

WS Directive

2.120 10/07/05

NATIONAL WILDLIFE DISEASE SURVEILLANCE AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE PROGRAM

1. PURPOSE

To summarize the mission, responsibilities, and program direction of Wildlife Services (WS) National Wildlife Disease Surveillance and Emergency Response Program (program).

2. REPLACEMENT HIGHLIGHTS

This is a new directive.

3. AUTHORITY

The Act of March 2, 1931 (46 Stat. 1468; 7 USC 426-426b, as amended) and The Rural Development, Agriculture, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act of 1988 (Public Law 100-202, 7 USC 426c) provides legal authority for WS involvement in investigations and control of wildlife diseases and to control nuisance mammals and birds and those constituting reservoirs of zoonotic diseases.

4. BACKGROUND

In FY 2003, WS received appropriated funding to develop a nationally coordinated system for monitoring diseases of concern, and to establish an infrastructure capable of rapidly responding to introductions of exotic pathogens into wildlife populations. The program and its Surveillance and Emergency Response System (SERS) embed wildlife disease biologists into State Operational Programs to assist APHIS and other agencies (i.e. local, State, Federal, Tribal) with achieving disease monitoring, surveillance, research, and emergency response goals.

5. MISSION

The mission of the program is to provide Federal leadership in managing wildlife disease threats to agriculture, human health and safety, and natural resources by assisting Federal, State, Tribal, and local governments, private industry, and citizens with management of zoonotic and other wildlife diseases of concern.

6. RESPONSIBILITIES

The primary responsibility of the program is to provide assistance to various cooperators to address specific wildlife diseases and respond to a variety of emergencies. The responsibility of organizing and overseeing the program at the National level is assigned to the National Wildlife Disease Coordinator (Coordinator). The Coordinator provides guidance and direction in developing specific monitoring or surveillance plans, recommending research topics, identifying and recommending training needs for personnel, implementing operational wildlife disease management activities, and developing and implementing multi-hazard emergency response capabilities. The Coordinator or his/her designee shall also establish wildlife disease working groups which may include input from the National Wildlife Research Center (NWRC). The Coordinator shall communicate all program activities to the Deputy Administrator's Office. The Coordinator or his/her designee is responsible for maintaining the designated phone number, (970) 266-6363, to receive notifications of requests for WS assistance in emergencies.

Primary responsibilities of wildlife disease biologists embedded in the SERS are to collect, preserve, and ship biological samples according to established guidelines, serve as liaisons in respective state(s) of responsibility among agencies concerned with wildlife disease issues, participate in disease management activities, investigate opportunities to provide assistance to agencies involved in wildlife disease issues including supporting NWRC projects, and respond to disease outbreaks and other emergencies requiring WS participation. Wildlife disease biologists are directly supervised by respective State Operational Programs. Supervision under emergency response will be in accordance with the Incident Command System and SERS.

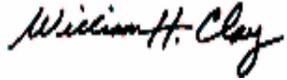
7. PROGRAM DIRECTION

The Coordinator determines overall program direction and involvement with guidance and direction from the Deputy Administrator's Office, and in accordance with the National Wildlife Disease Surveillance and Emergency Response System Business Plan. Program direction is additionally provided through creation of wildlife disease working groups, which may include NWRC participation, to provide input on specific diseases of interest. Working groups are overseen by the Coordinator and managed by designated employees. The Coordinator determines diseases, excluding rabies, of interest and concern to WS and subsequent prioritization.

8. REFERENCES

WS Directive 1.201, Mission and Philosophy of the WS Program (09/16/03).

WS Directive 1.210, Legal Authority (09/19/03).
WS National Wildlife Disease Surveillance and Emergency Response
System Business Plan (04/14/05).
WS Multi-hazard Emergency Communications Standard Operating
Procedure (04/12/05).

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "William H. Clay". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent initial "W".

Deputy Administrator