



Wildlife Services Seeking Solutions Through Research

United States
Department of
Agriculture

Animal and
Plant Health
Inspection
Service

**National Wildlife
Research Center**



Defining and Reducing Wildlife Hazards to Aviation

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National Wildlife Research Center Scientists Modify Airport Habitats and Study Adjacent Land Uses

Wildlife Services' (WS) National Wildlife Research Center (NWRC) is the only Federal research facility devoted exclusively to resolving conflicts between people and wildlife through the development of effective, selective, and acceptable methods, tools, and techniques. NWRC's field station in Sandusky, OH, is dedicated to providing a scientific foundation for WS' programs that reduce wildlife hazards at airports throughout the United States.

In order to be certified for passenger traffic by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), most U.S. airports are required to have wildlife hazard management plans in place. In addition, the FAA requires that aircraft engines be designed to withstand collisions with certain bird species. The FAA also imposes strict standards regarding the placement of wildlife attractants, such as waste management



facilities near airports. NWRC's research focuses on understanding the nature of wildlife hazards at airports, developing management tools that will reduce these hazards, and providing airport personnel with information on the latest strategies for managing wildlife hazards.

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Major Research Accomplishments:

- WS has developed a National Wildlife Strike Database of more than 40,000 reports.
- WS obtained Food and Drug Administration approval to use alpha chloralose to aid in the capture of birds.
- WS completed an FAA manual entitled "Wildlife Hazards Management at Airports," which has been distributed by the FAA to certified airports in the United States and translated into French and Spanish for worldwide distribution.
- WS partnered with private industry to develop a nonlethal chemical repellent to deter wildlife from feeding on grass.
- WS partnered with private industry to develop a nonlethal laser gun to disperse geese and other wildlife from airports and other problem sites.

Applying Science and Expertise to Wildlife Challenges

Wildlife Habitat Management and Other Land-Use Studies at Airports—NWRC scientists have been studying the height and type of vegetation around airports to determine how to minimize populations of birds and other wildlife species that pose hazards to air transportation. More research is needed to determine how businesses and natural areas that surround airports encourage populations and movements of diverse wildlife species. The results of this research will continue to allow the development of strategies to reduce health, safety, and nuisance issues associated with wildlife at airports.

