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Applications Open for Waterfowl Hunting Reservations

SEPTEMBER 03RD 2014 BY DEE LOFLIN

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Missouri - Hunters who want to pursue ducks or geese on wetland areas managed by the Missouri Department of Conservation can start applying for reservations Sept. 1.

Applications for hunting on the Conservation Department's managed wetland areas are handled exclusively online. Hunters have from Sept. 1 through 19 to apply for reservations at 12 Conservation Department managed wetland areas identified in the 2014-2015 Waterfowl Hunting Digest. The digest is available from permit vendors statewide, at Conservation Department offices and nature centers, or at mdc.mo.gov. To apply, visit mdc.mo.gov/node/3806. Drawing results for reservations during the entire season at these 12 areas will be available at the same website on Oct. 1.

Hunting opportunities at Otter Slough, Eagle Bluffs, and Grand Pass conservation areas will be handled through the Quick Draw system again this year, with one in four hunting spots allocated through daily "poor-line" drawings. Quick Draw applications are made available a few days before the hunting period. Quick Draw applications will open at midnight Oct. 17 for Grand Pass CA and midnight Oct. 24 for Eagle Bluffs and Otter Slough CAs.

Whether applying through the traditional reservation system or Quick Draw, hunters need their nine-digit identification number, found at the top of hunting permits, or next to the bar code on Conservation Heritage Cards. To apply for reservations under Quick Draw,

hunters over age 15 and under age 65 need a small-game hunting and a migratory bird permit. Hunters under age 16 only need a Conservation Identification Number.

Disabled hunters may apply for disabled-accessible blinds through Quick Draw. For non-Quick Draw areas, hunters may apply by calling the area office on or after Oct. 1. To qualify for a disabled-accessible blind, you must submit a hunting-method exemption form. These forms and area phone numbers are available at mdc.mo.gov/node/9631 or by calling any MDC Regional Office.

Neither Quick Draw nor the traditional system allows nonresidents to apply for reservations. However, resident hunters who draw reservations can include nonresidents in their hunting parties. Nonresidents also can take part in the daily, on-site “poor-line” drawings under both systems.

Unclaimed reservations under both the Quick Draw and traditional reservation system are added to those available in the “poor line,” where hunters without reservations can draw for a chance to hunt.

Duck stamps are required for waterfowl hunters. Many wildlife enthusiasts and stamp collectors also buy the stamps, which sell for \$15. Proceeds from the sale of duck stamps support waterfowl research and conservation programs.

Missouri is one of five states chosen by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for a test run of selling federal duck stamps online. Eight states already participate in the E-Stamp program. In the past, the stamps have been available at U.S. Post Offices, Conservation Department offices, and some retail permit vendors, but not online. This year, paper stamps will still be offered at some post offices and Conservation Department regional offices, nature centers, and visitor’s centers, but not at retail permit vendors or waterfowl hunting conservation areas. Instead, hunters and retail vendors will have the option of selling waterfowl E-Stamps through **www.mo.wildlifelicense.com**.

E-Stamps also may be purchased from your home computer for \$17.50, which includes a \$2.50 handling fee. A \$1 Internet convenience fee will be added to your total online order. E-Stamps also may be purchased from some retail permit vendors, where the \$1 Internet convenience fee will not apply.

Hunters will receive an E-Stamp at the time of purchase, and a paper duck stamp will be sent to them through the mail. Hunters can use their E-Stamps immediately and for 45 days following purchase. After 45 days, hunters must carry the paper duck stamp.

The decision not to sell paper duck stamps through retail vendors came from federal officials after printing of the 2014 Early Migratory Bird Hunting Digest was complete. As a result, the digest says hunters can buy duck stamps from some retail vendors - without mentioning details of purchasing E-Stamps.

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