

**National Wildlife Services Advisory Committee Meeting**

Utah State University Inn  
4300 Old Main Hill, Room 507  
Logan, Utah

**Tuesday, June 19, 2007**

Committee Members in Attendance:

Mr. Joel A. Alderete, New Mexico Farm and Livestock Bureau (Vice Chair)  
Ms. Nina C. Baucus, Sieban Ranch Company  
Mr. John Baughman, Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies  
Mr. Jeffrey Baxter, Baxter Land Company, Inc.  
Dr. Scott Bender, The Navajo Nation  
Mrs. Seniors Ann Burdette, Urban Wildlife  
Ms. Karen Elaine "Maggie" Brasted, Humane Society of the United States  
Mr. Robert E. Frost, Animal Health  
Mr. David F. LaCour, Rice Growers Association  
Ms. Cathy A. Liss, Animal Welfare Institute  
Dr. Debra L. Miller, UGA, Vet Diagnostic and Investigational Lab  
Mr. Bruce L. Morrison, Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, Retired  
Mr. Ira L. New Breast, Native American Fish and Wildlife Association (Now: BIA)  
Mr. John E. Ostrom, Aviation Industry (Chair)  
Mr. Bryce R. Reece, Wyoming Wool Growers Assn.  
Dr. J. Maurice Shelton, Sheep and Goat Industry – Texas A&M University  
Mr. Scott W. Steckel, National Pest Management Association  
Ms. Patti L. Strand, National Animal Interest Alliance  
Mr. Hugh A. Warren, Global Aquaculture Alliance

Committee Members not in Attendance:

Mr. Joel A. Kretz, Ranching/Timber

Welcome and Introductions – Bill Clay

Bill Clay, Wildlife Services' Deputy Administrator, opened the meeting and welcomed the group at 8:03 a.m. The Wildlife Services' Management Team and personnel were introduced. Dr. Nat Frazier, Dean, Utah State University, Dr. Mike Conover, Berryman Institute, Utah State University, and Under Secretary Bruce Knight, U.S. Department of Agriculture were introduced. National Wildlife Services Advisory Committee members introduced themselves and their representation.

Opening Remarks – Under Secretary Bruce Knight

Under Secretary Knight thanked the group for their participation and emphasized the importance of advisory committees. Advisory committees can assist the agency in

anticipating the future needs of the public and industry. While there may be challenges and conflicts among the various stakeholders' agendas, the issues brought forth can provide insight into services needed and new directions.

Under Secretary Knight addressed specific questions from the National Wildlife Services Advisory Committee members. Questions and issues addressed included: 1) impressions of Congress' knowledge and importance of Wildlife Services role with the agriculture industry; 2) the importance of acknowledging the State role in avian influenza monitoring and surveillance; 3) funding of Wildlife Services' Mexican gray wolf activities; 4) Wildlife Services funding and vulnerabilities to congressional earmarks; 5) acceptability of Wildlife Services influencing other agency actions (i.e., Fish and Wildlife Service); 6) impacts of delisting and management of Threatened and Endangered species responsibilities being passed to Wildlife Services; 7) the need for more on the ground Wildlife Services personnel; 8) Wildlife Services need to address succession planning and the ability to move employees up through the ranks into management roles; 8) Under Secretary Knight was thanked for his efforts and being a strong advocate.

#### Welcome - Dr. Frazier

Bill Clay introduced Dr. Nat Frazier, Dean, Utah State University. Bill emphasized the close relationship Wildlife Services has with Utah State University and the number of Utah State University graduates employed by Wildlife Services.

Dr. Frazier welcomed the group to Utah and Utah State University. He reemphasized the long standing relationship between Wildlife Services and Utah State University including the Logan Field Station and the Berryman Institute; the Berryman Institute is and has been funded by congressional earmarks. Utah State University has also benefited from the relationship by Wildlife Services researchers serving in a faculty role through teaching and research. He also addressed the ability of Utah State University to assist the wildlife profession with the recent and continued wave in retirements within the profession. Utah State University continues to work to provide distance learning opportunities at the B.S. and M.S. levels. These opportunities will be through both remote campus and on-line resources.

Committee members' questions for Dr. Frazier included agency educational requirements for entry level positions and the ability of students graduating with multi-disciplinary degrees to meet these minimum requirements, addressing wildlife disease issues within student curriculum, and providing opportunities for broader cross-training courses.

#### Program Overview – Bill Clay

Bill Clay addressed some recent program related events in Utah including an aircraft accident, still under investigation, and a fatal bear attack of which Wildlife Services personnel responded. Other Agency and Program related information included: APHIS personnel actions including the announced departure of the Administrator, Dr. Ron DeHaven, and the promotion of former Wildlife Services' Associate Deputy

Administrator, and Biotechnology and Regulatory Services' Deputy Administrator, Cindy Smith to Associate Administrator; Wildlife Services participation in the national avian influenza monitoring and surveillance initiative; the hiring of 22 additional disease biologists; increasing efforts involving invasive species; receiving additional requests and conducting more international assistance; Wildlife Services FY07 budget lost \$4.2 million of earmark funding, and a redirection in Operations and Method Development line items is expected in the FY08 budget.

Program specific questions were addressed during the presentation.

#### Administrative Issues – Joyce Gubler

Joyce Gubler, Wildlife Services' Deputy Director for Administration, addressed travel reimbursement forms and requirements that were provided in the Committee member folders.

#### Overview of Research Station – John Shivak

Dr. John Shivik, Field Station Leader for the Logan, UT research field station, provided an overview of the field station, including the current research focus, and personnel. Questions from the Committee members were addressed.

#### Update on Last Committee Meeting Recommendations – Martin Mendoza

Last year's National Wildlife Services Advisory Committee meeting was held August 1-2, 2006, in Riverdale, Maryland. Recommendations from last year's meeting were presented by Martin Mendoza, Wildlife Services' Associate Deputy Administrator. He reported the status of the 2006 Committee recommendations. Each recommendation was briefly reviewed and discussed.

#### Discussion of Agenda Topics – John Ostrom, Chair

John Ostrom provided the opportunity for Committee members to address specific agenda items. Wildlife Services personnel provided technical information regarding specific agenda items. Committee members Maggie Brasted, Cathy Liss, and Scott Bender provided a list of topics that focused Committee discussions. Some of the agenda items included Wildlife Services' Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement, Best Management Practices for trapping, research on the effects of different traps types, long-term improvements in reducing damage caused by wildlife due to the efforts of Wildlife Services, the livestock protection program, the aerial hunting program, Wildlife Services disease surveillance and Rabies programs, Goal and Mission statements, and the National Wildlife Research Center overhead charges.

#### Committee Discussions and Preliminary Recommendations – John Ostrom, Chair

John Ostrom asked the Committee members to offer any initial recommendations for consideration. This led to Committee discussions on a wide variety of topics.

Nina Baucus: Secretary of Agriculture should strongly encourage the Secretary of Interior to provide funding to Wildlife Services to pay for wildlife damage management activities involving threatened and endangered species such as wolves.

John Baughman: Ask the Secretary of Agriculture to work with the Secretary of Interior and the States on a needs assessment for future management of large carnivores. Identify the appropriate state, federal and private roles, and strategies on providing resources on a sustainable basis.

Scott Bender: A) Ask the Secretary of Agriculture to approve and investigate the importation of the new Canadian oral rabies vaccine; B) Wildlife Services security costs should become a separate line item in the budget; C) Wildlife Services should develop an internal advisory committee in light of not having a local or national meeting; D) to support aerial operations, specifically aerial hunting, as an integral tool of the Wildlife Services program.

Robert Frost: Establish a long-term vision of utilizing Wildlife Services as a conduit for transferring money, but sustaining the Program infrastructure; reinforcing the FY08 recommendations for zoonotic disease and rabies funding.

Debra Miller: A) Reemphasize recommendation #1 from the 2006 Committee recommendations and add new funding; B) recommend \$4.2 M to reestablish NGO and graduate research funding, and seek \$3.2 M for continued funding for avian influenza and feral swine research; C) reemphasize recommendation #8 from the 2006 Committee recommendations for field testing wildlife contraception.

Cathy Liss: A) Implement the commitment of the U.S. Government in a December 11, 1997, Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) ending use of all types of leghold traps for muskrat and nutria, and phase out use of “conventional steel jawed leg hold restraining traps”; B) recommend the Secretary of Agriculture conduct an inventory of number and type of traps currently in its possession.

Bruce Morrison: The National Wildlife Services Advisory Committee recommends the Secretary of Agriculture cooperate with Federal, State, Tribal, private, and non-governmental organizations to jointly fund and implement the initiative for a Healthy Fish and Wildlife Resource for the United States.

Bryce Reece: A) The need for an accurate model to estimate the coyote population and new funding; B) the need for an inventory of all traps and have a goal to have a trap monitor on every trap and new funding.

Maurice Shelton: Reemphasis of the Committee recommendations 2, 3, 4 from 2006.

Scott Steckel: To recognize the conflict and problems between Wildlife Services and private industry, and work jointly to solve. An MOU between WS and National Pest Management Association is being drafted.

Joel Alderete: Wolf depredation response teams. There is a need for adequate equipment and funding for the job.

Committee members Jeff Baxter, Maggie Brasted, David Lacour, Seniora Ann Burdette, Ira New Breast, Patti Strand, Hugh Warren, and John Ostrom did not have any initial recommendations.

The Committee discussed, combined, and withdrew some of the initial recommendations. Subgroups were formed to draft language for the final recommendations.

The day's session was adjourned.

### **Wednesday, June 20, 2007**

The meeting was re-adjourned at 8:05 a.m.

#### Committee Recommendations – John Ostrom, Chair

Recommendations developed by the Committee for consideration by the Secretary are as follows. The Committee vote is shown as Y (yes), N (no), A (abstain). Background information was provided by the Committee member submitting the recommendation.

#### *Recommendation 1*

The National Wildlife Services Advisory Committee recommends the Secretary of Agriculture support the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Wildlife Services' future budget initiatives and mandates without redirection of existing resources.

Approved: Y (14), N (1), A (2)

Background: On June 19, 2007 Under Secretary Knight's charge to the National Wildlife Services Advisory Committee (NWSAC) emphasized the importance of the advisory committee's role in assisting the agency in anticipating the future needs of the public and industry. On that note NWSAC needs to formulate a strategic plan in sync with the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) and the Secretary. In short, an understanding that NWSAC is proposing and seeking action for a budgeted plan needed by APHIS and Wildlife Services (WS).

The WS responsibilities to federal and states agencies, industry and the public are expanding and must be adequately funded. NWSAC recognizes WS needs a visionary and descriptive long range plan with a proposal included in the President's budget.

WS needs a budget that will alleviate the “rob Peter to pay Paul” syndrome. NWSAC has spent a great deal of time recommending to the Secretary that “new money” be found. The reality of the budget process is that this will not happen.

WS has increased responsibilities during its tenure with USDA and especially within the last few years without appropriate annual budget increases. The future will demand additional manpower, resources and infrastructure to enable WS to fulfill its role. The June 19, 2007 Recommendation Number 1 is a preamble to agency needs and is a beginning effort by NWSAC to create additional language illustrating need and an action plan for a President’s budget proposal.

NWSAC must be aggressive and visionary with this Recommendation to:

- Assist the Secretary and the Administration to put forth a budget proposal
- Persuade Congress to pass an adequate budget.

Most NWSAC recommendation items over the past few years would automatically be included within a new program proposal for the President’s budget.

### *Recommendation 2*

The National Wildlife Services Advisory Committee recommends to the Secretary of Agriculture that due to the current limitation of only one United States Department of Agriculture approved Oral Rabies Vaccine for wildlife use, Wildlife Services investigate and research be expedited on Oral Rabies Vaccines that are currently approved by Canada and/or the European Union, to make some of these Oral Rabies Vaccine options available to the Wildlife Services Rabies Program to enhance and improve Rabies management.

Approved: Y (16), N (0), A (0)

Background: Currently, there is only one provider and one USDA approved Oral Rabies Vaccine available for the Wildlife Services Rabies control program.

This vaccine has been less than optimal for all species and environments that the Wildlife Services Rabies control program is asked to work within. The need for additional vaccines is critical to the success of the program. In addition, the lack of other Oral Rabies Vaccine competitors to the sole provider of Oral Rabies Vaccine to Wildlife Services has stymied overall Oral Rabies Vaccine development, improvements and increased costs for the wildlife Rabies management program.

### *Recommendation 3*

The National Wildlife Services Advisory Committee recommends to the Secretary of Agriculture that the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service establish a separate funding path for Wildlife Services facility security. The purpose of which is to maintain

traditional Wildlife Services responsibilities, functions and research independent of and, without infringement by security funding requirements.

Approved: Y (14), N (0), A (2)

Background: Security was not one of the core missions of Wildlife Services and the costs put upon Wildlife Services for security should be managed as such.

Cost for security for offices and programs of Wildlife Services were dramatically increased following 9-11. While some of the initial funding for the increased security requirements was provided, a majority of the current funding has been diversions from other Wildlife Services program budgets. This is an increasing overhead cost that is affecting both field programs and research by decreasing funds available for their intended use. Having security as a separate line item will help APHIS and Wildlife Services by showing the actual costs of Wildlife Services security programs, and help to stabilize individual program funding.

#### *Recommendation 4*

The National Wildlife Services Advisory Committee recognizes aerial operations as an integral tool of wildlife damage management, including but not limited to aerial hunting activities. Therefore, the Committee recommends aerial control operations be continued as an essential tool in wildlife damage management.

Approved: Y (14), N (2), A (0)

Background: The aerial activities of Wildlife Services, including aerial hunting, as a tool in the management of wildlife, while a small portion of the overall management methods, is an essential program for the western U.S. and Hawaii, where extreme distances, impassable terrains and invasive species are a factor. This management tool is not only important to livestock producers, but is also a critical tool for the protection of endangered flora and fauna, and even plays a role in public health and safety.

#### *Recommendation 5*

The National Wildlife Services Advisory Committee recommends the Secretary of Agriculture support Wildlife Services' plans and initiatives to provide needed increases in research staff to develop sampling and diagnostic methods for wildlife disease surveillance by the National Wildlife Research Center.

Approved: Y (17), N (0), A (0)

Background: The Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) Wildlife Services (WS) National Wildlife Research Center (NWRC) BSL-3-Ag wildlife disease laboratory has unique capabilities to address North American disease control efforts in wildlife.

An increasing number of zoonotic diseases of animals and humans have wildlife as their host or reservoir. There is a critical need to increase capacity in wildlife disease surveillance, diagnostic methods and research.

An APHIS animal health priority throughout the last decade is the modernization and expansion of the nations' federal animal health reference laboratories and programs at Ames, Iowa and Plum Island, New York and expand the National Animal Health Laboratory Network (NAHLN).

*Recommendation 6*

The National Wildlife Services Advisory Committee recommends the Secretary of Agriculture seek sustained funding in the President's annual budget requests to Congress to support the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Wildlife Services' Wildlife Disease Surveillance, Monitoring, Emergency Response and Research Program. This program should include two wildlife disease biologists per state and U.S. territory, and support collaboration of the Wildlife Services' National Wildlife Research Center with the National Animal Health Laboratory Network and appropriate state, territorial and Tribal agencies.

Approved: Y (17), N (0), A (1)

Background: The Wildlife Disease Surveillance and Monitoring and Emergency Response program was established to provide assistance to Federal, Tribal, and State agencies with wildlife disease threats. This includes partnership in an international border disease-surveillance system. Currently, 45 wildlife disease biologists are attempting to address all disease issues in all U.S. States and territories. This often results in reallocation of other "non-disease" personnel to fulfill duties when needs are high (especially during disease outbreaks or periods of intense surveillance testing.) Two wildlife disease biologists per state and territory would alleviate a significant portion of this reallocation, especially given that these individuals are expected to be mobile and travel (with estimated arrival time of less than equal to 48 hours of notification in emergency situations) to other areas during times of increased need (e.g. outbreaks.) Further, the suggestion to encourage partnerships with other disease professionals (especially diagnostic facilities) will greatly aid in increasing the trained personnel available to provide physical labor and maximize specimen processing.

*Recommendation 7*

The National Wildlife Services Advisory Committee recommends the Secretary of Agriculture seek \$7.4 million for Wildlife Services (\$2.8 million for Operations and \$4.6 million for Methods Development) in the President's FY 2009 budget to replace money lost from unfunded directives and to fulfill mandated avian influenza research and disease associated with feral swine. Redirection of funding is not possible for future years and sustained annual funding to adequately maintain these programs must be identified.

[The Operations line lost \$2.8 million in FY 2007 from unfunded earmarks previously used to support various human-wildlife conflict concerns. As well, in FY 2007 the Methods Development line lost \$1.4 million in unfunded earmarks used to support the Berryman Institute and graduate research studies at the Texas, Utah, and Mississippi field stations. The FY 2008 President's budget redirects an additional \$3.2 million in the Methods Development line to fulfill mandated avian influenza research and diseases associated with feral swine.]

Approved: Y (17), N (0), A (1)

Background: The FY 2008 President's budget mandates \$3.2 million to be redirected from the Methods Development line to avian influenza research activities. This money is being redirected from other research studies at the National Wildlife Research Center. Given that avian influenza and feral swine have been mandated as a yearly priority for Wildlife Services, sustained annual, new funding is required and should not come from internal (WS) redirected funds.

Similarly, \$4.2 million in monies that were previously earmarked for the Berryman Institute and research studies (specifically the Texas, Utah and Mississippi field stations) were lost in FY 2007. In turn, Wildlife Services instituted a minimum needs challenge to provide expenses to the Berryman Institute and the ongoing research projects. These monies were primarily redirected from the National Wildlife Research Center and some monies were provided to South Dakota Fish and Game.

#### *Recommendation 8*

The National Wildlife Services Advisory Committee recommends the Secretary of Agriculture seek sustained funding from the President's annual budget requests to Congress 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.

Approved: Y (18), N (0), A (0)

Background: It becomes increasingly important to implement multiple forms of predator management techniques to address the concerns of the various stakeholders (wildlife conservation agencies, the general public, and the agricultural industry.) Wildlife contraceptive research has made great strides in the past decade and is proving to be a promising approach in some species. Unfortunately, lack of available funding is often the primary impediment to use of these techniques. Funding is needed to continue to improve contraception techniques, explore their use in various species, and move contraception from the developmental stage to the practice stage. The latter being accomplished first through field trials and then through implementation wherever needed.

#### *Recommendation 9*

The National Wildlife Services Advisory Committee recommends the Secretary of Agriculture take steps for the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Wildlife Services to work towards implementing the commitment made by the U.S. Government on December 11, 1997 in its Letter of Understanding to end use of “all jaw-type leghold restraining traps” on muskrat and nutria and phase out use of “conventional steel-jawed leghold restraining traps.”

Defeated: Y (6), N (8), A (3)

Background: The European Union adopted Regulation 3254/91 in 1991 to prohibit use of leghold traps in the EU and to require that third countries either prohibit use of leghold traps or adopt “internationally agreed humane trap standards.” Rather than comply with this Regulation, and threatening a WTO challenge, the U.S. Government entered into negotiations with the EU which resulted in the U.S. submission of a Letter of Understanding in which it committed to Best Management Standards, but also stated that it would end use of “all jaw-type leghold restraining traps” on muskrat and nutria (within 4 years of the entry into force of the agreement with Canada, the EU and Russia) and to phase out use of “conventional steel-jawed leghold restraining traps (within 6 years of the entry into force of the agreement with Canada, the EU and Russia).” The agreement has not been ratified, but Wildlife Services is seeking to comply with the Best Management Practices; similarly, it should seek to comply with these other terms in its Letter of Understanding.

(NOTE: This recommendation incorrectly identified nutria as one of the species that the U.S. agreed to phase out the use of “conventional steel-jawed leghold restraining traps”. The December 11, 1997 Letter of Understanding only specified muskrats and weasels.)

#### *Recommendation 10*

The National Wildlife Services Advisory Committee recommends the Secretary of Agriculture conduct an inventory of the number and specific types of traps currently in its possession. The Committee further recommends a goal of Wildlife Services to have a trap monitor on every trap, where such use is practical and appropriate.

Approved: Y (14), N (2), A (0)

Background: It has been approximately 15 years since Wildlife Services last conducted a national inventory of the traps in its possession. Wildlife Services is in the process of replacing traps it uses in its operations to assure that they comply with Best Management Practices. This inventory would assist in assessing how many traps are still in need of replacement, and how the tools used by Wildlife Services may have changed over time.

Trap monitors are improving the efficiency of Wildlife Services operations and there is strong interest in use of these devices. The devices save considerable drive time over rough terrain and decrease fuel usage. Further, they decrease the need for human

presence at trap sites and can help find lost traps and drags. Trap monitors have the potential of saving Wildlife Services time and money.

*Recommendation 11*

The National Wildlife Services Advisory Committee recommends the Secretary of Agriculture cooperate with appropriate federal, state, Tribal, private, and non-governmental organizations and agencies to jointly fund and implement the “Initiative for a Healthy Fish and Wildlife Resource for the United States.”

Approved: Y (13), N (0), A (3)

Background: The Fish and Wildlife Health Committee of the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, in cooperation with the Wildlife Disease Committee of the U.S. Animal Health Association, has developed an initiative for a Healthy Fish and Wildlife Resource for the United States. The purpose of this initiative is: 1) to develop capacity for state, Tribal, territorial natural resource agencies to conduct detection surveillance, monitoring, and management of wildlife diseases; 2) to provide training for state, federal, Tribal, and territorial agencies and non-governmental organizations reference wildlife disease detection, surveillance, monitoring, and management; 3) to establish a central clearing house for rates and occurrence of wildlife disease incidents through a centralized, internet based database; 4) to encourage veterinary diagnostic laboratories to provide species specific wildlife diagnostic capabilities and wildlife veterinary specialists for the assessment of wildlife diseases, and; 5) to establish a list of wildlife diseases of concern and their potential for introduction to or spread within the United States. This initiative will concentrate on those diseases at the wildlife-human interface as well as those at the wildlife-domestic livestock interface. In March of 2007, the initiative was approved at the business meeting of the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies by the Directors of the State Wildlife Agencies and will be submitted to the Executive Board of the U.S. Animal Health Association during their October 2007 annual meeting.

*Recommendation 12*

The National Wildlife Services Advisory Committee recommends the Secretary of Agriculture, through the National Wildlife Research Center, evaluate the feasibility of developing a cost effective model to accurately estimate coyote populations. If such evaluation proves that a model can be developed, the Committee further recommends that National Wildlife Research Center seek new funding to complete this project.

Approved: Y (15), N (0), A (1)

Background: While a GAO audit of WS activities in the 1990’s concluded that program activities to protect livestock have no overall affect on coyote populations, some constituencies and publics of Wildlife Services continue to express concern that Wildlife Services operations to control coyotes can have negative effects on overall coyote populations. While Wildlife Services works to only control coyotes that are

detrimentally affecting livestock operations and certain wildlife populations, controversy sometimes arises that such activities may be negatively affecting coyote populations as a whole. Currently, there is no cost effective, accurate model or method to estimate coyote populations. Development of such would greatly aid both the agency, as well as the interested public, in assessing Wildlife Services operations effects on overall coyote populations.

*Recommendation 13*

The National Wildlife Services Advisory Committee recommends the Secretary of Agriculture recognize and support the completion of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Wildlife Services and National Pest Management Association (NPMA).

Approved: Y (14), N (0), A (2)

Background: There is a current internal Wildlife Services policy to help minimize competition issues between Wildlife Services and private pest/nuisance wildlife control industry. As private industry grows in skill and professionalism the types of services available will further conflict with Wildlife Services scope of current service. The intent of private industry is to be given the opportunity to provide proposals and therefore fairly compete in the market previously held solely by Wildlife Services. Currently, Wildlife Services chooses not to provide proposals for services when a Request for Proposal (RFP) is put out to the public, but will provide a quotation when contacted directly by an entity requesting their service. Wildlife Services has developed an Urban-Suburban Concept Paper that has identified several potential business opportunities and private industry would like to participate in this potential business growth.

NPMA along with private industry is willing to develop a list of private service providers available by location, scope of territory, and job type experience to assist in development of cooperative programs. This list of providers will be made available to National, Regional, State, and Local governments so they are aware of the available service providers for specific job types.

*Recommendation 14*

The National Wildlife Services Advisory Committee recommends to the Secretary of Agriculture that as funds become available a Wildlife Services qualified airport wildlife biologist position be established in every state to provide consultation and assistance to the Federal Aviation Administration with the evaluation of airport wildlife hazard assessments and wildlife hazard management plans.

Approved: Y (15), N (0), A (1)

Background: Currently, airports certificated under 14 CFR 139 are required to conduct a wildlife hazard assessment (WHA) when specific events occur on or near the airport.

This WHA must be conducted by a qualified airport wildlife management biologist and then reviewed by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to determine if a wildlife hazard management plan (WHMP) must be developed. Prior to implementation, the WHMP must be approved by the FAA. Per the current Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the FAA and Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Wildlife Services, it is agreed by both parties, that Wildlife Services has the professional expertise and airport training to provide support to assess and reduce wildlife hazards to aviation. Even with this MOU in place, there appears to be a lack of resources and a formalized process which would allow Wildlife Services to provide formal consultation to the FAA on the approval of Wildlife Hazard Assessments and Wildlife Hazard Management Plans, similar to the role that Wildlife Services serves to the Fish and Wildlife Service on the recommendation of Migratory Bird Depredation Permits via Wildlife Services Form 37.

*Recommendation 15*

The National Wildlife Services Advisory Committee recommends to the Secretary of Agriculture that the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Wildlife Services develops the sustainable capacity to address human/wildlife conflicts including livestock depredation associated with expanding populations of wolves and grizzly bears.

Approved: Y (14), N (0), A (2)

Background: Wildlife Services and the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service have traditionally contributed significant money and personnel for management of wolves and grizzly bears (monitoring coordination, damage prevention, conflict resolution, and animal control.) As these species leave the endangered species list, these animals will fall under management authority of the states, even though they are national programs, i.e., America wants healthy populations of large carnivores, but they can only thrive in large, sparsely settled areas found in just a few parts of the lower 48 states. Management costs will remain high, perhaps even increase, after recovery is achieved. What are the appropriate roles for state, federal, and private entities in future management of species? What are the best strategies to assure long-term reliable funding? Annual appropriations, sportsmen's license fees, or operational funds aren't adequate.

*Recommendation 16*

The National Wildlife Services Advisory Committee recommends to the Secretary of Agriculture that the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service research and evaluate the technology of remote unmanned aerial vehicles, along with emerging detection and surveillance technologies, for use as a wildlife damage management tool for Wildlife Services, recognizing that manned aerial operations are, and will continue to be, an integral tool of Wildlife Services operations.

Approved: Y (13), N (0), A (3)

Background: The aerial activities of Wildlife Services, (including aerial hunting), as a tool in the management of wildlife, while a small portion of the overall management methods, is an essential program for the western U.S. and Hawaii, where extreme distances, impassable terrains and invasive species are a factor. This management tool is not only important to livestock producers, but is also a critical tool for the protection of endangered flora and fauna, and even plays a role in public health and safety. The use of remote unmanned aerial vehicles, and infrared technologies could be additional valuable tools in both funding and personnel safety.

### Closing

John Ostrom thanked the Committee and staff for all of their assistance with the meeting. Those members who have served three terms and would not be returning, Cathy Liss, Debra Miller, and Jeff Baxter, were recognized and thanked by group for their participation on and commitment to the Committee.

The official meeting was adjourned at 1:35 p.m. A tour of Wildlife Services' Logan Field Station was provided following the meeting.