

Virginia Migratory Waterfowl Conservation Stamp Competition Seeks Artists for 2016 Virginia Competition

Richmond, VA. (September 10, 2015) — Artists' entries are being accepted through Feb. 1, 2016, for the Virginia Migratory Waterfowl Conservation Stamp Competition. The winning artwork will be featured on the 2016-17 Migratory Waterfowl Conservation Stamp, also known as the Virginia duck stamp.

There are several changes this year to the annual contest sponsored by the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries and Virginia Ducks Unlimited. The contest which has been limited to Virginia artists over the past 10 years has now been opened up to any U.S. citizen. This change will expand the pool of artists from the already talented Virginia artists to a much greater number of artists that will definitely raise the competition level. In addition changes have been made to the Competition in order to increase the value and visibility to the winning artists, including: an increased cash prize, guaranteed reimbursement for artist remarks, and the ability for the winning artist to immediately sell prints or other merchandise as the exclusive provider.

Another new aspect to the competition is the way the artwork and top artists will be recognized. The winning artwork, along with the second and third place winners will be unveiled during the preview night gala on March 18th, 2016, at the 37th Annual Rappahannock River Waterfowl Show in White Stone, Virginia. This show routinely attracts 4000-5000 attendees with interests in art, waterfowl hunting, and bird watching and provides a great opportunity for artist recognition.

Another change in the contest is that the artwork will be limited to certain species each year. This year, artists may submit renderings of the American Widgeon, Mallard, Northern Pintail, Blue-winged Teal, or Northern Shoveler, and their related habitats.

Artwork will be judged on the following criteria:

- Level and accuracy of detail in all aspects of the anatomy of waterfowl;
- Appropriateness, accuracy and detail in depiction of the selected species' habitat;
- Attractiveness and creativity of the composition, regarding spatial balance, lighting and harmony of subject and background; and,
- Visual appeal and suitability for reproduction at both the print and stamp scales.

The competition is open to US Citizens 18 years and older. Artists may submit two designs in whatever medium they choose. Images must be no larger than 18 inches by 13 inches, and should be loosely covered with a protective overleaf, although not framed or covered with glass.

Complete entry guidelines are located on the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries website <http://www.dgif.virginia.gov/hunting/waterfowl-stamp.asp>

The winning design will be selected by a panel of judges who have expertise in waterfowl biology or artistic method and expression. The winning artist is encouraged to attend the unveiling ceremony on March 18th, 2016. The winner will receive \$2,500 in prize money, and ribbons will be awarded for 2nd and 3rd places.

Proceeds from sales of the stamp go into a special fund at VDGIF dedicated specifically to the protection and restoration of wetland and waterfowl habitat in Virginia and on the breeding grounds in eastern Canada.

For more information about the Migratory Waterfowl Conservation Stamp Competition, visit the VDGIF website. For more information on the Rappahannock River Waterfowl Show, please visit <http://www.rws.org/>