



**For Immediate Release**  
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## **2005 State-Fish Art Contest Lands New Sponsor**

# **Rapala®**

**Brooklyn Center, MN** - Rapala, the world's largest producer of fishing tackle and lures, is partnering with Wildlife Forever to promote the positive message of fishing and aquatic conservation to the youth of America. Wildlife Forever is proud to announce that Rapala is the newest sponsor of the 2005 *Wildlife Forever State-Fish Art Contest*.

"We're thrilled to call Rapala a partner in the Wildlife Forever State-Fish Art Contest. Rapala is at the center of the angling universe, and their support of the youth of America is tremendous," said Douglas H. Grann, President & CEO of Wildlife Forever. "With Rapala's help, the State-Fish Art Contest will continue to introduce young people across the country to the joys of fishing and the stewardship of aquatic habitats."

"Rapala is thrilled to come on board with the State-Fish Art Program. It makes all the sense in the world to partner with our broader outdoor enthusiast comrades to expose youth to fishing and the great outdoors. The future of angling is dependent upon attracting fresh young faces," said Lori Peterson, Director of Marketing for Rapala.

The *Wildlife Forever State-Fish Art Contest* utilizes art to introduce students to angling and aquatic conservation. To enter the contest, young artists and angling enthusiasts create an illustration of their respective state-fish and a written composition on its behavior, habitat, and efforts to conserve it. Entries are categorized, judged, and awarded in three grade levels: 4-6, 7-9, and 10-12. Educators nationwide have employed the full-color *Fish On!* lesson Plan, an interdisciplinary educational text specific to aquatic natural resources. The conservation education materials includes extensive background information, a species identification section profiling each state fish, a glossary, and student worksheets, and can be downloaded at no cost from the Wildlife Forever website, [www.statefishart.com](http://www.statefishart.com).

State winners of the 2005 contest will be recognized at the 7<sup>th</sup> Annual State-Fish Art Expo at Mall of America on July 2, 2005. A massive art display will feature all the outstanding artwork from across the country and an Awards Ceremony will recognize the talented young artists before the large mall crowd. The event at Mall of America is free and open to the public.

In addition, artists and their families attending the Expo will receive free entry to the Metrodome to watch the Minnesota Twins face the Tampa Bay Devil Rays on July 3<sup>rd</sup>. The artists and their artwork will be recognized in a special pre-game ceremony on the playing field.

According to Grann, “The *Wildlife Forever State-Fish Art Contest* is a program that emphasizes the wonder and enjoyment to be found in the natural world. The State-Fish Art Contest imparts important lessons through a fun medium, art, that touches the creative spirit of youth.”

### **About Rapala**

Dedicated to delivering memorable fishing experiences every time, the Rapala Group, headquartered in Vääksy, Finland (Helsinki Stock Exchange: RAP1V), manufactures and markets fishing lures, fishing line, fishing rods, fishing reels, hooks, terminal tackle, knives and accessories under the Rapala, VMC, Blue Fox, Storm, and Williamson Lures brand names. The company was unofficially founded in 1936 when Lauri Rapala invented the Rapala fishing lure. Rapala maintains its strict standards of quality and craftsmanship while delivering its fishing products to anglers in more than 130 countries. For more information, visit [www.rapala.com](http://www.rapala.com).

### **About Wildlife Forever**

Located in Brooklyn Center, MN, Wildlife Forever is a non-profit multi-species conservation organization dedicated to preserving America’s wildlife heritage. Working at the grassroots level, Wildlife Forever has funded conservation projects in all 50 states, committing millions of dollars to “on the ground” efforts. Wildlife Forever values conservation education, habitat restoration and enhancement, land acquisition, research, and management of fish and wildlife populations. To learn more, go to [www.wildlifeever.org](http://www.wildlifeever.org).

Sponsors for the *Wildlife Forever State-Fish Art Contest* include Rapala, Mall of America, Minnesota Twins, North American Fishing Club, and Cheap Joe’s Art Stuff.

For information on the *Wildlife Forever State-Fish Art Contest*, visit [www.statefishart.com](http://www.statefishart.com).  
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Digital copies of artwork are available upon request.

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