



United States Department of the Interior

U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE



IN REPLY REFER TO:

AUG 13 2019

Dear Tribal Leader:

In 2017, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service hosted in-person and telephone consultations with federally recognized Tribes in the United States on a variety of topics involving eagles. During these consultations, Tribal leaders requested the ability to retain deceased eagles found in Indian Country, as defined under 18 U.S.C. 1151. The Service has revised its policy to accommodate this request, and has developed a process to authorize this activity.

The revised policy has three goals: to authorize the retention of a deceased eagle or eagle remains found by a Tribe's member on that Tribe's land (i.e., Indian Country); to enhance eagle conservation in Indian Country; and to avoid unnecessary human health or safety challenges that some deceased eagles pose.

A permit from the Service is required to possess (retain) an eagle found on Tribal land in Indian Country and permit conditions must be followed for that activity to be lawful. The Service will not charge an application fee for this permit, and information on how to obtain a permit is attached to this letter. Please note that bald and golden eagles are protected by federal law and certain activities like killing or selling an eagle are strictly prohibited. Collection of an eagle is also prohibited, and the permit referenced in this letter will clearly describe the process to report a deceased eagle to law enforcement officials, and for your Tribe to receive that eagle after investigative and other requirements are met.

In closing, the Service is honored to facilitate your Tribe's spiritual, religious, and cultural pursuits through continued access to deceased eagles and eagle feathers at the National Eagle Repository. We are also pleased to report that we have the ability to authorize your Tribe's retention of eagle remains found in Indian Country, and look forward to working with your Tribe to obtain the proper permit to participate in that program.

If you have any questions, please contact your respective Service Tribal liaison. Their contact information can be found at <https://www.fws.gov/nativeamerican/contact.html>.

Sincerely,

Margaret E. Everson
Principal Deputy Director