

November 26, 2014



# WINGTIPS

Friends of the Migratory Bird/Duck Stamp

## Duck Stamp Legislation: Up to the Senate

On November 17, [H.R. 5069](#), the Federal Duck Stamp Act of 2014, passed the House of Representatives. This could raise the price of a Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation [Duck] Stamp an additional \$10, to \$25. The price of the stamp has not increased in over two decades.

Dan Ashe, Director of the USFWS, commented, "The increase is desperately needed, and I hope the Senate takes action to approve the increase in the current Congress. Wetland landscapes, and the habitat they provide for waterfowl and other native species, are at risk across the country, as rising commodity prices fuel both increasing land prices and the conversion of small wetlands for crop production."

The \$10 increase in this bill is dedicated to easements, and not to be used for fee-title acquisitions. It is estimated that an additional \$16 million per year will be available from the stamp for these easements, a welcome addition at this point. (The USFWS is already securing many habitat easements, especially across the Prairie Pothole Region.) The easement restriction is appropriate for this increase, but it could be troublesome if it were expanded for price increases in the future.

The bill also includes a provision that allows the Secretary of the Interior to reduce the price per stamp if it is determined that the increase results in an overall reduction in revenues.

The Senate could take up the parallel bill ([S. 2621](#)) sometime in the next few weeks. The bill will expire unless it is passed by the Senate before the end of the year.

Throughout the process we would all benefit from a thorough discussion of the importance of saving valuable wetland and grassland habitats, the constructive role of easements at this

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## Did You Know?

1) In 1992, after noting that some waterfowl species were often depicted on Duck Stamps while other species had never appeared, the Federal Duck Stamp office began a program of prescribing which species could be painted in any given year.

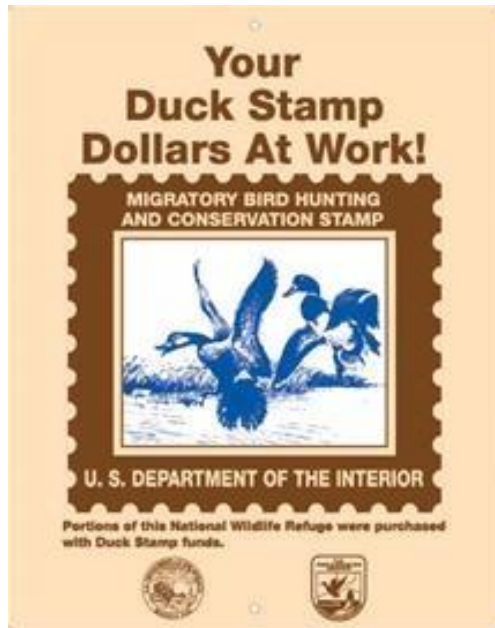
2) The first "certificates of appreciation" from the USFWS were sent to post-season purchasers of the 1959-1960 Stamp. This was to reward buyers who bought the stamp after the hunting season was over. This was at a time when severe droughts were devastating waterfowl populations. The certificate was

stage, and the need to increase sales of the stamp, especially among those Americans not currently required to buy the stamp.

5"x7", printed in black and white on imitation parchment.

3) The last time the stamp price was raised was 1991, when it increased in price from \$12.50 to \$15.

## How much did YOUR stamp secure?



The bold sign reads, "Your Duck Stamp Dollars at Work!" You can find this popular sign at a number of Waterfowl Production Areas (WPAs) and National Wildlife Refuges across the country.

But it really raises a question: "How much did *your* stamp secure in the way of wetland and grassland habitat?"

With that in question in mind, we attempt here to pursue a reasonable answer for everyone who has bought a Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation [Duck] Stamp in the last year.

According to preliminary numbers from the USFWS, there were about \$53 million that came into the Migratory Bird Conservation Fund (MBCF) in 2013. The MBCF is where about \$24 million from sales of the Duck Stamp were deposited last year.

The combined fee-title and easement acres of wetland, bottomland, and grassland habitats secured during the year were 60,000 acres (or about 7,000 acres for refuges and 53,000 acres for small wetlands and associated grasslands in the Prairie Pothole Region).

That comes out to about \$883 per acre of habitat secured. If 98% of the price of a Duck Stamp goes into the MBCF for habitat preservation, that's \$14.70 per stamp. Then, the \$14.70 accounts for 1.66% of an acre, or 725 square feet.

In our opinion, that's really impressive. It's an area slightly less than 27 feet x 27 feet... or almost the [combined floor space of an average bedroom, kitchen, and dining room](#) in a new home in the USA in 2013. The comparison is appropriate, producing a "bedroom," "kitchen," and "dining room" for waterfowl, long-legged waders, shorebirds, and many other birds and wildlife. Moreover, to be able to stand somewhere on a refuge or WPA and think that "my stamp" secured a block that's about 725 square feet, should be enough to make anyone feel proud.

To accentuate the significance of that sort of conservation contribution, you can now download a new [Certificate of Conservation](#) made available by the Friends, one to which you can attach a valid \$15-stamp and show off your role in preserving 725 square feet of crucial habitat.

- Scott Yaich, Ducks Unlimited
- Paul J. Baicich, Friends of the Migratory Bird/Duck Stamp

## The Stamp Friends and "Giving Tuesday"



"Giving Tuesday" is an effort to create a national day of giving to kick off the end-of-year holiday season. Giving Tuesday was started in 2012 as a response to the trend of commercialization and consumerism in the immediate post-Thanksgiving season (e.g., "Black Friday" and "Cyber Monday").

The effort has been praised as an antidote to consumer culture and as a way for people to give back, to make some

important financial contributions. It is in that spirit that we suggest a contribution on this coming Tuesday, 1 December, to the Friends of the Migratory Bird/Duck Stamp. This will help us continue spreading the word on the value and importance of the Stamp. Remember, our independent, nonprofit organization is dedicated to two basic goals:

1. To increase promotional and educational efforts among various target audiences concerning the Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation [Duck] Stamp and the National Wildlife Refuge System.
2. To increase the regular, voluntary purchase of the stamp among hunters and non-hunters alike.

Your tax-exempt contribution can make a real difference on this upcoming Giving Tuesday. Just click below to see how you can take part in the effort:

[Buy a Stamp. Make a Contribution. Join the Friends Group!](#)

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