

Wildlife Services

Protecting People
Protecting Agriculture
Protecting Wildlife

State Report

FY 2010

New York



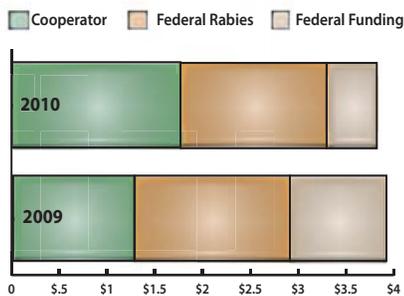
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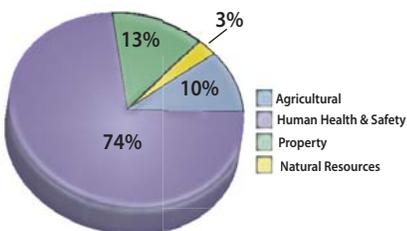
Major Cooperators

- The New York State Departments of Agriculture and Markets, Health and Environmental Conservation
- The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey
- Stratton Air National Guard Base
- Oneida Lake Association
- The Cities of Albany, Troy, Colonie, and Watertown
- Cornell University Diagnostic Laboratory and Cooperative Extension
- New York City Departments of Environmental Protection and Health
- Orange, St. Lawrence, Clinton and Jefferson Counties
- Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station
- Westchester County Airport

Total Funding (Millions)



Resources Protected % of Total Funds



USDA Resolves Wildlife Conflicts in New York

Every day, New York residents, industries, organizations, municipalities and agencies call on Wildlife Services (WS) 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 professional strategies to resolve wildlife conflicts.

New York, a diverse ecological mix of urban and suburban settings and agricultural and forested environments, is home to nearly 19 million people with 47,223 square miles of land and 7,000 square miles of inland water. Accordingly, WS works to reduce public safety risks and property damage by managing wildlife populations at airports, protecting domestic animals from rabies, and protecting natural resources, such as threatened and endangered birds from mammal predation and fisheries from bird depredation.

Protecting Natural Resources to Save Jobs and Local Economies

Lake Champlain has an estimated 16,000 cormorants feeding on fish and nesting on trees in sensitive habitat. Nesting cormorants kill the trees with their acidic fecal droppings, reducing nesting habitat for species of special concern such as the migratory common terns, great blue herons, and black-crowned night herons. WS is working with the States of New York and Vermont, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, as well as several bird conservation and fish conservation organizations, to manage cormorants. Current management focuses on egg oiling and limited shooting of cormorants in New York to complement egg oiling, shooting, and hazing activities in Vermont. The two states and several non-governmental organizations worked with WS to write a management plan for cormorants and other waterbirds on Lake Champlain.

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 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 Agriculture Resources—New York ranks third nationally in milk production. Overabundant starlings at dairies consume feed denying dairy cows protein, which reduces milk production and farmers' income while increasing feed costs. Also, starlings can spread bacteria increasing the health risk to cattle. During winter months WS treats starlings with a registered toxicant at dairy farms that pay for the service. WS assisted 82 dairy farms in the previous 2 years and is working with Cornell University and New York State Agriculture and Markets to assist more dairy producers. This is the program's sixth year.

Protecting Human Health and Safety at Airports—Bird strikes to aircraft cost civil aviation more than \$615 million annually in the United States and pose a hazard to flight. Globally, wildlife strikes have killed more than 219 people and destroyed over 200 aircraft since 1988. In the United States, wildlife strikes killed 11 people and injured 197 people from 1990 to 2007. The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey reported between 80 and 315 aircraft collisions annually with birds at John F. Kennedy International Airport over the last 29 years. WS reduced gull strikes to aircraft by 76-99% which provided a safer operating environment for aircraft and passengers. WS is helping other New York airports, which reported 5,781 aircraft collisions with birds, deer, and coyotes from 1990 to 2009.

In response to US Air Flight 1549 crash landing on the Hudson River in 2009, the WS program expanded service to manage resident Canada geese near all major airports in New York to manage resident Canada geese near the airport. The reduction in risk to



United States Department of Agriculture
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

aviation is accomplished by removing resident Canada geese from the airport environment. In urban areas where most airports are located, this is accomplished by capture and removal during June and July. During the summer of 2009 and 2010, WS removed about 5,700 geese to protect aviation safety and property damage in New York City and upstate New York. The effectiveness of this program is best demonstrated at LaGuardia Airport where the number of geese struck by aircraft has declined 75% since 2004. The number of geese observed on or near LaGuardia Airport has also declined 80% since 2009.

WS has been working with airports to provide a safe operating environment since 1976 with the goal of minimizing hazardous wildlife threats to aviation while balancing natural resources protection. WS conducts wildlife hazard assessments, control measures, and training for airports so they can comply with Federal Aviation Administration regulations and safety policies. Additionally, the research arm of WS develops innovative methods to minimize wildlife use of airports or to detect wildlife and avoid an aircraft strike.

WS has conducted wildlife hazard assessments or site visits at all 24 certificated airports in New York State plus military installations and general aviation airports. In the last two years, WS implemented wildlife control measures to reduce immediate risks at 13 airports. Wildlife control measures used were integrated hazing programs, removal of hazardous deer, coyotes, or Canada geese, and working with the airports' neighbors to manage local wildlife. In FY 2010, WS trained 123 airport personnel from 12 of New York's civilian airports and military installations. Some training programs were joint ventures with the New York Airport Management Association and the New York State Bureau of Aviation.

Urban Human Health and Safety—Canada geese threaten public health and safety, property, and crops. The peak resident Canada goose population in New York was approximately 257,000 birds. WS biologists work with local governments to design and implement Canada goose programs that meet local needs. Some communities utilize technical information to implement goose management programs themselves. WS programs have included hazing projects with a border collie, nest and egg treatment, population management, seminars, one-on-one consultation by telephone, and assisting landowners and managers in obtaining Federal and State permits to manage geese. New York WS responds to more than 240 requests for assistance with geese each year.

Reducing the Occurrence of Raccoon Rabies—First reported in New York in 1990, raccoon rabies quickly spread and is now present throughout most of the State. WS has contained the spread of raccoon rabies in western New York, pushed raccoon rabies out of the Champlain Valley and St. Lawrence River Plain, and kept raccoon rabies from entering New York from Vermont and Quebec. Raccoon rabies containment is accomplished by a combination of three methods. A trap-vaccinate-release (TVR) program created a barrier of vaccinated raccoons in Jefferson, St. Lawrence, Clinton, and Niagara Counties from 2007 to 2010. An estimated 65% of the raccoon population was vaccinated in each zone. Second, broad areas were baited with 694,681 oral rabies vaccine (ORV) baits across 4,126 square miles in 2010 for the twelfth consecutive year. The ORV bait contains a vaccine pouch released when eaten by a raccoon. The TVR and ORV baiting in combination has contained raccoon rabies from spreading to other regions of New York. Finally, raccoon populations were monitored. These accomplishments are possible through a cooperative effort with the New York State Department of Health, Cornell University's Diagnostic Laboratory, and other state and local agencies.

New York City had over 110 raccoon rabies cases in Manhattan parks in 2009 and 2010. The city requested assistance from WS to reduce the prevalence of rabies because of the high human density of 67,000 residents per square mile and 25 million visitors per year to Central Park. Rabid raccoons attacked four people and two dogs in Manhattan in 2010. WS implemented two 9-week TVR programs in Central Park in cooperation with several local agencies and organizations. Over 400 raccoons were vaccinated in 2010. The results of the TVR efforts were that only one positive raccoon rabies case has been reported in Manhattan since September 2010.

Looking to the Future

Feral swine have slowly been increasing in abundance during the last few years in New York. Most feral swine sightings are associated with regulated shooting enclosures. However, other feral swine sightings are independent of shooting enclosures. In New York, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, farm organizations and food safety advocates have concerns about feral swine spreading disease to livestock and people, contaminating the food supply with bacteria, damaging wetlands, and threatening populations of native wildlife. At the requests of New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets, WS conducted a survey to document locations where feral swine occur, captured feral swine and took tissue samples for disease monitoring to alleviate damage to crops and wetlands. WS surveyed 9 counties that border Pennsylvania by interviewing 968 landowners about feral swine. Twenty-seven feral swine were captured and tested for pseudorabies and classical swine fever. New York State will use the information to make policy and regulatory decisions about managing a growing population of feral swine.

New York Wildlife Services Funding

In addition to receiving Federally allocated funds, WS also receives money from cooperators such as producers, private individuals, businesses, and other Federal, State, and local government agencies. In most cases, these cooperators request help to resolve wildlife damage problems or they play a role in wildlife damage management.

Major Assistance Activities:

- Reducing public health threats from raccoon rabies
- Protecting public safety and aircraft operations from wildlife hazards at airports
- Protecting property from damage caused by resident Canada geese
- Increasing milk production and profits at dairies by reducing European starlings
- Protecting property and public health from damage caused by large, urban crow roosts
- Protecting agriculture and public health from diseases transmitted by feral swine

Top 5 WS Research Projects of Interest to New York:

- Evaluating techniques for reducing Atlantic brant threats to aviation
- Defining and reducing wildlife hazards to aviation
- Developing long-term techniques to disperse winter crow roosts from urban and suburban areas
- Evaluating the impact of beaver to the recovery of native brook trout
- Evaluating techniques for managing voles to restore natural areas in New York City