



## NOTICE TO THE WILDLIFE IMPORT/EXPORT COMMUNITY



October 22, 2004

**Subject: Service Issues Interim Rule to Address Trade of Beluga Sturgeon Products**

**Background:** On June 29, 2004, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service published a proposed special rule under the Endangered Species Act to describe specific conditions under which U.S. trade in beluga sturgeon products would be allowed. All populations of beluga sturgeon (*Huso huso*) were listed as threatened under the Act on April 24, 2004.

Implementation of the threatened listing was delayed until October 21, 2004, to allow the Service time to propose this special rule, gather public comments, and issue a final rule. Additional time is needed to evaluate and consider all of the comments received in response to the proposed special rule.

**Action:** The Service has approved an interim special rule that will allow legal trade in products derived from threatened beluga sturgeon during the interval between the effective date of the threatened species listing and the publication of a final special rule, which is expected by the end of January 2005. Such trade must be consistent with regulatory requirements already in force under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES). This interim rule is effective immediately.

**Contact:** For more information on the proposed special rule and this interim rule, please check <http://international.fws.gov/>. A news bulletin announcing this rulemaking action can be found on the Service website under "Current News Releases" ( <http://news.fws.gov/NewsReleases> ).

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