253 different National Wildlife Refuges. And 106 of these refuges can attribute at least two-thirds (66.6%) of their existence directly to MBCF/Stamp dollars. At the same time, almost all of the smaller Waterfowl Production Areas (WPAs) in the Refuge System - or 3 million acres - can be attributed to MBCF/Stamp investments.

The Migratory Bird Conservation Commission is chaired by the Secretary of the Interior, Sally Jewell. Its members include U.S. Senators Thad Cochran (R) of Mississippi and Martin Heinrich (D) of New Mexico; Representatives Robert J. Wittman (R) of Virginia and Mike Thompson (D) of California;

Prime Hook (DE)	82.4%
Panther Swamp (MS)	80.9%
Turnbull (WA)	74.4%
Cache River (AR)	73.5%
Chassahowitzka (FL)	73.1%
Blackwater (MD)	73.0%
Chincoteague (VA)	69.9%
Lower Hatchie (TN)	65.1%
Nisqually (WA)	58.4%
Seney (MI)	46.4%
Aransas (TX)	43.0%
Lake Umbagog (NH and ME)	42.2%
Cape May (NJ)	40.3%
J. Clark Salyer (ND)	36.5%
Great Swamp (NJ)	36.1%
Bear River (UT)	35.0%
Sonny Bono Salton Sea (CA)	26.5%
Malheur (OR)	25.6%
Gray's Lake (ID)	20.2%
Pocosin Lakes (NC)	

Tom Vilsack, Secretary of Agriculture; and EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy.

The stamp program, of course, is waterfowl-driven, securing vital habitat for the NWRS. But by default, the MBCC decisions benefit many other species of birds - shorebirds, long-legged waders, raptors, songbirds, and more - as well as a broad selection of other wildlife.

In addition, this has been a particularly significant year for bird conservation in that 2016 marks 100 years of progress with the centennial celebration of the first Migratory Bird Treaty, which was signed between the United States and Great Britain (for Canada) in 1916.

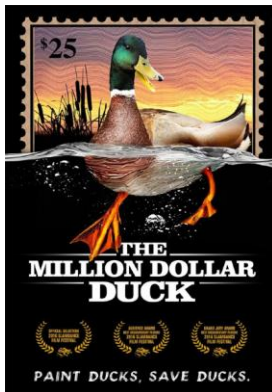
Finally, if you bought a Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation [Duck] Stamp last year, you may now pat yourself on the back. Your "investment" in wetland, bottomland, and grassland conservation is paying off with these most recent Refuge System acquisitions!

11.2%  
Lower Klamath (CA)  
10.2%  
J.N.Ding Darling (FL)  
8.5%  
Bayou Sauvage (LA)  
8.2%  
Assabet River (MA)  
4.4%

**Note:** 1) The dollars reflected in these percentages are from the Migratory Bird Conservation Fund (MBCF) where Stamp dollars are the major, *but not the only*, contributor. A large portion also comes from excise/import fees and other some sources.

2) You can access a recent report of all [NWRs which owe all or part of their existence to MBCF](#) investments from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

### *Some ways to spread the word and support the cause...*



Consider five simple things to support the activities of our Friends and raise awareness of the entire Stamp program:

- 1) Join our Friends or renew your membership. Find details toward the bottom of this newsletter.
- 2) Spread the word and have your like-minded friends [sign up](#) for *Wingtips*, our near-monthly newsletter.
- 3) View *The Million Dollar Duck*, the fun documentary about the stamp and the art contest. Show the video at a meeting. (Now available on iTunes and Amazon, next month available on DVD.) For details, click on the image to the left.

4) Build support for the Jr. Duck Stamp through AmazonSmile. Click on the feature to the right to find out more details on this program.

5) Buy and wear a classic 1934-1935 Duck Stamp T-shirt, featuring an image of the very first Stamp. See the particulars below.

There are [many other things to do](#), but these five are great starters. Please consider sharing these ideas with others, whether they are hunters, anglers, hikers, birders, wildlife photographers, environmental educators, art teachers, or Refuge Friends.

**Shop at AmazonSmile**  
and Amazon will make  
a donation to:

The Junior Duck Stamp Program  
through our Friends

Get started

amazon smile

### T-shirt with Classic Stamp Image Available from the Friends

The Friends of the Migratory Bird/Duck Stamp still has a stamp support T-shirt featuring the classic first stamp, with the wonderful artwork by Jay Norwood "Ding" Darling. The message on the shirt is simple - "Securing Wildlife Habitat Since 1934."



The price (\$11.20 plus shipping and handling) is being kept as low as possible, to get the T-shirt in the hands - and on the backs - of bird advocates and conservationists across the country.

Through the T-shirt, we wish to spread the word about the unique role that the Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation [Duck] Stamp provides.

By using the original 1934-1935 stamp image on this T-shirt, our Friends acts as a Nonexclusive Licensee of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, with the Stamp design the property of the United States Government.

Our T-shirts come in traditional men's style only. They are available in five sizes: S, M, L, XL, and 2XL. And, you can find T-shirt images, an order form, and more details [here](#).

### National Wildlife Refuge Week: October 9-15

The selective listing of stamp-sourced National Wildlife Refuges on the top right of this issue of *Wingtips* is a reminder for us to acknowledge National Wildlife Refuge Week in October.

Whether or not your favorite refuge was enhanced by the inclusion of property acquired through investments of the Migratory Bird Conservation Fund, it is important to remember that wherever you live, there is probably a National Wildlife Refuge near you!

You may wish to review the list of some of the [activities](#) around the country recognizing National Wildlife Refuge Week to find one happening in your area.

## About the Friends of the Migratory Bird/Duck Stamp

Our Friends Group is an independent, nonprofit organization dedicated to two basic goals:

1. To increase promotional and educational efforts among various target audiences concerning the stamp and the National Wildlife Refuge System.
2. To increase the regular, voluntary purchase of the stamp among hunters and non-hunters alike.



Our "Regular Friend" annual fee is kept modest, only \$15, but all Friends are *also* asked to pledge to buy two stamps per year, joining with other individuals and organizations across the country with that promotional effort. Our "Friend's Year" also corresponds with the "year" of a valid Stamp - from July to July. [Join our Friends group!](#)

## Sharing and Adapting Our Content



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