

NATIONAL WILDLIFE SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
 Summary/Decision Document
 August 5-7, 2008

RECOMMENDATION	TARGET	DECISION
<p>1. The National Wildlife Services Advisory Committee (NWSAC) recommends the Secretary of Agriculture confer with the Secretary of the Interior to obtain any proposed plans for revised NEPA documents on the management of double-crested cormorants, the issuance of new depredation orders or extensions of existing orders, the endorsement of international management of double-crested cormorants and Wildlife Services (WS) role in these plans.</p> <p>2. The NWSAC recommends to the Secretary of Agriculture that Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) H5N1 wild bird surveillance funding remain sufficient to maintain the early detection activities and capabilities of WS and State, Tribal cooperators.</p> <p>3. The NWSAC recommends to the Secretary of Agriculture that WS unique expertise in international capacity building in behalf of the USDA continue to be considered a critical outreach responsibility of WS.</p>		<p>1. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) requested comments on the Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) and Proposed Rule of a 5-year extension of 50 CFR 21.47 (Aquaculture Depredation Order) and 50 CFR 21.48 (Public Resource Depredation Order) for cormorants beyond the April 2009 expiration date. WS provided a comment letter (1/14/09) that supported the proposed rule to extend the Depredation Orders to 2014 and to standardize reporting dates within the two Depredation Orders. The FWS issued the Final Rule on the 5-year extension on April 6, 2009. In the future, the FWS may conduct a supplemental Environmental Impact Statement process to reexamine regional cormorant population management and other alternatives, and WS will participate in its development. Further, WS' internal Cormorant Working Group meets annually to coordinate activities and reporting. WS and FWS headquarters' staffs meet periodically throughout the year regarding cormorant issues and regulatory activities.</p> <p>2. The Department supports funding of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) H5N1 wild bird surveillance in accordance with the High Path AI Strategic plan dated 2009. The plans calls for reduced emphasis of wild bird surveillance and greater emphasis on live bird market surveillance, among other things.</p> <p>3. The Department acknowledges the importance of international capacity building activities and the need to reach out internationally to developing countries and governments in need of WS expertise in wildlife damage</p>

4. The NWSAC recommends the Secretary of Agriculture continue to expedite WS investigation, research and field trials of oral rabies vaccines (ORV) that are currently approved by Canada and/or the European Union. NWSAC further recommends the Secretary assist making these ORV options available in a timely manner to the WS rabies management program to enhance and improve rabies management and emergency response.

5. The NWSAC recommends to the Secretary of Agriculture that WS make their expertise available to First Nations, Alaskan and other Native communities for the

management, including surveillance and monitoring of zoonotic diseases. However, lack of resources requires that WS international outreach activities continue to occur on a cost reimbursable basis consistent with WS business plan priorities.

4. The Department concurs that WS research and field trials on prospective oral rabies vaccines for wildlife and feral dogs is essential for meeting the long-term goal of elimination of specific terrestrial rabies variants. Specifically, the Department has supported continuing captive canine adeno-rabies glycoprotein (CAV₂-RG) vaccine research in skunks, raccoons and feral dogs and is preparing to support future field testing of this vaccine in collaboration with the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), Thomas Jefferson University, and Molecular Targeting Technologies, Inc (MTTI). This vaccine has proven effectiveness in captive trials with skunks and raccoons and production feasibility is being explored through a USDA Small Business Innovation Research Grant to MTTI, with the goal of a field trial once sufficient data are available to meet regulatory requirements. In addition, WS is planning to collaborate with CDC and Mexican authorities to replicate a pilot field trial using a modified live SAG₂ ORV targeting free-roaming and feral dogs implicated in rabies transmission, including to wildlife. WS is also working closely with Canadian representatives to explore opportunities for collaboration on strategies for research and future field testing of ONRAB® oral rabies vaccine to manage the raccoon rabies epizootic along the U.S.-Canadian border. These results complement other data to help guide future decisions on oral rabies vaccines.

5. The Department concurs with is recommendation. The APHIS Wildlife Services APHIS Native American Working Group (ANAWG) representative will provide

<p>protection of traditional cultural and subsistence agriculture, livestock and wildlife food resources, including wolf management.</p> <p>6. The NWSAC recommends the Secretary of Agriculture place in the President's budget funding at current levels to sustain research directed toward methodologies of disease control and population reduction of feral swine.</p> <p>7. The NWSAC recommends that the Secretary of Agriculture seek new Federal funding for additional coordinators for airport safety.</p>		<p>outreach communication to WS regional and state/field offices in order to continue to provide wildlife damage management assistance to the public, including First Nations, Alaskan and other Native communities, in a manner that is transparent, accountable, and cost effective. To maximize WS' commitment to assisting tribal nations, WS personnel will continue to evaluate requests on a case-by-case basis to determine WS assistance can be used to meet the needs of the tribes, as well as how WS can provide services in instances when tribal funds are limited.</p> <p>6. The Department concurs with this recommendation. Feral swine continue to expand in range and numbers in the United States, posing a significant disease hazard to livestock. NWRC scientists investigate the ecology of feral swine as it relates to their proximity to livestock; develop baits for feral swine control; monitor movements of feral swine to assess effectiveness of aerial control efforts; and work towards the development of an effective fertility control compound for feral. In FY 2009, NWRC received \$496,500 to assess the risk feral swine pose in generating new strains of avian influenza viruses. In addition, WS strategic planning has identified feral swine surveillance, control, and research as a priority in the FY 2011 budget request.</p> <p>7. The APHIS concurs with this recommendation. WS has a Wildlife Hazards Management at Airports business plan that identifies WS strategic wildlife hazard at airport goals.</p> <p>Further, WS strategic planning has identified wildlife hazards at airports as a priority in the FY 2011 budget request. The budget proposal for FY 2011 requested \$17.7 million for airport safety and assistance for</p>
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8. The NWSAC requests the Secretary of Agriculture reaffirm support for sustained funding for research and management efforts to prevent establishment of, reduce, and where possible, to eliminate injurious, vertebrate invasive species that negatively impact wildlife, aquaculture, agriculture, forestry, and human health.

9. The NWSAC recommends the Secretary of Agriculture seek new funds to continue and enhance WS research program to develop new tools and methodologies to limit adverse effects of increasing populations of depredating wildlife species on aquaculture, agriculture, forestry and human health.

managing wildlife hazards at airports. We will continue to address this in future budget requests.

8. The Department concurs with this recommendation. The annual economic impact of vertebrate invasive species in the United States has been estimated as \$120 billion. WS through the National Wildlife Research Center continues to develop methods to control and eradicate invasive species. The NWRC recently realigned its research projects to better address invasive species issues through its Invasive Species and Technology Development Research Program. This program includes methods development efforts in economic impact assessments, population estimation, surveillance, bait development, and toxicant development. Species targeted include brown treesnake, feral swine, monk parakeets, nutria, starlings, pigeons and house sparrows. Resource protection sectors include: domestic animal production (disease protection), habitat protection, threatened and endangered species protection, human health and safety protection, and property protection.

9. The Department agrees that numerous species of wildlife (e.g., blackbirds, starlings, geese, cormorants, coyotes, and deer) can cause significant losses to crops, livestock, and aquaculture resources. NWRC continues to generate data to support APHIS registered vertebrate pesticide registration through the Environmental Protection Agency and Food and Drug Administration. NWRC supported the data development for registration of a fertility control agents for Canada geese and a pending registration for white-tailed deer. NWRC is developing a more species specific predator control toxicant, theobromine/caffeine mixture. NWRC scientists continue to study the population dynamics of cormorants so that more effective damage control strategies can be

10. The NWSAC recommends the Secretary of Agriculture seek new funding to support the replacement of 25 percent of all traps not meeting the Best Management Practices (BMP) standards each of the next four years to expeditiously achieve the goals of the BMP: animal welfare, efficiency, selectivity, practicality, and safety.

11. The NWSAC recommends the Secretary of Agriculture direct WS to prioritize goals and operations used to control wildlife depredation of aquaculture, agriculture, forestry and safeguarding public health and safety. NWSAC further recommends the Secretary support future budget initiatives and mandates for WS without redirection of existing resources and vigorously resist any attempts to reduce the agency's budget recommendations or force redirections which do not contain new funding.

implemented. In FY 2008, NWRC scientists tested several non-lethal methods for depredation reduction by bears, coyotes, and wolves: frightening devices, supplemental feeding, and food aversion conditioning.

10. Traps are an essential tool in the management of furbearer populations and in the effort to reduce damage by furbearers such as beaver and coyotes. Federal funds are currently being used to develop Best Management Practices standards for traps and WS has been involved in this effort. Standards are now in place for numerous furbearer species (beaver, muskrat, nutria, bobcat, coyote, fisher, gray fox, opossum, raccoon, river otter, and red fox). The State wildlife agencies regulate the use of traps in each state and they will ultimately determine the requirements for certain traps and the initiation dates for those requirements. The Department supports funding for these activities as available, but must prioritize initiatives and program activities consistent with the President's management agenda and balanced budget priorities.

11. The Department supports wise utilization of resources through the use of strategic Business Plans developed by WS. Currently, Business Plans of highest priority include Airport Safety and Assistance, National Wildlife Disease and Emergency Response, Livestock Predation (Predation Management), Feral Swine Damage Management, and Rabies Management. The Department will continue to support future WS budget initiatives and mandates that are consistent with the mission of the Department, APHIS, and WS goals of protecting the nation's agriculture, livestock, and human health. The Department will strongly encourage new funding without redirecting current operations or research monies.

12. The NWSAC recommends the Secretary of Agriculture support WS initiative to secure the planning and construction of an approximate 25,000 sq ft BSL 3 laboratory and diagnostics facility by the NWRC. After construction additional needs include adequate increases in research staff to develop sampling and diagnostic research methods for wildlife disease surveillance that will allow WS to better address disease risks and implement control measures at the wildlife, agriculture and human health interface and support emergency diagnostic and surge capacity needs.

13. The NWSAC recommends the Secretary of Agriculture requests WS create educational materials regarding impact on wildlife disease and rabies management programs posed by intentional importation and human translocation of wildlife, feral dogs and cats.

12. The NWRC established a wildlife disease research and methods development program in 2003. Part of the development of this program is the planning and construction of a 25,000 sq. ft. BSL-3 laboratory and BSL-3(Ag) animal test facility. APHIS has supported efforts for the development and construction of this facility. The NWRC is currently working with the General Services Administration to complete the development and bidding process, with construction to follow. These facilities will allow WS to better address disease risks and implement control measures at the wildlife-agriculture interface.

13. WS recognizes that the translocation of wildlife has been used successfully to enhance or reintroduce populations of rare species, provide hunting or viewing opportunities, farm wild game, and to reduce local human-wildlife conflicts. However, accidental and intentional translocations may have multiple, unintended negative consequences including significant impacts to public health, agriculture, and wildlife as well as jeopardize management programs targeting wildlife diseases including the WS oral rabies vaccination program being conducted in 16 States. To date, WS biologists have given numerous presentations, conducted meetings with State Agencies, and authored or co-authored several publications on the implications of translocating wildlife. WS continues to work with Legislative and Public Affairs (LPA), Veterinary Services (VS), CDC, and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to develop additional educational materials for the public on disease and wildlife damage implications of translocating and illegally importing wild species. Additionally, WS continues to work closely with State Wildlife, Agriculture, and Health agencies to assist them in developing outreach material on this subject.

14. The NWSAC recommends to the Secretary of Agriculture that WS seek new funding from Congress to add new positions within the Agency charged with being a resource on the use of livestock guarding animals as a non-lethal method of livestock protection.

15. The NWSAC recommends the Secretary of Agriculture continue to support the use of approved toxicants for predator control which are used by the WS program.

14. During FY 2009, WS developed a new Resource Management Specialist (RMS) position to serve as a liaison among producers, WS Operations and Research, and organizations, on a wide variety of wildlife damage management methods, especially the use of guard animals to reduce predation on livestock. The RMS specialist, who started last month (May 2009), will have national level responsibilities, report to WS Headquarters management, and is stationed in the WS Western Regional Office in Fort Collins, CO. Priority will be given development of informational resources and communication of advancements, research, and needs, among producers, WS, and methods providers (guard animals breeders, services, etc.). In addition predation management to protect livestock, the new RMS will also be a resource for other program areas, including other mammal and bird damage management. The selected individual has 13 years of experience as a WS Wildlife Specialist and Biologist with the WS Program, and possesses a BS degree in Wildlife and Fisheries Ecology from Oklahoma State University. Initially, the RMS will spend substantial effort visiting programs and producers to ensure that RMS activities and perspectives understand and meet the needs of the various communities to be served.

15. APHIS has developed and registered 22 pesticide products (10 rodenticides, 2 gas cartridge products, 6 avicides, 3 predacides, and 1 snake management tool) with EPA to contribute to the management of wildlife damage to livestock, forestry, agricultural production, and aquaculture, as well as those wild animals creating human health issues through infectious diseases. Currently, WS is developing a theobromine-caffeine mixture delivered via the Coyote Lure Operative Device (CLOD) as a coyote toxicant. The goal of the research is to take

		<p>advantage of the selective toxicity of theobromine and caffeine to canids by developing a coyote toxicant from concentrated extracts of the cocoa, tea, and coffee. APHIS anticipates submitting an Experimental Use Permit (EUP) during September 2009 to allow field studies to be conducted by the 2011 lambing season.</p> <p>On February 4, 2009, EPA posted its response to the petition, noting its denial of the requests to issue and Notice of Intent to Cancel and immediately suspend the registrations of the two chemicals. Subsequently, on March 6, 2009, EPA again rejected the petitioner's position, by denying their request for an appeal of the original January 2009 decision that had been made by the previous Administration.</p>
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