

# Transporting Wildlife & Wildlife Products Between Alaska & the "Lower 48"

If you take wildlife or wildlife products (products, parts, and derivatives) with you when you travel by land between Alaska and the "lower 48" contiguous States, you need to be aware of U.S. and Canadian laws and regulations that govern the import and export of wildlife.

These laws and regulations apply to you if you travel by car or bus and cross into and out of Canada on your trip. They may affect your ability to take certain belongings with you (for example, a pet bird) or to bring home wildlife products (such as hunting trophies or tourist souvenirs) that you acquire while traveling.

The guidelines below can help you enjoy your trip and comply with U.S. and Canadian wildlife protection laws that govern the import and export of live wildlife and wildlife parts and products.

## General Guidance

### Why do wildlife import/export laws apply to a person traveling between Alaska and another State with wildlife or wildlife products?

Such transactions are imports and exports if you travel by land through Canada – a separate country – even if your destination is either Alaska or one of the lower 48 States.

If you have wildlife or wildlife products with you, you are exporting them from the United States to Canada when you cross the border and enter that country. You are importing wildlife into the United States when you leave Canada and re-enter this country.

### How do I import/export wildlife when I travel by land between Alaska and the lower 48?

In all cases, you must declare any wildlife products to U.S. or Canadian Customs when you enter or leave each country.

Additional requirements apply if your wildlife or wildlife products involve species protected under U.S. or Canadian law or you are traveling with live wildlife.

### Who regulates the import and export of wildlife between the United States and Canada?

On the U.S. side of the border, the [U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service](#), [U.S. Customs and Border Protection](#), and other Federal agencies regulate wildlife imports and exports. Canadian Customs and [Environment Canada](#) deal with wildlife imports and exports in Canada.

## Protected Species

### What additional requirements apply if I am importing/exporting protected species?

If your wildlife or wildlife products involve species protected under U.S. or Canadian law, you will need to obtain permits and other authorizations in advance before you can transport them through Canada. You will also need to file a [U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Form 3-177](#) to declare your wildlife when you enter and leave the United States.

## What types of wildlife require permits?

[Permits](#) may be required under U.S. or Canadian law to import or export the following types of wildlife:

- Species listed as endangered or threatened under the U.S. Endangered Species Act (50 CFR 17)
- Animals and plants regulated under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES). Examples include parrots, macaws, pythons, tortoises, and some sport-hunted species.
- Live birds protected under the Wild Bird Conservation Act (e.g., parrots and macaws)
- Marine mammals species listed under the Marine Mammal Protection Act (50 CFR 18)
- Migratory birds (50 CFR 21)
- Injurious species (such as live snakehead fish and mitten crabs) (50 CFR 16)

## Are there any other requirements for importing or exporting protected species?

Yes. U.S. regulations require individuals importing or exporting protected species to declare and present their wildlife to the Fish and Wildlife Service for inspection at specific locations called designated ports. Since none of these ports are located on the U.S./Canadian border, you must apply for a [designated port exception permit](#) from the Service before you can travel by land through Canada with protected wildlife.

## Hunting Trophies

### How do I transport my sport-hunted wildlife between Alaska and the lower 48?

As with other wildlife, you must declare your trophy to Canadian and U.S. Customs and Border Protection when you enter or leave each country. If your trophy requires a permit under 50 CFR 16, 17, 18, or 21, you must obtain a designated port exception permit from the Service as described above.

A number of commonly sport-hunted species are protected under the CITES treaty and require permits. As explained below, U.S. and Canadian rules implementing the treaty waive permits for some species under certain circumstances.

### What are some examples of common sport-hunted species that require CITES permits for transport through Canada?

The following trophies need a CITES export permit issued by the United States to enter Canada from Alaska. You must also obtain a CITES re-export permit from Canada to bring these products back into the United States.

- Fully processed/taxidermied black bear (*Ursus americanus*) products
- Fresh or mounted grey wolf (*Canis lupus*) sport-hunted trophies
- Fresh or mounted brown bear (*Ursus arctos*) sport-hunted trophies

Either you (the hunter) or another person may transport these trophies provided they are properly declared and have the required permits.

### What are some common trophy products for which permits are not required?

As a hunter, you may bring the following products into Canada from Alaska and from Canada to the lower 48 without a CITES permit even though the species involved is protected under the CITES treaty. Only the person who took the animal is eligible for these permit waivers. (If someone else transports these products for you, CITES permits will be needed from both the United States and Canada.)

- The hide, hide with claws attached, skull and meat of legally hunted black bear (*Ursus americanus*). These products must be in a fresh, frozen, or salted state. No internal organs of any kind may be imported or exported.
- The carcass or meat of legally hunted sandhill crane (*Grus canadensis*). These products must be in a fresh, frozen, or salted state.

## Souvenirs

### What do I need to know before I transport wildlife souvenirs I purchased in Alaska through Canada to the lower 48?

Before you travel through Canada by car or bus with tourist souvenirs made from wildlife, you should check [Canadian law](#) to make sure that you can legally import and export your products. Be sure to declare your products to U.S. and Canadian Customs when you enter or leave each country.

### Are there some common souvenirs made from protected species and sold in Alaska that cannot be transported through Canada?

Yes. Popular tourist souvenirs sold in Alaska include Native Alaskan handcrafts made from wildlife parts. Although it is legal to buy authentic Native Alaskan handcrafts made from certain protected species, the following products are either not considered an Alaskan native handcraft or cannot be transported through Canada:

- Polar bear rugs
- Raw skins and skin pieces of polar bear
- Uncarved or unaltered walrus ivory
- Whale baleen
- Products made from sea otter

## Live Wildlife

### What requirements apply if I am traveling with live wildlife?

If you travel with live wildlife, you must file a special declaration form ([Fish & Wildlife Service Form 3-177](#)) when you leave or return to the United States.

To facilitate your transport of live wildlife, the Service requires notification before your arrival at any U.S. port. Please contact the appropriate [port of entry](#) for more information.

Most of the live wildlife we regulate may require permits and veterinary certificates for valid transport. Please contact the [U.S. Department of Agriculture](#) for more information on veterinary certificate requirements.

## Other Modes of Transport

**Do wildlife import/export rules affect me if I fly between Alaska and one of the lower 48 States with wildlife or wildlife products?**

No. Direct flights between Alaska and any other State are domestic flights. Taking wildlife or wildlife products with you on such a flight does not constitute an import or export.

**Do wildlife import/export rules affect me if I mail my wildlife or wildlife products between Alaska and the lower 48?**

No. You can send wildlife products by mail between Alaska and another State using either the U.S. Postal Service or an overnight package delivery company. If you are driving through Canada on your way from or to Alaska, you may want to consider mailing or shipping wildlife products instead of carrying them with you

For additional information contact:

**For import/export issues**

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Office of Law Enforcement  
703-358-1949 703-358-2271 fax

**For further questions concerning CITES**

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service  
[Division of Management Authority](#)  
(703)-358-2104 (703)-358-2298 fax