



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
P.O. Box 1306
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87103

In Reply Refer To:
FWS/R2/MBO/046513

NOV 02 2010

Dear Federal Migratory Bird Permittees:

Thank you for your inquiry regarding the donation of feathers and parts of migratory birds to the Liberty Non-Eagle Feather Repository. Donations from permitted sources greatly assist in conservation efforts and provide Native American tribal members with migratory bird feathers and/or parts for traditional religious and cultural use.

In the spirit of maintaining and improving upon trust relations with the Native American community, Liberty Wildlife Rehabilitation Foundation (Liberty) and the Southwest Region of the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) established a two-year, non-eagle feather repository pilot program. The Service and Liberty signed a Memorandum of Agreement, permitting this facility to acquire and distribute feathers and parts of federally protected birds to Bureau of Indian Affairs recognized tribal members across the country.

The program started October 2010, and will be implemented for two years. After this time, tribal members that have participated will be encouraged to assess the program to determine how well the program worked, to provide suggestions they may have, and to indicate what aspects they would change. These evaluations will assist the Service and Liberty in shaping the direction of the program for the future according to members' needs.

Please contact the Liberty Repository, at 480-998-5550 if you have questions that are not addressed above, or visit their website at <http://www.non-eaglefeathers.net>. Instructions for donating to the Repository are enclosed. Please read your permit conditions carefully to ensure that donations are authorized. You may also contact the Migratory Bird Permit Office of the Service's Southwest Region, at 505-248-7882 to confirm that this disposition method is permitted. Your efforts are much appreciated and we look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,



Ben M. Juggle

Regional Director

Enclosure

DONATING ITEMS TO THE NON-EAGLE FEATHER REPOSITORY

- ***How should the items be packed for shipment?***

Separate containers should be used for loose feathers, birds parts (such as talons), and from whole bird carcasses. Clearly mark the bags/containers as to their contents.

- ***How should the bags/containers be marked?***

Write the permit number and species of bird on each separate container. If you are not sure of the species, do not guess—indicate that it is “species unknown”. IF you know the location where the item was found (city-county-state), please include that information as well.

- ***What information is needed for each shipment?***

The Repository will need the name of the business or institution, principal officer’s name, address, telephone number, and fax/email if applicable. Provide your permit number authorizing the disposition of feathers and/or parts of migratory birds. Include the type of permit, and the expiration date of the permit.

- ***What if my business or institution is permit-exempt?*** If you are an entity that has been determined to be exempt from the permit requirement, per 50 CFR 21.12(b), please request a copy of a Letter of Authorization (LOA) from your Regional Migratory Bird Permits Office. Include this with the shipment and the

other required information. Repositories cannot accept shipments without a FWS permit number or copy of the LOA as proof that items are legal to accept for distribution.

- ***What does “permit-exempt” mean?***

Veterinarians and certain institutions are not required to have a FWS permit to possess migratory birds. The Code of Federal Regulations allows accredited institutional members of the American Association of Zoological Parks and Aquariums (AAZPA) and some public scientific or educational institutions exemption from the permit requirement, provided that state regulations are met. Contact your Regional Migratory Bird Permits Office for further information.

- ***Does the Fish and Wildlife Service provide mailing boxes or postage?***

No. The Repositories are not receiving federal funding and donations are strictly voluntary. You may contact either Repository to get information on any suggestions they may have for combining shipments or other methods to minimize costs.

Please contact any of the following with additional questions:

Megan Mosby, Executive Director
Liberty Repository
<http://www.non-eaglefeathers.net>
480-998-5550

Michele Gallagher, FWS
Migratory Bird Permits Office
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505-248-7882

Joseph Early,
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505-248-6602