

# Wildlife Services

Protecting People  
Protecting Agriculture  
Protecting Wildlife

State Report

FY 2015

# Indiana

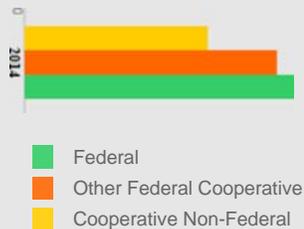


### Contact Information:

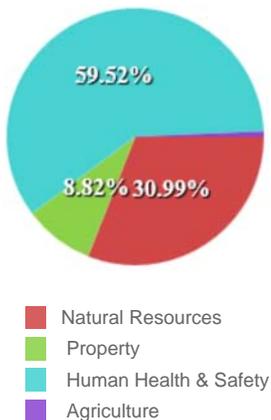
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### Total Funding (\$ Million)



### Resources Protected % of Total Funds



### USDA Resolves Wildlife Conflicts in Indiana

Every day, the Wildlife Services (WS) program in Indiana 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 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-Indiana works with Federal and State officials, industry, and individuals to protect property and reduce human health and safety risks at airports, businesses, residential areas, public lands and along roadways.

### 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. During 2014, WS delivered technical advice and recommendations to more than 1.6 million people.

In most cases, landowners and resource managers use technical information to implement habitat management and other methods to reduce damage on their properties. WS-Indiana provides homeowners, gardeners, and resource managers with information on science-based, environmentally friendly solutions to wildlife damage problems through educational programs, telephone consultations, personal consultations, and online assistance.

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.

WS applies and recommends an integrated wildlife damage management approach that incorporates biological, economic, public, environmental and other information into decision making. WS implements a wide range of damage management activities. The following highlight WS' role in protecting resources in Indiana.

**Protecting Human Health and Safety at Airports** — Wildlife strikes cause more than 590,000 hours of aircraft down time and cost the nation's civil aviation industry approximately \$937 million annually. American military aircraft sustain losses exceeding \$10 million annually. WS has assisted the Nation's airports for decades and collaborates closely with the Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Defense, and other Government agencies. WS provided assistance to 839 airports in 2014, including advice, training, on-site evaluations and assessments of wildlife hazards, and direct operational management to reduce wildlife strikes.

WS-Indiana works with military and civilian airports to manage wildlife which pose hazards to aircraft and human safety. Airport assistance ranges from technical assistance to biologists stationed at the airport to provide direct management assistance. WS biologists and specialists conduct hazard assessments, provide management recommendations, and provide training to airport staff. WS biologists are onsite at three Indiana airports to provide wildlife hazard consultation and management services.

**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 2014, WS safeguarded populations of 162 T&E species nationwide by reducing the impacts of predation and competition from more abundant species, consulting with the FWS to ensure that WS programs do not jeopardize listed species, and developing and sharing information that contributed to conservation of listed species.

WS-Indiana provided technical assistance on habitat modification and predator protection options to protect least terns. WS-Indiana also provided management services in critical habitat to aid in the protection of the Karner blue butterfly. WS-Indiana protects many species from potentially hazardous chemicals to include the piping plover in northern Indiana.

**Monitoring and Controlling Wildlife Diseases** WS works with Federal and State wildlife, health, and agriculture agencies to monitor and conduct surveillance for diseases in wildlife that could impact agriculture or human health. The program's Wildlife Disease Biologists act as WS' first responders through the National Wildlife Disease Program's Surveillance and Emergency Response System. Information



United States Department of Agriculture  
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

obtained through disease surveillance in wildlife populations enables agencies to better prepare for and respond to outbreaks and emergencies.

WS-Indiana and its cooperating partners in the Indiana Wildlife Disease Surveillance Network collected samples from live and hunter-harvested wildlife as part of an early detection effort for wildlife diseases such as tularemia, canine parvovirus, canine distemper, tuberculosis, chronic wasting disease, and leptospirosis.

**Protecting Indiana from Invasive Species** — Invasive, nonnative species may prey upon, displace, or otherwise harm native wildlife. 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: to prevent the introduction of invasive species and to provide for their eradication or control to minimize the economic, ecological, and human health impacts.

WS-Indiana conducts invasive species activities in partnership with Federal and State agencies and others to protect human health and safety, property, agriculture and natural resources.

European starling flocks of up to 300,000 birds occupy urban areas in Indiana during the winter months. Their droppings have caused damage to buildings, monuments, sidewalks, and caused public health/sanitation concerns. Feral pigeons have caused significant damage and public health/sanitation concerns in urban areas as well as multiple production facilities of consumable goods in Indiana. WS-Indiana has significantly reduced the damage in these areas using an integrated management approach. WS-Indiana has worked very closely with the Indiana Department of Natural Resources as well as many lake associations in the state to manage the invasive mute swan.

**Reducing the Negative Impacts of Feral Swine** — Feral swine, an invasive species, are prolific breeders and thrive in rural, suburban and urban habitats. By 2012, their populations had expanded to at least 39 States, numbering approximately five million animals. This expanding population and distribution is associated with property damage and negative effects on public health, domestic animal health, crop production, and natural resources. Currently, the total aggregate cost of damage is estimated to be \$1.5 billion annually, with at least \$800 million related to direct costs to agriculture.

WS-Indiana provides technical assistance to landowners and property managers experiencing damage from feral swine. WS-Indiana also works with State and Federal agencies and private landowners to reduce feral swine damage and populations.

**Protecting Multiple Resources from Beaver Damage** — During the past 20 years beaver populations have increased throughout the United States due to lower demand for beaver products and decreases in recreational trapping. This growth has positive effects, such as increased wetland habitat, as well as negative impacts from dam building and tree cutting. Beaver dams back up water that floods and kills valuable timber and destroys or damages cropland, roadways, sewer and septic systems, and water treatment and electric utilities. Dams may also negatively impact fish populations by changing the movement and temperature of stream water. Beaver cut down trees that are valued for timber production and landscaping.

Beaver damage to drainage structures and railroad trestles have increased in Indiana. WS works with landowners, utilities and the transportation industry to resolve beaver damage utilizing IWDM methods.

**Responding to Emergencies** — WS has a long history of responding to emergency requests for assistance from farmers, ranchers, and others. Increasingly, WS is asked to assist in responding to natural and manmade disasters such as hurricanes, floods, and oil spills. WS employees use their specialized skills on

emergency response teams to recover wild and domestic animals and haze animals away from contaminated areas. WS' Wildlife Disease Biologists have the necessary emergency response training and clearances, and can be mobilized quickly.

### Looking to the Future

WS continues to provide the citizens of Indiana 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 the availability of personnel and resources, as well as legislative authorities to support these activities.

WS-Indiana is receiving increasing numbers of requests for assistance with problems associated with feral swine, wildlife at airports, wildlife diseases, blackbirds and starlings, and invasive species.

### Wildlife Services Funding in Indiana

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 Indiana

- Protecting bridges, roads, and natural resources from beaver damage
- Assessing and reducing wildlife hazards at airports
- Conserving threatened and endangered species
- Assessing and reducing public health threats from starlings and other pest birds
- Protecting agricultural animals and pets from wildlife-borne diseases

### Top 5 WS Research Projects of Interest to Indiana

- Developing tools/methods to reduce mute swan damage to human health & safety
- Evaluating the effectiveness of wildlife damage management to reduce starling and other pest bird damage to industrial workers and facilities
- Developing and refining tools/methods to reduce feral swine in Indiana
- Evaluating and managing plant community composition to reduce the attractiveness of vegetation to hazardous wildlife.
- Evaluating the effectiveness of wildlife damage management methods to prevent exposure of wildlife to contaminants.

### Major Cooperators:

- Indiana Department of Natural Resources
- Purdue University
- Indiana Board of Animal Health
- Indianapolis Pest Bird Task Force
- Indiana Dairy Producers
- Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore
- United States Army Corps of Engineers
- CSX Transportation
- Indianapolis International Airport
- Ft. Wayne International Airport
- Evansville Regional Airport
- Indianapolis Downtown Inc.
- Indiana Air National Guard