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# News Release



**For Immediate Release**

**Date: June 20, 2007**

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## **National Duck Stamp First Day Of Sale Ceremony Comes To Nevada**

Las Vegas... This year, local communities across the nation have an opportunity to share in an annual ceremony to unveil the release of a new Federal Duck Stamp and a new Junior Duck Stamp. This First Day of Sale Ceremony traditionally held at the Smithsonian National Postal Museum in Washington, D.C., will be held June 22, 2007, at Bass Pro Shop, 8200 Dean Martin Drive, Las Vegas, Nevada from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm.

The ceremony, sponsored by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Bass Pro Shops, U.S. Postal Service, and Nevada Department of Wildlife will begin with a formal ceremony at 9:00 am and offer for sale the 2007-2008 Federal Duck Stamp with a First Day Cancellation issued by the U.S. Postal Service. Art work from Nevada's Junior Duck Stamp Contest will also be on display.

Federal Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamps, commonly known as "Duck Stamps," are pictorial stamps produced by the U.S. Postal Service for the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. They are not valid for postage and cost \$15.00 each. Originally created in 1934 as the federal licenses required for hunting migratory waterfowl, Federal Duck Stamps have a much larger purpose today.

Federal Duck Stamps are a vital tool for wetland conservation. Ninety-eight cents out of every dollar generated by the sales of Federal Duck Stamps goes directly to purchase or lease wetland habitat for protection in the National Wildlife Refuge System. The Federal Duck Stamp Program has been called one of the most successful conservation programs ever initiated and is a highly effective way to conserve America's natural resources.

Since 1934, when Congress established the Federal Duck Stamp, 120 million stamps have been sold raising more than \$670 million. With these funds more than 5.2 million acres of wetland habitat have been purchased, not only to benefit waterfowl, but also other wetland-dependent fish, wildlife, and plant species.

In Nevada, 640,496 Duck Stamps have been purchased since 1934. Close to 29,946 acres of the 39,926-acre Ruby Lake National Wildlife Refuge, located in northeast Nevada were purchased with \$208,437 of Duck Stamp funds. Portions of the Desert, Pahrangat and Sheldon National Wildlife Refuges in Nevada have also benefited from the sale of these stamps.

Besides serving as a hunting license and a conservation tool, a current year's Federal Duck Stamp also serves as an entrance pass for National Wildlife Refuges where admission is normally charged. Duck Stamps and the products that bear duck stamp images are also popular collector items.

In 1989, the first Junior Duck Stamps were produced. Junior Duck Stamps are now the capstone of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service's Junior Duck Stamp environmental education program, teaching students across the nation "conservation through the arts." Revenue generated by the sales of Junior Duck Stamps funds environmental education programs in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and 2 territories (American Samoa and the Virgin Islands).

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The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is the principal Federal agency responsible for conserving, protecting and enhancing fish, wildlife and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. The Service manages the 95-million-acre National Wildlife Refuge System, which encompasses 547 national wildlife refuges, thousands of small wetlands and other special management areas. It also operates 69 national fish hatcheries, 64 fishery resources offices and 81 ecological services field stations. The agency enforces federal wildlife laws, administers the Endangered Species Act, manages migratory bird populations, restores nationally significant fisheries, conserves and restores wildlife habitat such as wetlands, and helps foreign and Native American tribal governments with their conservation efforts. It also oversees the Federal Assistance program, which distributes hundreds of millions of dollars in excise taxes on fishing and hunting equipment to state fish and wildlife agencies. Visit the Service's website at <http://www.fws.gov>.