

DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

news release

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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NEWS BRIEFS FROM THE FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Small Businesses Excepted from Wildlife Import/Export License Requirement.

Small businesses and individuals who occasionally import or export wildlife with a value of less than \$25,000 a year will not have to be licensed, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has decided. The exception will be effective upon publication in the December 31, 1980, Federal Register.

With this and certain other exceptions, it will be unlawful after December 31 for any person to engage in business as a wildlife importer or exporter unless he or she has applied for the \$50 license. The licensing requirement was part of a final rulemaking adopted on August 25, 1980, to implement several wildlife laws administered by the Service on the importation, exportation, and transportation of wildlife. The rulemaking was proposed in March 1978 and was the subject of two comment periods and two public hearings. The Service also announced it would provide the public with an opportunity early in 1981 to comment on all aspects of the import/export regulations, including the license requirement.

Those who must apply for the license include retailers, wholesalers, and manufacturers of furs, leather products, jewelry, rugs, and curios; pet dealers, taxidermists, laboratory and research suppliers, distributors, freight forwarders, and other suppliers. The licensing requirement is expected to aid law enforcement efforts to curb illegal trade in wildlife and to provide an early warning signal that a species is being threatened by commercial trade.

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Revised Rules for Implementing Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act Proposed.

The Departments of the Interior and Commerce have proposed revised regulations for implementing the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (FWCA), a 1934 law whose purpose is to avoid or offset losses of wildlife resources caused by water development projects. A draft environmental impact statement on the proposal has also been issued and is available for public review and comment.

The proposed rules, which were published in the December 18, 1980, Federal Register, are a revision of rules proposed in May 1979. They would affect Federal agencies that are involved in planning or issuing permits for impoundments, channel deepening, or other projects that would modify streams, wetlands, or other water bodies for any purpose. The rules would also affect individuals or companies who must obtain Federal permits or licenses for such projects.

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The FWCA directs Federal agencies that are planning or making decisions about water projects to give wildlife conservation "equal consideration" with other features of such projects, such as economic benefits or hydroelectric power generation. The act requires these agencies to consult with the Interior Department's U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Commerce Department's National Marine Fisheries Service, and appropriate State wildlife agencies. The wildlife agencies are to evaluate the possible effects of the project on fish, wildlife, and their habitats and to make recommendations for conserving wildlife resources.

The proposed rules are designed to provide for uniform implementation of the FWCA by all Federal agencies, to guide Federal agencies and applicants for Federal permits on how to consult with wildlife agencies, and to minimize confrontations and costly delays by assuring that wildlife values are considered early in planning stages.

Copies of the proposal and the draft environmental impact statement are available from Dick Robinson (ES), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240, and from James R. Chambers, National Marine Fisheries Service, 3300 Whitehaven Street, N.W., Page Building II, Washington, D.C. 20235. Public comments are invited and may be sent to the addresses listed above. The deadline for receipt of public comments is February 17, 1981.

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Regulations Provide for Public Voice in International Protection of Endangered Species. New Federal regulations formally provide for citizen participation in the development of United States negotiating positions for meetings of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora.

The Convention, commonly referred to as CITES, is an organization of 62 nations dedicated through mutual cooperation to preventing trade from contributing to the extinction of wild animals and plants. Delegates from participating nations meet every 2 years to act on procedures for implementing and enforcing the treaty's provisions on such matters as African elephant ivory trade, endangered reptile hides, spotted cat furs, and similar issues concerning international trade in endangered animals or their products.

The new regulations issued by the Fish and Wildlife Service provide at least two opportunities for public participation in advance of each biennial meeting. The first comes with a notice in the Federal Register announcing the proposed agenda, time, and place of the next meeting of the Parties and requesting suggestions on the positions the U.S. should take. The second opportunity comes with a notice summarizing proposed negotiating positions and asking for public comment.

Although new regulations became final only when published in the December 18, 1980, Federal Register, the procedures they contain have been in effect during the preparations for the 1981 CITES meeting at New Delhi. Comments or requests for additional information should be directed to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (WPO), Washington, D.C. 20240, telephone (703) 235-2418.

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New Appointment. Edward L. Davis, a career Fish and Wildlife Service employee, has been appointed the Interior Department agency's new assistant director--administration. In his new position, Davis will be responsible for the administrative management of the 6,000-employee agency, directing its personnel, finance and accounting, and contracting and procurement operations.

Davis, 47, joined the Service in 1961 as a biological technician at the Fish Pesticide Laboratory in Denver, Colorado. His later assignments included those of fishery technician at the Patuxent Wildlife Research Center and museum specialist at the Service's Bird and Mammal Laboratory at the Smithsonian Institution.

After serving as a program analyst in the Office of the Secretary of the Interior, Davis joined the Service's division of ecological services, becoming its branch chief for budget and administration and later branch chief of program support. He participated in the Interior Department's Manager Development Program in 1970-71.

From Hannibal, Missouri, Davis earned a B.S. in biology with a minor in chemistry and physics in 1955 Central State College in Wilberforce, Ohio.

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