



## **Falconry Policy**

**Effective Date: August 1, 2013**

**Replaces: November 23, 2010**

### **INTENT:**

To provide direction on licensing and holding of raptors for the sport of falconry and to enable the capture of wild raptors for falconry purposes. The policy is guided by the following overarching results-based objectives:

- 1) To ensure good stewardship and humane care of captive raptors utilized by falconers.
- 2) To promote the benefits of falconry including conservation education, raptor rehabilitation and specific conservation efforts directed both towards raptors and their quarry.
- 3) To minimize administrative effort and permitting while ensuring compliance with regulations.

### **APPLICATION:**

This document applies to any person who has, or is applying for, permits and/or licenses to:

- capture or hold raptors for the purpose of hunting wildlife
- to import or export raptors to/from Saskatchewan for the purpose of falconry

This policy does not apply to the management of commercial raptor breeding operations.

### **DEFINITIONS:**

- **Apprentice falconer:** means a person licensed by the province who may practice falconry under the supervision of a qualified falconer
- **Captive reared:** means a raptor that is hatched and raised in captivity from captive stock
- **Director:** means the Executive Director of the Fish and Wildlife Branch, Ministry of Environment
- **Eyas raptor:** means a young of the year raptor that is taken from the nest prior to it being able to fly
- **Falconer:** is a person who trains and uses raptors for hunting
- **Falconry:** is the hunting of wild quarry in its natural habitat with a trained bird of prey
- **Falconry Licence** means a *Captive Wildlife Licence for Falconry Purposes*
- **Licensed falconer:** means a person who holds a *Captive Wildlife Licence for Falconry Purposes*
- **Minister:** means the Minister of Environment
- **Ministry:** means the Ministry of Environment

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- **Passage raptor:** means a raptor that is captured while free-flying in the wild during migration or in the winter
- **Permit or licence:** means authority granted for an activity under *The Wildlife Act* or regulations; these terms may be used interchangeably
- **Wild-caught:** means a wild raptor, either eyas or passage, that is captured under permit from wild populations for falconry purposes

### **POLICY and GUIDELINE(S):**

- Fish and Wildlife Branch, Ministry of Environment, is responsible for:
  - the creation, maintenance and update of this policy
  - issuing Falconry Licences (which serve as captive wildlife licences for falconry, a capture permit for eyas and passage raptors and a licence for import and export of live raptors for falconry purposes by Saskatchewan resident falconers)
  - the issuance of apprentice licences
  - the issuance of permits for the import and export of live raptors for falconry purposes
  - the issuance of permits for the import and export of live raptors for falconry purposes for non-resident falconers
  - the issuance of Peregrine Falcon capture permits
  - the issuance of rehabilitation permits for rehabilitating raptors
- Compliance and Field Services Branch, Ministry of Environment, is responsible for:
  - the issuance of permits for the retention of dead raptors
  - the completion of a minimum of one annual inspection of licensed falconers and the submission of reports of inspections to the Director
  - supervising the banding of wild caught raptors taken for falconry
- The Saskatchewan Falconry Association/licensed falconer is responsible for:
  - the sponsorship of apprentice falconers
  - the humane care and stewardship of raptors
  - reporting observations of nests and foraging sites to the Saskatchewan Conservation Data Centre (SKCDC) to aid in evaluation of population trends/status of raptors

### **Permitted Species**

- all native wild-caught raptors except eagles and owls, unless listed as threatened or endangered in federal or provincial legislation
- captive-reared native raptors
- captive-reared exotic raptors
- captive-reared hybrids of exotic raptors and/or native raptors

### **General Conditions**

- wild caught birds may not be sold, traded or bartered

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- wild caught birds held under a Falconry Licence may not be used for breeding purposes
- permitted wild-caught species will not exceed two such raptors per resident licensee
- there are no restrictions on the number or species of captive-bred raptors
- non- resident falconers cannot capture raptors from the wild in Saskatchewan
- all hybrids and exotic raptors must be equipped with telemetry equipment when they are being flown

### **PROCEDURES:**

#### **Falconry Licences**

- Saskatchewan resident falconers must:
  - submit an application for a *Resident Falconry Licence* to the Director
  - the form is available online at <http://www.environment.gov.sk.ca/permits/>
  - advise of any permanent changes in raptor status: loss, death, or transfer to ENV within 14 days
    - a Falconry Licence will serve as:
      - captive wildlife licence
      - import/export licence
      - capture permit
- out of province falconers must:
  - submit an application for a *Non-Resident Falconry Licence* to the Director
  - a Non-Resident Falconry Licence will serve as:
    - captive wildlife licence for falconry purposes
    - import/export licence
  - the form is available online at <http://www.environment.gov.sk.ca/permits/>
- all licences are issued at the discretion of the Director and subject to terms and conditions specified on the licence
- unless otherwise specified, all Falconry Licences will expire on March 31, one year following the date of issue.
- prior to March 1 of the year the permit expires, all licensed falconers must reapply for a falconry licence
- by March 31 of each year, licenced falconers must provide a report stating the species, sex and band numbers of all birds currently held, have been acquired, died or lost through the year
- all applicants must be at least 12 years of age at time of application for a Falconry Licence and have either demonstrated their competency or successfully completed an apprenticeship period with a licensed falconer
- for all permit applications, up to five working days from date of application may be required to process appropriate permits.

## **Apprentice Falconers**

If sponsored by the Saskatchewan Falconry Association:

- an initial training period with a licensed falconer must be completed without a bird, during which time the person illustrates his/her interest and ability to become a licensed falconer
- upon completion of this initial period:
  - the apprentice falconer must:
    - submit written application to the Director for an apprentice falconry licence and a captive wildlife licence in order to capture and hold one bird and;
    - must sign the Falconry Apprentice/Supervisor Agreement
  - the licenced falconer who supervises an apprentice must:
    - ensure that the apprentice has adequate equipment, transportation and facilities to care for a raptor before the apprentice is eligible to hold or capture a raptor for falconry purposes;
    - provide a sponsorship letter to accompany the application stating what the applicant has done to date;
    - sign the apprentice's application to capture or hold one raptor for falconry purposes;
    - sign the Falconry Apprentice/Supervisor Agreement
  - the Saskatchewan Falconry Association must:
    - in writing, sponsor the applicant and endorse the licensed falconer who will supervise the applicant and;
    - ensure that the applicant and supervisor have signed the Falconry Apprenticeship/Supervisor agreement and return a copy to the Ministry of Environment
- an apprentice falconer must apprentice with a bird, under the guidance of a licensed falconer for a minimum of one year
- the supervisor and the Saskatchewan Falconry Association must notify the Director when an apprentice has completed their apprenticeship or if the apprentice/supervisor agreement has been severed
- a regular Falconry Licence may be granted once the ministry has been advised by the Saskatchewan Falconry Association that the applicant has successfully completed their apprenticeship

If not sponsored by the Saskatchewan Falconry Association:

- the apprentice falconer must:
  - submit written application to the Director for an apprentice falconry licence;
  - must sign the Falconry Apprentice/Supervisor Agreement
  - apprentice with a licensed falconer without a bird for a minimum of one year
- the licenced falconer who supervises an apprentice must:

- sign and ensure that the applicant has signed the Falconry Apprentice/Supervisor Agreement and return a copy to the Ministry of Environment

After the initial minimum one year apprenticeship period, in order to hold a bird:

- the apprentice falconer must:
  - submit an application for a captive wildlife licence to capture and hold one raptor
- the licenced falconer who supervises an apprentice must:
  - ensure that the apprentice has adequate equipment, transportation and facilities to care for a raptor before the apprentice is eligible to hold or capture a raptor for falconry purposes;
  - provide a sponsorship letter to accompany the application stating what the applicant has done to date;
  - sign the apprentice's application to capture and hold one raptor for falconry purposes
- an apprentice falconer must apprentice with a bird, under the guidance of a licensed falconer for a minimum of one year to demonstrate required/requisite competencies with a bird
- the supervising licensed falconer must notify the Director if the apprentice/supervisor agreement has been severed
- a regular Falconry Licence may be granted once the ministry has been advised by the supervisor that the applicant has successfully completed their apprenticeship

### **Import/Export of Raptors**

- any non-Saskatchewan resident individual who requests to import or export a raptor for falconry purposes must:
  - complete *The Saskatchewan Falconry Import/Export Permit Application Form*
  - the form is available online at <http://www.environment.gov.sk.ca/permits/>
  - submit the application to the Director of Fish and Wildlife Branch
- no permits other than valid proof of the legality of the bird(s) in question and whatever permits required by the province/state/country to which the falconer is travelling to or from are required for movements of Saskatchewan resident licensed falconers with their own birds into or out of Saskatchewan for periods not greater than 30 days.
- Saskatchewan resident falconers require a permit (and must complete *The Saskatchewan Falconry Import/Export Permit Application Form*) for movements into or out of Saskatchewan with their own birds for periods greater than 30 days
- for all permit applications, up to five working days from date of application may be required to process appropriate permits

**Capture of Raptors** (excluding Peregrine Falcons, see next section)

- Under conditions of the licence, and subject to approval by the Director, Saskatchewan falconers are permitted to:
- capture eyas raptors and between August 15 in one year to April 30 in the following year, passage raptors
- hold up to a maximum of two wild caught birds in possession
- permittee cannot capture any species listed as threatened or endangered under *The Wildlife Act* or the federal *Species at Risk Act*
- non-resident falconers cannot capture raptors from the wild in Saskatchewan
- permittee must report any capture of any eyas or passage raptor to the Licensing Specialist listed on the falconry licence and the local Conservation Officer within three days of capture to arrange for banding. A revised permit will be issued to include any additional birds.
- banding of eyas and passage raptors must be done under the direct supervision of a conservation officer
- removal of eggs is not permitted
- removal of eyas birds must be timed to prevent premature fledging
- a minimum of one live young must be left in the nest
- for eyas capture, permittee must provide the exact location (legal land description or GPS coordinates) of all nest site(s) that are visited
- permittee must have permission of the landowner, occupant or lessee prior to accessing privately control land for the purpose of capturing an eyas raptor

**Capture of Peregrine Falcons**

- a licensed falconer who wants to capture a wild passage Peregrine must:
  - complete the Application Form for the *Capture of Wild Raptors*
  - submit it to the Director a minimum of two weeks prior to the anticipated capture date
  - this form is available online at: <http://www.environment.gov.sk.ca/raptors>
- the annual provincial quota for capture of Peregrine falcons is three birds
- the season for the capture of wild Peregrines is from Sept. 1- Oct. 20.
- immediately after capture of a Peregrine falcon, the falconer must email the Licensing Specialist and contact the local Conservation Officer advising that a Peregrine falcon has been captured and arrange for banding under the direct supervision of a Conservation Officer
  - included in this email must be a photo of the captured bird, estimated age of bird, and location of capture
- a revised permit will be issued to include any additional birds
- the ministry will notify falconers holding valid Peregrine capture permits via email when a Peregrine has been captured and the provincial quota has changed
- any Peregrine falcon captured after the provincial quota of three birds has been reached must be released back to the wild in the presence of a Conservation Officer

### **Housing of Raptors**

- raptor(s) held under a falconry licence may be temporarily housed at a location of another licenced falconer with a letter of authority from the permittee providing that the stay is not for more than 30 days.
  - This letter will include the date custody was given and the anticipated duration of care, the permit number and the band number(s) of the raptor(s) to be temporarily cared for.
  - The owner of the bird will provide a copy of their permit to the temporary care giver.
- all raptors must be kept and housed in a humane and safe manner
- for appropriate housing conditions, refer to *The Captive Wildlife Regulations* and the Saskatchewan Falconry Association Facility and Care Guidelines

### **Rehabilitation of Wild-caught Raptors**

- to rehabilitate a raptor, a licenced falconer must first contact the Licensing Specialist for a rehabilitation permit
- under a rehabilitation permit, qualified falconers may possess and fly any native raptor for rehabilitation purposes where the sole intent is the eventual release of the bird(s) to the wild
- a wild raptor to be rehabilitated may be permitted under a rehabilitation permit and would not count as part of the two wild bird limit

### **Retired Wild-caught Raptors**

- if a wild-caught raptor is no longer an effective hunter, is no longer used for falconry purposes and cannot be released to the wild, and if the cause of ineffectiveness is not a result of neglect by the permittee, the raptor may be retained as a retired raptor under permit as one of the two licensed wild-caught limit
- if a retired raptor is not retained by the original permittee, permission may be authorized by the Ministry for donation of the bird to an approved facility for public viewing

### **Monitoring**

- falconers are requested to report observations of nests and foraging sites to the Saskatchewan Conservation Data Centre (SKCDC) <http://www.biodiversity.sk.ca/> to help evaluate the population trends/status of raptors and to facilitate knowledge transfer
- the SKCDC will host the database but the point locations of nest sites will not be shared with the general public.

**ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION:**

1. Legislative References/Authority:
  - *The Wildlife Act, 1998*  
(<http://www.qp.gov.sk.ca/documents/English/Statutes/Statutes/W13-12.pdf>)
  - *The Captive Wildlife Regulations*  
<http://www.qp.gov.sk.ca/documents/English/Regulations/Regulations/W13-1R13.pdf>
  - *The Wildlife Regulations, 1981*
  - <http://www.qp.gov.sk.ca/documents/English/Regulations/Regulations/W13-1R1.pdf>
  - *The Open Seasons Game Regulations, 2009*
  - <http://www.qp.gov.sk.ca/documents/english/Regulations/Regulations/w13-12r3.pdf>
  - *Species at Risk Act, 2002*
  - [http://www.sararegistry.gc.ca/default\\_e.cfm](http://www.sararegistry.gc.ca/default_e.cfm)
  
2. Permits/Forms (available online at <http://www.environment.gov.sk.ca/permits/> )
  - *Application for a Falconry Licence*  
<http://www.environment.gov.sk.ca/Default.aspx?DN=aeb98f8f-bd8c-4831-ab25-8ad6051555bf>
  - *Application for Falconry Import/Export Licence*  
<http://www.environment.gov.sk.ca/Default.aspx?DN=69941f7b-b40e-4ead-a78a-ce1f0d5a63f6>
  - *Application Form for the Capture of Wild Raptors*  
<http://www.environment.gov.sk.ca/raptors>
  
3. The following documents may be obtained from the Licensing Specialist:
  - *Falconry Inspection Sheet*
  - *Apprentice Falconer permit*
  - *Rehabilitation Permit*
  
3. Contact:

Branch: Fish and Wildlife  
Ministry of Environment  
4th Floor, 3211 Albert Street  
Regina, SK S4S 5W6  
306-787-2885

**APPROVED BY:**

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