

Permitting statement

The Endangered Species Act (ESA) explicitly provides that permits may be issued to conduct otherwise prohibited activities for the purpose of enhancing the propagation or survival of the affected species. Under the ESA, otherwise prohibited activities, including import, export, take and interstate or foreign commerce, may be permitted if the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service finds that the activity will be for scientific purposes or to enhance the propagation or survival of the affected species.

To determine whether to allow such activities to proceed, the Service considers factors such as the biological needs of the species; possible threats to the populations; current population estimates; management programs; legal protection, local community involvement; and, if any funds are generated by the otherwise prohibited activity, how those funds are used for conservation.

In the case of the import or export of live captive-bred animals, enhancement is usually provided through the generation of revenue in support of established conservation programs that contribute to improving the status of the species in the wild. The Service typically monitors this activity through the applicant's submission of annual reports, information provided through our grants programs, and other sources.

In the case of the import of sport-hunted trophies, the Service looks at the overall management program for a species in each country. Factors considered include: the biological needs of the species; possible threats to the populations; and current population estimates, quotas, management plans, legal protection, local community involvement, and use of hunting fees for conservation. The Service examines the country's management program to ensure that it addresses the threats to the species and contributes to the overall conservation of the species. The Service considers the biological, social and economic aspects of the program and other relevant information to ensure that we authorize import only in those cases where the overall program enhances the survival of the species.

Many of the organizations to which charitable donations are being proposed are familiar to us. If the organization is not familiar to us, the Service may go back to the applicant for additional information about the organization or the proposed project, and/or we may go to outside contacts for additional information. If the Service has questions about the organization or the project, we will ask more questions.