

# Wildlife Services

Protecting People  
Protecting Agriculture  
Protecting Wildlife

## State Report

FY 2010

# Maryland-D.C.



### Contact Information:

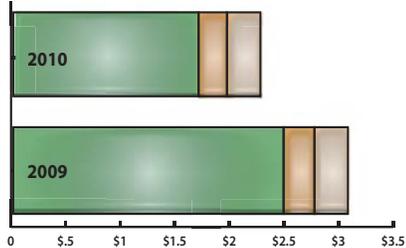
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### Major Cooperators

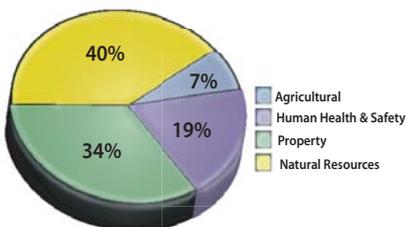
- Maryland Department of Natural Resources
- Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene
- Anne Arundel County Department of Health
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- Transportation Companies
- Maryland Aviation Administration
- Baltimore/Washington International Thurgood Marshall Airport
- Martin State Airport
- NASA/Goddard Space Flight Center
- National Park Service

### Total Funding (Millions)

Cooperator Federal Rabies Federal Funding



### Resources Protected % of Total Funds



### USDA Resolves Wildlife Conflicts in Maryland

Every day, residents, industries, organizations, and agencies call on Wildlife Services (WS) in Maryland for expertise in protecting agriculture, property, natural resources, and human health and safety from damage or threats posed by wildlife. Managed by professional wildlife biologists, WS responds with effective, selective, and humane strategies to resolve wildlife conflicts.

WS has teamed up with the Wildlife and Heritage Division of Maryland's Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to provide professional guidance to citizens who have concerns and problems with wildlife. As the operators for the DNR's toll-free Nuisance Wildlife Information Line (1-877-463-6497), WS provides technical assistance to thousands of callers on a one-to-one basis. WS has worked with several Maryland airports to help protect human safety and aircraft from dangerous wildlife/aircraft collisions. WS also works with Andrews Air Force Base, the home of the 89th Airlift Wing and Air Force One, as well as Martin State Airport, the home of the Maryland Air National Guard, to reduce wildlife hazards.

### 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, this 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 this effort, 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 Air Travel**—Wildlife collisions with aircraft cost U.S. civil aviation more than \$615 million annually. More importantly, these strikes place the safety of passengers and flight crews at risk. Baltimore/Washington International Thurgood Marshall Airport (BWI), the nation's second fastest growing airport, reported 837 wildlife/aircraft strikes from 1990 to 2007. WS has two wildlife biologist stationed at BWI assisting with projects and research aimed at minimizing wildlife hazards. This presence at BWI has helped to increase awareness of wildlife hazards and reduce the threat of wildlife collisions with commercial aircraft.

Since 1999, WS has provided technical assistance to 5 Maryland airports and an airbase, either through initial consultation visits or through the development of wildlife hazard assessments. WS also provides training to airport personnel to help lower the risk of wildlife/aircraft collisions. Currently, WS is helping the Maryland Aviation Administration implement comprehensive wildlife hazard management plans for three airports. In addition to hands-on technical assistance, WS' National Wildlife Research Center (NWRC) conducts research from its Sandusky, OH Field Station to reduce wildlife hazard risks to aviation and the public. Studies underway at several large airports evaluate habitat management practices and wildlife dispersal techniques. NWRC also maintains the National Wildlife Strike Database used by the Federal Aviation Administration and airports to monitor trends and wildlife species of greatest concern to aviation.

**Protecting Property and Natural Resources**—Most birds are protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA), an international treaty administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), which is responsible for the conservation and the continuing population growth of many species. The MBTA also protects some bird species, such as Canada geese and vultures, which often cause great economic and ecological damages. FWS recognizes WS expertise when it comes to the prevention and control of damage caused by migratory birds.



United States Department of Agriculture  
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

With nearly 400,000 Canada geese migrating through Maryland each year, and as many as 93,000 Canada geese that call Maryland home year-round, many of Maryland's farmers and waterfront property owners experience problems with these birds. Since 1997, WS has provided technical assistance for more than 600 goose-related problems and more than 200 requests for culture-related assistance annually.

Since FY 2002, WS has partnered with FWS and Maryland DNR to protect wetlands along the Chesapeake Bay from damage caused by nutria, an invasive mammal that has proliferated along the Chesapeake, damaging both wetland and agricultural environments. The abundance of this large rodent, coupled with rising sea levels, is resulting in the large-scale conversion of emergent marsh to open water. The goal of WS' management is to test various nutria removal strategies and to determine if nutria can be eradicated from the bay.

**Protecting Public Health and Safety**—In 2001 WS joined the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene and the Anne Arundel County Department of Health in their efforts to control raccoon rabies through the use of oral vaccines. With assistance from WS, the rabies program was able to expand its efforts to the entire county. More than 80,000 oral rabies vaccination baits are dropped in September from helicopters, vehicles, and by hand to ensure the vaccine are distributed throughout the county. When raccoons ingest the oral bait, they become vaccinated against the deadly disease. In addition to protecting Maryland residents, pets, livestock, and wildlife; this effort is part of a larger campaign to create a rabies-free barrier along the East Coast that will stop the westward spread of the disease.

WS partners with Maryland's DNR to assist in reducing damage caused by deer on Federal, State and local government facilities.

### **Looking to the Future**

The growth in air travel coupled with increases in deer and bird populations has created a greater need for wildlife management at airports to reduce threats posed by wildlife.

Another public safety issue facing Maryland is the growing need to protect people, pets, and livestock from wildlife-borne diseases. Rabies, West Nile virus, chronic wasting disease and avian influenza are major health concerns on the East Coast. While Maryland WS is now active in rabies control efforts, the program could provide greater disease surveillance to Federal, State, and local public health officials if program capabilities expanded.

### **Maryland Wildlife Services Funding**

In addition to receiving Federally allocated funds, WS also receives funding from agricultural producers, private individuals, businesses, and other Federal, State, and local government agencies. In most cases, these cooperators need help in resolving wildlife damage problems or play a role in wildlife damage management.

### **Major Assistance Activities:**

- Providing technical assistance and educating the public about wildlife, particularly in urban areas
- Reducing wildlife hazards to aviation
- Protecting natural resources and reducing nutria damage to the Chesapeake Bay
- Managing problems caused by Canada geese, white-tailed deer and vultures
- Protecting public health through monitoring of West Nile virus

### **Top 5 WS Research Projects of Interest to Maryland:**

- Defining and reducing wildlife hazards to aviation
- Investigating problems caused by vultures
- Evaluating waterfowl as disease, parasite, and noxious weed reservoirs
- Controlling wildlife vectors of rabies and avian influenza, West Nile virus and chronic wasting disease
- Improving assessment, sampling, and economic methods for wildlife damage management