

**Committee on Natural Resources
Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations
Oversight Hearing
1334 Longworth House Office Building
September 10, 2024
10:30 AM**

Oversight Hearing titled “*The Fish and Wildlife Service Gone Wild: Examining Operation Long Tail Liberation*”

Questions from Rep. Stansbury for Mr. Paul Pelletier

Is it your position that current demand for macaques in medical research in the US cannot be met with verified captive bred monkeys?

As discussed in my testimony, rather than utilize the historically effective international protocols established by CITES, the Fish & Wildlife Service (FWS) has essentially superseded CITES protocols by imposing a *de-facto* import ban on all NHP’s from Cambodia by refusing clearance of any primate shipments. This selective use of the CITES framework and protocols continues to wreak havoc on the health science industry. Given that FWS has selectively jettisoned requisite CITES protocols, NHP suppliers are left without essential implementing guidance as to what evidence would be sufficient to confirm acceptable foreign captive breeding. Thus, to the detriment of expressed conservation efforts, a captive-bred NHP shortage has been artificially created by FWS for **only** U.S. vaccine and bio-science researchers. Import statistics reveal 29,612 primates were imported into the USA in 2022, followed by a rapid drop to 16,888 in 2023. The ensuing rise of wild caught imports from countries such as Mauritius certainly confirms that, with the *de facto* FWS ban on the importation of Cambodian sourced NHP’s, the worldwide captive-bred population remains insufficient to meet U.S. research needs.

Do you think it is acceptable to use wild macaques for research purposes?

All federal regulations allow for the use of legally procured wild macaques for research purposes. Testimony that wild macaques would not be suitable for research purposes has simply never been validated. Historically, as long as imported wild caught NHP’s go through industry standard screening, importation and quarantine procedures, they have been suitable for bioscience and vaccine research.

But you should know that not all imports of wild caught NHP's are used directly for research. As the testimony further established, there are currently insufficient domestic purpose bred colonies to support the U.S. bio-scientific demand. As such, one of the goals of importing feral animals, is to increase the US captive colonies, which serves to reduce the demand to import animals from abroad. This long-term solution was also emphasized by the testimony of Dr. Gillespie.

WWP has been promoting U.S. based captive breeding colonies for the last 30 plus years and has one of the largest U.S. captive colonies in the U.S.