

In addition to these services, WS has conducted wildlife training courses for airport personnel at Des Moines International Airport. The Iowa WS program also serves as a direct link to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and aids airports in obtaining necessary permits for alleviating damage caused by federally protected migratory birds.

Protecting Agriculture—Ninety-two percent of Iowa’s land base is used for agriculture. As a result, Iowa ranks second in the Nation for the production of red meat. WS has worked to provide both technical and direct assistance to resolve coyote predation conflicts that impact livestock producers. Research studies suggest that in the absence of a livestock protection program, losses due to predation could double or even triple.

NWRC also conducts a research and methods development program to reduce or prevent livestock predation. Studies are underway to develop more effective, less injurious coyote capture systems, sound-activated aversive conditioning collars, and improved electronic frightening devices. Also, coyote territorial behavior and population modeling studies are underway to support the development of reproduction suppression strategies for high-predation rate areas. All methods developed through NWRC that are appropriate for use in Iowa will be employed by field personnel.



Looking to the Future

Requests for WS’ assistance in Iowa continue to increase. This poses a significant challenge given that this small program currently operates with just a single wildlife specialist for the entire State. Increasingly, beaver activity is causing damage to roads, crops, bridges, and other water structures while urban wildlife nuisance complaints by residents and businesses are on the rise. The demand for WS’ expertise in protecting livestock (sheep, cattle, and hogs) from predators, especially coyotes, is expected to continue as well. Lastly, wildlife diseases such as West Nile virus and rabies are becoming more common.

Iowa Wildlife Services Funding

In addition to receiving federally allocated funds, WS also receives money from cooperators; such as producers; private individuals; businesses; and other Federal, State, and local government agencies who have a vested interest in the program. In most cases, these cooperators need help to resolve wildlife damage problems or they play a role in wildlife damage management.

