



PROGRAM ACTIVITY REPORT (PAR)

RE-EXAMINING WILDLIFE SERVICES' DISEASE MANAGEMENT, RESEARCH, AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE ROLES

Over the last several weeks, Drs. Rich Minnis and Gene Rhodes of Wildlife Services announced that they would be leaving the program to pursue other career opportunities. Rich has been serving in the Operational Support Staff (OSS), providing the NWDP with disease and emergency response support from the Riverdale office. Gene has been the Assistant Director of the National Wildlife Research Center (NWRC), overseeing disease and other research activities. While we are excited for Rich and Gene as they embark on new opportunities, we will miss the interaction and support they provided the NWDP.

As you might have guessed, the current and projected budget constraints will make refilling these positions unlikely. This presents Wildlife Services, and in particular the NWDP and NWRC, with an opportunity to re-evaluate our business model for providing emergency planning and response support, and how we coordinate disease management and research. After a series of discussions among the Deputy Administrator's Office, OSS, NWRC, and NWDP, it was decided that I would serve as Acting Assistant Director for NWRC beginning 18 December 2011. In this capaci-

ty, I will be working with NWRC Director Dr. Larry Clark and Assistant Director Dr. Mark Tobin to evaluate opportunities for Wildlife Services to consolidate our wildlife disease surveillance, management, research and emergency response activities. It is our goal to provide the Deputy Administrator's Office with the results of our analysis in January. Through this

which we can improve the cohesiveness of research and operational disease programs within Wildlife Services that will improve the efficiency at which we deliver these products. In so doing, we may also be able to improve the quality of these services for our cooperators and the public.



Many of you have wondered how a potential reorganization of disease activities within Wildlife Services would

process, we hope to identify both immediate and future cost savings to the public, while strengthening our capacity to protect American agriculture, natural resources, and human health and safety.

affect your roles. At this early stage in the process it would be difficult for me to speculate on specific activities. However, the Deputy Administrator's Office continues to express their commitment to maintaining an operational wildlife disease surveillance and emergency response program. So as we move forward, we will be exploring avenues for more closely aligning management and research activities within Wildlife Services, while maintaining our unique missions.

Undoubtedly, there will be some intricacies implementing whatever plan emerges from this effort. Some of these we will be able to anticipate. Others will not be realized until a specific plan is developed and implemented. While change can be a very difficult process, it often provides opportunities where none seemed to exist previously. It is these potential opportunities on which we are focusing. For example, there may be unique ways in

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The original artwork on this page was created by the National Wildlife Disease Program's Erika Kampe and Sarah Goff