



DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

news release

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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HUMANE TRANSPORT RULES FOR WILD MAMMALS, BIRDS ANNOUNCED BY THE FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

When Noah organized the world's first shipment of wildlife, he got his instructions on animal care and pen construction from Higher Authority.

While transportation technology has improved since the days of wooden arks, how best to ensure the humane and healthful transport of animals in the legal wildlife trade has remained a concern ever since the flood waters receded and Noah's charges descended two-by-two from Mount Ararat.

While transport of some types of wildlife within the United States is subject to provisions of the Animal Welfare Act, administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the humane shipment of wild mammals and birds into the country has never been regulated comprehensively. Transport guidelines have been developed by the airline industry, but those rules are advisory only and do not carry the force of law.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has now established regulations under the Federal Lacey Act Amendments of 1981 that set standards for the shipment of mammals and birds into this country. These new requirements for shippers of such wildlife include standards for the consignment, feeding and care, confinement, and handling of these species.

Among the requirements, these rules now prohibit carriers from accepting wild mammals or birds for shipment that have not been examined by a veterinarian from the country of export. They also require periodic visual observation, by the carrier, of animals while in transit to ensure that certain ventilation, pressure, and temperature standards are maintained.

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For certain species, the regulations also specify the number of animals that may be transported in the same enclosure. Care requirements are also specified for various wildlife species, including primates, marine mammals, elephants and hoofed mammals, perching birds, and birds-of-prey.

The Fish and Wildlife Service will establish rules covering the humane and healthful transport of fish, reptiles, amphibians, mollusks, crustaceans, arthropods, coelenterates, and other invertebrates at a later date.

A complete listing of the Service's humane transport regulations for the importation of wild mammals and birds appears in the November 10, 1987, Federal Register. The regulations become effective February 8, 1988.