



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Washington, D.C. 20240



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Walter S. Jones, M.C.
District Office

The Honorable Walter Jones
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Jones:

Thank you for your letter of January 29, 2007, regarding Mr. John Mark Ansley's request to possess a bald eagle. We appreciate Mr. Ansley's work providing rehabilitative care to injured, orphaned and sick migratory birds and his efforts to preserve our Nation's natural resources.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) has the authority under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act to issue permits to exhibit bald and golden eagles at public museums, public zoological parks, and public scientific societies. We recognize this limits the types of facilities, such as Eastern Wildlife Center, that qualify for an Eagle Exhibition permit. However, until the Service codifies new definitions for museums, zoological parks, and scientific societies, we are unable to grant exemptions under the regulations to allow other types of facilities to possess eagles for exhibition purposes.

The Service published a scoping notice in the *Federal Register* on October 13, 2005, seeking public review to help develop permit regulations governing possession of live migratory birds and eagles for educational use. The scoping notice was intended to help the Service gather information and suggestions about current practices and public views regarding educational use of live migratory birds and eagles, in anticipation of drafting new permit regulations. Feedback from this notice will enable us to propose regulations that will already have benefited from input from the regulated community.

The Service has not established regulatory definitions of public museums, public zoological parks or public scientific societies. Through the information received from the scoping notice we intend to establish definitions for these terms in the future. The definition of 'public' is found at 50 CFR 10 and is used by all Service programs to which part 10 applies. The definition of public is: