

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Director Dan Ashe
Statement on Antiques Roadshow's Decision to Stop Appraising Ivory Tusks

June 9, 2014

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Director Dan Ashe issued the following statement today:

Antiques Roadshow's decision to stop featuring carved ivory tusks on air – and to remove existing appraisals of such items from the show's archives – represents a significant step forward in ensuring that U.S. consumers don't contribute to the current global crisis in African elephant poaching and illegal trade of elephant ivory.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is in the process of implementing a near total ban on commercial elephant ivory trade in the United States. With a weekly audience of approximately 10 million viewers, Antiques Roadshow can play a key role in educating viewers about new and existing restrictions on the sale of ivory. The show also provides an excellent platform to help reduce consumer demand for ivory and other wildlife products that is contributing to a global epidemic of poaching threatening the survival of wild populations of elephants, rhinos, tigers and other iconic species.

Over the last several years, Antiques Roadshow, produced by WGBH Boston, has embraced the opportunity to inform its viewers about wildlife conservation issues. The show's producers have worked with the Service to understand the various wildlife laws and regulations that impact antiques trade and then educate their staff, appraisers and the series audience. Service law enforcement officers have provided training to Antiques Roadshow appraisers to ensure that they are aware of how those laws affect the sale and distribution of antiques and collectibles that are comprised of animal parts such as elephant ivory, rhino horn and sea turtle shell. In 2013, Antiques Roadshow aired a special segment on the rhino poaching crisis and how it relates to the antiques trade.

Putting an end to the poaching crisis and illegal wildlife trade will take partners from across a wide range of industries and interests. We all have a stake in ensuring the survival of wild animal and plant species at risk. We truly appreciate the efforts of Antiques Roadshow and look forward to continuing our partnership.