



DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

news release

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

For Release April 20, 1982

David Klinger 202/343-5634

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE PROPOSES ENTRY FEE, OTHER CHANGES FOR ANNUAL "DUCK STAMP" CONTEST

Entrants in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's popular "Duck Stamp" art competition will pay a \$20 entry fee if a rule proposed in today's Federal Register is approved after public comment.

The non-refundable fee is being proposed to help offset the administrative costs of the annual contest to select the design for the Federal Government's Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp.

Today's Federal Register notice also announced the November 4, 1982, contest judging date and proposed several changes in the procedures by which entries are accepted and judged in the Federal Government's only regularly sponsored art competition.

The proposal to require an entry fee follows three years of rapid growth in the total number of yearly entries and steadily escalating administrative costs associated with the staging of the contest. Last year, there were 2,099 entries in the "Duck Stamp" contest, compared to only 373 as recently as 1978. Last year's contest cost the Fish and Wildlife Service approximately \$50,000 to sponsor.

"We've been extremely gratified with the tremendous interest in this contest from a wide range of professional and amateur artists," says John Mattoon, the Service's assistant director for public affairs. "However, the vastly increased volume of entries received in recent years requires a considerable amount of the Service's budget and staff time. An affordable entry fee will allow the Government to recoup some of that expense and still permit the serious artist to participate in one of the country's foremost art competitions."

(over)

The "Duck Stamp," which was created in 1934 as a means of collecting revenue from waterfowl hunters to restore and preserve waterfowl habitat, is issued annually by the Federal Government and required of all such hunters 16 years of age and older. Since 1949, its design depicting different species of ducks, geese, or swans has been selected through the contest, open to all artists who are residents or citizens of the United States. The "Duck Stamp" is the longest running, annually issued series of stamps in U.S. revenue stamp history. About 2.2 million of the \$7.50 stamps are sold each year with revenues used to buy wetland habitat.

In addition to the entry fee, the Fish and Wildlife Service is proposing contest rule changes that would:

- Require that the dominant feature of an entry be a live, non-extinct North American migratory duck, goose, or swan of the family Anatidae; and
- Broaden the criteria for participation as a contest judge to include recognized experts in the fields of ornithology, conservation and waterfowling, or art, thereby allowing a wider range of expertise from which the Service may draw when proposing judges.

Today's notice also announced that the contest will open for entries on July 1, 1982, and close on October 1. If the number of entries warrants, a preliminary screening of designs will be held on November 3 before the formal judging the next day. Five waterfowl species (hooded merganser, green-winged teal, mallard, ruddy duck, and canvasback) that were depicted on the previous 5 years' "Duck Stamps" will be ineligible in the 1982 competition.

Contest rules and entry forms will be available on or after June 1, 1982. Prospective entrants should write the "Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp Contest," U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240 at that time for contest information.

Comments on the several changes that have been proposed for this year's contest are due by May 20, 1982, and should be sent to the same address.

x x x