



## NOTICE TO THE WILDLIFE IMPORT/EXPORT COMMUNITY



September 12, 2008

### **Subject: Personal Effects Exemption for Caviar**

**Background:** At the 14<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Conference of the Parties (Cop14) to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), which was held in June 2007 in The Netherlands, the Parties agreed to lower the personal effects exemption for sturgeon and paddlefish caviar from 250 to 125 grams. This change was reflected in amendments to resolutions dealing with personal effects (Res. Conf. 13.7) and sturgeon (Res. Conf. 12.7) that are available on the CITES website.

The CITES personal effects exemption allows individuals to import, export, or re-export personally owned items made from CITES species that they wear or carry with them in their accompanying baggage without CITES permits. Since 1998, when all previously unlisted sturgeon and paddlefish species were added to CITES Appendix II, individuals have been able to import, export, or re-export up to 250 grams of sturgeon and paddlefish caviar without obtaining a CITES permit. The lower limit adopted at CoP14 reflects continuing global concern about the sustainability of trade in sturgeon and paddlefish species.

The United States has adopted this change by revising its regulations that implement CITES in this country (50 CFR Part 23).

**Action:** Effective September 15, 2008, any person entering or leaving the United States may import or export no more than 125 grams of sturgeon or paddlefish caviar as part of their personal effects. Permits will be needed if the quantity exceeds 125 grams; permits must cover the entire amount, not just the amount in excess of the new limit.

Travelers should also remember that the United States does not allow the import of any beluga caviar since the beluga sturgeon is listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act.

Contact:  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Office of Law Enforcement  
703-358-1949; 703-358-2271 (fax)  
[lawenforcement@fws.gov](mailto:lawenforcement@fws.gov) (e-mail)