

Wildlife Services

Protecting People
Protecting Agriculture
Protecting Wildlife

State Report

FY 2012

Oregon



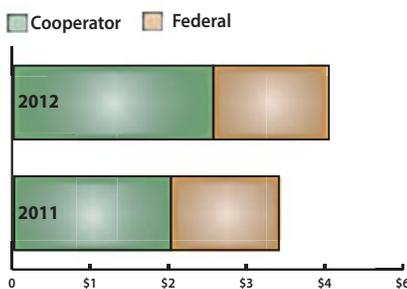
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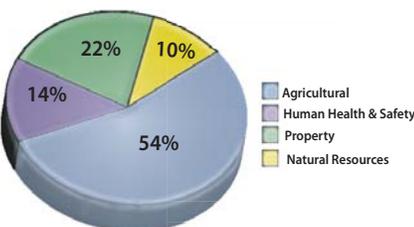
Major Cooperators

- Oregon state agencies and universities
- County governments and sheriff's departments
- Cities and municipalities throughout Oregon
- Federal Aviation Administration, civilian airports and military airbases
- Private individuals and associations
- Agricultural associations
- Sportsmen
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- U.S. Forest Service
- U.S. Bureau of Land Management

Total Funding (Millions)



Resources Protected % of Total Funds



USDA Resolves Wildlife Conflicts in Oregon

Every day, the Wildlife Services (WS) program in Oregon helps citizens, organizations, industries, and Government agencies resolve conflicts with wildlife to protect agriculture, other property, and natural resources, and to safeguard human health and safety. WS' professional wildlife biologists and specialists implement effective, selective, and responsible strategies that value wildlife, the environment, and the resources being protected. WS manages wildlife damage according to its public trust stewardship responsibilities as a Federal natural resource management program. 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 assistance to the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) received a Federal 2011 Exemplary Ecosystem Initiative Award. WS implements nonlethal exclusion and bird harassment at bridge sites slated for repair or replacement, allowing ODOT to complete critical highway infrastructure projects while minimizing impacts on Federally protected migratory birds. WS-Oregon works at hundreds of sites to prevent birds and bats from using them for nesting or roosting, saving the State hundreds of millions of dollars.

Applying Science and Expertise to Help the Public

WS frequently provides information, advice, equipment, and materials that enable people to resolve wildlife conflicts on their own. Often, this technical assistance can be provided in person, by telephone, or through the mail or internet. During 2012, WS delivered technical advice and recommendations to more than 1.6 million people.

WS also implements solutions on-site, through direct management assistance, when the wildlife-related problem is complex and cannot be safely or effectively resolved by others. WS' National Wildlife Research Center conducts scientific research and assessments to refine methods and develop new science-based solutions to wildlife challenges.

With a State cougar population exceeding 5,700, local densities exceed any documented in North America. Young and displaced cougars looking to establish territories encroach on residential areas, threatening public safety. WS works cooperatively with the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) and the Oregon State Police (OSP) to resolve cougar conflicts. The expanding population coincided with increased conflicts with livestock production, big game management, human safety and the loss of pets. WS provides training for ODFW, OSP, and local law enforcement on identifying cougar signs and victims and implementing cougar management actions.

WS applies and recommends an integrated wildlife damage management approach that incorporates biological, economic, public, environmental, and other information into decision making. The following examples highlight WS' role in protecting resources in Oregon.

Protecting Crops and Other Agricultural Resources—Agricultural landscapes provide abundant wildlife habitat. WS assists farmers and ranchers to protect crops and other agricultural resources and facilities from damage caused by waterfowl, deer, wild turkeys, gulls, bears, and other species.

Timber production plays a vital role in Oregon's economy, culture, and customs. The forest products industry is the State's largest manufacturing employer, with 65,000 Oregonians working in sawmills, plywood plants, pulp and paper manufacturing, logging and trucking companies, and wood furniture manufacturing facilities. Timber harvests have shifted from public to private lands in recent decades. Damage to private tree stands is conservatively estimated at \$15 million annually. Bears emerging from hibernation forage for food by peeling the outer bark and eating the forming vascular tissues causing significant damage.



United States Department of Agriculture
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

A single bear can damage 50 to 70 trees in a day. Unchecked, bear can damage more than 70% of the trees in a stand. WS assists timber producers by incorporating multiple methods to minimize or eliminate damage. Steps could include selectively removing bears causing damage, providing alternative feed for bears, and instituting practices that may make trees less palatable to bears.

Protecting Livestock from Predation—Despite producers' best efforts to protect their livestock, thousands of domesticated farm animals are killed by predators each year. The most recent reports by the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) livestock producers in Oregon reported that producers lose about 7,700 sheep and 3,800 cattle to predators annually. Producers often turn to WS for assistance in reducing and preventing further predation. The integrated approach implemented by WS includes recommendations applied by the producers and, in many cases, operational wildlife management implemented by WS.

In 2012, WS-Oregon spent more than 640 hours assisting ODFW by investigating suspected wolf/livestock depredation. During investigations WS helped document non-lethal preventive measures livestock producers were implementing and made additional recommendations where appropriate.

Protecting Human Health and Safety at Airports —Wildlife strikes cause more than 760,000 hours of aircraft down time and cost the nation's civil aviation industry approximately \$700 million annually. American military aircraft sustain losses exceeding \$10 million annually. WS collaborates closely with the Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Defense, and other Government agencies and provided assistance to 772 airports in 2012.

WS has assisted most of Oregon's major airports and associated Air National Guard Units by providing technical assistance, conducting wildlife hazard assessments, writing wildlife hazard management plans, dispersing or removing wildlife, and training airport staff on ways to minimize wildlife threats. The Oregon Department of Aviation (ODOA) relies on WS to review land development projects to evaluate the potential to attract wildlife and create wildlife hazards to aircraft operations.

Protecting Threatened and Endangered Species and Other Natural Resources—WS contributes to the conservation of species listed as threatened and endangered (T&E) through partnerships with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), State wildlife agencies, organizations, and landowners. During 2012, WS safeguarded populations of 168 T&E species nationwide.

Predators have been responsible for more than 60% of all egg destruction and mortality of young western snowy plover, a Federally threatened bird. When nonlethal methods failed, in 2001 WS began assisting plover conservation through selective removal of avian and mammalian predators. Since then, plover nesting success on Oregon beaches has been the highest recorded since monitoring began in 1990. Data indicates predator control is helping plover numbers climb toward recovery goals. In 2005, WS-Oregon was jointly recognized by the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management for its role in the Western Snowy Plover Recovery Project and awarded Conservation Project of the Year. By 2012, 231 breeding plovers produced 173 fledglings.

Protecting Oregon from Invasive Species—Nonnative species that cause harm are collectively known as invasive species, which may prey upon, displace, or otherwise harm native species. Some also alter ecosystems, transport disease, interfere

with crop production, or cause illnesses in animals and humans. Executive Order 13112 establishes

Federal leadership responsibilities regarding invasive species—Feral swine, an invasive species, are prolific breeders and thrive in most habitats. This growing population and distribution is associated with property damage and negative effects on public health, domestic animal health, crop production, and natural resources.

Since 1999 WS has worked with small grants from local soil and water conservation districts in north-central Oregon to remove feral swine. This work protects stream habitat critical to T&E salmon and steelhead, reduces the spread of noxious weeds, and safeguards against diseases carried by swine. WS has worked closely with private landowners and public lands managers to remove nearly 450 feral swine and sample diseases such as pseudorabies, swine brucellosis, and classical swine fever.

Looking to the Future

WS continues to provide the citizens of Oregon with safe, effective, and responsible management assistance for a variety of wildlife damage problems. The potential for human-wildlife conflicts likely will increase and WS' ability to respond will depend on personnel and resource availability, as well as supportive legislative authorities.

In Oregon, WS is receiving increasing numbers of requests for assistance with problems associated with wildlife at airports, coyotes in urban/suburban areas, wolves, wildlife diseases, and other wildlife.

The successful reintroduction of wolves to the North Rocky Mountains has led to wolves dispersing into Oregon and establishing packs, resulting in wolf /livestock conflicts. Efforts to control predator damage caused by coyotes, cougars, bears, foxes, and bobcats will be complicated because traditional predator management tools will be restricted, and likely more costly, when wolves are present.

WS strives to meet the demands for assistance within the constraints of its existing resources and capabilities so that all citizens have access to program services. Collaborative, partner-based approaches will be increasingly important among natural resource, agriculture, and health agencies to meet public needs.

Wildlife Services Funding in Oregon

In addition to receiving Federally allocated funds, WS also receives funding from program beneficiaries such as agricultural producers, airports, individual citizens, businesses, organizations, and other Federal, State, and local Government agencies. See charts for sources of funding and resources protected.

Top 5 Major WS Assistance Activities in Oregon

- Reducing mammalian and avian predator damage to crops and livestock
- Assessing and reducing wildlife hazards at airports
- Protecting timber crops from damage caused by bear
- Protecting public safety and health from wildlife
- Conducting wildlife disease surveillance and monitoring

Top 4 WS Research Projects of Interest to Oregon

- Identifying and reducing wildlife hazards to aviation
- Developing new methods to protect livestock and wildlife from predators
- Improving assessment, sampling and economic methods for wildlife damage management
- Developing tools/methods to reduce waterfowl damage to varied resources