

Wildlife Services

Protecting People
Protecting Agriculture
Protecting Wildlife

State Report

FY 2010

Massachusetts



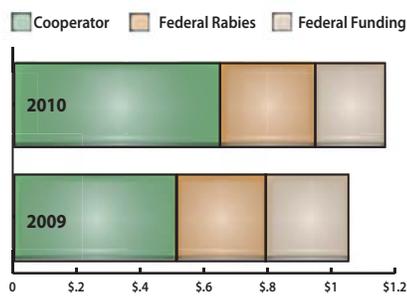
Contact Information:

Monte Chandler, Massachusetts,
Connecticut, and Rhode Island
Wildlife Services State Director
463 West Street,
Amherst, MA 01002
Phone: (413) 253-2403
FAX: (413) 253-7577
Toll-Free Number: 1-866-4USDAWS
(1-866-487-3297)
monte.d.chandler@aphis.usda.gov
www.aphis.usda.gov/wildlife_damage

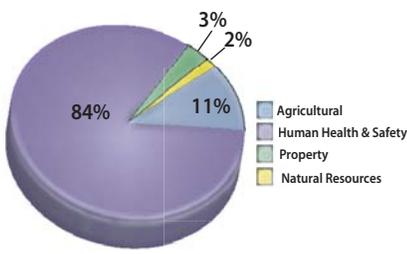
Major Cooperators

- Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife
- Massachusetts Department of Public Health
- Massachusetts Division of Agricultural Resources
- University of Massachusetts - Extension System
- Massachusetts Department of Transportation, Aeronautics Division
- Massport Airport Operations
- Westover Air Reserve Base
- Otis National Coast Guard Base
- Barnstable County Department of Health and Environment
- Tufts University Animal Hospital
- Multiple Towns and Residential Associations for Canada Goose Management
- Corporate or Private Landfills and Transfer Stations
- U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
- Individual Massachusetts Agricultural Producers

Total Funding (Millions)



Resources Protected % of Total Funds



USDA Resolves Wildlife Conflicts in Massachusetts

Massachusetts is heavily populated and ecologically diverse. Routinely, residents, industry professionals, organizations, and agencies call upon the Wildlife Services (WS) program in Massachusetts for help and expertise in protecting various resources. While assistance to protect agricultural resources is provided, WS personnel are also increasingly providing aid in the protection of human health and safety, property, and natural resources from damage or threats caused by wildlife. WS provides technical assistance and implements biologically, environmentally, and socially sound wildlife damage management in compliance with all applicable laws and regulations.

Applying Science & Expertise to Wildlife Challenges

WS offers information, advice, equipment, and materials that enable people to resolve wildlife conflicts on their own. Often, this technical assistance can be provided over the phone. WS may also provide on-site help, or direct assistance, to address complex wildlife problems that may be difficult or cannot be safely and effectively resolved by others. To support these efforts, WS in Massachusetts continues to collaborate with researchers of the WS' National Wildlife Research Center (NWRC) to develop answers to new problems posed by wildlife and to ensure the program benefits from the latest science and technology.

Protecting Human Health and Safety at Airports—Wildlife collisions with aircraft cost U.S. civil aviation an estimated more than \$615 million annually and pose a hazard to flights. WS' NWRC conducts research to reduce wildlife hazards to aviation and air passengers. Additionally, WS biologists in Massachusetts provide training, wildlife hazard assessments, and direct wildlife management assistance at State airports through partnerships with airport management, State agencies, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), and other Federal agencies. During 2010, WS conducted cooperative programs and technical consultations at three military, three State, and nine municipal airports. WS conducted wildlife hazard management workshops for nine personnel from Massachusetts airports, and staffed a wildlife hazard management WS program exhibit booth at the New England Regional FAA Airports Conference during 2010.

Protecting Human Health & Safety from Rabies—Since 2001, WS has supported the Cape Cod Oral Rabies Vaccination (CCORV) program in southeastern Massachusetts in collaboration with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, the Barnstable County Department of Health and the Environment, and the Cape Cod Rabies Task Force (CCRTF). The program was designed to prevent the spread of rabies to Cape Cod, a heavily populated tourist destination. Cooperative activities include oral rabies vaccine (ORV) bait distribution, surveillance activities, training, and small-scale research studies.

In response to a March 2004 Cape Cod rabies outbreak, enhanced rabies surveillance was conducted to facilitate rabies management decision making. WS and CCORV cooperators have submitted more than 1,935 rabies suspect or dead animals for testing. To combat the spread of rabies across Cape Cod, WS and CCORV cooperators distributed over 640,933 ORV baits. Currently, the partners continue to implement ORV baiting for rabies control in cooperation with the National Rabies Management program.

Wildlife Disease Management—To enhance preparedness for emergency disease response, WS continues to collaborate with USDA/APHIS' Veterinary Services (VS) and several State and local health agencies. WS has assisted these other agencies with investigating several cases of possible exotic Newcastle disease, and an unknown virus apparently causing morbidity in common eiders, and sampling deer harvests to monitor for potential chronic wasting disease (CWD).



United States Department of Agriculture
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

Avian influenza (AI), is a viral disease, which can infect domestic poultry and some wild birds. The highly pathogenic H5N1 strain of bird flu has been found in increasing numbers of countries in Europe, Asia and Africa. Through the end of 2010, highly pathogenic AI (HPAI) H5N1 was still not present in the United States. None-the-less, WS continues to lead a national multi-agency collaboration effort to monitor wild migratory birds in the United States for HPAI H5N1. WS personnel continue to work in collaboration with State agencies and other public and private organizations to conduct surveillance activities for AI by collecting samples from wild migratory birds.

Protecting Multiple Resources from Canada Goose

Damage—For the past 30 years, resident Canada goose populations have increased in Massachusetts and continue to present a major wildlife challenge. Many traditional management methods are beginning to show limited effectiveness as goose populations continue to grow. Massachusetts WS recommends the use of integrated wildlife damage management in which several effective methods are combined to alleviate goose conflicts. Methods include combining habitat management, exclusion, harassment, and repellants. WS program specialists conduct integrated programs with towns and homeowner associations to reduce the reproduction success of local geese. In FY 2010, the WS Massachusetts program conducted 44 consultations and resource loss evaluations impacting approximately \$348,131 in damage losses to Canada geese.

Protecting Federally Endangered Piping Plovers—During FY 2010 WS assisted the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife (MDFW) in managing fox and skunk predation on Federally protected piping plovers and other shorebirds that nest on Plymouth, Massachusetts, beaches. WS and MDFW, working together with a private wildlife foundation have reduced predation of shorebirds and enhanced nesting success of these protected species.

Protecting Agricultural Resources—Although human population densities are increasing, agriculture remains economically and socially important in Massachusetts. WS continues to provide wildlife damage management expertise to agricultural industries. These include vegetable, fruit, dairy, turf, ornamental, aquaculture, and livestock producers located in urban, suburban, and rural settings.

WS Massachusetts personnel collaborate with the University of Massachusetts Extension System to manage starling contamination of feed and water at dairy farms, which can cause infections in cattle and reduce milk production. In addition to cost savings from reduced contamination and scavenged feed, dairy and feed lot farmers who participate report improvements in the herd health and milk production.

Looking to the Future

WS continues to provide citizens of Massachusetts with safe, effective, and humane assistance for a variety of wildlife conflicts through cooperatively funded wildlife damage management activities. A major concern is monitoring and preventing the spread of wildlife-borne diseases such as rabies, tularemia, salmonella, giardia, and E. coli and potentially CWD into Massachusetts.

Massachusetts 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.

Top 5 Major Assistance Activities:

- Alleviating wildlife hazards at airports to protect civilian and military passengers and aircraft
- Protecting human and animal health from disease threats such as rabies using ORV
- Reducing threats to human health and safety and property damage from Canada geese, gulls, and other wildlife
- Monitoring zoonotic diseases such as HPAI virus, tularemia, and chronic wasting disease

Top WS Research Projects of Interest to Massachusetts:

- Enhancing management of European starlings at trash transfer stations and potential impacts to airports and aircraft activity, and at livestock feedlots
- Evaluate grass types and heights at airports for optimum aircraft safety while preserving conditions to benefit protected grassland birds
- Monitor use of ORV bait stations in areas of dense human populations
- Review possible routes and types of rabies spread across the canal on to Cape Cod and help collaborators alleviate these vulnerabilities