

*Wildlife and Hunting Heritage
Conservation Council*

July 23, 2014

The Honorable Sally Jewell
Secretary of the Interior
1849 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20240

Mr. Daniel Ashe
Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20240

RE: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Suspension of Importation of Elephant Trophies
from Zimbabwe and Tanzania

Dear Secretary Jewell and Director Ashe:

Based on the information received during the June 2014 meeting in Cody, Wyoming and the discussion that followed, the Wildlife and Hunting Heritage Conservation Council recommends that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service immediately end the 2014 suspension of the importation of elephant trophies from Zimbabwe and Tanzania because:

- The decision to suspend importation was made without prior notification to or consultation with the two affected countries or with the hunters that actively participate in the conservation of the elephants in Zimbabwe and Tanzania.
- The suspension of importation is undermining existing anti-poaching strategies implemented by regulated professional hunting businesses, as well as community-based programs like CAMPFIRE that provide incentives to local communities to conserve elephants rather than remove them.
- The reliance on ‘anecdotal data’ rather than sound science to motivate a decision of this magnitude flies against the principles of American wildlife management. The USFWS press release from April 4, 2014 stated, “...In Zimbabwe, available data, though limited, indicate a significant decline in the elephant population...” Testifying before Congress later this spring, Zimbabwe’s wildlife authorities stated that their science indicates exactly the opposite – Zimbabwe’s elephant population is actually increasing.

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DESIGNATED FEDERAL OFFICER &
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Rather than penalizing American sportsmen and women while the USFWS collects and reviews data on elephants in Zimbabwe and Tanzania, the Wildlife and Hunting Heritage Conservation Council requests that the FWS immediately reverse its ban on the importation of sport hunted elephants from Zimbabwe and Tanzania at the earliest possible time. We appreciate your consideration of this recommendation and your support of the Council's efforts on behalf of the hunting community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Tomke". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

John Tomke, Chair
Wildlife and Hunting Heritage Conservation Council