

TESTIMONY OF JOSEPH HAUTMAN
BEFORE THE:
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMMITTEE ON RESOURCES
SUBCOMMITTEE ON FISHERIES AND OCEANS

CONCERNING:
H.R. 1494, ELECTRONIC DUCK STAMP ACT OF 2005 &
H.R. 3179, THE JUNIOR DUCK STAMP REAUTHORIZATION AMENDMENTS ACT OF 2005

Thursday, July 21, 2005

WASHINGTON , DC

Introduction

Mr. Chairman, and members of the Subcommittee, my name is Joseph Hautman. I am a wildlife artist, a waterfowl hunter, a two-time winner of the Federal Duck Stamp Design Contest, and a governor of the National Duck Stamp Collector's Society. I have a PhD in Physics and was carrying out scientific research at the University of Pennsylvania when I won my first Federal Duck Stamp Contest in 1991. Since winning the contest my sideline of painting wildlife has turned into a full-time occupation. In addition to the federal stamps, I have also designed conservation stamps in five different states, published and distributed duck stamp prints, and collaborated with a number of conservation groups to raise money for wetlands and waterfowl through the sales of duck stamp prints and other wildlife art.

As Federal Duck Stamp contest winner I have traveled extensively around the country, talking to widely diverse groups of people to help promote greater public awareness of the program and its accomplishments.

The Junior Duck Stamp program has always had my enthusiastic support. I have been a judge of the contest at the state level three times and have made presentations on Duck Stamp Art to students at the grade school, junior high and senior high levels.

Artwork and Conservation Stamps

The artwork on the traditional Federal Duck Stamp is an important tool for the sales of duck stamps and contributes to the public image and visibility of the Duck Stamp program.

- For the thousands of philatelic collectors of the stamp the imagery is *essential*. Six to ten percent of Federal Duck Stamps sold are purchased by this group. Without the artwork the interest in the stamp as a collectible would fall to negligible levels.
- Waterfowl hunters will purchase a "stamp" regardless of its form, but with the electronic purchase some hunters could resent what would appear to be no more than an extra "tax" on their state hunting license. For many hunters the traditional paper stamp is more than just a receipt for a tax paid, it is a badge of honor, a symbol of a hunter's respect for the natural resources they are privileged to use. Over the years, the Federal Duck Stamp has inspired a loyalty and respect among hunters, not just for the program it represents, but also for the importance of wetlands conservation in general. Duck hunters are proud of their sport, proud of their heritage, and proud of *their* Duck Stamp Program. Like many people, I first learned about the Duck Stamp when I saw it, with its colorful and inspiring image, on my fathers hunting license. I am not sure that I would have asked about it, or learned to appreciate it, if it were only a number on a receipt.

Section 7, subsection (c.) of HR1494 allows 45 days for the delivery of the paper stamp to the purchaser. However, many hunters buy their licenses shortly before they go hunting and a good share do not hunt after the opening day of the season. So some hunters could go through their entire hunting season without needing to have the actual paper stamp in their possession. This could seriously affect the perceived relevance of the traditional Duck Stamp.

- Another important role of the artwork on the Federal Duck Stamp is in exposing non-hunters and non-collectors to the program. Many of these people benefit from the wetlands and refuges funded by Duck Stamp dollars, and many will buy stamps if they are made aware of the quality and integrity of the program. In my experience promoting the program it has always been the Duck Stamp artwork that has motivated people to start asking questions. The visibility and exposure of the program at art shows, stamp shows, fundraisers, and in the media can only be hurt if the relevance of the artwork is decreased.

The major wildlife conservation groups, including Ducks Unlimited, Pheasants Forever, National Wildlife Federation, National

Wild Turkey Federation, the state Waterfowl Associations, and many others, are aware of the power of wildlife art to inspire people to contribute to conservation efforts. Fundraising events often rely on auctions and raffles of framed artwork and products bearing wildlife images. When I published the Duck Stamp Print in 2002, I estimate that well over 5000 Duck Stamps were sold to accompany framed Duck Stamp prints. That year over 2500 of these prints were sold or auctioned off by non-profit groups at fundraising events. These prints hang in people's homes and on office walls, and every Duck Stamp, every print sold, and every Duck Stamp poster carries a message about the Duck Stamp conservation program. This is how new people are made aware of the program, its role in conservation, and of particular issues like wetland preservation and restoration.

All of the above mentioned benefits of the imagery on the traditional paper Duck Stamp would adversely affected by any decrease in the relevance, visibility and prestige of the artwork.

The Junior Duck Stamp

The educational and inspirational potential of the Duck Stamp artwork is most obviously realized in the Junior Duck Stamp program. The artwork opens the door to teaching young people about waterfowl, the importance of habitat, and the need for conservation. In my experience, *nothing*

makes a person, young or old, observe and appreciate something better than trying to draw it. Depicting nature demands careful observation, and that observation leads to awareness, appreciation, and often a passion for wildlife and the natural world. In the case of the Junior Duck Stamp program, the exposure to wetlands and waterfowl conservation doesn't end with the schoolchildren but can become an education of entire families.

Conclusions

In conclusion, I believe that H.R. 1494, ELECTRONIC DUCK STAMP ACT OF 2005 could have a detrimental impact the effectiveness of the traditional paper Duck Stamp because:

- The option of an electronic stamp can only reduce exposure to duck stamp artwork which plays an important role in inspiring the loyal support of hunters, and the education and engagement of the general public.

2. The electronic stamp is likely to reduce the perceived relevance of the pictorial stamp since many hunters may actually be done hunting for the season before they actually have the paper stamp in their possession. This could have a negative impact on the prestige, visibility, and media coverage of the Duck Stamp Program.

Reduced visibility and relevance of the Duck Stamp artwork would also have a negative influence on young peoples' participation in the Junior Duck Stamp program. It is also likely to have a detrimental effect on the many State Duck stamp programs which have been estimated to raise over a million dollars every year for state conservation projects.

In the event that this Act does proceed forward, I recommend additions to the evaluation section to include not just the enumeration of duck stamps sold and the dollars collected, but also :

- Direction to include in the evaluation any changes in both the hunters' and the general public's perception of the Federal Duck Stamp program.

2. Direction as to which parties are to be included in the evaluation process. In particular, I would recommend input from representatives of private conservation groups who may be indirectly affected by the changes in the relevance of the traditional paper stamp.

These measures could help to ensure that the introduction of an electronic stamp does not hurt the visibility and public perception of the Federal Duck stamp program nor limit the public's awareness of its mission.

I also recommend, in the event that the Act is passed, that some thought be given to alternative ways of incorporating the Duck Stamp design into the electronic process. For example, it has been suggested that the design be printed, or preprinted, in some form on the back side of the printed electronic receipt. This could help to offset any reduction in the visibility and relevance of the Duck Stamp artwork on the traditional stamp.

Regarding H.R. 3179, THE JUNIOR DUCK STAMP REAUTHORIZATION AMENDMENTS ACT OF 2005, I unequivocally support the reauthorization. In an era where public funding of the arts is fraught with controversy, and school

art programs are being cut, it is especially important to preserve this hugely successful educator of both children and adults.

Finally, I would like to add two comments. The first was passed on to me by Kip Koss, the grandson of Ding Darling, a former Director of the Fish and Wildlife Service and a wildlife artist who designed the first Duck Stamp in 1934 and played an essential role in the creation of the Federal Duck Stamp Program: In Section 2, Findings, (3), the statement "... stamps have generated more than \$600,000,000 in revenue...." is made. Using the published Bureau of Labor Statistics inflation adjustment factors for each year of the program, the number in today's dollars is nearly \$2,000,000,000. To be precise, Duck Stamp sales from 1934 through 2004 actually total \$1,922,780,770 or "nearly two *billion* dollars."

Second, I would like to respectfully remind the subcommittee of the recent Senate resolution 183 of June 28 of this year in which the Senate " expresses strong support for the continued success of the Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp." For you reference I have attached a copy of that resolution as Addendum A.

Mr. Chairman and members of the Subcommittee, thank you for giving me the opportunity to contribute to these proceedings. I am honored to have the chance to share my views on two such important and successful programs as the Federal Duck Stamp Program and the Junior Duck Stamp Program.

Addendum A

SRES 183 ATS

109th CONGRESS

1st Session

S. RES. 183

Recognizing the achievements and contributions of the Migratory Bird Commission on the occasion of its 72nd anniversary and the first day of sale of the 2005-2006 Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

June 28, 2005

Mr. COCHRAN (for himself, Mrs. LINCOLN, and Ms. SNOWE) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to

RESOLUTION

Recognizing the achievements and contributions of the Migratory Bird Commission on the occasion of its 72nd anniversary and the first day of sale of the 2005-2006 Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp.

Whereas the 2005-2006 Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp, popularly known as the 'Duck Stamp', marks the Migratory Bird Conservation Commission's 72nd anniversary;

Whereas June 30, 2005, will be the first day of sale for the 2005-2006 Duck Stamp;

Whereas the Migratory Bird Conservation Commission was created by Congress in 1929 to consider and approve any areas of land or water recommended by the Secretary of the Interior for purchase or rental by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service under the Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp Act, and to consider the establishment of new waterfowl refuges;

Whereas the Waterfowl Population Survey, operated by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, is celebrating its 50th anniversary in 2005 and is featured on the 2005-2006 Duck Stamp; and

Whereas since its inception in 1934, the Federal Duck Stamp Program has raised over \$700,000,000 through the sale of Duck Stamps to hunters, stamp collectors, and conservationists to help purchase 5,200,000 acres of wetlands habitat for the National Wildlife Refuge System: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate--

- (1) recognizes the achievements and contributions of the Migratory Bird Conservation Commission on the occasion of its 72nd anniversary and the first day of sale of the 2005-2006 Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp;
- (2) expresses strong support for the continued success of the Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp;
- (3) encourages the United States Fish and Wildlife Service in its efforts to broaden understanding of, and appreciation for, the Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp and the National Wildlife Refuge System by increasing partnerships on behalf of the National Wildlife Refuge System that will contribute to increased growth and development of the system; and
- (4) reaffirms its commitment to the National Wildlife Refuge System and the conservation of the rich natural heritage of the United States.

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