

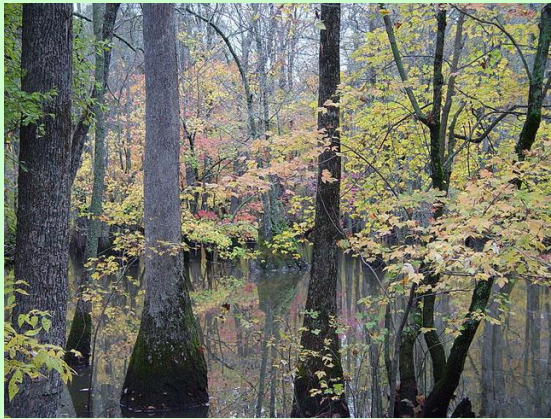
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WINGTIPS

Friends of the Migratory Bird/Duck Stamp

MBCC Meeting Report



Cache River NWR Eric S. Johnson USFWS

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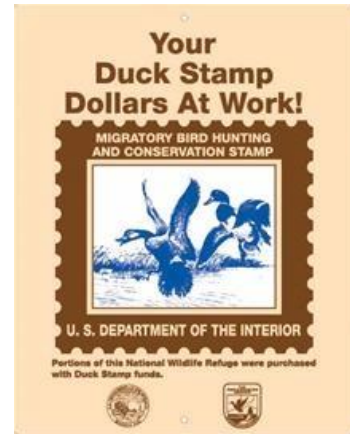
Your stamp dollars at work!

On April 20th, and with little fanfare, the Migratory Bird Conservation Commission (MBCC) met in a modest room in Washington DC to approve expenditures of \$10.8 million from the Migratory Bird Conservation Fund (MBCF) to conserve 7,200 acres for six National Wildlife Refuges, through purchases of fee-title land and conservation easements. These funds were raised largely through the sale of Federal Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamps, commonly known as "Duck Stamps."

The Duck Stamp program has been in place since 1934 and has raised more than \$980 million to conserve more than 6 million acres of important habitat for the National Wildlife Refuge System.

Over 250 refuges of the 563 refuges in the system have had at least part of their land acquired through MBCF/Stamp dollars, and 106 of them can attribute at least two-thirds (66.6%) of their existence directly to MBCF/Stamp dollars. At the same time, almost all of the 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. Its members include U.S. Senators Thad Cochran of Mississippi and Martin Heinrich of New Mexico; Representatives Robert J. Wittman of Virginia and Mike Thompson of California; Tom Vilsack, Secretary of Agriculture; and EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy. The MBCC operates with laudable cooperation and bipartisanship, in contrast to much of what happens these days in Washington, DC! The Commission is serious in its responsibilities to make wise investments for the Refuge System.



The stamp program, of course, is waterfowl-driven, securing wetland and grassland 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 broad selection of other wildlife.

The NWR projects selected by the MBCC at last month's meeting were the following:

- Cache River NWR, Arkansas - acquisition of 978 fee acres for \$2,391,000.
- Neches River NWR, Texas - acquisition of 952 fee acres for \$1,476,351.
- Nisqually NWR, Washington - acquisition of 809 fee acres and 140 easement acres for \$3,466,000.
- Tulare Basin Wildlife Management Area, California - acquisition of 160 fee acres for \$560,000.
- Umbagog NWR, Maine - acquisition of 4,091 fee acres for \$2,583,000.
- Willow Creek-Lurline NWR, California - acquisition of 115 easement acres for \$402,000.

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

New Junior Duck Stamp Winner Chosen

On April 22, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service announced the winning artist and artwork for the 2016-2017 Federal Junior Duck Stamp (JDS). The design for the new stamp, painted by Stacy Shen, 16, of Fremont, Calif., was chosen by an experienced panel of judges at the national Junior Duck Stamp Art Contest, held at J.N. "Ding" Darling National Wildlife Refuge in Sanibel, Florida.



The colored pencil entry, with a pair of Ross's Geese, had won the California State Junior Duck Stamp Contest. It was judged the winner among best-of-show entries from all 50 states, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. This year, an impressive 27,192 entries were submitted to the 52 state and territory Junior Duck Stamp contests. Proceeds from sales of the \$5 Junior Duck Stamp support environmental education and the JDS program.

In congratulating the winning artist and all the talented young people who participated in the contest, USFWS Director Dan Ashe remarked, "As urbanization accelerates, many Americans, including many young people, find it increasingly difficult to experience nature. The Junior Duck Stamp Program remains one of the Service's hallmark efforts to engage youth and foster a lifelong connection with the outdoors."

Sarah Clayton, 18, of Sidney, Ohio, took second place with her oil painting depicting a pair of Ring-necked Ducks. Third place went to Chase Mascaro, 16, of Slidell, Louisiana, for his rendition of a pair of Hooded Mergansers. See [here for a gallery of all 52 of the entries](#).

While online shopping, you can help the Jr. Duck Stamp Program

"AmazonSmile" is a simple concept that works like this: When you shop through the Amazon website, the folks at Amazon will donate to your favorite designated tax-exempt organization or charity.

The Friends of the Migratory Bird/Duck Stamp is now a registered charitable organization with AmazonSmile. You can designate 0.5% of your eligible purchases to be donated to the Friends, at no cost to you. In turn, these funds will be re-donated by the Friends to sustain the creative activities of the the Junior Duck Stamp Conservation and Design Program. You can find a lot more details [here](#).



Please consider sharing this information to supporters of the Jr. Duck Stamp Program, whether they are environmental educators, art teachers, hunters, bird watchers, or Refuge Friends.

Meanwhile in Canada...

Each year since 1985, a painting created by a Canadian wildlife artist is selected as the [Canadian Wildlife Habitat Conservation Stamp](#). The majority of proceeds from these sales fund Wildlife Habitat Canada's grant program for conservation projects across Canada. On April 30, the new Canadian Wildlife Habitat Conservation Stamp was released by our neighbors to the north. Last year (2015) the artwork was of Mourning Doves by W. Allan Hancock of British Columbia. This year three impressive Surf Scoters will grace the stamp, painted by Pierre Leduc of Quebec.



The Canadian effort is nowhere as large and successful as the U.S. program for the Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation [Duck] Stamp, but it is still effective. Since 1985, WHC has provided over \$50 million in [grants](#) to more than 1,500 habitat conservation projects across Canada.

The vast majority of stamps are purchased by hunters to validate their Migratory Game Bird Hunting Permit. Stamps and prints are also purchased by individuals and collectors to raise funds for wildlife habitat conservation.

In addition to the revenue from the Habitat Conservation Stamps and Prints, Wildlife Habitat Canada raises funds from a variety of governmental and industry partners to undertake specific activities and projects.

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" 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!](#)

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