



DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

news release

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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ART COMPETITION INTENSE AS "DUCK STAMP'S" ANNIVERSARY BEGINS

The countdown to become the Nation's 50th anniversary "Duck Stamp" is on!

One of 1,582 colorful pieces of waterfowl art vying for the prestigious title will be selected in national competition beginning November 8, 1983, at the Interior Department in Washington, D.C.

At stake is the honor of gracing the Federal Government's Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp in 1984 -- the 50th year of the unique hunting stamp program administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

California, Minnesota, and Pennsylvania have produced the greatest number of citizen-entrants, with 140, 110, and 85 contestants, respectively. The total of 1,582 entries is the second highest in the history of the design competition, which dates back to 1949. The stamp program itself began in 1934 and the art designs it has fostered make the "Duck Stamp" the longest-running such series in U.S. revenue stamp history.

"We're pleased with the field of entries this year, and competition will, once again, be intense," says G. Ray Arnett, Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Fish and Wildlife and Parks. "Part of the reason for the volume of entries and the national interest that's focused on the contest this year is, of course, due to the fact that this year's design will become the 50th anniversary stamp when it is released in 1984. That stamp will cap half a century of public support for the national goal of waterfowl conservation and wetlands protection."

The entries -- colorful outdoor scenes that depict diverse species of North American ducks, geese, and swans -- will go on public display at 10 a.m., November 8 at the Interior Department auditorium at 18th and C Streets, N.W. Judging by a panel of non-Government experts and public exhibition will continue through 4 p.m. that day, to be followed by a further round of judging beginning at 9 a.m., November 9. A winning design is anticipated about 2 p.m. on November 9.

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The contest ceremonies will carry added attractions this year: champion Labrador retrievers and an expert "duck caller" will demonstrate their skills at 1 p.m. on November 9, also in the Interior Department auditorium. Previous contest winners will attend the ceremonies that day and the telephone call to this year's winning entrant will be broadcast from the auditorium stage once the top design is selected. The public exhibition will end at 4 p.m. that day.

The upcoming contest will also feature a major technological innovation -- a video projection system by which each entry will be displayed at several locations in the auditorium to visitors during the judging.

The winning design and the top 20 runners-up will get a second public showing on November 11-13, when they will be displayed at the prestigious Easton Waterfowl Festival in Easton, Maryland. A similar exhibition is planned for top "Duck Stamp" designs by the San Bernardino County Museum in Ontario, California, later this year. Details about that public exhibition will be announced at a later date.

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Note to Editors: Next year's 50th anniversary "Duck Stamp" celebration will include issuance of a commemorative postage stamp and a major public information campaign. Many of these events will be announced at the upcoming "Duck Stamp" judging on November 8 and 9, 1983.