



AGENCIES & GUIDELINES

There are multiple layers in place to ensure the welfare of an endangered species. Below is a brief outline of relevant animal welfare and conservation acts and designated agencies that enforce these acts.

- **The Endangered Species Act (ESA)** -- The Endangered Species Act was passed by Congress on December 23, 1973. The primary purpose is to conserve indigenous species listed by the Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) as “threatened” or “endangered” and to protect their ecosystems in the United States. A species is considered endangered if it is in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range. “Exotic species,” i.e., animals not found in the wild in the United States, are relevant under the ESA primarily with respect to the anti-trafficking provisions of the statute that implement the United States’ agreement to CITES. (See below). For additional information: <http://www.fws.gov/laws>
- **The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES)** -- CITES is an international treaty between governments to ensure that international trade in specimens of listed animals and plants does not threaten their survival. CITES allows the exhibition of animals in a circus, which has been the case in the United States since 1975 under FWS regulations. Additionally, *Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey*[®] has not imported an Asian elephant from Southeast Asia since 1980. That specific import involved elephants born in captivity and was specifically authorized by FWS pursuant to a permit issued after a notice and comment procedure in which interested parties, including animal groups, participated. For additional information: <http://www.cites.org>
- **The Animal Welfare Act (AWA)** -- The Animal Welfare Act, signed in 1966, regulates the treatment of animals in research, exhibition, transport, commerce, and by dealers. *Ringling Bros.*[®] has never been found in violation of the AWA. For additional information: <http://awic.nal.usda.gov>
- **The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)** -- The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) is a United States Federal Executive Department. Its purpose is to create and implement regulations and policy on farming, agriculture, and food and enforce the Animal Welfare Act. For additional information: <http://www.usda.gov>

- **The Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service** -- The Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) is a multi-faceted Agency within the USDA with a broad mission area that includes **administering the Animal Welfare Act**, protecting and promoting U.S. agricultural health, and carrying out wildlife damage management activities. APHIS is responsible for conducting unannounced inspections throughout the United States of licensed facilities, such as *Ringling Bros.*, to ensure compliance with the Animal Welfare Act. For additional information: <http://www.aphis.usda.gov>

These entities work together to enforce animal welfare regulations and ensure proper animal husbandry and care by:

- Requiring that *Ringling Bros.* and other traveling exhibitions are annually licensed by the USDA.
- Requiring that the applicant be in compliance with all federal standards and regulations under the AWA, before APHIS will issue a license, registration or renewal.
- Under the federal AWA, USDA representatives (within APHIS) who are veterinarians or animal health technicians conduct regular and unannounced inspections of animals, animal enclosures and their traveling facilities.
- Ensuring that all registered facilities continue to comply with the AWA, by APHIS inspectors making unannounced inspections.
- Working with USDA inspectors to correct any non-compliance issues and being subjected to legal action if requested changes are not met within a given timeframe. *Ringling Bros.* has never been found in violation of the AWA.
- APHIS requires licensed facilities to comply with standards for the following: housing, ventilation, ambient temperature, lighting, interior surfaces, primary enclosures, sanitation, pest control, feeding and watering, outdoor shelter, compatibility, record-keeping, adequate veterinary care, handling and transportation.
- *Ringling Bros.* meets and often exceeds federal regulations USDA standards and regulations and its animal care practices are commonly accepted in the animal care industry and USDA.
- The guide and tethers are time-tested, appropriate and commonly accepted tools that are accepted by the USDA.