

STATE OF ALASKA

DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

DIVISION OF WILDLIFE CONSERVATION

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GOVERNOR**

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Permit for Selling Big Game Trophies from an Estate, Bankruptcy, Divorce, Unclaimed from A Taxidermist, or Other

Sale of big game trophies, skulls of big game animals (not including skulls of black bears, wolves, and wolverines), and any part of a brown bear is illegal without a permit issued by the Department of Fish and Game. Alaska regulation [5 ACC 92.031(b), (f)] provides for the sale of game skins and trophies. Game skins and trophies may also be sold by a court appointed or duly authorized estate executor during a probate action, a referee in a bankruptcy, as the result of a divorce, or by taxidermists in possession of unclaimed, finished skins or trophies. Permits for unclaimed trophies for a taxidermist will be issued only after the "finished" skin or trophy has been held unclaimed for six months and the taxidermist has sent notice of intent to sell, by registered mail at least 15 days prior to sale, to the last known address of the person who ordered the taxidermy work.

If none of these scenarios apply, an applicant may select "Other" and must provide an explanation for the sale on the application. Permits are valid for six months and are renewable. You may gift a big game trophy to anyone at any time without a permit.

The permit number must be included in any advertisement for sale of items authorized by the permit.

Which species require a permit? A permit is required to sell trophies of species defined as big game in Alaska even if the animal was killed in another state or country. Those species are black bear, brown bear, bison, caribou, Sitka black-tailed deer, elk, mountain goat, moose, muskox, and Dall sheep and wolves and wolverines taken under a hunting license. Wolves and wolverines taken under a trapping license are classified as furbearers, and hides or products made from hides of those species taken under a trapping license may be sold without a permit. The Department maintains harvest records for those species which include the type of license under which each animal was harvested and date of harvest.

What qualifies as a trophy? In Alaska "trophy" is legally defined as "a mount of a big game animal, including the skin of the head (cape) or the entire skin, in a lifelike representation of the animal, including a lifelike representation made from any part of a big game animal; "trophy" also includes a "European mount" in which the horns or antlers and the skull or a portion of the skull are mounted for display [5 ACC 92.990(42)]. Under certain conditions the Department believes that skulls of brown bears also qualify as trophies. Please see below.

Rugs – Rugs are also considered trophies, so a permit is required to sell them. The Department defines "rug" as the tanned skin of a big game animal including the skin of the head finished with a felt back and skull insert.

Skulls and antlers – A permit is required to sell skulls of big game animals except black bears, wolves, and wolverines. The Department will only issue permits for sale of skulls that are part of a “European mount” (horns/antlers attached to the skull or portion of skull) or skulls of brown bears that are cleaned and finished for display. In most cases horns or antlers that are not attached to any portion of a skull may be sold without a permit.

Game skins – Except for brown bear skins, tanned or untanned skins of big game animals including partial skins or whole skins that do not meet the definition of a “rug” may be sold without a permit. The Department will only issue permits to sell whole tanned brown bear skins because partial skins or skins without paws and claws do not meet the legal definition of “game skin”.

Alaskan Trophies Outside Alaska – Unless the animal was taken with the intent of immediately exporting and selling a trophy made from it, sale of big game animal trophies taken in Alaska outside the state does not require a permit from Alaska or violate the Lacey Act.

Obtaining a Permit

To facilitate review and expedite processing of permit requests, the following items should be sent to this office as part of the permit application, preferably via email.

1. Completed application form. Please provide detailed descriptions of all trophies including species, type of mount, etc.
2. **For Estate:** A photocopy of a Letter of Testamentary, Letter of Administration, or Letter of Appointment authorizing the applicant to distribute the assets of the estate. The name of the deceased must also be included on the application. **For Bankruptcy:** A photocopy of a Notice of Bankruptcy Filing or Declaration of Bankruptcy Filing authorizing the applicant to distribute the assets of the bankruptcy. **For Divorce:** A photocopy of a divorce decree documenting the applicant as the owner of the trophies. **For a Taxidermist:** A photocopy of the original dated work order or invoice, identifying the former owner and the skin or trophy; the original unopened registered letter of intent to sell, if returned by the U.S. Postal Service -OR- Photocopies of the letter of intent to sell and the U.S. Postal Service "return receipt." -OR- A copy of correspondence signed by the former owner indicating that he has surrendered any claim to the skin or trophy.

If you have any questions regarding this matter, please contact the Permits Section at (907) 465-4148 or dfg.dwc.permits@alaska.gov or ADF&G, DWC, Permits Section, P.O. Box 110024, Juneau, AK 99811.

The application form and instructions can be found on our website at:

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=otherlicense.trophies>