

# Wildlife Services

Protecting People  
Protecting Agriculture  
Protecting Wildlife

## State Report

FY 2010

# Maine



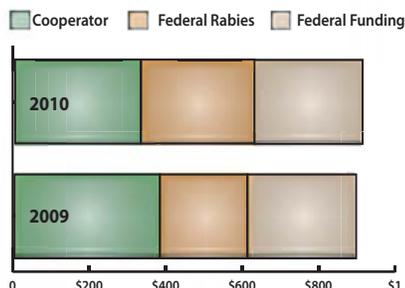
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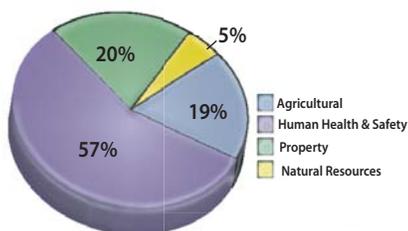
### Major Cooperators

- Cities of Lewiston and Auburn
- Maine Department of Transportation
- Seven Islands Land Company
- American Forest Management, Inc.
- Huber Resources Company
- Waste Management

### Total Funding (Thousands)



### Resources Protected % of Total Funds



### USDA Resolves Wildlife Conflicts in Maine

Every day, APHIS' Wildlife Services (WS) in Maine assists private citizens, businesses, organizations, and government agencies in resolving wildlife damage to agriculture, property, natural resources, and human health and safety. A team of professional wildlife biologists and wildlife specialists responds to requests by integrating the most effective, selective and humane strategies to resolve human-wildlife conflicts.

Maine has a diverse mix of commercial forest lands, scenic coastal areas, lakes and rivers, which provides suitable habitat for a variety of wildlife species. WS routinely provides direct or technical assistance on managing conflicts with more than 50 wildlife species, including beavers, black bears, white-tailed deer, gulls and ospreys.

### Applying Science & Expertise to Wildlife Challenges

WS offers information, advice, equipment, and materials that enable many people to resolve wildlife conflicts on their own. Often, technical assistance can be provided over the phone. WS also provides on-site expertise, or direct assistance, to manage complex wildlife problems that cannot be safely resolved by others. To support our assistance efforts, 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 Transportation, Timber and Natural Resources**—The Maine Cooperative Beaver Management Program provides assistance for landowners to manage beaver damage such as flooding timber, roads, bridges and property. Under this program, Maine WS provides direct assistance at more than 1,000 sites each year, while providing a cost-benefit ratio of nearly 1:9.5.

**Protecting Air Travel**—White-tailed deer, Canada geese, gulls, and other wildlife pose a major hazard to aircraft throughout Maine. WS biologists are trained to assess wildlife hazards, and provide technical and operational assistance at military and civilian airports. Our biologists provide training to airport staff on identifying wildlife hazards, proper reporting of wildlife strikes and strategies for mitigating hazards.

WS conducts bird surveys at a landfill located adjacent to a general aviation airport. Management is then conducted by landfill operators and airport managers to reduce the number of birds at the landfill through harassment and lethal control methods.

**Protecting Property**—WS assists industrial, retail, agricultural and other sites in managing damage caused by roosting birds. Large flocks of feral pigeons and European starlings can cause significant damage to buildings through the accumulation of fecal material. WS routinely provides technical and direct assistance with damage caused by a variety of other animals such as woodpeckers, gulls, ospreys and woodchucks, which can cause significant property damage.

**Protecting Human Health** – WS is involved with a variety of projects that protect human health and safety - from protecting drinking water to wildlife disease surveillance and management. WS assists the towns of Lewiston and Auburn, Maine by protecting their drinking water from fecal contamination caused by gulls. WS manages gull activity by integrating a variety of harassment techniques and lethal control and has been successful in reducing the reservoir's bacteria levels to minimal levels.

**Protecting Agricultural Crops**—Maine WS offers a lease-to-own program for electric fencing to exclude wildlife from commercial and home gardens and to protect livestock. Participants receive the fencing and pay five equal payments over a period of five years,



United States Department of Agriculture  
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

which makes the program effective and economical. More than 400 participants have been assisted by this program since 1991. WS also works with producers of blueberries, livestock and other industries to reduce wildlife damage through technical and direct assistance.

**Wildlife Diseases**— Maine WS conducts surveillance on a variety of wildlife diseases to protect agriculture and human health, including rabies, tularemia and eastern equine encephalitis (EEE).

WS conducts enhanced surveillance for rabies to determine the geographic extent of this disease in raccoons, skunks and other vector species. Animals that are found dead along roads or those that are found to be sick are tested for rabies using the Direct Rapid Immunohistochemical Test (DRIT) and results are confirmed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Animals that have a history of contact with humans or domestic animals are tested through traditional health department protocols. Additionally, WS distributes approximately 100,000 oral rabies vaccines from aircraft over northern Maine to prevent additional spread of the disease. Following vaccine distribution, raccoons are live-captured and temporarily immobilized to collect biological data and blood samples which are used to determine program efficacy.

**Natural Resources**—WS partners with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife to protect nesting piping plovers and least terns from predation on the Rachel Carson National Wildlife Refuge. In addition to predation, other factors such as habitat loss, weather events and human interference have left piping plover populations at historic lows in the state. Over the past four nesting seasons, reproductive success of piping plovers where WS has worked have exceeded the species recovery goal of 1.5 chicks per pair.

### **Looking to the Future**

WS will continue to play an important role in wildlife disease surveillance. Maine will continue to work on managing wildlife rabies with New Brunswick and Quebec, Canada. Wildlife diseases which are capable of impacting agriculture and human health will be closely monitored in cooperation with other State and Federal agencies.

WS will work with our cooperators to protect livestock and endangered species from predation through direct and technical assistance. We will continue to work with military and civilian airports to reduce wildlife hazards through education and direct assistance. Providing Federal leadership in managing wildlife damage, particularly those related to human health and safety and protecting agricultural industries, remain our program's mission.

### **Maine Wildlife Services Funding**

In addition to receiving Federally allocated funds, WS also receives funding from businesses individuals and other Federal, State and local government agencies who request assistance with wildlife damage management.

### **Major Assistance Activities:**

- Protecting commercial timberlands, State and municipal roads and highways from damage caused by beavers
- Protecting drinking water reservoir from fecal contamination caused by resident and migrating gulls
- Protecting threatened and endangered species from predation
- Wildlife disease surveillance

### **Research Projects of Interest to Maine:**

- Monitoring and reducing gull movements over critical drinking water reservoirs
- Defining and reducing wildlife hazards to aviation
- Providing long-term solutions to beaver damage
- Recovery of threatened and endangered species following removal of predators
- Distribution and prevalence of wildlife diseases