



In Brief

2011 Wildlife Services Research Needs Assessment

What is the Wildlife Services (WS) Research Needs Assessment (RNA)?

The WS RNA is a request for information regarding priorities of internal and external stakeholders for managing conflicts between humans and wildlife.

Why conduct a RNA?

The results of the RNA, along with Congressional Directives, guidance from the WS Deputy Administrator, and stakeholder input, assist WS in establishing research priorities and allocating resources to the WS National Wildlife Research Center (NWRC). The NWRC is the research arm of the WS program and applies scientific expertise to resolve human-wildlife conflicts while maintaining the quality of the environment shared with wildlife.

When was the last RNA conducted and who participated?

In 2011, a RNA was sent to upper level managers and researchers within WS, other APHIS programs, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the U.S. Geological Survey. Respondents were asked to distribute the request throughout their organizations. A similar survey was distributed by the Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies (AFWA) to the branch chiefs of fish and wildlife for all 50 states, and to non-Federal stakeholders representing various livestock and agricultural commodity groups, universities, and non-government organizations.

What questions were included in the RNA?

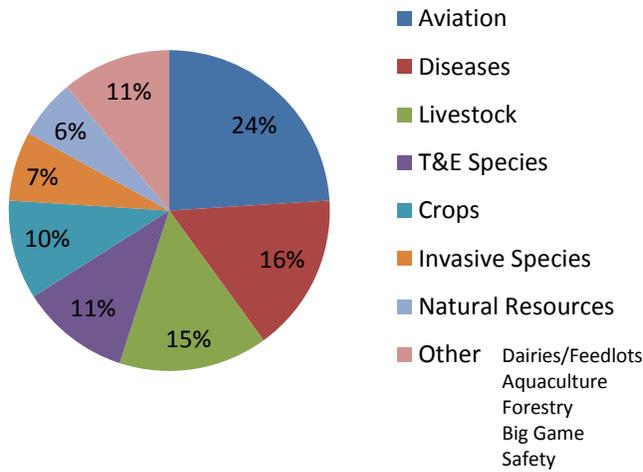
Respondents completed open-ended and multiple choice questions related to (1) their top three research needs; (2) impacts of wildlife on production, economics, human health & safety, and/or property damage; (3) involvement as wildlife professionals in various areas of human-wildlife conflicts; (4) state or regional needs for research; and (5) the value of various consultations and services offered by the NWRC.

What were the key findings from the 2011 RNA?

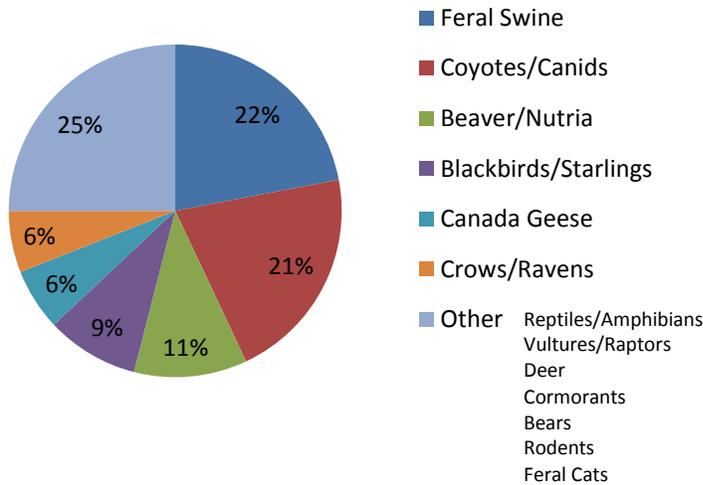
A total of 86 Federal and 31 non-Federal stakeholders (representing 42 states) responded to the RNA and AFWA surveys, respectively. Feral swine and predators were the most frequently cited species of concern, although beavers and blackbirds/starlings were also high on the list. Conflict areas most often mentioned included aviation safety, disease transmission, livestock predation, and crop depredations.

The top research needs cited were development/evaluation of lethal management methods, development/improvement of non-lethal management methods, economic and physical assessments of impacts and management methods, and information on ecology and/or population dynamics of pest species.

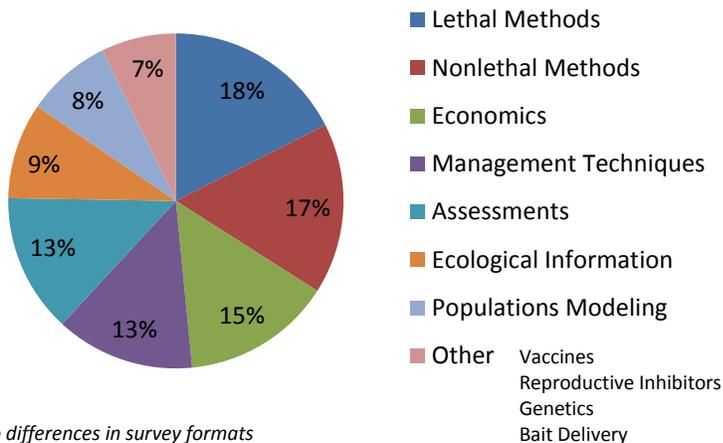
Conflict Areas



Species of Concern



Methods Development Needs



Due to differences in survey formats only Federal responses are shown

Predation on livestock and game species continues to be a major concern in the western United States; while cormorants, beavers, deer, and vultures were identified as major concerns in the eastern United States.

Feral swine and canine predators were identified by both federal and non-federal respondents as the species of most concern.

State agency and private stakeholders most frequently identified either wildlife transmission of diseases or livestock depredation as their highest area of concern.

State agency and private stakeholders most often identified their highest research priority as a need for development of more effective management techniques.

All respondents expressed a need for better information about the extent and nature of various human-wildlife conflicts.

For more information regarding the 2011 WS Research Needs Assessment, please contact:

Dr. Mark Tobin
Assistant Director
USDA-APHIS-WS-NWRC
4101 LaPorte Avenue
Fort Collins, CO 80521

970-266-6036

Mark.E.Tobin@aphis.usda.gov