



NOTICE TO THE WILDLIFE IMPORT/EXPORT COMMUNITY



Date 05/02/2024

Subject: American Eel Elvers Canada Fishery Closed for 2024

Background: American eel (*Anguilla rostrata*) elvers (juvenile eels) are an important, valuable, and high demand fishery in international trade. In Canada, elvers (sometimes referred to as glass eels) range only in the Maritimes Region. In March 2024, Fisheries and Oceans Canada released a [statement](#) announcing they will not issue elver fishing licenses and will not open the Maritimes Region elver fishery to any fishers whatsoever in 2024 due to high levels of unauthorized harvest and trade, threats to fisheries management, and public safety concerns. Therefore, any elvers harvested in Canada in 2024 will have been taken in violation of foreign law.

Elvers are regulated by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service). Imports, exports, and transport of elvers must comply with all requirements specified in U.S. laws and regulations, including the Lacey Act, the Endangered Species Act (ESA), and 50 CFR Part 14. According to the ESA and the regulations in [50 CFR 14.4](#):

Import means “to land on, bring into, or introduce into, or attempt to land on, bring into, or introduce into any place subject to the jurisdiction of the United States, whether or not such landing, bringing, or introduction constitutes an importation within the meaning of the tariff laws of the United States.”

Export means “to depart from, to send from, to ship from, or to carry out of, or attempt to depart from, to send from, to ship from, or to carry out of, or to consign to a carrier in any place subject to the jurisdiction of the United States with an intended destination of any place not subject to the jurisdiction of the United States, whether or not such departure, sending, or carrying, or shipping constitutes an exportation within the meaning of the Custom laws of the United States.”

Similarly, the Lacey Act defines transport as “to move, convey, carry, or ship by any means, or to deliver or receive for the purpose of movement, conveyance, carriage, or shipment.”

Action:

All fish or wildlife must be declared to the Service upon import into the United States, or prior to export from the United States. All fish or wildlife imported into the United States, exported from the United States, or transported through the United States must be marked in accordance with [50 CFR 14.81](#) and [50 CFR 14.82](#).

Any elvers imported into, exported from, or transported through the United States are subject to inspection under the ESA and the Lacey Act. The import into, export out of, or transport through the United States of wildlife in violation of foreign law is a violation of the Lacey Act, 16 U.S.C. §3372(a)(2)(A). Any shipment found to be in violation of this statute, or any other provision of ESA or the Lacey Act, is subject to enforcement action.

Contact:

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