



# NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture • Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service • Legislative and Public Affairs  
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## **USDA CELEBRATES THE OPENING OF A NEW INVASIVE SPECIES RESEARCH BUILDING AT COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY**

FORT COLLINS, Colo., Dec. 15, 2006--The U.S. Department of Agriculture recently celebrated the opening of its new 25,000-square-foot Invasive Species Research Building (ISRB) in an opening ceremony held on Dec. 6.

The building, part of USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service's wildlife services (WS) National Wildlife Research Center (NWRC) headquarters site, is located on 43-acres of the Colorado State University (CSU) Foothills Research Campus in Fort Collins, Colo.

"The completion of the Invasive Species Research Building here at NWRC is key to developing innovative methods for resolving new and emerging invasive wildlife species conflicts with agriculture, natural resources, native wildlife and human health and safety," said Bruce Knight, undersecretary for USDA's marketing and regulatory programs mission area.

The facility, built by the U.S. General Services Administration and a private developer, expands upon NWRC's existing capabilities to conduct wildlife research by providing a state-of-the-art facility to properly care for and study invasive wildlife.

The ISRB also enhances NWRC's ability to study the ecology, biology, behavior and physiology of invasive wildlife species and to develop management tools and strategies for mitigating their damage and controlling their spread. The building is designed to simulate temperature and humidity ranges from temperate to tropical ecosystems. The flexibility of these environmental controls allows for the year-round study of invasive wildlife species.

In addition to its unique climate capabilities, the ISRB includes a wide variety of animal-room sizes and a digital X-ray suite. Animals will be housed behind at least four sets of secured doors making it an extremely secure facility for housing invasive species.

Examples of invasive species NWRC will study in the facility could include nutria; Norway, roof and Gambian pouch rats; European starlings; brown tree snakes and Caribbean tree frogs. In addition to permitting research on existing invasive species, this facility will also allow rapid investigation into newly introduced vertebrate invaders that may cause economic or public health risks.

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The facility adds a unique dimension to the cooperative USDA-CSU program to address human-wildlife conflicts. It will provide new opportunities for NWRC scientists and CSU faculty to carry out methods development and research, and support graduate student and postdoctoral training in the area of human-wildlife conflicts.

NWRC is the research arm of APHIS' WS program. WS is a nonregulatory program that provides federal leadership in managing conflicts with wildlife. NWRC applies scientific expertise to the development of scientific information and practical methods to resolve human-wildlife conflicts and maintain the quality of the environments shared with wildlife. To learn more about NWRC, visit its Web site at <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/ws/nwrc>.

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