

2025/2026 MINNESOTA HABITAT STAMP CONTEST

RULES

*****NOTE:** THE DUE DATES AND JUDGING FOR THE FIVE (5) CONTESTS
HAVE BEEN MERGED INTO THREE (3) CONTESTS FOR EFFICIENCY***

Dear Artist,

Thank you for your interest in this year's Minnesota's Stamp Contest. Please review the criteria and application materials you will need to enter this year's contest and submit your artwork along with the signed forms.

1. APPLICATION

Each stamp contest is open only to Minnesota residents who have maintained a legal residence in the state for a minimum of 60 days immediately preceding the entry deadline date for the contest. A person may submit only one (1) entry per year for each type of stamp contest. If two or more designs are submitted for a stamp contest in one year, each of the person's entries for that contest will be declared ineligible.

Entries for each stamp contest will be accepted only during the contest entry period. Entries must be received by the department by 12:00 p.m. on the last day of the contest entry period. Late or early entries will be disqualified. **ENTRIES MUST BE RECEIVED VIA USPS OR VIA COURIER. NO DROP OFF OF ARTWORK WILL BE ACCEPTED.**

Please ensure your entry is dry prior to wrapping for submission to prevent damaging your artwork. A contest entry should be securely wrapped and enclosed in a container or envelope with the name of the stamp contest clearly marked on the outside. All completed and signed contest entry forms must accompany the contest entry. These contest entry forms shall include:

- A. **Entry form**, affixed to the back of your design.
- B. **Reproduction Rights Agreement**, the enclosed *Reproduction Rights Agreement*, granting the Department of Natural Resources the right to use the design for **stamp image and other purposes must be signed** and submitted with the design to be considered for the contest.
- C. Any other forms specified in the contest application package.

Submission of all the contest entry forms is required for eligibility. Failure to include all completed contest entry forms will render the contest entry ineligible and will be returned to the artist.

All artwork must be addressed to: Cathy Rajtar, Department of Natural Resources, c/o Stamp Contest, DNR Building – 500 Lafayette Road, Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155-4012.

The Department will handle all entries with utmost care; however, contestants are advised that it is their responsibility to obtain adequate property insurance for their entry. **The Department of Natural Resources assumes no liability for damage, loss, or theft of a contest entry.**

A person who wins a contest is ineligible to enter a contest for the same type of stamp for the year of competition following the contestant's first win. A person who wins a contest for one type of stamp is eligible for the other fish and wildlife stamp contests. If the artist should win the same stamp contest two or more times, ineligibility is extended to two years following each win. For example, if an artist wins the Pheasant Stamp Contest for the first time in 2016, they may not enter the Pheasant Stamp Contest until 2018. If that same artist wins the Pheasant Stamp Contest in 2018, they may not enter again until 2021.

The winning artist will receive no financial remuneration from the state. The winning design will be returned to the artist shortly after the contest ends.

2. DESIGN STANDARDS

A contest entry may be created in one or a combination of media. Entry shall be an original work of art created by the person submitting the contest entry and shall be a one-of-a kind design. Printing processes, screen printing, intaglio, lithography, and relief are acceptable. A contest entry is allowed to be created using non-photographic digital media. A person submitting a contest entry is required to list all media used in the creation of the entry.

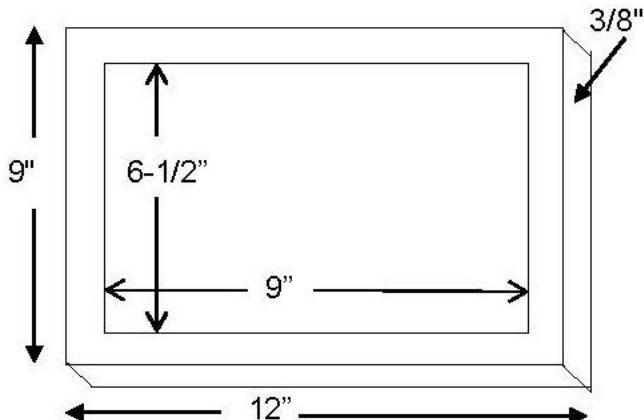
The background or setting of a contest entry shall only represent environments found in Minnesota. Design elements in a contest entry should be accurately portrayed as to ecology and anatomy, although they need not be literal renditions.

The design must be of the artist's own creation, neither copied nor duplicated from another person's art, including paintings or drawings in any medium or published photographs.

Any **winning** design from another stamp contest (federal, state, or private) is ineligible.

The design must not be framed or under glass. An acetate or similar clear plastic covering is acceptable. However, it does make judging the design more difficult.

The design size of a contest entry shall be two-dimensional on a horizontal format: 9 inches wide and 6-1/2 inches in height. A contest entry shall be firmly attached to solid white matting with dimensions of 12 inches wide and 9 inches in height. A contest entry shall not exceed 3/8 inch in thickness, including matting. No other color shall be used for matting. Winning contest entries must produce a quality stamp image.



Any entry signed, lettered, or otherwise identified by the artist on the face of the design will be disqualified.

The entry form, which affirms originality, must be signed and attached to the back of the design.

3. JUDGING

The contest will be held **on the dates as listed for each contest**. The judging will occur virtually; **there will be no in person judging or viewing**.

The judging panel will consist of members chosen from areas of expertise, such as: art, ichthyology, Fish and Wildlife background, conservation, and printing. The names of the artists will remain unknown to the judging panel until the winners are selected.

Each entry is given an identifying number prior to judging to keep the artist's identity unknown. Two rounds of virtual judging are used to select the winner.

During the first round of virtual judging, the panel views all entries, and privately emails their top 3 choices to Cathy Rajtar who tallies the totals. The top 3 choices advance to the final round.

During the final round, judges view the top 3 choices selected, and privately email their first, second and third place choices to Cathy Rajtar, who tallies the final votes. The winner, and runners up, are announced to the judges, and the winning artists are notified.

4. RETURN OF ARTWORK

Entries will be returned to the address furnished by the artist.

6. QUESTIONS?

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Cathy Rajtar at the Division of Fish and Wildlife at 651-259-5221.

Wishing you the best of luck with your design!



2025/2026 MINNESOTA HABITAT STAMP CONTEST ENTRY FORM

By signing below, I represent and certify that the information I have provided below is true, and that I have abided by the criteria set forth in this application, and that my entry is an original of my own creation, neither copied nor duplicated from another person's artwork.

2025/2026

Circle
Contest
Entered

1. **Trout/Salmon** 2. **Walleye** 3. **Waterfowl** 4. **Pheasant** 5. **Turkey**

PRINTED NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____

STATE: _____

ZIP: _____

COUNTY: _____

DAY-TIME PHONE: _____

OTHER PHONE: _____

SPECIES SUBMITTED: _____

EMAIL: _____

SIGNATURE and DATE: _____

**MUST LIST ALL MEDIA
USED:** _____

Registration Number: _____
Assigned by the DNR _____

**Date received at the
DNR** _____

NOTE: Firmly affix this application to the back of your entry, package carefully, and submit with the Reproduction Rights Agreement.

All entries will be returned to the artist. Please obtain adequate supplemental insurance, if desired.



2025/2026 MINNESOTA HABITAT STAMP CONTEST REPRODUCTION RIGHTS AGREEMENT

WHEREAS, the state of Minnesota, by and through the Department of Natural Resources, hereinafter referred to as the 'DEPARTMENT', conducts an annual contest to select the design for the MINNESOTA STAMP, hereinafter referred to as the 'STAMP'; and

WHEREAS, the undersigned artist, hereinafter referred to as the 'ARTIST', created and submitted an original work of art as an entry for consideration in the 2025 annual contest for the 2026 STAMP, and for the 2027 TURKEY STAMP, hereinafter referred to as the 'DESIGN'; and

WHEREAS, if the ARTIST'S DESIGN is the winning entry for use on the 2026 STAMP, and for the 2027 TURKEY STAMP, the ARTIST agrees to the conditions concerning reproduction rights contained in this Agreement.

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of the mutual benefits to be derived from use of the DESIGN for the 2026 STAMP, and for the 2027 TURKEY STAMP, the parities here to understand and agree that:

1. The ARTIST represents and certifies that the DESIGN is the ARTIST's own creation, is neither copied nor duplicated from previously published or unpublished art (including paintings, drawings, or images in any medium) or published photographs, and has not been a winning entry in any other stamp contest of any previous Minnesota contests; and

2. Completion of printing the STAMP shall mean that time, as determined by the DEPARTMENT, when all STAMPS have been printed and delivered to the DEPARTMENT and found acceptable. The DEPARTMENT may copy and reproduce the DESIGN and may publish or otherwise distribute such copies or reproductions for educational, promotional, or informational purposes at any time.

3. The DEPARTMENT agrees to take all reasonable precautions to protect the DESIGN from damage or loss while in its possession. However, the ARTIST expressly waives any claim for damages to the DESIGN, however caused, against the state of Minnesota, its employees or agents, or parties authorized to handle the DESIGN.

4. Ownership of the original work of art incorporating the DESIGN may be retained by the ARTIST and it shall be copyrighted with the copyright registered, and it may also be copied, reproduced, published, or otherwise distributed by the ARTIST, but any copyright of the DESIGN or any agreement made by the ARTIST with any other person or company covering the use of the DESIGN shall be expressly made subject to the rights of the DEPARTMENT under this agreement.

5. Any and all reproductions of the STAMP image made or authorized by the DEPARTMENT under the terms of this Agreement, except the engraving and printing of the MINNESOTA STAMP, and reproductions thereof authorized pursuant to the provisions of this Agreement, shall whenever practical, indicate that the original has been designed by the ARTIST.

6. The ARTIST understands and agrees that the DEPARTMENT, in its sole discretion, reserves the right to make minor changes in the DESIGN for preparation of the STAMP image and its derivative works without obtaining approval from the ARTIST. Upon the ARTIST's written request, the DEPARTMENT shall provide the ARTIST with a written list of all changes made.

7. All rights granted in this agreement to the DEPARTMENT or its licensees of the DESIGN, STAMP image, and derivative works shall be without compensation to the ARTIST.

8. The DEPARTMENT reserves the right not to hold or complete a contest or to publish the winning DESIGN in any manner.

9. The ARTIST and the DEPARTMENT are bound by the application of Minnesota Rules 6290.0100 through 6290.0800.

*** DO NOT CUT THE BOTTOM OF THIS PAGE OFF ***

I HAVE READ AND AGREE TO THE ABOVE CONDITIONS:

PRINTED NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____

STATE: _____

ZIP: _____

COUNTY: _____

DAY-TIME PHONE: _____

OTHER PHONE: _____

SPECIFY CONTEST: _____ : _____

EMAIL: _____

MUST LIST ALL _____

MEDIA USED _____

SIGNATURE and DATE: _____

Registration Number: _____

Assigned by the DNR _____

Date Received by the _____

DNR



2026 MINNESOTA HABITAT STAMP CONTEST DATES AND GUIDELINES

All contest judging will be taking place via a virtual/remote platform.

2026 Trout and Salmon Habitat Stamp AND 2026 Walleye Habitat Stamp

Entries Accepted for BOTH: Monday, July 14, 2025, and continuing until 12:00 noon Friday, July 25, 2025

Entries Judged: Thursday, July 31, 2025. Judging will take place virtually.

Trout/Salmon Eligible Species: Trout: Brook, Brown, Lake, Splake, Tiger;
Salmon: Atlantic, Chinook, Cisco, Coho, Kokanee and Pink.

Trout/Salmon NOT Eligible: Rainbow Trout design is not eligible this year.

Walleye Eligible Species: The walleye (*Sander vitreus vitreus*), must be the primary focus of the design; however, other species may be included in the design if they are used to depict a common interaction between species or are common inhabitants of Minnesota's lakes.

2026 Migratory Waterfowl Habitat Stamp

Entries Accepted: Monday, August 11, 2025, and continuing until 12:00 noon, Friday, August 22, 2025

Entries Judged: Thursday, August 28, 2025. Judging will take place virtually.

Eligible Species: • Wood Duck • Gadwall • Cinnamon Teal • Bufflehead • Ruddy Duck

Not Eligible Species: Cackling Goose

2026 Pheasant Habitat Stamp AND 2027 Wild Turkey Habitat Stamp

Entries Accepted for BOTH: Monday, September 15, 2025, and continuing until 12:00 noon, Friday, September 26, 2025

Entries Judged: Thursday, October 2, 2025. Judging will take place virtually.

Pheasant Eligible Species: The ring-necked pheasant (*Phasianus colchicus*), must be the primary focus of the design; however, other species may be included in the design if they are used to depict a common interaction between species or are common inhabitants of Minnesota's pheasant range.

Wild Turkey Eligible Species: The eastern wild turkey (*Meleagris gallopavo silvestris*), must be the primary focus of the wild turkey habitat stamp design; however other wildlife species may be included in the design if they are used to depict a common interaction between species or are common inhabitants of Minnesota's wild turkey range.

IMPORTANT: All artwork must be mailed or sent via courier to: Cathy Rajtar, Department of Natural Resources, c/o Stamp Contest, DNR Building – 500 Lafayette Road, Saint Paul, Minnesota, 55155-4012.