

WS Directive

2.110 03/06/03

WILDLIFE SERVICES RESEARCH AND METHODS DEVELOPMENT

1. PURPOSE

To provide administrative guidelines for research and methods development within the Wildlife Services (WS) Program.

2. REPLACEMENT HIGHLIGHTS

This directive replaces ADC Directive 2.110 dated 03/26/93.

3. BACKGROUND

The Wildlife Services (WS) Program bases its strategies and decisions on valid scientific information. To accomplish its mission of providing Federal leadership in managing problems caused by wildlife, WS supports and promotes scientific investigations to develop and improve wildlife damage management (WDM) methods and to provide science-based information for WDM. WS research and methods development activities include applying the scientific method and appropriate regulatory standards to study the biology and ecology of wildlife involved in conflicts, to develop new and improved WDM methods and technology, to perform pesticide and drug registration activities within Good Laboratory Practice (GLP) regulations and guidelines, and to conduct scientific and economic analyses of WDM strategies and programs. The focus of WS sponsored research is to ensure that WS strategies, decisions, and actions are based on valid scientific information and are effective, economical, environmentally sound, and socially acceptable to the greatest extent possible.

4. POLICY

- a. Wildlife Services Research and Methods Development: The WS National Wildlife Research Center (NWRC) is the research arm of the Program. The WS State Offices are the operational arm of the Program. The NWRC and state operational programs have distinct yet complimentary responsibilities in accomplishing the WS mission. NWRC conducts laboratory and field research projects and studies under NWRC research protocols and has authority to contract for research and to enter into cooperative research agreements with outside agencies, universities, private organizations, and individuals. Whenever funds are appropriated by Congress to APHIS/WS for the purpose of conducting research or methods development projects under NWRC research protocols, NWRC will conduct the projects. Whenever other WS funds are provided to NWRC for research purposes with identified objectives, NWRC may direct, conduct, provide administrative and technical oversight, or collaborate in such projects.

When WS State Directors have the need to contract for a cooperative wildlife damage-related research project to an outside source (e.g., Congress directs the action, cooperator provides funding through WS State Director), the State Director should request NWRC assistance in reviewing the research objectives and the appropriateness of experimental designs. If NWRC does not have the

necessary scientific expertise available to adequately assist in these reviews, NWRC will advise the State Director where such expertise might be obtained.

- b. **WS Operational Assistance in Research Activities:** WS operational employees may provide assistance in research and methods development activities to NWRC, universities, other Federal and State agencies, private organizations, and individuals based on approval of the State Director and provided that such participation does not supersede or interfere with their accomplishment of assigned operational duties. While conducting assigned field activities, WS operational employees may evaluate modifications to existing WDM techniques, tools, and systems for the purpose of improving these techniques and tools. WS operational employees should obtain approval from their respective State Director prior to providing research assistance external to WS to determine if consultation with the appropriate NWRC expertise is recommended.
- c. **Pocatello Supply Depot (PSD):** Product improvement or quality control studies may be conducted at the PSD. Prior to initiation of such studies involving chemicals or drugs, the PSD Manager will request scientific review and other appropriate assistance from NWRC, as part of meeting GLP standards.
- d. **Research Prioritization Process:** The WS program periodically surveys WS State Directors and NWRC research scientists for highest priority research and methods development needs, and ranks the identified needs by importance on a national basis. These assessments will be conducted at least every five years. The NWRC Director uses the national ranking from these assessments as principal guidance, along with Congressional Directives and Deputy Administrator input, for WS research planning.

Deputy Administrator