



DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

news release

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE REMINDS DUCK STAMP CONTESTANTS, ANNOUNCES NEW HUNTING, FISHING PROGRAMS

● Duck Stamp Deadline Nears. Prospective winners of the Nation's foremost conservation competition -- The federal Duck Stamp contest -- have one month left to submit their designs for the 1985 judging.

October 1 is the deadline for entering this year's contest, which will select the artwork to highlight the 1986-87 Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp. The Duck Stamp contest is the federal government's only regularly sponsored art competition, and it annually attracts thousands of paintings of North American waterfowl from both novice and professional wildlife artists.

Rules and entry forms are still available from the Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp Contest, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240. Contest regulations also appeared in the March 7, 1985, Federal Register.

The 1985 judging will be held November 5 and 6 in the Department of the Interior auditorium, 18th and C Streets, N.W., in Washington, D.C.

● More Refuges Opened to Hunting, Fishing. The Fish and Wildlife Service has published a final rule adding 20 national wildlife refuges to the lists of areas where regulated hunting and fishing will be permitted.

The final rule, published in the August 26, 1985, Federal Register, lists seven refuges for which migratory game bird, upland game, or big game hunting programs have been approved and 14 refuges for which sport fishing programs have been added.

The following is a State-by-State breakdown of the refuges and the new programs:

Alabama: Bon Secour and Wheeler (sport fishing).

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Arizona: 'Buenos Aires (migratory bird, upland game, and big game hunting).

Florida: Cedar Keys, Egmont Key, Hobe Sound, Lower Suwannee, Pelican Island, and Pinellas (sport fishing).

Georgia: Harris Neck, Tybee, Wassaw, and Wolf Island (sport fishing).

Iowa: Union Slough (migratory bird, upland game, and big game hunting).

Michigan: Harbor Island (migratory bird, upland game, and big game hunting).

Mississippi: Bogue Chitto (migratory bird, upland game, and big game hunting).

South Carolina: Pinckney Island (sport fishing).

Texas: Buffalo Lake (upland game hunting).

Virginia: Back Bay (big game hunting).

Washington: Columbian White-tailed Deer (big game hunting and sport fishing).

Regulated hunting and fishing are permitted under the laws that govern the National Wildlife Refuge System if these activities are compatible and consistent with the major purposes for which the refuges were established. The refuge hunting and fishing regulations are consistent with State and federal laws governing the conservation of fish and wildlife resources.

● Hunting Regulations Reviewed. The Fish and Wildlife Service has published a final rulemaking concerning changes in regulations governing hunting programs on nearly 70 national wildlife refuges across the country. The rulemaking, published in the September 4, 1985, Federal Register, covers migratory game bird, upland game, and big game hunting programs.

Each year, the Service reviews the regulations governing hunting programs on individual refuges to determine if modifications are necessary. Changing environmental conditions, State and federal regulations, and other factors influencing wildlife populations and habitats can require changes in the hunting programs.

Last year, the regulations governing hunting were made a part of the Code of Federal Regulations. Before that, regulations for hunting programs had to be published in the Federal Register each year. This proved to be costly and often led to delays in issuing the regulations.

The regulation changes contained in the final rulemaking represent minor adjustments to existing hunting programs. Under provisions of the National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act and the Refuge Recreation Act, the Secretary of the Interior may allow compatible hunting and fishing on refuge lands.