

NATIONAL WILDLIFE SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE (NWSAC) MEETING
 Summary/Decision Document
 August 1-2, 2006

RECOMMENDATION	TARGET	DECISION
<p>1. The National Wildlife Services Advisory Committee recommends the Secretary of Agriculture seek new funding to support the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Wildlife Service's (WS) Wildlife Disease Surveillance, Monitoring, Response and Research Program. This program should include two wildlife biologists per state and U.S. territory, and support collaboration of WS' National Wildlife Research Center with the National Animal Health Laboratory Network and state wildlife agencies.</p>	<p>1. FY 2008</p>	<p>1. In FY 2007, WS will hire approximately 20 wildlife disease biologists to be stationed in various states to conduct wild bird avian influenza surveillance activities, will also help to monitor other wildlife diseases as resources allow, and respond to APHIS emergencies. In FY 08, the Department is seeking additional resources for wildlife disease surveillance and monitoring activities along the US borders with Mexico and Canada.</p>
<p>2. The National Wildlife Services Advisory Committee (NWSAC) recommends the Secretary of Agriculture reaffirm Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Wildlife Services priority to protect livestock and agriculture from offending animals. The NWSAC recommends the Secretary of Agriculture seek new funding providing for yearly inflation and future annual resource needs.</p>	<p>2. Ongoing</p>	<p>2. The Department concurs with this recommendation. Protection of agriculture and livestock from damage by wildlife is a part of the core mission of USDA/APHIS/WS and will continue to be a high priority within the program. Additional funds for wildlife control in western states were appropriated to WS in FY 06 (\$700K) and remained constant in FY 2007. However, for FY 2008, other priorities preclude a request for additional funding in this area.</p>
<p>3. The National Wildlife Services Advisory Committee recommends the Secretary of Agriculture seek new funding for Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Wildlife Services to increase coyote and feral swine research. This research should include identifying property and ecological damage, expanding distribution and population, associated disease risks, and development of effective long and short term control methods.</p>	<p>3. FY 2007</p>	<p>3. During FY 2006, WS increased funding both to predation research at its Logan, UT Field Station and feral swine research at its Kingsville, TX Field Station. However, during FY 2007, WS has had to reduce overall funding to these 2 field stations because of budget reductions and this has affected research in these 2 areas. For FY 2008, priorities include increased research in avian influenza and diseases associated with feral swine in the amount of \$3.2 million.</p>
<p>4. The National Wildlife Services Advisory Committee recommends the Secretary of Agriculture seek dialogue and cooperation with the Secretary of the Interior to gain new funding to increase field resource capacity for Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Wildlife Services to resolve increasing conflicts involving humans, livestock, other domestic animals, and wildlife resulting from restored and expanding wolf populations.</p>	<p>4. Ongoing</p>	<p>4. The Department recognizes that growing wolf populations have resulted in increasing conflicts with people, livestock, pets, and other wildlife and dialogue with the FWS to help resolve these issues will continue. While FWS has provided WS limited funding for wolf damage management activities in the past, recent FWS funding has been shifted to state wolf management programs. WS will continue to dialogue with FWS and State wildlife officials to discuss wolf management issues and WS' role as wolf populations in the various states become delisted, including resources needed to address any increased need for WS assistance.</p>
<p>5. The National Wildlife Services Advisory Committee recommends to the Secretary of Agriculture that airport safety remain a priority and that Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Wildlife Services continue to provide leadership and direction in the areas of research, control and training for the mitigation of aircraft/wildlife hazards.</p>	<p>5. Ongoing</p>	<p>5. Airport Safety and Assistance remains a growth area for APHIS/WS. However, because of decreasing resources and other priorities, the Department has not been able to provide increased resources and will continue to rely on cooperators to fund a large portion of these activities.</p>

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<p>6. The National Wildlife Services Advisory Committee recommends the Secretary of Agriculture work with the Secretary of Interior to develop a cooperative arrangement between Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Wildlife Services and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to process and respond to migratory bird depredation permit applications within seven days.</p>	<p>6. Ongoing</p>	<p>6. APHIS/WS continues to represent stakeholders and work with FWS to streamline the depredation permitting process by focusing more attention at the regional level. WS Regional staff has conducted periodic meetings with counterpart FWS Regional staff to clarify procedures and eliminate delays in the FWS permit review process. In Ohio, WS, FWS, and state wildlife representatives have developed a collaborative process for vulture depredation permits whereby FWS approves the depredation permit request within 24 hours and the state wildlife agency pays the \$100 permit fee for the landowner. WS has updated WS Form 37, bird depredation permit application, to more efficiently participate in the permit application process.</p>
<p>7. The National Wildlife Services Advisory Committee (NWSAC) commends the Secretary of Agriculture and Wildlife Services for the increased use of electronic trap monitors. The NWSAC recommends the expanded development of monitors with the long-term strategy being to encourage use of these monitors which results in the immediate notification of a sprung trap. The NWSAC further supports the goal of minimizing the amount of time an animal remains in a trap.</p>	<p>7. FY 2006-2007</p>	<p>7. The Department recognizes the need for expanded development and use of electronic trap monitors. During 2006, Wildlife Services invested an additional \$60,000 into operational electronic trap monitor evaluation in 16 eastern and western states. For 2007, both regions will invest a total of \$45,000 to incorporate these devices into additional states. NWRC scientists will continue to develop and test this technology in order to make it more reliable, affordable and efficient.</p>
<p>8. National Wildlife Services Advisory Committee recommends the Secretary of Agriculture seek new funding for the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Wildlife Services, National Wildlife Research Center to expand contraceptive research, especially for predator control/management, the use of field trials to aid in cost/benefit analysis of the technique, and encourage implementation of these methods as appropriate.</p>	<p>8. FY 2009</p>	<p>8. The Department supports the investigation and development of contraceptive techniques and strategies for certain species of wildlife, as conducted by the APHIS/WS/National Wildlife Research Center (NWRC). WS scientists have registered Nicarbazin as a contraceptive for urban geese, are working with state wildlife agencies to develop and register immunocontraceptive vaccines and best management practices for use with white-tailed deer, and will, in 2007, evaluate surgical sterilization of coyotes relative to antelope survival. In FY 2006, NWRC scientists also published an article that summarized studies of PZP immunocontraceptives in coyotes. In addition, NWRC is developing an "International Scientific Coalition for the development of Oral Contraceptive Technology" for other wildlife species.</p>
<p>9. The National Wildlife Services Advisory Committee recommends that the Secretary of Agriculture, through the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Wildlife Services, National Wildlife Research Center, conduct full economic cost/benefit analysis of practices and/or programs recommended, promoted or offered by the agency, dependent upon the availability of financial resources.</p>	<p>9. Ongoing</p>	<p>9. The Department concurs with the importance and value of economic evaluations of programs and practices by the APHIS/WS/National Wildlife Research Center. These evaluations will be conducted as resources become available. NWRC initiated or completed 9 such cost/benefit analysis in 2006 and will continue these evaluations on a prioritized basis as resources permit in 2007.</p>
<p>10. The National Wildlife Services Advisory Committee (NWSAC) commends the Secretary of Agriculture and Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Wildlife Services (WS) for the excellent and extraordinary efforts in the development and</p>	<p>10. Accomplished</p>	<p>10. The employees were recognized appropriately at the end of FY 2006 with certificates of merit and cash awards.</p>

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<p>implementation of “An Early Detection System for Highly Pathogenic H5N1 Avian Influenza in Wild Migratory Birds: U.S. Interagency Strategic Plan.” Dr. Thomas DeLiberto, Mr. Seth Swafford, Ms. Joyce Gubler and other WS employees worked above and beyond the call of duty to complete this plan in a timely manner and to develop and implement a system to provide grants to State Wildlife Agencies to insure the successful achievement of goals and objectives. The NWSAC recommends appropriate recognition be given these employees by the Office of the Secretary.</p>		
<p>11. The National Wildlife Services Advisory Committee recommends the Secretary of Agriculture seek \$1.5 million of new annual funding to sustain requirements mandated by the Department of Homeland Security for protection of Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Wildlife Services facilities.</p>	<p>11. FY 2007</p>	<p>11. While the Department is unable to obtain additional Homeland Security funds and has directed all agencies to absorb security costs from within their budgets, APHIS will continue to make security a high priority item, and submit facilities security initiatives in future budget requests.</p>
<p>12. The National Wildlife Services Advisory Committee recommends the Secretary of Agriculture seek new funding to support increased research for improved baits and vaccines critical to the control and eradication of wildlife rabies in skunk and mongoose.</p>	<p>12. FY 2008</p>	<p>12. Through the National Rabies Management Team research prioritization process and WS’ internal research prioritization process at NWRC, the need for improved or new baits and vaccines has been identified as our highest research priority. Raccoon, skunk and mongoose, in decreasing order of importance, have been identified as species of highest concern. Several captive and field studies of existing bait formulations have been completed. A prospective bait from the private sector is in prototype testing and limited field testing will occur in FY 2007. WS has been instrumental in funding oral rabies vaccine development at Thomas Jefferson University. Canine-adenovirus recombinant rabies glycoprotein shows good promise and was tested in captive raccoons and skunks in late FY 2006 and early 2007. A Small Business Innovation Research Grant has been provided to a small firm to continue moving this prospective vaccine toward licensing consideration. Bait and vaccine testing to determine acceptance, uptake and immunogenicity is costly; however, there is a strong need for new or improved technology and we will continue to commit resources to this effort as resources allow.</p>
<p>13. The National Wildlife Services Advisory Committee recommends that the Secretary of Agriculture investigate the feasibility of funding from a first point of sale or importation of each dose of rabies vaccine sold for use in the United States to aid the expansion of wildlife rabies research and eradication.</p>	<p>13. Not Accepted</p>	<p>13. WS currently has no authority to impose fees for such activities, but will investigate and report on the potential of this recommendation moving forward toward a funding initiative.</p>
<p>14. The National Wildlife Services Advisory Committee recommends to the Secretary of Agriculture that when feral canids and felids adversely impact agriculture, wildlife, or human health</p>	<p>14. Ongoing</p>	<p>14. WS will include feral canid and felid damage management in operations to protect agriculture in so far as state and local laws and regulations permit.</p>

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<p>they be officially included within the scope of Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Wildlife Services research and control operations.</p> <p>15. The National Wildlife Services Advisory Committee (NWSAC) recommends the Secretary of Agriculture expedite the Texas Gray Fox Rabies eradication project. The NWSAC recommends that strategic efforts include those endemic areas of southern New Mexico and Arizona.</p> <p>16. The National Wildlife Services Advisory Committee recommends that the Secretary of Agriculture include feral canids and felids in Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Wildlife Services, Oral Rabies Vaccination (ORV) research, and if proven efficacious, that ORV be used for rabies control and prevention in those species under Memorandum of Understanding guidelines on Native Nations.</p> <p>17. The National Wildlife Services Advisory Committee recommends the Secretary of Agriculture working in conjunction with the Secretary of Interior to amend regulations such that the accessibility requirements of migratory bird permit log holders are greater than 30 days old.</p>	<p>15. FY2007- FY 2012</p> <p>16. Ongoing</p> <p>17. FY2007/2008</p>	<p>15. In FY 2006, WS provided approximately 100,000 additional baits to increase the barrier width in the gray fox ORV zone. We have sufficient resources to increase the baits by about 120,000 to completely treat the zone in FY 2007 and will continue this treatment level until the goal of elimination from Texas is achieved in the next 4 to 6 years.</p> <p>WS agrees that as resources become available we should be prepared to conduct meaningful control operations in the southwestern US targeting rabies in gray foxes. However, as a first step we need to better characterize the distribution of the unique gray fox variant(s) of the rabies virus in AZ and NM. Then rabies control strategies can be formulated and readied for implementation in AZ and NM, including common border areas in northernmost Mexico. WS and cooperators have made improvements toward enhanced rabies surveillance through implementation of a Direct Rapid Immunohistochemical test and will, to the degree practical, focus on enhanced surveillance in AZ and border areas with current resources.</p> <p>16. Canine rabies is a global issue. As such, it often impacts wildlife. Infected wildlife, in turn, threatens agriculture interests and public health. WS has traditionally focused on dog rabies when it spills over or threatens to spillover into wildlife, such as it did in coyotes in south Texas in the late 1980's through the 1990's. Implementation of ORV, integrated with dog vaccination campaigns and other education efforts, was successful in eliminating canine rabies from the US (in south Texas). WS will continue to focus on dog rabies as it relates to wildlife and recognizes that the developing infrastructure to conduct ORV in dogs globally should result in sound future infrastructure dividends for ORV in wildlife carnivores such as foxes, raccoons, skunks and coyotes. WS will continue to provide technical assistance regarding rabies suspect feral cats.</p> <p>17. WS will submit amended regulatory language to FWS designed to relieve stakeholders of daily record keeping requirements. This amended language will be provided to FWS when the cormorant depredation order is scheduled for renewal. Secondly, as part of the ongoing annual discussion conducted between WS and FWS, WS has begun dialogue to recommend amending general regulatory migratory bird depredation permit reporting requirements to be more consistent with on-the-ground daily bird damage management operations.</p>
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<p>18. The National Wildlife Services Advisory Committee recommends the Secretary of Agriculture explore long-term strategic planning, development and operations for the purpose of raising management control capacity. The NWSAC recommends that this long term plan be accomplished through training and outreach of cooperators.</p>	<p>18. Ongoing</p>	<p>18. WS uses an integrated wildlife damage management approach that utilizes both operational and technical assistance to implement control activities. WS will continue to provide technical training and conduct outreach to cooperators, customers, private industry and members of the general public through its strategic business plans and in accordance with federal, state, and local regulations. WS will also continue to incorporate training and outreach to cooperators into any new strategic business plans where appropriate.</p>
<p>19. The National Wildlife Services Advisory Committee recommends that Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Wildlife Services, seek to minimize impacts to producers when State and Federal laws and regulations conflict and result in a limitation of services or programs.</p>	<p>19. Ongoing</p>	<p>19. The Department concurs with this recommendation and also understands that WS operations must proceed with full consideration of issues with state and federal rights. In general, WS provides services at the specific request of individuals, commodity groups and other local state and federal agencies. WS responds to such requests within the scope of existing local and state regulations unless specific exemptions or a stated opinion by the state that a particular law or regulation does not apply to WS are clearly in place.</p>