

# Wildlife Services

Protecting People  
Protecting Agriculture  
Protecting Wildlife

State Report

FY 2015

# South Dakota



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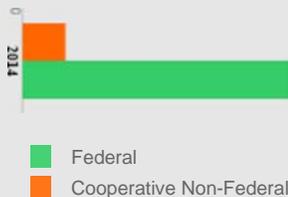
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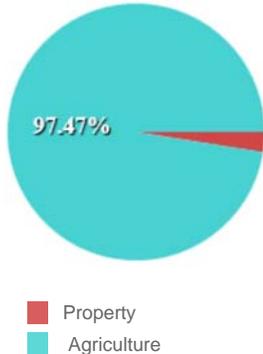
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### Total Funding (\$ Million)



### Resources Protected % of Total Funds



### USDA Resolves Wildlife Conflicts in South Dakota

Every day, the Wildlife Services (WS) program in South Dakota 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.

South Dakota is characterized by a diverse landscape of river valleys, rolling prairie and badlands. Vast open spaces occupied by farms, ranches and small towns contrast with larger urban and suburban areas. WS assists with the management of wildlife conflicts, which impact livestock producers, farmers, homeowners, airports and public land managers. Livestock production in South Dakota contributes substantially to the State's economy. The 2011 farm receipts for cattle and calves totaled \$2.2 billion while total cash receipts from sheep production were \$33.9 million.

### 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 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 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 examples highlight WS' role in protecting resources in South Dakota.

**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) for cattle (2011) and sheep and goat (2010) indicate predation on more than 647 thousand head of livestock annually, resulting in combined losses of nearly \$138 million. Producers often turn to WS for assistance in reducing and preventing further predation. The integrated approach implemented by WS includes recommendations that are applied by the producers and, in many cases, operational wildlife management implemented by WS.

WS conducts aerial operations to support the South Dakota Game, Fish, and Parks' integrated predator damage management program for the protection of livestock.

**Protecting Human Health and Safety at Airports** — Globally, wildlife strikes with aircraft have killed more than 231 people and destroyed more than 220 aircraft since 1988. 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 has completed comprehensive wildlife hazard assessments and also helped develop wildlife hazard management plans for the major civilian airports in South Dakota. WS also conducts training for airport employees on the best management practices for minimizing wildlife/aircraft encounters.

**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 (USFWS), State wildlife agencies, organizations, and landowners. During 2014, WS safeguarded populations of 162 T&E species nationwide by reducing the impacts of predation and



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Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

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-South Dakota has cooperated with the USFWS and the U.S. Forest Service on their efforts to maintain and expand populations of the endangered black-footed ferret.

**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 agencies to better prepare for and respond to outbreaks and emergencies.

WS-South Dakota has assisted with monitoring of plague that poses a threat to human health and safety as well as to black-footed ferrets.

### **Looking to the Future**

WS continues to provide the citizens of South Dakota 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 strives to meet the requests 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 South Dakota**

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 South Dakota**

- Protecting livestock from coyote predation
- Assessing and reducing wildlife hazards at airports
- Conserving threatened and endangered species
- Assessing and reducing public health threats from wildlife diseases
- Protecting agricultural animals and pets from wildlife-borne diseases

### **Top 3 WS Research Projects of Interest to South Dakota**

- Developing tools/methods to reduce coyote predation to livestock
- Evaluating the effectiveness of wildlife damage management to reduce wildlife conflicts to aviation safety
- Evaluating and monitoring wildlife for diseases

### **Major Cooperators:**

- South Dakota Game, Fish, and Parks
- South Dakota Department of Agriculture
- U.S. Forest Service
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- Livestock Associations