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NABR recognizes US Fish and Wildlife Service's efforts to streamline permitting

WASHINGTON – National Association for Biomedical Research President Matthew R. Bailey issued the following statement commending the efforts of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service director to streamline permitting actions for wildlife under CITES and other laws.

In 2017, then Deputy Assistant Secretary Aurelia Skipwith came up with the effort to have the FWS move to an electronic permitting system, and her vision came true on Oct. 21, 2020. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (“Service”) launched its “ePermits” system. This electronic system issues permits under the Endangered Species Act, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, the Marine Mammal Protection Act, the Wild Bird Conservation Act, the Lacey Act and other treaties.

Under the leadership of Director Skipwith, the Service worked with the medical research community to solicit its input on the development of the new electronic permitting system. The new permitting system will improve the efficiency and reliability of the United States in its administration of these laws, making U.S. permitting more consistent with other countries that administer these laws.

“NABR applauds the Fish and Wildlife Service for streamlining the permitting systems used by the medical research community. Access to laboratory animals is necessary to develop and ensure the safety of drugs and medical devices,” stated Bailey.

“NABR and its members particularly appreciate the leadership of Director Skipwith to engage with the medical research community and to take steps that improve the efficiency of permitting in the United States. The proclamation of a national emergency regarding the coronavirus pandemic underscores the importance of streamlining animal research to develop vaccines and cures for the novel coronavirus and other dangerous diseases,” he continued.

Presently, medical researchers in the United States must rely on foreign supplies of many animals used in medical research. Such animals are purpose-bred for use in many studies to develop vaccines and cures. Research animals are vital to understanding the genetic and molecular pathways that lead to disease, promising areas for research leading to new treatments for devastating diseases.

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About NABR: *Founded in 1979, the National Association for Biomedical Research (NABR) is the only national nonprofit organization dedicated solely to advocating for sound public policy that recognizes the vital role animals play in biomedical research. NABR provides the unified voice for the scientific community on legislative and regulatory matters affecting laboratory animal research and works to safeguard the future of biomedical research on behalf of its more than 350 members. Members include public and private universities, medical and veterinary schools, teaching hospitals, voluntary health agencies, professional societies, pharmaceutical and biotech industries, and other animal research-related firms. To learn more about NABR, visit www.nabr.org.*