

Changes to the Animal Welfare Act Being Considered

USDA is in the process of proposing changes to the Animal Welfare Act that would include birds. In August, 2011, APHIS published to the web a factsheet "Questions and Answers: Rat, Mice, and Birds to be included in the Animal Welfare Act." To view that factsheet, go to www.aphis.usda.gov/publications/animal_welfare/2011/FS-QArmb.pdf

For a detailed discussion of this proposed change go to <http://ornithologyexchange.org/forums/topic/1018-usda-reg-on-rats-mice-and-birds-delayed/>

Since other agencies and groups must approve the final proposal, it may take 8 months or more before the proposed changes are published in the Federal Register. After it is published in the Federal Register, it can be viewed online at www.regulations.gov/ We need to monitor this link so that we can be prepared to comment when and if it is published.

Funding the proposal which will require more staff to implement could be a hurdle that USDA must overcome since there are problems fully implementing the mammal portion of the AWA.

There is little we can do now other than knowing that changes are being considered and watching for more information on the web regarding those changes.

If you find out anything more about the proposed changes to the Animal Welfare Act, please do not hesitate to contact any member of the APWS Board of Directors. Their email addresses are printed in each issue of the APWS Magazine.