

Wildlife Services

Protecting People
Protecting Agriculture
Protecting Wildlife

State Report

FY 2015

Oregon

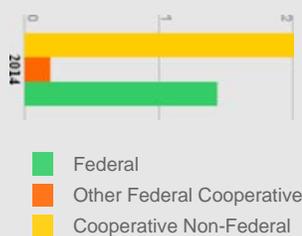


Contact Information:

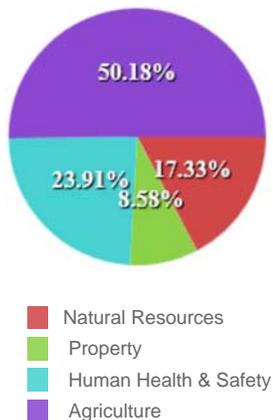
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Total Funding (\$ Million)



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, 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

WS on-going assistance to the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) received a Federal 2011 Exemplary Ecosystem Initiative Award. WS implements nonlethal exclusion and dispersal at bridge sites slated for repair or replacement, allowing ODOT to complete critical infrastructure projects while minimizing impacts on protected migratory birds.

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.

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.

During the first 15 months of the 2013-2015 OR State biennium, WS field employees addressed 1,011 unique combinations of wildlife species and resource type conflict scenarios. It worked 1,720 person-day visits on a minimum of 1,361 different properties in 35 counties on a total of 6.9 million acres; 5.5 million acres of private land and 1.4 million acres of Federal/State/county/city lands.

With a state's cougar population exceeding 6,000, local densities surpass any documented in North America. Young, displaced cougars encroach on residential areas. Expanding populations coincided with increased conflicts with human safety, livestock production, big game management, and pet losses. WS cooperates with the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) and the Oregon State Police (OSP) to resolve conflicts. WS trains 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 incorporating biological, economic, public, environmental, and other information into decision making. Annually, the program presents ???The Producer of the Year Award,??? to an Oregon sheep producer who proactively implements non-lethal preventive measures to minimize the risk of predation. The producer teams with the local WS specialist to implement an integrated plan tailored to the specific operation.

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 and culture 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, where damage is conservatively estimated at \$15 million annually. Emerging from hibernation, bear forage by peeling the outer bark and eating the forming vascular tissues causing significant damage. A single bear can damage 50 to 70 trees in a day. Unchecked, bear can damage more than 70 percent of the trees in a stand. WS assists by incorporating multiple methods to minimize or eliminate damage: 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, predators kill thousands of domesticated farm animals each year. The most recent National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) reports showed livestock producers in Oregon 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.



United States Department of Agriculture
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

The integrated approach implemented by WS includes recommendations applied by the producers and operational wildlife management implemented by WS.

WS discusses integrated predation management at meetings of Oregon's major agriculture commodity groups, local livestock associations, and other groups. WS-Oregon held the inaugural workshop in WS' initiative to conduct predation management workshops emphasizing non-lethal methods throughout the West. Its 2014 event in Pendleton was open to county/state/federal officials, Tribal representatives, livestock producers and wildlife advocates.

While assisting ODFW in the investigation of suspected wolf/livestock depredation events, WS documents implemented non-lethal preventive measures and makes additional recommendations where appropriate.

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 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. The Oregon Department of Aviation 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 2014, WS safeguarded populations of 162 T&E species nationwide.

Predators have caused more than 60 percent 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. Subsequent plover nesting success on Oregon beaches has been the highest recorded since monitoring began in 1990, with plover numbers climbing 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. During FY 2014 WS-Oregon received new Congressional funding that could be applied to the 2007 Oregon Feral Swine Action Plan. With that funding and using a helicopter, 155 feral swine were removed and field equipment was secured for use in a multi-year effort to eradicate feral swine in Oregon.

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 and supportive legislative authorities.

In Oregon, requests increased for assistance with problems associated with wildlife at airports, coyotes and cougars in urban/suburban areas, 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 other predators will be complicated because traditional 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 6 Major WS Assistance Activities in Oregon

- Reducing mammalian and avian predator damage to crops and livestock
- Feral swine eradication to protect natural resources, agriculture, and human health & safety
- 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 including evaluating the use of large breed guard dogs in preventing wolf predation
- Improving assessment, sampling and economic methods for wildlife damage management
- Evaluating the importance of beaver to the life history of salmon & steelhead

Major Cooperators:

- Oregon State agencies and universities
- County Governments and sheriff's departments
- Cities and municipalities
- 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