

Wildlife Services

Protecting People
Protecting Agriculture
Protecting Wildlife

State Report

FY 2015

New Hampshire

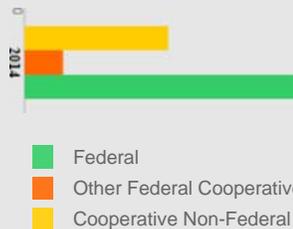


Contact Information:

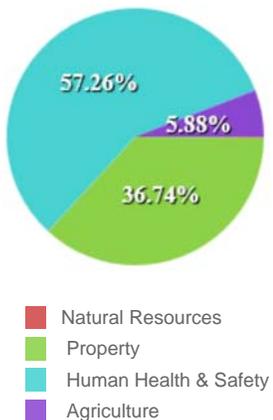
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Total Funding (\$ Million)



Resources Protected % of Total Funds



USDA Resolves Wildlife Conflicts in New Hampshire

Every day, the Wildlife Services (WS) program in New Hampshire (NH) helps citizens, organizations, industries, and Government agencies resolve conflicts with wildlife to protect agriculture, other property, and natural resources, and 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. 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.

New Hampshire features a mix of urban/suburban, and rural environments hosting an equally wide array of wildlife. This is reflected in WS-NH's diverse work. The program cooperates with State and Federal officials, municipalities, industry, and individuals to prevent wildlife damage to fruit, row crops and livestock; protect property; guard natural resources from wildlife depredation; reduce wildlife hazards to aviation; protect people, pets, and livestock from wildlife-borne diseases; and educate the public about wildlife and damage management.

Specific projects conducted by WS in New Hampshire include: mitigating bear-human interactions; assisting New Hampshire Fish and Game (NHFG) to protect and monitor State endangered upland sandpipers; conducting sampling and monitoring for rabies, chronic wasting disease, and other diseases; and managing damage caused by deer, waterfowl, gulls, starlings, and other wildlife.

Applying Science and Expertise to Help the Public

WS frequently provides technical assistance (TA) that enables people to resolve wildlife conflicts on their own. This TA is provided in person, by telephone or through the mail or internet. During 2014, WS delivered technical advice and recommendations to more than 1.6 million people nationwide.

In most cases, landowners and resource managers use technical information to implement habitat management and other methods to reduce damage on their properties. WS uses an integrated wildlife damage management approach and implements a wide range of activities. In 2014, WS provided technical and direct assistance through phone consultations, site visits, and education. WS-NH conducts an extensive equipment loan program and provides electric fencing, pyrotechnics, repellants and other deterrents to assist the public in reducing nuisance wildlife damage.

For example, an estimated 31,000 resident Canada geese currently occur in the state. As population increases, conflicts develop: fecal droppings accumulate, overgrazing damages landscaping, and aggressive nesting geese threaten people. WS provided advice, loaned equipment and utilized direct control to assist 91 NH residents, municipalities and businesses resolve nuisance goose concerns in 2014. WS implements a wide range of damage management activities. The following examples highlight WS' role in protecting resources in New Hampshire.

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

Black bear foraging impacts agricultural producers across the state. In cooperation with State agencies, WS increased staff stationed throughout the state to provide timely response, abatement and assessment capabilities. WS addressed property and agricultural damage and human safety threats through a combination of site visits, harassment, fencing distributions, and trap-and-relocate activities. Since FY 2006, an expanded toll-free Bear Information and Referral Service has shared information and assisted municipalities, campgrounds and restaurants experiencing bear conflicts, which allowed the State to reduce the total funds reimbursed for bear damage to agriculture. WS-NH has seen a dramatic increase (157%) in assistance requests -- from 262 received in 2006 to 673 in 2014.

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



United States Department of Agriculture
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

advice, training, on-site evaluations and assessments of wildlife hazards, and direct operational management to reduce wildlife strikes.

WS-NH conducts harassment and control activities at one airport, and implements an integrated bird harassment program at a nearby landfill. WS consults with and trains airport personnel, and assists in acquiring the necessary permits that allow designated personnel to address bird and mammal hazards at these facilities.

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 165 T&E species nationwide. WS-NH works with the State to protect several T&E species by removing feral cats, skunks and raccoons on piping plovers nesting beaches; loaning equipment to State contractors for tern restoration projects; and assisting in monitoring upland sandpipers at Portsmouth International Airport and Northern long-eared bats, statewide.

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 (SERS). Information obtained through disease surveillance in wildlife populations enables WS and other agencies to better prepare for and respond to outbreaks and emergencies.

Reducing the Negative Impacts of Feral Swine — Feral swine, an invasive species, are prolific breeders and thrive in rural, suburban, and urban habitats. By 2014, their populations had expanded to at least 40 States, numbering approximately 5 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.

Due to increasing damage complaints and sightings, WS-NH is working with the NHFG to investigate all feral swine reports and continue the feral swine trapping program that was initiated in 2009. WS collects disease samples from all feral swine removed.

Looking to the Future

WS continues to provide New Hampshire residents 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-NH is receiving increasing numbers of requests for assistance with problems associated with feral swine, wildlife at airports, coyotes in urban/suburban areas, geese, bears, and beavers.

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 New Hampshire

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 New Hampshire

- Protecting agricultural crops and property from damage caused by bear, deer and moose
- Assessing and reducing wildlife hazards at airports
- Conserving threatened and endangered species
- Protecting public safety from wildlife
- Reducing feral swine, geese, gull, and starling damage to resources

Top 5 WS Research Projects of Interest to New Hampshire

- Evaluating the effectiveness of wildlife damage management to reduce wildlife damage to aviation
- Evaluating and monitoring wildlife for diseases
- Quantifying and assessing the damage caused by turkey, deer, and bear to agriculture
- Developing tools/methods to reduce goose, gull and raptor damage
- Evaluating the effectiveness of American kestrel relocation

Major Cooperators:

- New Hampshire Departments of Fish and Game, Agriculture, Health, and Environmental Services
- New Hampshire Cooperative Extension Service
- University of New Hampshire
- New Hampshire Air National Guard
- Pease International Tradeport and regional airports
- The Cities of Berlin, Nashua and Lebanon
- Waste Management of New Hampshire, Inc.
- Androscoggin Valley Regional Refuse Disposal District
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- Federal Aviation Administration