

DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

news release

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WILDLIFE WRAP-UP: RECENT PROPOSALS OF INTEREST BY THE FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

The Interior Department's U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has recently announced the following proposals in the Federal Register concerning endangered species and other wildlife:

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Alligator trade. Manufacturers who fashion products from American alligator leather would no longer need Federal permits under a proposal published in the August 8, 1980, Federal Register. This change would allow the Interior Department agency to concentrate its law enforcement efforts at the earlier point in trade where hides are tanned by the limited number of processors of crocodilian hides.

At the request of the State of Louisiana, this proposal would also allow the nationwide sale of alligator meat and parts, except hides, from lawfully harvested alligators, if that sale meets the laws and regulations of certain States. At present, this sale is restricted to the State in which an alligator is harvested.

Once endangered throughout its range in the southeastern United States, the alligator has rebounded in recent years under strict protective laws. Alligators in 12 Louisiana parishes have been reclassified to a special category under the Endangered Species Act that allows closely regulated commercial trade in the hides. Public comment on the proposal will be accepted through September 8, 1980.

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Leopard comments. Due to the large volume of public comments on the Fish and Wildlife Service's proposal to reclassify the leopard from "endangered" to "threatened" status in Sub-Saharan Africa, and to permit the importation of sport hunted leopard trophies, the comment period is being extended until November 24, 1980 (August 14, 1980, Federal Register).

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Scientific Authority responsibilities, export of seven species. In the July 10, 1980, Federal Register, the Fish and Wildlife Service has requested comment on regulations it will propose to carry out responsibilities of the Scientific Authority under the terms of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

The 1979 amendments to the Endangered Species Act of 1973 reassigned Scientific Authority responsibilities to the Secretary of the Interior and they are now carried out through the Fish and Wildlife Service.

The proposal also states the types of information required by the Service to allow export of legally obtained specimens of the following seven species: American alligator, bobcat, lynx, river otter, Alaskan wolf, Alaskan brown bear, and American ginseng. Each of these species is listed on Appendix II of the Convention.

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New wildlife port. Dallas-Ft. Worth would become the ninth Federally designated port-of-entry for wildlife and wildlife products if a proposal by the Fish and Wildlife Service in the July 14, 1980, Federal Register is approved.

Conferring port status on Dallas-Ft. Worth would allow the importation and exportation of fish and wildlife and related products through the world's seventh largest airport, serving both the metropolitan area and the south-central and southwestern United States.

Under Federal law, most wildlife and wildlife products must be routed for inspection by the Fish and Wildlife Service through designated ports-of-entry; at present, these ports are New York City, Los Angeles, Chicago, Miami, San Francisco, New Orleans, Seattle, and Honolulu.

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