

Wildlife Services

Protecting People
Protecting Agriculture
Protecting Wildlife

State Report

FY 2010

Illinois



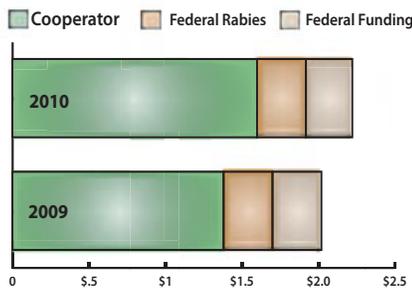
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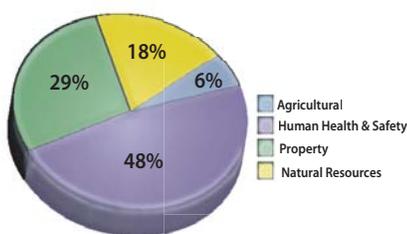
Major Cooperators

- City of Chicago (O'Hare International and Midway International Airports)
- U.S. Department of Energy – Fermi National Accelerator and Argonne National Laboratories
- Illinois Department of Transportation, Division of Aeronautics
- Forest Preserve Districts of Cook and DuPage Counties
- Lake County Forest Preserve District
- Numerous power generating stations, railroads, and other industrial facilities

Total Funding (Millions)



Resources Protected % of Total Funds



USDA Resolves Wildlife Conflicts in Illinois

The Wildlife Services (WS) program in Illinois helps residents, industries, organizations and governments resolve conflicts with wildlife that affect agriculture, human health and safety, natural resources, public infrastructure, and private property. Our professional wildlife biologists and specialists are located throughout Illinois and are trained to manage wildlife conflicts with effective, selective, and humane strategies that value the integrity of the wildlife resource and the resources protected.

Wildlife Services works to protect property and safety at airports, on public land, and on private property. The program also protects people, pets, and livestock from wildlife-borne diseases; guards natural resources from damage; and educates the public about wildlife and wildlife damage management.

Applying Science & Expertise to Wildlife Challenge

WS offers information, advice, equipment, and materials that enable many people to resolve wildlife conflicts on their own. Often, this technical assistance can be provided over the telephone. On-site expertise, or direct assistance, is provided to manage complex wildlife problems that cannot be safely resolved by others. WS conducts scientific research across the nation to develop answers to new problems posed by wildlife and to ensure the program benefits from the latest science and technology.

Protecting Agricultural Resources—WS works with the agricultural industry to resolve conflicts caused by wildlife, including bird damage to crops and livestock. Birds can destroy field crops, spread disease to livestock, and significantly decrease milk production in dairy cows. WS works with the Illinois Departments of Agriculture and Natural Resources to identify and resolve wildlife conflicts with agricultural resources.

Protecting Human Health and Safety Wildlife Hazard Management at Airports

Wildlife-aircraft collisions cost U.S. civil aviation more than \$615 million annually and represent a hazard to flight crews and passengers. From 1990 to 2009, more than 4,700 wildlife strikes, involving 110 species, occurred at Illinois airports according to Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) National Strike Database maintained by WS to monitor trends and wildlife species posing the greatest concern to aviation safety. Illinois WS biologists collaborate with scientists from WS' National Wildlife Research Center (NWRC) to study methods for reducing wildlife hazards to aircraft and how airport habitat management methods affect wildlife abundance.

WS biologists are working with researchers at NWRC to evaluate how avian radars can be used to promote aviation safety through wildlife management at airports. In addition, mark/re-sighting and satellite telemetry studies are being conducted on red-tailed hawks at airports. Data provided by these studies will assist in making scientifically sound management decisions concerning safety threats red-tailed hawks pose at airports.

WS biologists work with Chicago's international airports and others throughout the state to manage wildlife which pose hazards to aircraft and human safety. Airport assistance ranges from technical assistance, to WS staff stationed at the airport to provide direct management assistance. WS biologists and specialists monitor the airfield for wildlife activity, mitigate potential threats, and make recommendations to airports to reduce the attractiveness of airfields to wildlife. At many airports WS collaborates with the Illinois Department of Transportation to conduct individual hazard assessments and provide management recommendations based on the findings. In addition, WS biologists provide training to airport staff statewide for their compliance with FAA safety training requirements.

Urban and Rural Human Health and Safety Issues—WS works with private industries and the Illinois Department of Public Health to alleviate disease threats to public and employee health. Large concentrations of birds can create environmental conditions



United States Department of Agriculture
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

conducive to histoplasmosis, a fungal disease which can cause exposed humans to develop severe respiratory problems. WS works to reduce threats posed by concentrations of birds, including gulls whose droppings have been shown to elevate e-coli counts in recreational waters causing swim bans on public beaches.

Protecting Natural Resources

Deer Damage to Sensitive Native Vegetation—White-tailed deer inhabiting urban/suburban areas are protected from factors that limit their populations in rural locations. Once deer herds become overabundant they severely degrade sensitive vegetation in parks and forest preserves. WS provides assistance to urban/suburban natural resource managers in maintaining desirable deer populations.

Protecting Multiple Resources

Avian Influenza Surveillance—Highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) H5N1 spread rapidly from Asia to Europe, raising concern that the disease could be carried by migratory birds to North America. WS works with State and Federal agencies, local governments, universities, and businesses to conduct statewide surveillance as part of the Interagency National Strategic Plan for the Early Detection of HPAI in wild birds.

Feral Swine Surveillance

Damage to natural and agricultural resources by feral swine is well documented, and monitoring for diseases in feral swine is crucial to understanding the risks posed to commercial swine producers. WS works with State and Federal agencies in addition to private landowners to conduct statewide comprehensive disease surveillance in feral swine.

Bird Damage Management—WS responds to reports of pigeon and European starling threats to property, human health, and human safety. These invasive birds often inhabit power generating stations and industrial sites where fecal droppings deteriorate equipment, contaminate livestock and human food products, and threaten human health and safety. In these situations, WS helps identify methods to exclude birds from sensitive locations and manage populations inhabiting the facilities.

Looking to the Future

Illinois WS provides safe, effective, and humane assistance for diverse wildlife conflicts. As wildlife and human populations continue to come into conflict, the need for WS assistance continues to increase. Further collaborations to manage wildlife threats at airports and to monitor wildlife borne diseases are expected in the future.

Illinois Wildlife Services Funding

WS receives Federally allocated funds, which are utilized to assist in managing conflicts with birds and wildlife diseases. WS also receives funding from agricultural producers, private individuals, industrial facilities, and other Federal, State, and local government agencies. These cooperators have sought WS assistance in resolving their wildlife-related conflicts because of the effective and professional assistance provided by Illinois WS personnel.

Top 5 Major Assistance Activities:

- Protecting airline passengers and aircraft from wildlife hazards at airports
- Protecting property, human health, and human safety from bird damage
- Protecting sensitive native vegetation from white-tailed deer damage
- Protecting public safety and property from ring-billed gull, Canada goose and white-tailed deer damage
- Protecting agricultural resources and public health and safety from disease threats (e.g, histoplasmosis, rabies, and HPAI) and other damage/threats

Top WS Research Projects of Interest to Illinois

- Identifying and reducing wildlife hazards to aircraft and human safety
- Examining bird damage to agricultural resources, property, public health and public safety
- Increasing knowledge of wildlife vectors of rabies, chronic wasting disease, classical swine fever, and pseudorabies