

The Duck Stamp Story

A Communication Tool for Conserving Ducks and Wetlands

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Individual Documentary

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I selected the Duck Stamp for my topic because I love to do everything outdoors. I also got my first duck this year, a blue-winged teal. The opportunity to waterfowl hunt exists today, largely, due to the Duck Stamp, which has existed ever since 1934. This topic connects to this year's theme because the Duck Stamp is a communication tool to the public, helping people understand and participate in protecting waterfowl and wetlands.

I found my information from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, books from the library and organizations like Ducks Unlimited (Ducks Unlimited is a national nonprofit conservation organization dedicated to waterfowl and wetlands including promotion of the Duck Stamp program). I searched through old newspapers in *Chronicling America* and in online archives locating primary sources from the 1930s when the Duck Stamp Act was passed. I found a documentary made by the Fish and Wildlife Service in 1984 during the 50th anniversary. Another primary source was an interview I had with artist Scot Storm, who painted the 2004 and 2019 Duck Stamps selected in the national contest. I conducted two interviews with Tom Landwehr, a former Minnesota natural resources commissioner and Ducks Unlimited coordinator. I twice interviewed acclaimed outdoors journalist Rob Drieslein who has written extensively about the Duck Stamp. Just recently, I interviewed Suzanne Fellows, the current leader of the Duck Stamp for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

I created my Documentary using We Video on a ChromeBook and worked hard to find high quality pictures and videos. Locating enough visuals was not easy but I made the most of what I researched. My documentary has undergone a lot of changes as I moved through the process including recording audio outdoors in a wetland, filming part of my conclusion near a National Wildlife Refuge the Duck Stamp funded, and conducting interviews and follow-up interviews.

The historical argument I am making is that without the Duck Stamp, many species of waterfowl would be extinct, and millions of acres of wetlands would be critically threatened. Since the 1930s, people have had to continuously educate the public about the value of the Duck Stamp program. That message has been so well understood, that the people who fund the program, and pay the annual fee, are its most ardent supporters. They keep the communication going into the next generation, like mine, which is the key to understanding.

As my thesis statement states, "In response to market hunting and mass destruction of habitat, waterfowl populations dwindled to an all-time low in the early 1930s. To generate funding to restore waterfowl populations and habitat, Congress passed the Duck Stamp Act in 1934 requiring all waterfowl hunters to purchase one annually. Over the past 88 years the Duck Stamp program has communicated to a diverse group of people and involved them in wildlife conservation that has helped restore duck populations and generated more than a billion dollars of revenue that's been used to acquire over six million acres of habitat."

Annotated Bibliography

Primary Sources

Interviews

Drieslein, Rob Personal Interview. GoogleMeet, 24 Feb. 2021 and April 12, 2021.

This interview with Rob Drieslein was very important because he is an outdoor journalist and the managing editor and president of the Midwest's largest outdoor newspaper. He has covered the duck stamp contest, waterfowl hunting, and wetlands management extensively throughout his three decades with the newspaper and also has a radio program and podcast. He is a strong supporter of protecting the outdoors and said the duck stamp is such a solid program with a great story behind it.

Fellows, Suzanne. Personal Interview. GoogleMeet. May 13, 2021.

Suzanne Fellows is the program coordinator for the actual duck stamp program for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). She and I chatted between the state and national contest because I'd been trying to get an interview with her predecessor. My information was shared and she actually got in touch with me through my teacher. She had heard about my documentary and seen it before I could send it to her. That was a great feeling and it was so helpful to speak with the person who is most responsible for the current duck stamp program. She knew the history of the program so well and overall importance. She also really appreciate the art and so I do too.

Landwehr, Tom. Personal Interview. GoogleMeet, 22 Feb. 2021 and Email Interview. April 4, 2021.

Tom Landwehr really helped my understanding of the Duck Stamp and he helped reinforce what I know about the Duck Stamp. During his four years as the commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, he oversaw the state duck stamp program and also worked with the Federal government on wetland conservation programs. Before that role, he was a regional manager with Ducks Unlimited, a conservation organization that raises millions to support wetlands and also does a lot to promote the duck stamp.

Storm, Scot. Personal Interview. FaceTime, 23 Feb. 2021.

This interview was very interesting and important because he won the national Duck Stamp painting contest out of many different artists in both 2004 and 2019. Speaking with him helped me understand how artists use the duck stamp to express their connections and feelings about their waterfowling experiences. It was interesting to me that these artists use the painting to communicate a message that it's important to enjoy the outdoors but also protect them and raise the money it takes to preserve them. He felt a strong connection to the history of the duck stamp and that helped me better understand my own feelings about the outdoors and conservation.

Newspaper Articles

Dr. Frank Thone, "Giving the country back to the ducks.," *The Sunday Star*, Washington, D.C. February 1935, Page 1.

This article was an amazing find through *Chronicling America* from Washington, D.C. newspaper written by renowned science reporter Dr. Frank Thone. The article provided an interesting perspective on the Duck Stamp only a year after it began.

The Sumter Daily Item, "Congress Passes Duck Stamp Bill To Aid Waterfowl ," Sumter, South Carolina, March 19 1934, Page 1.

This article from a South Carolina newspaper provided coverage and perspective on the passage of bill to create the Duck Stamp itself. The article provided an overview of the passage of the law and highlighted those who worked hard to pass the measure in the hope it would make a difference.

Robert Page Lincoln. "The Duck Stamp Story" October 20, 1934:1

This source was very helpful because it explained the Duck stamp tax during the first season of implementing the law after being passed by Congress.

The Humboldt. "Congress Passes Duck Stamp Act to Aid Wildfowl" March 23, 1934

This source also talks about the Duck Stamp tax when it was freshly passed by Congress. It helped to better my understanding of the Duck Stamp and how it was explained to those who live when the Duck Stamp act was passed by congress.

Saint Cloud Times, "Duck Stamp Tax What Becomes Of the Extra \$1 Duck Hunting Will Cost You Next Fall." February 13, 1934: Page 1.

This source was good at bettering my understanding on the Duck Stamp from the point of hunters in Minnesota. It was interesting to hear about the Duck Stamp in the time when it was current and really needed for conservation of waterfowl and habitat.

Nevada State Journal. "Uncle Sam Finally." July 10, 1934: Page 1

This newspaper article reported on the importance of the Duck Stamp and what it is and was. It helps to better my understanding.

Daily News NYC. "Tax On Hunters Paves Way For Conservation movement" March 18, 1934: Page 1

A good newspaper article that gave more perspective on the passing of the law and made for a good visual in the documentary.

Carbon County News, "Snyder Reviews Duck Situation." April 27, 1944, Page 4,

It was interesting to hear about the Montana duck hunts then and how they found winter killed ducks and waterfowl in the spring. It was talking about the Duck Stamp 10 years later.

The Minneapolis Tribune "Minnesota at top of list in Duck Stamp sales" November 24, 1934

This is a very good article. It was very interesting and helpful. Good to read the Minnesota perspective and why people in Minnesota thought it was a positive thing and that many people were buying.

Minneapolis star. "Duck hunters start trek to upstate lakes" October 2, 1934

This was a good source. It was very interesting to hear about the Duck Stamp when it was first introduced.

The Minneapolis Tribune, "Duck Stamp Tax voted By senate" February 7, 1934

This is a very good article. It was very interesting and helpful. Good to read the Minnesota perspective and why people in Minnesota thought it was a positive thing.

Secondary Sources

Books

Dolin, Eric Jay and Dumaine, Bob. The Duck Stamp. Canada: Krause Publications, 2000.

This book was found online and obtained from my local library. I later purchased a version of the book from eBay. It was a very thorough version of the story of my topic and was a big help. I exchanged messages with author Eric Jay Dolin who has written many other well known books.

Ruscoe, Michael.. American waterfowl. Italy: Gruppo Editoriale Fabbri, 1989.

This book had some great information on the history of waterfowling and contained some numerous historical drawings. In the end, I decided that none of them worked very well with the documentary but the information was helpful.

Articles

Bird Academy. How hunters and artists helped save North America's waterfowl, January 14, 2021.

<https://www.friendsofthestamp.org/learn/stamp-basics/>

It talks about how hunters were the ones who saved all of the ducks in North America. And how Duck Stamps help waterfowl.

"Ding" Darling Wildlife Society. Friends of the Refuge, JAY N. "DING" DARLING 1886-1962. Ding

Darling Wildlife Society Friends of the Refuge. December 22, 2020

<https://dingdarlingsociety.org/articles/our-namesake>.

It has information about darling's life. And legacy and who he was a person from the perspective of the foundation.

Friends of the migratory bird/Duck Stamp, 12/22/20. Friends of the migratory bird/duck stamp.

December 22, 2021 <https://www.friendsofthestamp.org/learn/stamp-basics/>.

It talks about the basics of the stamp and how the money is used. And where it goes to.

Smithsonian institution archives, "Ding" Darling's Ducks and What's Good for the Earth.

Smithsonian institution archives, December 12, 2020,

<https://siarchives.si.edu/blog/dingdarling>.

It talks about why the Duck Stamp was needed. And still is today. It also talks about Ding Darling and how crucial he was to the creation of the stamp program.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife, Digest of Federal Resources Laws of Interest to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, August 8, 2017. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, December 10, 2020
<https://fws.gov/laws/lawsdigest/migtrea.html>.

This listing of laws related to waterfowl legal history was about what happened before the migratory bird act. and who helped it become what it is today. This source helped me understand the laws that were passed to protect waterfowl before the duck stamp.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, History of the Duck Stamp. December 14, 2017. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, accessed November 29, 2020
www.fws.gov/birds/get-involved/duck-stamp/history-of-the-federal-duck-stamp.php.

This source talks about the history of the Duck Stamp. And how it progressed over the years. In short it is basically why it was needed.

Waterfowl Stamps and More 2020, John Olin, Ding Darling, Maynard Reece & King Buck: The Making of an Icon – Part Two. Couldn't find, Waterfowl stamps and more, January 4, 2021,
waterfowlstampsandmore.com/john-olin-ding-darling-maynard-reece-king-buck-making-i-con-part-two/

This article talked about Ding Darling and who he was and what he did with his life. It was about the Who What Where When about Ding Darling, the first head of the Duck Stamp program.

Videos

Buy a Duck Stamp, Save the Ducks, Animal Planet. Sept 15 2016. YouTube . 11/29/20
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kXe8DvloBtA>

This documentary was about asking the artist what they thought about the duck stamp program and how they thought it impacted wetlands. I also used footage for my documentary.

Ducks Unlimited, The Federal Duck Stamp turns 80, Ducks Unlimited. Oct,1,2012
www.ducks.org/conservation/public-policy/federal-duck-stamp/the-federal-duck-stamp-turns-80

It talks a lot about how the Duck Stamp has progressed throughout the years. And everything that happened before the 80th anniversary of the Duck Stamp.

Ducks Unlimited inc. The Beautiful Collectible Duck Stamp
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7aFY6uXEFKQ> July 10 2010. 11/29/20

This source was important because it had some good footage for my documentary. And is part of my introduction to the documentary.

The Art of the Duck Stamp. Animal Planet . Sept 13 2016. YouTube.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wOtdD3wRCLY> 11/29/20

This source was very good for the footage and the documentary helped to enforce my learning of the Duck stamp. It was from a television program about the history of the duck stamp and the annual contest.

The Duck Stamp Story, A/V Geeks, (1984), March 15, 2017, Youtube,

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pbwa-JeN> Original production for U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Produced by Stefan Dobert Productions, Inc.

This was a good source for visuals and sound. I learned alot from this source about the art side of the Duck Stamp contest. It's a documentary made for the 50th anniversary of the duck stamp act.

Visuals

<http://waterfowlstampsandmore.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/53d669ba68950.image.jpg>

<http://waterfowlstampsandmore.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/RW1-Jumbo-single.jpg>

http://waterfowlstampsandmore.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Darling_juniorinbeloit_college.jpg

http://waterfowlstampsandmore.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/DingCartoon_DarlingFoundation-1.png

http://waterfowlstampsandmore.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/fdr1934-signing-web_O_O.jpg

<http://waterfowlstampsandmore.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/National-Wildlife-Federation-stamps-2.jpg>