



# DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

## news release

U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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### GOING, GOING, GONE: WILDLIFE PRODUCT SALE GENERATES A QUARTER-MILLION DOLLARS

The sale of a 10-year backlog of confiscated wildlife products has generated an estimated \$250,000 in bids from people across the country, according to Clark R. Bavin, chief of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's law enforcement division. Proceeds from the sale, less administrative costs, will be deposited in the U.S. Treasury.

Bavin said he was pleased to clear out the storage facilities and to be rid of the "paperwork nightmare" of caring for the products. They have been stored at Government expense since their involvement in violations of various Federal and State wildlife conservation laws.

"It's unfortunate that so many people had to learn about these laws the hard way," Bavin said. "Many of the laws have been on the books for years. We hope that everyone, especially those in the travel and fashion industries, will make a special effort to learn about them so that they can be spared the expense and embarrassment of having their shipments confiscated when they arrive illegally in this country."

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Bavin said 574 people placed about 28,000 bids in the largest sale of its kind of 380 lots of ivory, reptile leather products, fur coats, and assorted curios made from wildlife. Several people bid on the entire collection, while as many as 150 bid on many of the individual lots. James Pollard, chief of the sales section for the General Services Administration's National Capital Region, said the number of bids was unusually high for a sealed bid sale. "But," he added, "it was not unexpected, given the wide publicity and general interest in wildlife-related matters."

The highest bid, and also a tie bid broken by the flip of a coin, was \$14,753.30 for 94 fur coats sold as one lot. The second high bid of \$14,144 was for 640 pieces of black coral jewelry. Other winning bids were \$357.99 for an armadillo guitar with broken strings; \$909 for nine armadillo handbags; \$552.60 for 36 elephant hide beer mugs; \$1,928.88 for a 53.8 pound elephant tusk; \$180 for four stuffed caimans; \$200 for a stuffed coatimundi; \$500 for a large elephant foot stand; \$688 for four elephant foot ice buckets; \$220 for 44 hollow ostrich eggs; \$1,257 for a lion skin; \$1,678 for a mink coat; and \$310 for 72 pairs of ladies python shoes.

The Fish and Wildlife Service has a much greater volume of more restricted products that cannot be sold, such as endangered species, marine mammal, and migratory bird specimens and products. They are being made available as loans or donations to zoos, museums, universities, research institutions, or government agencies for public display or educational purposes.

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