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WINGTIPS

Friends of the Migratory Bird/Duck Stamp

The Stamp for 2020-2021



Black-bellied Whistling Ducks by Eddie LeRoy

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Action alert: Proposed rules change for art contest

The Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp plays a vital role in advancing wetland and grassland conservation, preserving valuable habitats for wetland birds and for future generations. The Friends of the Migratory Bird/Duck Stamp's interest is to support the Federal Duck Stamp program, advocating and promoting the effort with its tremendous scope, reach, and value in celebrating our American culture and heritage since 1934.

In 2018, all entries to the Federal Duck Stamp art contest were required to include one or more **waterfowl hunting specific elements** or a waterfowl hunting scene as part of the artwork.

A proposed rule would make the theme "Celebrating Our Waterfowl Hunting Heritage" and the mandatory inclusion of an appropriate hunting element **permanent**, beginning with the 2020 Contest. This would be similar to the 2018 Contest rules.

Friends of the Migratory Bird/Duck Stamp recommend that this proposal be rejected.

This proposed rule to revise the Contest Regulations was posted on the Federal Register on January 29. See the [press release from the Department of the Interior](#).

The proposed rule is open for public comments until March 16, 2020. All comments must be submitted through the process described in the proposed rule - if they are submitted any other way, they cannot be incorporated or considered. [You can access the proposed rule and/or comment, via the Federal Register](#). Or you can use this link: <https://tinyurl.com/duck-stamp-rules-change>. Or you can search for the rule at www.regulations.gov using any of these search terms:

- FWS-HQ-MB-2019-0105-0001
- Revision of Federal Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp (Duck Stamp) Contest Regulations
- 2020-01497
- 1018-BE20

You can comment on the rule via the portal described above, or by postal mail. Ahead of entering your final comments, we recommend that you create your letter, ready to cut and paste to the portal.

We urge all of our readers to comment on this proposal. As a starting point for your customized response, the Friends have provided a [sample letter](#) and a list of [talking points](#). Please share this information via your preferred social media. And follow the [Forward this email](#) link at the end of this message to spread the word by e-mail.

Thank you for taking the time to comment and thanks for your support of the Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp and the Duck Stamp Office!

Rationale for our position

We feel that if made permanent, this proposal will limit, not advance, the Stamp or the Stamp Art Contest.

The limits placed on the creativity of artists by this rule will contribute to the already steady decline in the number of contest entries.

The challenge now is to increase sales of the Stamp, which are down from a high of [2,412,651 in 1970-1971 to today's 1,514,551 in 2017-2018](#). Current sales numbers are similar to those in the 1960s and 1980s.

We greatly appreciate the hunting community. They have provided most of the dollars to support the purchase of wetlands in America. Even with their current unwavering support the number of stamps purchased continues to decline as the number of hunters decline.

The biggest opportunity for increased sales is with others that use and appreciate the National Wildlife Refuge System and our public lands and purchase the stamp as a way of supporting conservation. We need to broaden the base of support to include the growing number of non-consumptive citizens who value land protection.

Framing the Stamp as exclusively within the context of America's hunting heritage does a disservice to the wide range of Stamp existing and potential purchasers. If more Stamps are not sold, not only will the Stamp and the Contest be negatively impacted, but waterfowl hunting and hunters who benefit most from this program, along with others who use our public lands, will see the impact of this program on preservation of waterfowl habitat shrink. This proposal would promote the theme "celebrating our waterfowl hunting heritage" at the expense of focusing on growing the program to insure its transformative impact well into the future.

In summary, this proposal will not increase Contest participants, generate increased Stamp revenue, grow the number Stamp collectors, expand sales to nonhunters, and will not raise appreciation for the Stamp itself. We feel the pending permanent rule change will negatively impact the Stamp and the Stamp Art Contest.

In 1976, Congress changed the name of the Stamp from "The Migratory Bird Hunting Stamp" to "The Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp" In order to acknowledge the rich tradition of the broad diversity of duck stamp supporters. This pending proposal is a step backward and should not be implemented.

ORDER A STAMP THROUGH US

You can get your own current Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp at most large Post Offices, at many National Wildlife Refuges, and through a number of vendors.



If you want another easy way to get a current Stamp, send a check for \$25 made out to Friends of the Migratory Bird/Duck Stamp, along with a *self-addressed stamped envelope* to us (at P.O. Box 2143, Columbia MD 21045), and a note with your phone number and your e-mail address in case there are any problems.

We'll send you the current stamp ASAP... as long as our supply lasts!

Support the Friends of the Migratory Bird/Duck Stamp

The Friends of the Migratory Bird/Duck Stamp is an independent, nonprofit organization dedicated to two fundamental 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 membership is annual, corresponding to the year of validity for the Federal Duck Stamp, namely from the beginning of July to the end of the following June. Our "Regular Friend" fee is modest, only \$15, but all Friends are also asked to *pledge to buy TWO stamps per year*, joining with other organizations across the country in that effort.

You can access a simple mail-in [membership form](#).

We encourage you to commit yourself to the promotion of the Stamp program, the Friends, and smart conservation through the sales and promotion of the Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation [Duck] Stamp.

And don't forget support for the Jr. Duck Stamp Program which reaches tens of thousands of youngsters. One way to help is described here, on the right, through AmazonSmile.

Shop at AmazonSmile
and Amazon will make
a donation to:

The Junior Duck Stamp Program
through our Friends

Get started

amazonsmile

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