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FISH & WILDLIFE
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Federal Duck Stamp Task Group Final Recommendations

Bird Conservation Committee / Waterfowl Working Group

September 15, 2015

Full report will be available on-line at:
www.fishwildlife.org/index.php?section=comlist-71

Issues and Recommendations of the Federal Duck Stamp Task Group

1) Issue: The conservation benefits of the Duck Stamp are poorly understood among the wildlife viewing community and the public, as well as among much of the hunting community

- a) **Recommendation:** Develop and support implementation of a communications strategy that targets groups identified in the NAWMP National Stakeholder workshops and survey.
- b) **Recommendation:** Work with all groups to identify synergistic opportunities for promoting broad conservation benefits of the Duck Stamp.

2) Issue: Revenue from sales of Duck Stamp has declined and is insufficient to meet conservation goals.

- a) **Recommendation:** Develop and support implementation of a marketing plan with specific sales and revenue goals for waterfowl hunters, other hunters, non-hunters and wildlife viewers, etc.
 - i) **Action:** USFWS should work with NAWMP/bird conservation community to identify and target specific messages and product(s) to the various market segments and identify the most appropriate and effective methods for sales and distribution. The NAWMP National Stakeholder Survey should help inform this effort.
 - ii) **Action:** Identify *aspirational* sales and revenue goals for each state, and market segment that are achievable based on past history, and the proposed marketing effort.
 - iii) **Action:** Identify demographic information that is currently being collected by e-stamp states and additional information required for improving sales.
- b) **Recommendation:** Determine a price point that optimizes sales and total revenue.

- i) **Action:** AFWA/USFWS cooperate to model past, current, and future sales data and the desirable price points for the stamp. This simulation could inform future efforts to increase the price of the stamp by the CPI.

3) Issue: Purchasing a Duck Stamp should be efficient and easy.

- a) **Recommendation:** Finalize plans and timeline for all states to sell electronic stamps through existing licensing systems
- b) **Recommendation:** Address issues regarding complications/shortcomings with existing e-stamp, including the 45-day expiration of the e-stamp.
 - i) **Action:** Change law to allow the e-stamp to suffice as the requirement to hunt waterfowl for the duration of the hunting season. The physical stamp could be sent to hunters after March 10th each year.
 - ii) **Action:** Develop smartphone app that would enable the person to easily purchase as a Duck Stamp (a physical stamp) and serve as an electronic version of the stamp (i.e. no physical stamp required).

4) Issue: Access to many National Wildlife Refuges is restricted or extremely limited for waterfowl hunting and wildlife viewing even when lands are acquired by MBCF dollars.

- a) **Recommendation:** Improve the identification and reporting of Refuge areas open/closed to waterfowl hunting and wildlife viewing and the reasons for not providing access.
- b) **Recommendation:** USFWS should work with the NAWMP community to identify priority areas for habitat acquisition, and to develop lists of land parcels available from willing sellers for submission to the Director and approval by the MBCC such that the limited MBCF funds are employed in a manner that maximizes the contributions to the NAWMP goals of waterfowl populations, habitat, and human users.
- c) **Recommendation:** USFWS should examine the potential to increase the number of refuges that allow the use of a Federal Duck Stamp to access the refuge, including voluntary payment or self-pay systems, for all recreational uses.

5) Issue: The increased price of the Federal Duck Stamp may affect sales of the federal stamp and state-level waterfowl hunting privileges or state conservation stamp sales.

- a) **Recommendation:** Assess impacts of increased price on sales of federal Duck Stamp sales and state waterfowl stamps/licenses
- b) **Recommendation:** AFWA should request data from individual states on waterfowl stamp/permit sales, participation in waterfowl hunting, etc., and compare it to federal stamp sales, revenue, and Harvest Information Program estimates.
 - i) **Action:** Select key states and compare sales of licenses and federal stamps before and after price increase
 - ii) **Action:** Determine correlation between HIP-derived hunter numbers and sales of state/federal stamps

6) Issue: The current uses of the Duck Stamp are limited to only those engaged in waterfowl hunting, or access to a very limited number of National Wildlife Refuges.

- a) **Recommendation:** Identify new (non-hunting/recreational) uses for the Duck Stamp.
 - i) **Action:** Cooperate with hunting, viewing, and tourism industry to provide a national discount to sporting good stores, national bird specialty stores, car rentals, etc.