



**Service and Partners to Celebrate Federal Duck Stamp
First Dale of Sale
at Don Edwards San Francisco Bay
National Wildlife Refuge
*Sale of Stamps to be Linked to Conservation Efforts***

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Pacific Southwest Region will join conservation organizations and other supporters of wildlife to celebrate the first day of sale of the 2010 Federal Duck Stamp at 10 a.m. Friday, June 25 at Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge in Fremont, CA.

Officials from the Service, Ducks Unlimited, Audubon California, California Waterfowl Association and others will speak on the importance of conserving wetlands and upland habitat for waterfowl, migratory birds and other wildlife. Speakers will make the connection between conservation and the sale of Federal Duck Stamps, which fund the acquisition of National Wildlife Refuge lands. Philatelists, hunters, birders and any fans of wildlife conservation will be able to purchase stamps at the event, between 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. at the refuge Visitor Center, located at Thornton Ave. and Marshlands Rd. in Fremont. Directions are available at: <http://www.fws.gov/desfbay/directions.htm>

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service produces the Federal Duck Stamp, which sells for \$15 and raises about \$25 million annually to fund wetland habitat acquisition. The 2010-2011 Duck Stamp features a painting of an American wigeon by artist Robert Bealle of Waldorf, Maryland. Bealle's painting was selected from works by 224 artists from across the U.S. who competed in the 2009 Federal Duck Stamp Art Contest. The popular contest, held annually since 1949, is the only art competition of its kind sponsored by the federal government. This year's contest will be held October 15-16, 2010 at the David Brower Center in Berkeley, California. It is the first time the contest has been held in a State west of the Mississippi River. The winning entry from the 2010 contest will grace the 2011-2012 Federal Duck Stamp. More information about this year's contest is available at: <http://www.fws.gov/cno>

Purchasing a \$15 Federal Duck Stamp is one of the most effective contributions a person can make to conserve habitat for a wide variety of species. Ninety-eight percent of the proceeds from stamp sales go to the Migratory Bird Conservation Fund, which supports the purchase of wetlands for inclusion into the National Wildlife Refuge System. All waterfowl hunters age 16 and older are required to purchase and carry a current Federal Duck Stamp. However, the stamp is not only for hunters. Conservationists, recreational birders, stamp collectors and others also purchase the stamp to support habitat conservation for a wide diversity of species.



Since creation of the Duck Stamp program in 1934, sales of Federal Duck Stamps have raised more than \$750 million to purchase nearly 6 million acres of wildlife habitat for the National Wildlife Refuge System. Twenty refuges in the Pacific Southwest Region (California, Nevada, and Oregon's Klamath Basin) have directly benefitted from the sale of Federal Duck Stamps.

In partnership with the Service, outdoor retailer Bass Pro Shop will host First Day of Sale events at 18 stores nationwide, including its California stores in Manteca and Rancho Cucamonga. First Day cancellations of the stamp will be available at all stores hosting an event.