

Compliance and Oversight for Wildlife Activities: A Unique Tack

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Guidance

- Animal Welfare Act & Regulations § 1.1 Definitions:
- **Wild animal** means any animal which is now or historically has been found in the wild, or in the wild state, within the boundaries of the United States, its territories, or possessions.....including, but is not limited to: deer, skunk, opossum, raccoon, mink, armadillo, coyote, squirrel, fox, wolf, etc.
- **Wild state** means living in its original, natural condition; not domesticated.





Photo Credit: The Denver Post

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Guidance


- Animal Welfare Act & Regulations § 1.1 Definitions:
- **Field study** means a study conducted on **free-living wild animals** in their **natural habitat**. However, this term **EXCLUDES** any study that involves an **INVASIVE PROCEDURE, HARMS, or MATERIALLY ALTERS THE BEHAVIOR** of an animal under study.



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Guidance

- AWAR § 2.31 (d) 1 IACUC Review of Animal Activities:
- In order to approve propose activities or proposed significant changes in ongoing activities, the IACUC shall conduct a review of those components of the activities related to the care and use of animals and determine that the proposed activities are in accordance with this subchapter unless acceptable justification for a departure is presented in writing. **Provided; however, THAT FIELD STUDIES AS DEFINED IN PART ONE OF THIS SUBCHAPTER ARE EXEMPT FROM THIS REQUIREMENT.**



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Guidance

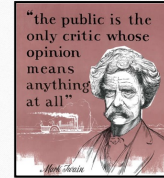
- **Guide to the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals**, eighth edition, page 32.
- In preparing the design of a **FIELD STUDY**, investigators are encouraged to **consult** with relevant professional societies and available guidelines (see Appendix A). Veterinary input may be needed for projects involving capture, individual identification, sedation, anesthesia, surgery, recovery, housing, transportation, release, or euthanasia. Issues associated with these activities are similar if not identical to those for species maintained and used in the laboratory. When species are removed from the wild, the protocol should include plans for either a return to their habitat or their final disposition, as appropriate.
- The Guide does not purport to be a compendium of all information regarding field biology and methods of use in wildlife investigations, but the basic principles of human care and use apply to animals living under natural conditions. IACUCs engaged in the review of **FIELD STUDIES** are encouraged to **consult** with a qualified wildlife biologist.



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Why?

- **Federal Law:** The Animal Welfare Act & Regulations set the minimum legal standards for the care and use of certain animals used for research, teaching, and exhibition.
- **Public Opinion:**
 - The AWA&R exist as a direct result of public opinion (outrage) and response to a lack of clear standards prior to 1966.
 - Public interest remains high, increasing, and is a bipartisan issue.
 - Favorable public opinion = A sense of public ownership (by us, trust, and ultimately... Funding for wildlife activities; e.g., management and research



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Status

- **IACUCs** (welfare compliance) remain s.o.p. for academia and private industry
 - However: mostly biomedical research/laboratory focused; e.g. lab animals in controlled environments
 - **Not a lot of experience out there in the review of wildlife activities.**
- **Wildlife animal welfare:** An increasing public profile
 - Activities no longer viewed as benign, remote, and entertaining (National Geographic, etc.)
 - Federal and state agencies getting ahead of the trend.



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Wildlife

- **FEDERAL AGENCY IACUCS**
 - Department of Interior: NPS, USGS, and USFWS
 - Department of Agriculture: US Forest Service
- **STATE WILDLIFE AGENCY IACUCS**
 - Alaska Dept. of Fish & Game (Div. of Wildlife Conservation)
 - California Dept. Fish & Game
 - Colorado Division of Parks & Wildlife
 - Montana Dept. of Fish, Wildlife & Parks
 - Texas Parks & Wildlife Dept.
 - Wyoming Game and Fish Dept.



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IACUC Review Standards

- You're an ICAUC with a wildlife activity on your docket....What do you do?
 - **Determine** whether a given activity **qualifies for the AWR Field Study Exemptions**.
 - Tricky: Undefined & Institutional Standards are IN PLAY.
 - **Examine** the project:
 - **Biology:** Species; Reproduction; Seasonality; Non-Targets
 - **Pharmacology:** Drugs (Immobilization vs. Handling vs. Sampling vs. Recovery)
 - **Ecology:** Landscape & Season
 - **Personnel:** Experience; Mortality Record (<2% Overall)
 - **Consultation:** Invite consultation, and pursue this liberally.

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PI AUP Standards

- You're a PI submitting a wildlife AUP for Review...On what should you focus?
 - Detail-oriented, but the **RIGHT** details:
 - Team experience and defined roles
 - Built-In **Flexibility**; e.g., multiple capture methods, drug protocols, etc.
 - High degree of detail re Capture, Handling, Sampling, and Recovery (as needed)
 - Occupational Health & Safety (Risk Assessments): know your surroundings!
 - Include a plan for dealing with **injured animals (Target AND Non-Target)**. This **WILL** happen...
 - Always include a EUTHANASIA/HUMANE KILLING PLAN with final disposition:
 - Na Pentobarbital, Pb rounds, etc.

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IACUCs and PIs

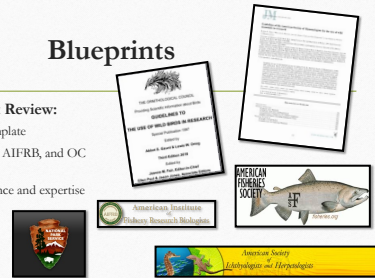
- Review and Approval is a **TEAM EFFORT**:
 - PI can offer a lot of helpful insight.
 - Recommend (if feasible) real-time dialogue/conversation
 - Establish strong, ongoing lines of communication for projects as needed



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Blueprints

- **AUPs and Project Review:**
 - ASM protocol template
 - ASM, ASIH, AFS, AIFRB, and OC Guidelines
 - Your own experience and expertise
- **SOP:**
 - NPS IACUC SOP
 - Agency policies



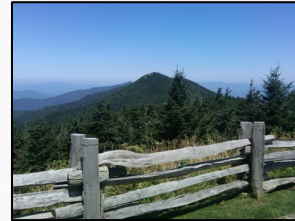
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Thank You & Resources

[American Society of Transplantation Infection Care of the Child \(ASTIC\)](#)
[Pediatric Infectious Diseases Society \(PIDS\)](#)
[American Society of Transplantation Infection Care of the Adult \(ASTICA\)](#)
[American Society of Transplantation Infection Care of the Adolescent \(ASTIA\)](#)
[ASTIC, PIDS, and ASTICA](#)
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Questions?



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