



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

# Importing Your Bontebok Sport-hunted Trophy

The bontebok (*Damaliscus pygargus dorcas*) is an antelope that historically ranged throughout the Republic of South Africa. It nearly became extinct by over-hunting and loss of habitat due to expanding agricultural demands. The bontebok population went from a low of 20 specimens in 1930 to more than 2,500 today. That government's Department of Nature and Environmental Conservation established a management program in the early 1980's which encourages game ranchers to maintain bontebok. The management plan allows controlled culling of excess males from registered captive herds to provide an economic incentive to ranchers to maintain bontebok and its habitat.

## Do I need a permit?

Yes. The bontebok is protected in Appendix II under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) and listed as endangered under the U.S. Endangered Species Act (ESA). You need a CITES export permit from the South African Management Authority and an endangered species import permit from the Division of Management Authority prior to bringing a personal sport-hunted bontebok trophy into the United States.

## Why are permits necessary?

Permits ensure that the legal and conservation requirements of CITES



and the ESA are met before the export and import occur. The main purpose of CITES and the ESA is to conserve protected wildlife for future generations. A CITES export permit can be issued if the export is not detrimental to the survival of the species and the specimen was legally acquired. An endangered species import permit can be issued if the import will enhance the propagation or survival of the species. The Service has determined that the culling of male bontebok through sport hunting on ranches that participate in South Africa's management program will enhance the survival of the bontebok, provided they are imported by the person who hunted them for personal use. South Africa registers game ranches to ensure they maintain pure-bred bontebok herds. Since the establishment of this program, registered, pure-bred bontebok herds on South African ranches have increased steadily.

#### **How does the Service know which game ranches are registered?**

South Africa periodically sends the Service a list of game ranches that are part of their bontebok management program. If you apply for an import permit for an animal taken from a ranch that does not appear on the list, and South Africa can not confirm the ranch is registered, your permit request will be denied.

#### **How long will it take to get an import permit?**

Apply for a permit at least 90 days before your departure. Under the ESA, applications must be published in the **Federal Register** to allow the public 30 days to comment on the proposed import.

#### **What should I know before I go hunting?**

- Confirm that the game ranch on which you propose to hunt is registered with South Africa's bontebok management program.
- Obtain a letter from the landowner giving you permission to cull a male bontebok on his/her property. Send a copy with your import permit application.
- Be aware that you may only obtain an import permit for a bontebok trophy taken by you for personal use.
- If you are considering buying wildlife souvenirs, check with the Division of

Management Authority to determine if you will be allowed to import them.

#### **What steps should I take?**

1. Obtain an import permit from this office. You may want to take a copy of the import permit with you, but leave the original permit at home as you will need to present it at the time the trophy is imported into the United States.
2. Comply with South Africa's laws during your hunt.
3. Obtain a CITES export permit from the South African CITES Management Authority prior to importing the trophy.
4. Check the expiration dates on your import and export permits before having the trophy shipped. You could lose your trophy if it enters the United States after your permits have expired. Import permits are valid for one year. Export permits are valid for 6 months as required by CITES. If the import permit expires before the trophy is imported, you need to apply for a new permit. Return the original unused permit, a newly completed renewal application form, and the processing fee. Allow at least 30 days for processing.
5. Import through a U.S. port designated for wildlife. If you plan to use a non-designated port, request that exception at the time you apply for the import permit. You may be charged additional fees at the time of import to cover the costs incurred by the Service for using a non-designated port.
6. Speak with the Service wildlife inspector at the port of entry to arrange for inspection 72 hours prior to the arrival of your trophy. At the time of import, you will need to present the original import and export permits, as well as a completed Declaration for Importation or Exportation of Fish or Wildlife (Form 3-177, obtained at the port).

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**U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service  
International Affairs  
Division of Management Authority  
4401 N. Fairfax Drive, Room 700  
Arlington, VA 22203  
703/358-2104 or 800/358-2104  
Fax 703/358-2281  
e-mail: [managementauthority@fws.gov](mailto:managementauthority@fws.gov)  
<http://international.fws.gov>  
<http://permits.fws.gov>  
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