

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to End Reminders for Import/Export Licenses and Designated Port Exception Permits

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If you import or export commercial products that comprise or contain wildlife in whole or in part, you are required to obtain a license from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) to bring these products into or out of the United States. FWS deems wildlife as any living or dead wild animal, its parts, and products made from it. Wildlife not only includes mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, and fish, but also invertebrates such as insects, crustaceans, coral, arthropods, mollusks and coelenterates. Additionally you must import or export your shipment through one of FWS's designated ports, declare your shipment on a special form, and receive clearance for your shipment.

FWS recently announced that as of August 1, 2014 it will no longer send written courtesy reminders to import and export license holders regarding the expiration of their annual license and designated port exceptions. For many years, FWS sent notices in advance of the pending expiration, which encouraged importers and exporters to renew on a timely basis. FWS reports that the change in policy is due to staff constraints. The notice issued by FWS can be read [here](#) and an informational fact sheet about importing/exporting wildlife can be found [here](#).

This change will affect importers and exporters of live animals (including those bred in captivity) as well as importers/exporters of animal products including sport hunted trophies, apparel, footwear, handbags and other accessories and jewelry and carvings.

Remember, as an importer or exporter, you are required to comply with all relevant Federal, state, and foreign laws that require the issuance of specific documentation and permits prior to the import or export activity. For more information, please contact [Laurence Lasoff](#).