



# PROCEDURE MANUAL

VOLUME	SECTION	SUBSECTION	PAGE
4	7	13.02	1 of 10
SUBJECT			
Translocations of Native and Non-native Wildlife			

## This Procedure Replaces:

4-7-13.02 - Introductions and Transplants of Wildlife (Wild Birds and Mammals) (1984)

## Staff and Organizations Affected:

Directors  
Regional Managers  
Wildlife Management Staff  
Ministry of Environment staff, including those in the Environmental Sustainability & Strategic Policy Division, and the BC Parks and Conservation Officer Service Division

## Policy Manual Cross-References:

Ministry Policy Manual, Volume 4, Section 7

Subsection:

- 02.01 Capture, Possession and Use of Raptorial Birds
- 04.01.3 Control of Species
- 12.05 Possession of Live Wildlife
- 13.02 Translocations of Native and Non-native Wildlife

## Procedure Manual Cross-References:

Ministry Procedure Manual, Volume 4, Section 7

Subsection:

- 02.01 Capture, Possession and Use of Raptorial Birds
- 04.01.1 Preventing and Responding to Conflicts with Large Carnivores
- 04.01.2 Management of Problem Wild Ungulates
- 04.01.3 Protecting Species at Risk from Other Species
- 12.05 Possession of Live Wildlife

## Other Cross-References:

B.C. Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks. 2000. Environmental risk assessment (ERA) : an approach for assessing and reporting environmental conditions. Habitat Branch. Technical Bulletin 1, Victoria. 84 pp.

Burt, W.H. 1943. Territoriality and home range concepts as applied to mammals. Journal of Mammalogy 24(3):346–352.

Hopkins, J.B., S. Herrero, R.T. Shideler, K.A. Gunther, C.C. Schwarz, and S.T. Kalinowski. 2010. A proposed lexicon of terms and concepts for human–bear management in North America. Ursus 21(2):154–168.

IUCN. 2013. Guidelines for reintroductions and other conservation translocations. Version 1.0. Gland, Switzerland. 72 pp.

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VOLUME	SECTION	SUBSECTION	PAGE
4	7	13.02	2 of 10
SUBJECT			
Translocations of Native and Non-native Wildlife			

Ministry of Environment. 2012. Status of Grizzly Bear populations in British Columbia. (<http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/soe/indicators/plants-and-animals/grizzly-bears.html>). Accessed 02 Feb 2016.

## Purpose:

This procedure is intended to ensure that translocations and relocations of wildlife have a high likelihood of success, provide conservation benefits, have minimal unintended consequences, and consider the health and welfare of the wildlife being moved and of the wildlife in the receiving area. This procedure recommends steps for the justification, development, documentation, and evaluation of translocations and relocations to enable success and to provide data for learning and improved management.

This procedure has 5 sections:

1. Scope
2. Development of Translocation Proposals
3. Review of Translocation Proposals
4. Decisions on Translocation Proposals
5. Translocations of Grizzly Bears
6. Permits and Permit Fee Exemptions

## Definitions:

**“animal”** – means an amphibian, reptile, bird, or mammal as defined in the *Wildlife Act* (RSBC 1996 c.488).

**“dangerous wildlife”** – as defined in the *Wildlife Act*, RSBC 1996 c.488., means

- (a) bear, cougar, coyote or wolf, or
- (b) a species of wildlife that is prescribed as dangerous wildlife.

**“home range”** – that area traversed by the individual in its normal activities of food gathering, mating, and caring for young (Burt 1943).

**“Grizzly Bear Population Unit (GBPU)”** – is a spatial unit within which the grizzly bears are thought to be interacting with each other to a greater extent than these bears interact with bears in adjacent GBPUs (Ministry of Environment 2012).

**“indigenous range”** – the known or inferred distribution generated from written or verbal records or physical evidence of the species’ occurrence. Where direct evidence is inadequate to confirm previous occupancy, the existence of suitable conditions within an ecologically



VOLUME	SECTION	SUBSECTION	PAGE
4	7	13.02	3 of 10
SUBJECT			
Translocations of Native and Non-native Wildlife			

appropriate proximity to proven range may be taken as adequate evidence of previous occupation. The indigenous range does not include range extensions caused by the intentional or unintentional movement of animals by humans (IUCN 2013).

" **native species**" - as defined in the *Wildlife Act* (RSBC 1996 c.488), is a species that

- (a) is indigenous to British Columbia, or
- (b) has extended its range into British Columbia from another part of North America, unless
  - i) the species was introduced to North America by human intervention or activities, or
  - ii) any part of the extension of its range within North America was aided by human intervention or activities.

"**relocation**" (see translocation) – the deliberate capture, transport, and release of individuals or groups of wild or captive-bred animals within the animal's home range (Hopkins *et al.* 2010).

"**quantified risk assessment**" – means an assessment of risk, based on objective data, associated with a specific project or activity as defined in the Liquefied Natural Gas Facility Regulation or the *Oil and Gas Activities Act*. See (B.C. Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks 2000) for more information.

"**species at risk**" – species designated as

- (a) threatened or endangered under the provincial *Wildlife Act*,
- (b) special concern, threatened, endangered, or extirpated under the federal *Species at Risk Act*,
- (c) species at risk by the Government Actions Regulation under the *Forest and Range Practices Act*, or
- (d) blue or red-listed by the British Columbia Conservation Data Centre.

"**Threatened Grizzly Bear Population Unit (GBPU)**" – is a Grizzly Bear Population Unit (see definition above) that is currently below long-term population viability as defined by the Ministry of Environment and is being managed for population recovery.

"**translocation**" (see relocation) – the deliberate capture, transport, and release of individuals or groups of wild or captive-bred animals beyond the animal's home range (Hopkins *et al.* 2010) and includes

- (a) "**reintroduction**" – the intentional movement and release of an organism inside its indigenous range from which it has disappeared (IUCN 2013).
- (b) "**reinforcement** or **supplementation**" – the intentional movement and release of an organism into an existing population of conspecifics (IUCN 2013).





VOLUME	SECTION	SUBSECTION	PAGE
4	7	13.02	4 of 10
SUBJECT			
Translocations of Native and Non-native Wildlife			

- (c) **“conservation introductions”** – the intentional movement and release of an organism outside its indigenous range to avoid extinction of populations of the focal species or to perform a specific ecological function (IUCN 2013).

**“translocation committee”** – a committee comprised of the Regional Wildlife Manager, the Manager of Terrestrial Conservation Science, the provincial Wildlife Veterinarian, and applicable provincial species specialists. For translocations involving Grizzly Bears, the committee should include the provincial bear specialist, and the provincial Fish & Wildlife Manager.

## Procedure:

### 1 Scope

- 1.1 For brevity, this procedure uses the term, “translocation”, to include translocations and relocations unless the differentiation is specified.
- 1.2 This procedure addresses
  - (a) translocations intended to benefit the conservation of native wildlife and ecosystems, and
  - (b) translocations intended for the management of wildlife that come into conflict with humans except for those wildlife described in 1.5(a).
- 1.3 This procedure applies to the translocation of all native and non-native wildlife within a region, among regions, out of the province, or into the province.
- 1.4 This procedure applies to the capture, transport, and release of captive-bred wildlife raised as part of an approved species-at-risk recovery plan.
- 1.5 This procedure does not apply to
  - (a) the relocation of dangerous wildlife that have been captured because they have caused, or might cause, a threat to the health and safety of humans, harassment or harm domestic animals as defined by the *Wildlife Act*, Designation and Exemption Regulation, or damage to property,
  - (b) the movement and release of injured or orphaned wildlife that have been rehabilitated by authority of a rehabilitation permit issued under the *Wildlife Act*, Permit Regulation,
  - (c) the movement and release of wildlife captured by authority of a pest-control permit issued under the *Wildlife Act*, Permit Regulation,
  - (d) the movement and release of wildlife as authorized by the *Wildlife Act*, Designation and Exemption Regulation,



VOLUME	SECTION	SUBSECTION	PAGE
4	7	13.02	5 of 10
SUBJECT			
Translocations of Native and Non-native Wildlife			

- (e) the application for, or the adjudication of, permits issued under the *Wildlife Act*, Permit Regulation to capture, possess, transport, or release wildlife that are at risk of death or have been injured due to anthropogenic activities,
- (f) the temporary release of raptors for falconry purposes or homing and racing pigeons under the *Wildlife Act*, *Wildlife Act* General Regulation, and
- (g) the release on private land of non-native game birds that have been captive-bred under the *Wildlife Act*, *Wildlife Act* General Regulation for the purposes of hunting, training dogs, or holding field-dog trials.

## 2 Development of Translocation Proposals

- 2.1 Each request to conduct a translocation should be accompanied by a translocation proposal that includes
  - (a) the name and address of the applicant,
  - (b) the goals and objectives of the proposed translocation,
  - (c) an Implementation Plan, and
  - (d) a Post-release Monitoring Plan.
- 2.2 The Implementation Plan and the Post-release Monitoring Plans should provide quantifiable expected and actual measures of success with confidence intervals so that the Province can document whether the measures of success have been achieved including
  - (a) the survival rate of captured wildlife,
  - (b) the survival rate of translocated wildlife,
  - (c) the percentage of translocated wildlife that remain at the new location, and
  - (d) the reproductive success of translocated wildlife;
  - (e) a reporting schedule to report on the initial and the long-term quantifiable measures of success in 2.2.
- 2.3 The translocation proposal also should include all of the following:
  - (a) documentation in the Implementation Plan of the feasibility study or the regionally applicable ecological literature that provides rationale for the expected values for the quantifiable measures of success in 2.2.
  - (b) quantification of the confidence intervals around the expected values for the quantifiable measures of success in 2.2.
  - (c) documentation in the Post-release Monitoring Plan of the feasibility study or the regionally applicable ecological literature that provides evidence on how the proponent will collect post-release data and calculate confidence intervals for the quantifiable measures of success in 2.2.





# PROCEDURE MANUAL

VOLUME	SECTION	SUBSECTION	PAGE
4	7	13.02	6 of 10
SUBJECT			
Translocations of Native and Non-native Wildlife			

- i) the persons in 3.1 can consider waiving the requirements for a Post-release Monitoring Plan and the requirements in 2.3(c) if the persons in 3.1 are satisfied that the translocation proposal contains suitable data from a previous translocation of the same species conducted in the same region of the province.
  - (d) the species, sex, ages, and number of wildlife being considered for translocation,
  - (e) the availability of suitable source of wildlife,
  - (f) an evaluation of the ecological suitability the source wildlife,
  - (g) an evaluation of the health of the source wildlife,
  - (h) evidence of consultations with the provincial Wildlife Veterinarian to document the disease risk-assessment for the proposed translocation,
  - (i) evidence of consultations with the provincial Wildlife Veterinarian to document procedures for the capturing, handling, processing, transporting, and releasing that ensure the health and welfare of the wildlife,
  - (j) primary and subsequent locations where the proposed source wildlife will be held if required by protocols,
  - (k) the methods for transporting the wildlife,
  - (l) the proposed dates for the capture, holding, translocation, and release,
  - (m) a map indicating the latitude and longitude co-ordinates of the proposed release sites and showing the ownership of the release sites and adjacent lands,
  - (n) an evaluation of the release sites, including an assessment of ecological suitability, an assessment of the potential effects that the translocation could have on
    - i) local wildlife, including genetics and health aspects,
    - ii) the local flora and fauna,
    - iii) other social and economic interests,
    - iv) private property, and
    - v) crown lands (e.g., regulations for parks, highways, and forestry),
  - (o) a plan for the management of the relocated wildlife including landscape-enhancement responsibilities, wildlife-control measures, and future human uses,
  - (p) input from First Nations, stakeholders, and the public,
  - (q) other approvals from other agencies or jurisdictions, including the approval of the agency providing the source wildlife if other than the Province of British Columbia,
  - (r) the costs and the availability and sources of funds, including in-kind funding, to conduct the translocation and post-translocation monitoring, and
- 2.4 A summary of consultation, if required, or engagement with the First Nations at the source and destination locations should be included in the translocation proposal. This summary should identify any issues, concerns, or conflicts that have been identified by First Nations.



VOLUME	SECTION	SUBSECTION	PAGE
4	7	13.02	7 of 10
SUBJECT			
Translocations of Native and Non-native Wildlife			

The summary also should outline which First Nations support the proposal or have not identified any concerns.

- 2.5 A summary of consultations with affected land owners and stakeholders at the source or destination locations should be included in the translocation proposal.
- 2.6 Proposals for translocations that will be led by officers exempt from requiring permits under section 86 of the *Wildlife Act* should be made to the Regional Wildlife Manager.
- 2.7 Proposals for translocations that will be led by individuals or organizations that are not exempt from requiring permits under section 86 of the *Wildlife Act* should be included as part of the appropriate permit-application process.
- 2.8 All translocation applications should be made at least 6 months in advance of the translocation start date.

### 3 Review of Translocation Proposals

- 3.1 Proposals for translocations received by the Regional Wildlife Manager or through the permit application process should be provided to the following persons for review:
  - (a) members of the Translocation Committee,
  - (b) the chair of the applicable provincial species-recovery team unless the proposal has come from that recovery team,
  - (c) the Regional Wildlife Managers in the regions of the proposed translocation capture and release sites,
  - (d) for species at risk, the Directors responsible for the species-at-risk program delivery in the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations and the Ministry of Environment, and
  - (e) for non-native wildlife, the Executive Director of the Ministry of Environment Ecosystems Branch.
- 3.2 Reviewers of a translocation proposal should consider if the translocation
  - (a) is permissible under the *Wildlife Act* and its regulations,
  - (b) has a high likelihood of achieving the intended conservation or management objective as measured, in part, by the quantified measures of success outlined in 2.2,
  - (c) has a low likelihood of causing adverse environmental effects,
  - (d) has an implementation, monitoring, reporting plan in place as outlined in 2.2,
  - (e) is based on a proposal that has completed consultation or engagement with First Nations where appropriate,





VOLUME	SECTION	SUBSECTION	PAGE
4	7	13.02	8 of 10
SUBJECT			
Translocations of Native and Non-native Wildlife			

- (f) does not contravene established management objectives for specific wildlife populations or wildlife population management units,
  - (g) has a suitable and available source of wildlife and minimizes risks to wildlife that will remain in the source population,
  - (h) is based on a proposal that describes wildlife-specific animal care and handling to minimize negative animal health and welfare issues,
  - (i) is of wildlife, and the potential organisms that these wildlife carry, that will not be deleterious to the existing flora and fauna at the translocation area,
  - (j) is of a species, sexes, and age-classes that are suitable for the translocation area,
  - (k) is to an area that is ecologically suitable for the wildlife,
  - (l) is to an area where known threats to the wildlife and to the wildlife's requirements have been removed or mitigated,
  - (m) might be in conflict with existing land-uses, such as resource extraction, agriculture, urban development, or transportation corridors,
  - (n) will not require the Province to incur financial costs if the translocation is for the management of wildlife that come into conflict with humans,
  - (o) has adequate funds in place for implementation and monitoring, and
  - (p) has the necessary approvals and permissions from landowners, agencies, or other jurisdictions, including the approval of the agency providing the source wildlife if that agency is one other than the Province of British Columbia.
- 3.3 Prior to making a final recommendation, reviewers of a translocation proposal should consider if
- (a) significant concerns have been identified, and if a quantified risk assessment is required for any aspect of the translocation such as a quantified risk assessment of the need to conduct genetic and health screening of the source population prior to capture,
  - (b) improvements to the receiving location are necessary and who should implement those improvements,
  - (c) there is adequate input from First Nations, regional and provincial stakeholders groups, and the public,
  - (d) input from other resource or land management agencies is necessary, and
  - (e) other provincial, federal, or international permits that are required (e.g., the Canadian Food Inspection Agency might require a permit for the translocation of wild *Cervidae* – check with provincial Wildlife Veterinarian for specifics of federal policy).
- 3.4 Comments and recommendations on translocation proposals by those persons listed in 3.1 should be forwarded to the appropriate statutory decision-maker within four weeks of receiving the proposal.





VOLUME	SECTION	SUBSECTION	PAGE
4	7	13.02	9 of 10
SUBJECT			
Translocations of Native and Non-native Wildlife			

## 4 Decisions on Translocation Proposals

- 4.1 The statutory decision-maker for translocation proposals will depend on the wildlife being moved and on the reasons for the translocation, and decisions should be made only after consideration of the recommendations of the people listed in sections 3.1, 3.3(c), and 3.3(d):
- (a) Regional Wildlife Managers can rule on translocations within their region for native wildlife and species at risk.
  - (b) The Director of the Fish & Wildlife Branch should rule on all translocations
    - i) among regions,
    - ii) involving provincial imports or exports, or
    - iii) involving non-native wildlife.
  - (c) Final decisions concerning the translocation of species at risk should be made only after consideration of the recommendations of the Executive Director of the Ministry of Environment Ecosystems Branch, and the Director of Resource Management Objectives in the Ministry of Forests, Lands, and Natural Resource Operations.
  - (d) Final decisions concerning the translocation of non-native wildlife should only be made after taking into consideration the recommendation of the Executive Director of the Ministry of Environment - Ecosystems Branch.
- 4.2 When a final decision on a translocation proposal has been reached, the statutory decision-maker should send a signed letter informing all consulted parties of the final decision.
- 4.3 Before any translocation takes place within a region, the appropriate Regional Manager should be informed by the proposal applicant.
- 4.4 Ministry staff should not make any commitments to supply or to receive wildlife for translocations until the final decisions on the translocation proposal has been made.
- 4.5 The results of any translocation should be reported to the BC Conservation Data Centre and entered into the provincial Wildlife Species Inventory (WSI) system.

## 5 Translocation of Grizzly Bears

- 5.1 Translocation is reserved for long-distance transport of bears for conservation purposes.
- 5.2 Following the changes proposed to the procedure, 04.01.1 Preventing and Responding to Conflicts with Large Carnivores, there should not be any "translocation" (i.e., out of the home range) of bears that have come into conflict with human interests (e.g., people, dwellings, livestock).



VOLUME	SECTION	SUBSECTION	PAGE
4	7	13.02	10 of 10
SUBJECT			
Translocations of Native and Non-native Wildlife			

- 5.3 Population augmentation or population re-establishment that requires the translocation of Grizzly Bears should only be undertaken under the following conditions:
- there is strong scientific evidence that translocation is required to achieve recovery,
  - the grizzly bears to be moved have been carefully evaluated with regard to their health, ecological compatibility, and the likelihood of home range establishment in the target area, and
  - all grizzly bears that are captured and moved are equipped with a GPS radio-collar and handled with the highest standards of animal care.
- 5.4 The most likely candidates for successful translocation to assist population recovery are sub-adult or young adult females, which might be pregnant with their first litters.
- 5.5 Grizzly Bears should only be translocated outside of a Grizzly Bear Population Unit (GBPU) when
- an approved recovery management plan for a threatened GBPU has called for population re-establishment or population augmentation, and
  - when there are potential release areas available within an ecologically similar threatened GBPU that
    - have adequate suitable areas
    - have adequate and appropriate sources of food,
    - have low mortality pressures for Grizzly Bears, and
    - are far enough from areas of human activity to reduce the likelihood that the released bears will be attracted to any human site or activity.

## 6 Permits and Permit Fee Exemptions

- 6.1 Despite section 2.6, translocations that will be led by officers exempt from requiring permits under Section 86 of the *Wildlife Act* should still acquire the appropriate provincial permits to export or import live wildlife when the source populations or proposed release sites are outside of British Columbia.
- 6.2 With respect to permit fees, approved translocations can be considered to be activities carried out on behalf of a government organization unless the translocation is for the management of wildlife that have come into conflict with humans.