

Wildlife Services

Protecting People
Protecting Agriculture
Protecting Wildlife

FY 2012

Resolving Wildlife Damage to Protect People, Agriculture and Wildlife



Contact Information:

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For national issues, call 301-851-4009
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4700 River Road, Unit 87

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www.aphis.usda.gov/wildlife_damage

Wildlife are a valuable natural resource, long enjoyed by the American public for aesthetic, recreational, and economic reasons. Native wildlife in overabundance or too close to human populations can lead to conflicts. Introduced, or invasive, species may endanger native species. Wildlife can destroy crops and livestock, damage property and natural resources, and pose serious risks to public health and safety.

Wildlife Services (WS), a program within the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, provides Federal leadership and expertise to resolve these conflicts and create a balance that allows people and wildlife to coexist. As wildlife damage occurs more frequently and evolves into new challenges, WS' knowledge and skills are increasingly required.

WS manages wildlife damage according to its public trust stewardship responsibilities as a Federal natural resource management agency. The program supports the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation, based on the principle that wildlife resources are owned collectively and held in trust by Government for the benefit of present and future generations. WS applies and recommends a cohesive approach, which incorporates biological, economic, public, environmental and other information into decision-making, and many methods beginning with nonlethal options. Responsible wildlife damage management however, sometimes requires lethal control. The Wildlife Society (a non-profit scientific and educational association that represents wildlife professionals,) states:

"Prevention or control of wildlife damage, which often includes removal of the animals responsible for the damage, is an essential and responsible part of wildlife management."

The WS mission is broad, and includes resolution of wildlife conflicts in rural and urban areas, conservation of natural resources, and protection of public, private and industrial property as well as threatened and endangered species. Increasingly, WS is responsible for minimizing wildlife threats to public health and safety, as well as to the Nation's vital agricultural base. Biosecurity challenges are global, spanning invisible boundaries and WS has responded with domestic and international programs to protect people, agriculture, and wildlife.

WS' success is based in its paired programs of field, or operational, work and research. Its National Wildlife Research Center (NWRC), internationally recognized as a leader in wildlife damage management science, conducts research and develops tools to address dynamic wildlife damage management challenges. WS operations field specialists and NWRC researchers work closely, ensuring that WS will continue to resolve wildlife conflicts effectively and humanely, using advanced science and technology.

Updated biannually, the WS Informational Notebook provides an overview of current research and operational projects in addition to detailed State program reports to provide a better understanding of the work performed daily by the dedicated WS biologists, scientists, and specialists.

These reports describe program activities in place during FY 2011 and FY 2012, some of which currently may not be operational.



United States Department of Agriculture
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

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The Facts About Wildlife Services Wildlife Damage Management



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WS Provides Management Assistance for Wildlife Conflicts

Wildlife Services (WS) provides Federal leadership and expertise to resolve wildlife conflicts that threaten the Nation's agriculture, human health and safety, property, and natural resources. Located within the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, WS programs include technical assistance -- or advice and information-- and direct assistance-- or operations-- that manage complex wildlife damage and conflict that cannot be solved by individuals. Through its National Wildlife Research Center (NWRC), WS conducts scientific research across the Nation to develop answers to new problems posed by wildlife and to ensure the program benefits from the latest science and technology.

Protection Assists Human Safety, Property, Natural Resources and Agriculture

As a result of conservation and environmental efforts, wildlife populations are thriving across much of the country. WS' professional biologists work in every State and U.S. territory to resolve wildlife conflicts in response to requests from individuals, businesses, groups, or local governments. WS coordinates wildlife damage management activities with Federal and State agencies and local governments.

WS protects people, agriculture, and wildlife by assessing and reducing damage from wildlife. Agricultural resources are those associated with farming and ranching, and associated industries. This includes livestock, crops, rangeland and timber, aquaculture, agricultural animal feed, and animal products. Human health and safety work is associated with the protection of people from death, injury, and threats. Natural resources are associated with publically managed parks, lakes, State and national forests, wetlands, wildlife and fish, including sensitive, threatened, and endangered species. Property resources include non-agricultural possessions, business and residential buildings, equipment, vehicles, machinery, pets or companion animals, and other items valued by people.

WS Works Cooperatively on Local Issues

Cooperators are the people, organizations, agencies and others who request WS assistance to better understand and resolve their specific wildlife damage problems. In FY 2012, cooperators provided 65% of the funding for operational program delivery by WS in the States nationwide. Cooperators provided the following percentages of total funding in the States to address wildlife damage related to the four protected resource categories: property (80%), natural resources (79%), health and safety (66%), and agriculture (53%). The amount of cooperative funding was greatest for the protection of health and safety (\$26.04 million), followed by agriculture (\$21.64 million), property (\$14.96 million), and natural resources (\$10.83 million).

WS Manages Wildlife Damage Professionally and Responsibly

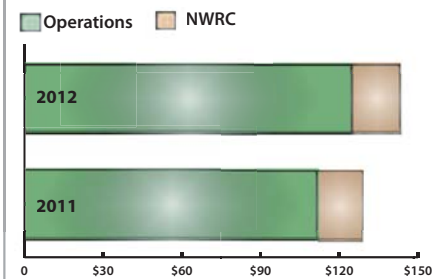
WS uses an integrated wildlife damage management approach, combining a number of management methods in an effort to resolve the conflict or damage. This science-based approach includes the use of nonlethal and lethal management methods.

Annually, about 100,000 concerns are addressed through technical, or advisory, assistance. In FY 2012, WS provided technical assistance to more than 1.6 million people. Frequently a combination of nonlethal measures is effective in resolving wildlife damage.

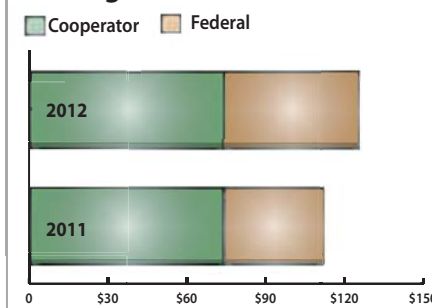
In some cases, both lethal and nonlethal methods are necessary. In such instances, WS directs its activities at specific localized wildlife responsible for the damage and new research has improved the program's ability to target nuisance wildlife. Studies reflect that WS lethal activities have no significant impact on predator populations.

WS conducts management activities in consultation with Federal and State wildlife management agencies, with all required permits and in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act.

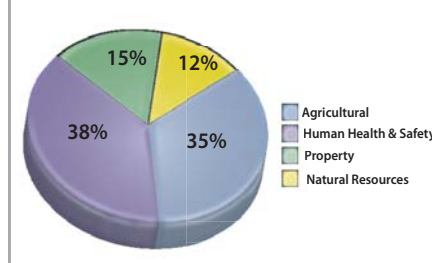
Wildlife Services Budget (Millions)



Wildlife Services Operations Funding (Millions)



Resources Protected FY 11 & 12 % of Total WS Operations Funds



WS Employees are Knowledgeable and Skilled Wildlife Damage Management Experts

WS employs a professional staff of about 1,700 scientists, wildlife biologists, field specialists and support specialists across the country. In recent decades, WS has increased professional credentials and training for longtime employees. A 2001 Government Accountability Office (GAO) Report noted that "Recommendations of the Leopold Report were incorporated in the program's policy manual" and the hiring of professional trained employees and in-service training was conducted.

WS' staff is administered by supervisors, most with degrees in wildlife management, biology, or environmental studies from accredited colleges and universities. Many have some form of accreditation through The Wildlife Society, the professional organization for U.S. wildlife biologists. Of administrative and supervisory staff, more than 500 have bachelors' degrees, 117 have post-graduate training including masters' degrees, and 9 have a doctorate or post-doctorate.

The Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, which represents State wildlife agencies, has recognized and commended WS biologists for their professionalism, dedication, hard work, and efforts to assist States in addressing wildlife damage problems. The Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Defense, and National Association of State Aviation Officials have identified WS as the recommended source of assistance in wildlife damage management for airports across the country.

WS employees are required to maintain licenses and certifications, for pesticide and other hazardous materials application, wildlife euthanasia and immobilization, firearms, CPR, and first aid.

WS Invites Public Input, Shares Information

The National Wildlife Services Advisory Committee selected by the Secretary of Agriculture provides guidance on the direction of WS. Annual meetings of the NWSAC allow the public an opportunity to participate and provide input to the Secretary of Agriculture on overall policy and guidance for the operation of the WS program. The Committee also serves as a public forum enabling those affected by the WS program to have a voice in the program's policies. Committee members are chosen to represent the diverse interests in the WS program and the multitude of industries to whom we provide services. Its diverse membership includes livestock producers, and representatives of the aviation industry, public health and animal welfare and environmental interest groups.

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires Federal agencies to evaluate environmental impacts into their decision making processes and ensures that environmental information is available to public officials and citizens before decisions are made and actions are taken. Wildlife Services (WS) prepares analyses of the environmental effects of program activities in fulfillment of NEPA requirements and to achieve its accountability and transparency priorities. NEPA documents are posted on the WS internet page, inviting public participation. The APHIS Freedom of Information Act processes ensure that the public's requests for WS information are met.

WS Assists Agricultural Producers

WS estimates that the majority of cooperative agreements for agricultural protection are with small farms and ranches. A small farm produces less than \$250,000 in gross annual receipts. Many farms are less than 1,100 acres in size.

Small farms struggle to survive nationwide and many have slim profit margins, which makes even small losses to wildlife impor-

tant. These farmers depend on WS' expertise in reducing losses to predators and agricultural damage. Studies suggest livestock farmers and ranchers spend more than \$190 million annually on nonlethal predator management. Most requestors seek WS assistance only when nonlethal methods do not resolve problems.

WS Works Safely

A year-long review by outside experts in 2007-08, found WS programs were operated safely and offered recommendations for continued safety. The WS aviation program was recommended for the Gold Standard Certificate for aviation-safety activities. The review also found WS maintained its pesticides in storage more secure than required by Federal regulations. The agency had a firearms safety record that had not caused any injuries to the public.

In January 2009 an Environmental Protection Agency report found that two tools under review were useful in protecting livestock without negatively impacting the target species, other wildlife or people. EPA permitted the continued use of the M-44 device and Livestock Protection Collar (LPC).

WS Conducts Research to Develop and Refine Methods

WS' National Wildlife Research Center is an international leader in nonlethal research to reduce wildlife damage. NWRC's 160 scientists, technicians and support staff develop tools and materials for use throughout the country. In FY 2012, the majority of NWRC's total funding is spent on developing or improving nonlethal controls, including contraceptives to limit growth of overabundant wildlife populations. Many nonlethal methods used today by Federal, State, and private sector wildlife professionals stem from research conducted at or through the Center. These include contraceptives for pigeons, Canada geese and white-tail deer, low-power lasers to disperse some birds, and the Electronic Guard.

A 2001 report by the GAO found that wildlife can pose significant threats to Americans and their property. When wildlife destroy crops, kill livestock, damage houses and businesses, and threaten public health and safety, the results can be costly.

- Wildlife damage to U.S. agriculture alone is estimated at \$944 million annually.
- Livestock losses to wildlife predators, such as coyotes and mountain lions, and feral dogs exceed \$138 million annually. More than 647 thousand head are lost to predators each year (cattle, calves, sheep, lamb, goats, and kids).
- Wildlife damage to blueberries, corn, and sunflowers cost producers more than \$50 million each year.
- Deer collisions with automobiles injure an average of 29,000 people annually and cause more than \$1 billion in damages.
- Wildlife collisions with airplanes cost U.S. civil aviation more than \$700 million each year and put the lives of passengers and crews at risk.

Information about WS work is available on its home page, including its FY 2012 Program Data Reports.

- More than 18.3 million animals, 84.4% of those encountered, were dispersed.
- Non-native birds or birds listed in the "Blackbird Depredation Order" accounted for 84% of the animals taken by WS; these totaled 3,352,385.
- WS took 1,765,446 invasive species, accounting for 53% of all animals taken.
- WS expended \$6.44 million to conduct conservation actions for 169 threatened and endangered species in 36 States and U.S. territories.

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Wildlife Services - A Wildlife Management Role and Public Trust Responsibility



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The Public Trust Doctrine:

- is the foundation for natural resources management in North America
- recognizes that wildlife is a publicly owned natural resource
- establishes local, State and Federal Government's responsibility to provide stewardship of natural resources for the public
- values long term conservation goals, not profit, as the guiding force

Wildlife Services Operates According to the Public Trust Doctrine

The U.S. Congress provides Wildlife Services (WS) with the legislative authority to conduct wildlife damage management, except for urban rodent control, where there is public need. The Public Trust Doctrine, with origins in Roman civil law and English common law, is the foundation of State and Federal wildlife management programs in North America. The basis for the doctrine in the United States was established by the Supreme Court in 1842 (*Martin v. Waddell*) and subsequently supported by other case law rulings during the 19th through the 20th centuries. The Doctrine establishes that wildlife is a natural resource that belongs to the public and that should be maintained through government programs in trust for the people, including future generations. As a Federal wildlife management program, WS conducts wildlife damage management according to the Public Trust Doctrine and its underlying public stewardship principles, not to generate revenue and profit for the Government. The Doctrine guides the relationship between natural resources that are publically owned, and the Government wildlife management programs that provide stewardship to maintain the resources for the benefit of the public and future generations.

Various local, State and Federal agencies, as well as non-profit organizations and commercial businesses engage in habitat conservation and wildlife management – resulting in a matrix of responsibilities and actions that combine to accomplish shared wildlife conservation missions.

Brief Historical Perspective of Government Wildlife Management

The science and profession of wildlife management in the United States, which emerged in the early 1900's, relies on the concept that wildlife is a renewable resource that belongs to the public and is not owned by private individuals. By the 1930's, wildlife management degree programs were in place at the University of Wisconsin and other American colleges and universities, Aldo Leopold had published his seminal volume, Game Management, and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act passed and firmly established Federal authorities in migratory bird conservation. Wildlife Services' enabling legislation, the Animal Damage Control Act of March 2, 1931 was in place, and gave authority to the Secretary of Agriculture to "... conduct a program of wildlife services with respect to injurious animal species ..."

Throughout the twentieth century, the focus of the profession moved from designation of national refuges and parks, to bolstering game species like deer and waterfowl, and then, towards more holistic environmental stewardship in the 1960's and 1970's. As human and wildlife populations grew, wildlife-related problems sometimes developed, and wildlife damage management programs emerged at both the State and Federal levels. In addition to the Federal government's Wildlife Services program, there are numerous State agencies that also contain offices and programs that address wildlife damage issues. Together, WS and their state counterparts collaborate to deliver responsive programs to help people live with wildlife by reducing damage and protecting public health and safety from negative impacts of this public resource.

The Wildlife Society (TWS), a non-profit scientific and educational association that represents wildlife professionals, recognizes that wildlife damage management is an important part of modern wildlife management, and that conservation principles not profit, are its foundation,. TWS maintains a "Wildlife Damage Management Position Statement" that emphasizes the need for careful assessment of wildlife-related problems, including the impact to individuals, the community, and other wildlife species. The North American Model of Wildlife Conservation which guides the activities of many natural resources management programs echoes key elements of the Public Trust Doctrine and promotes the concept that wildlife is a renewable resource and requires science based management.

Wildlife Services' Federal Role is Constantly Evolving

WS' goals and objectives have evolved. When Congress appropriated \$5,000 to create the Office of Economic Ornithology in 1885 as part of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Division of Entomology, the primary focus was the impact of bird damage on



United States Department of Agriculture
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

agriculture. During the ensuing decades, responsibilities included predator control for livestock protection and rabies control; early program priorities revolved around agricultural economics and research on methods and tools to help manage damage issues. The breadth of WS activities has increased over time due, in part, to changing societal, scientific, and economic conditions. Driven by increasingly diverse requests for assistance, WS' operational and research activities now include threatened and endangered species conservation, public health and safety protection, wildlife disease surveillance and monitoring, a nationally coordinated research effort, economic and environmental analyses of wildlife damage management actions, and other activities and programs. Additionally, WS plays a vital role in our Nation's efforts to eliminate the negative impacts of invasive species on the environment.

Wildlife Services' Vision and Mission Today

WS' vision is to improve the coexistence of people and wildlife. In implementing its mission to provide leadership in resolution of wildlife problems, WS optimizes the public value of wildlife by reducing negative aspects associated with damage, including predation, wildlife-aircraft hazards, disease transmission and consumption of crops while also giving due consideration to the impact or needs of the resource owner. By coordinating Federal government involvement in managing wildlife damage, WS officials help ensure that activities are environmentally sound and conducted in compliance with all applicable laws. WS recommends and implements an integrated wildlife damage management approach that includes consideration of a wide variety of effective, safe, responsible and practical solutions. Many of the tools and methods used by WS are not generally available for use by the public, including private wildlife control operators, due to the materials' concentration, safety requirements, or inherent risks associated with use. In order to effectively implement integrated programs WS professional biologists and technicians obtain all necessary training, certifications, licenses, and permits from regulatory and permitting agencies. WS delivers professional wildlife damage management programs that address damage management goals and promote wise use of the wildlife resource. For example, in FY 2012, WS donated 85 tons of edible meat for charitable donation to food banks around the nation.

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 socially responsible methods, tools, and techniques. In FY 2012, the majority of NWRC's research funding was devoted to the development or improvement of nonlethal wildlife damage management tools and methods. Many nonlethal methods used today by Federal, State, and private sector wildlife professionals stem from research conducted at or through NWRC. Through their efforts, NWRC scientists provide WS field biologists, and those who struggle with wildlife damage, an array of tools and methods to employ and adapt to resolve wildlife conflicts.

Wildlife Services Collaborates with the Public and other Agencies

Wildlife management agencies and programs at the local, State and Federal levels collaborate and coordinate to ensure that the principles of the Public Trust Doctrine are implemented for the public good. Memoranda of Understandings (MOU's) and other agreements among agencies ensure that conservation principles and responsibilities are clarified to maximize efficiencies and capitalize on agencies' expertise and authorities.

MOU's reinforce the agencies' commitment to jointly-held natural resource stewardship principles. WS currently has 112 MOU's in 48 States and Guam to support collaborative wildlife manage-

ment efforts. For example, in Montana, WS has MOU's with the Montana Department of Livestock and Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP), as well as the Crow Tribe of Montana, Blackfoot Nation, Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead Nation, Fort Peck Assiniboine and Sioux Tribes, and Gros Ventre and Assiniboine Tribes of the Fort Belknap Indian Community to support WS work related to predator and other wildlife damage management. WS also has agreements in Montana with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and Montana FWP to conduct grizzly bear damage management and support radio-collaring for research according to the Endangered Species Act. Nationwide during FY 2012, WS had agreements and MOU's that supported WS work to conserve 168 threatened and endangered species. In Missouri, WS conducts an integrated feral swine management program pursuant to a multi-agency MOU among the FWS, U.S. Forest Service (U.S. FS), National Park Service, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and three Missouri State Departments – Natural Resources (Wildlife), Agriculture, and Health & Senior Services.

In Wisconsin, WS implements several wildlife management programs based on MOU's with 4 State agencies, the University of Wisconsin, and several Tribes including the Bad River Band of the Lake Superior Chippewa and the Forest County Potawatomi Community. WS programs in the State include beaver management to protect native wild rice and to reclaim trout stream habitat, an integrated Canada goose management program to protect agricultural crops, and a wildlife damage claims program to compensate farmers who experience significant wildlife damage. WS wildlife management work with Tribes in Wisconsin focuses on resolving problems with black bear, beaver, and other wildlife. Additionally, WS biologists in Wisconsin investigate claims of gray wolf predation on livestock, pets and other domesticated animals, and implement wildlife management actions to reduce threats and damage from wolves through an agreement with the State Department of Natural Resources. WS' collaborations with State and Federal agencies in these three states, and around the nation, attest to the Program's commitment to managing wildlife damage according to the Public Trust Doctrine and government agencies' shared conservation goals and missions.

WS also has national level MOU's to clarify wildlife management responsibilities and programs with the Federal Aviation Administration, FWS, U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Bureau of Land Management, Department of Defense, and the National Association of State Aviation Officials. In 2008, WS entered into an MOU with the National Pest Management Association (NPMA), which represents the pest management industry. WS informs all requestors that other service providers may be available to conduct direct control assistance targeting European starlings, house sparrows, and pigeons in areas where private sector companies have an established ability to meet customer demand.

WS also provides assistance to the Department of Defense (DOD) to help alleviate property damage, realize natural resource protection goals and reduce wildlife hazards to aviation at airbases. Consistent with the Public Trust Doctrine and DOD's role as a Federal land holder, DOD is required by Federal law (Sikes Act, 16 USC 670a-670o, 74 Stat. 1052) to partner with Government programs that have the capabilities to perform natural resources work they require.

Wildlife Services' Work is Authorized by Congress

As a Government wildlife management program, WS ensures that wildlife resources are conserved for the public good. WS provides advice, recommendations, and direct operational assistance as authorized by The Animal Damage Control Act of March 2, 1931, (46 Stat. 1468; 7 USC 426-426b), as amended. Authority also exists in the Rural Development, Agriculture, and Related

Agencies Appropriations Act of 1988 (Public Law 100-202, 101 Stat. 1329-331; 7 USC 426c), which authorizes the Department of Agriculture to conduct activities to control nuisance mammals and birds with the exception of “urban rodent control.” By excluding urban rodent control, WS focuses its efforts on wildlife and does not overlap with the private pest control industry. Wildlife biologists, zoologists, and conservationists recognize that “urban rodent” means three species of commensal rats and mice: Norway rat (*Rattus norvegicus*), the black rat (a.k.a. roof rat, *Rattus rattus*), and the house mouse (*Mus musculus*). Consistent with this definition, WS does not conduct operations involving these three species in urban areas.

WS supports and adheres to the Federal Endangered Species Act and counterpart State laws to ensure that threatened and endangered species conservation goals and processes are met. The National Environmental Policy Act guides WS’ environmental review processes, and ensures that the public is appropriately informed of agency decision making. In managing damage related to migratory birds, WS complies with and supports the provisions of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. To further the Government’s duty to lead in the protection of this international resource, Executive Order 13186 (Migratory Bird Conservation, 1999) creates a comprehensive strategy for the conservation of migratory birds by the Federal government; APHIS and FWS developed and signed an interagency MOU in 2012, to strengthen both agencies’ commitments and communication related to migratory bird conservation. WS activities also support Executive Order 13112 (Invasive Species, 1999), which established the National Invasive Species Council (NISC), co-chaired by the Secretaries of the Interior, Agriculture, and Commerce. The Order seeks to prevent the introduction of invasive species and provide for their control and to minimize the economic, ecological, and human health impacts that invasive species cause. WS conducts invasive species activities involving feral swine, nutria, European starlings and other species, in partnership with agencies, organizations and local governments, to protect a wide variety of resources pursuant to Federal and State mandates, including the invasive species Executive Order.

Wildlife Services is Non-Regulatory and Service-Oriented

WS is a non-regulatory, service-oriented Federal program that works to improve the coexistence of people and wildlife and provides services in rural, suburban, and urban areas to those who request assistance. WS’ legislative authority allows the program to conduct cooperative wildlife damage activities, except for urban rodent control, and to enter into agreements with beneficiaries of services to collect funds to offset costs. WS provides service through provision of information (advice and recommendations) and field-based delivery of operational wildlife damage management actions. Typically, the public implements WS recommendations related to habitat management (e.g., fencing and exclusionary devices, vegetation management) and cultural practices (e.g., cessation of wildlife feeding, changing animal husbandry techniques, adjusting planting schedules) themselves since they do not typically require special wildlife management skills, permits or equipment. When requested, WS implements solutions on-site, through direct management assistance, when the wildlife-related problem is complex and cannot be safely or effectively resolved by the public.

Wildlife Services’ Partner-Based Funding Approach

WS activities and processes are congressionally-directed. The Rural Development, Agriculture, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act of 1988 (Public Law 100-202, 101 Stat. 1329-331; 7 USC 426c) describes WS capabilities related to cooperating with program recipients and to collect money in support of the

work. The Act of 1988 established that WS can “enter into agreements...and to deposit any money collected under any such agreement into the appropriation accounts that incur the costs...” The Program implements this capability via cooperative service or interagency agreements in a process known as cost sharing. In 2011, the House Agriculture Appropriation Committee further directed APHIS to maximize the use of cost sharing agreements or matching requirements with program cooperators.

WS’ reimbursement is limited to no more than the total direct and indirect costs that are incurred by the Program in providing the requested service. WS’ practice of limiting charges to costs incurred is in line with the Public Trust Doctrine’s conservation principles, WS’ enabling legislation, Congressional intent, and recognized accounting principles. This practice ensures that citizens reimburse the Government only for the actual cost of the wildlife management service they receive.

WS works on a cost-share basis with cooperators to protect resources. Cooperators may pay as much as 100% of the costs associated with wildlife damage management services (e.g., airport wildlife hazards mitigation). During 2012, WS program cooperators provided 65% of the funding for operational program delivery by WS in the states nationwide, to protect resources in the following categories: health and safety (\$26.0 million), agriculture (\$21.6 million), property (\$14.9 million), and natural resources (\$10.8 million).

Wildlife Services Provides Solutions to Empower Others

Each year, WS personnel conduct training courses, field visits, personal consultations and other outreach to provide tailored recommendations that empower others to solve their wildlife-related problems. In FY 2012, WS provided technical assistance to approximately 1.6 million people. WS biologists teach classes and courses in partnership with universities across the nation to help ensure that the next generation of wildlife biologists is prepared to help the public live with wildlife. WS provides substantial training and other technical assistance that benefits private sector wildlife control businesses and others around the nation:

- MD/DE/DC - referred 3,073 requests for assistance with wildlife problems to private wildlife control operators.
- NH - provided training to private wildlife control operators and referred 515 nuisance calls to private wildlife control operators.
- IN - maintained a “Wildlife Conflicts Information” website, with Purdue University and the Indiana Department of Natural Resources that provided the public with contact information for hundreds of private wildlife control operators.
- NC - partnered with the NC Wildlife Resources Commission to implement a program to license private wildlife control operators. WS delivered training classes that certified/recertified 220 Agents (to date, 1,400 Agents have been trained).
- TX - provided training for certification/recertification for State-licensed Pest Control Operators and for Nuisance Wildlife Control Operators. WS regularly referred calls to wildlife control operators in Harris, Bexar and El Paso counties – areas with more than 26% of the State’s population.
- Nationwide - trained more than 4,600 airport personnel to conduct wildlife hazard management actions on airports.

Wildlife Services’ mission continues to focus on resolving damage conflicts between the public and wildlife while being accountable to the needs of people and wildlife.