

Wildlife Services

Protecting People
Protecting Agriculture
Protecting Wildlife

State Report

FY 2010

North Carolina



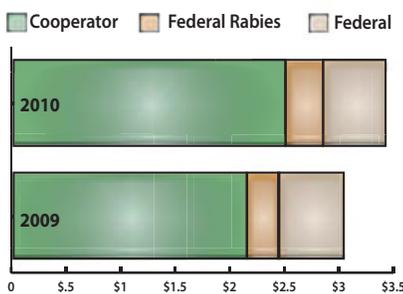
Contact Information:

Jon F. Heisterberg, North Carolina
Wildlife Services State Director
6213-E Angus Drive
Raleigh, NC 27617
Phone: (919) 786-4480
FAX: (919) 782-4159
Toll-Free Number: 1-866-4USDAWS
(1-866-487-3297)
jon.f.heisterberg@aphis.usda.gov
www.aphis.usda.gov/wildlife_damage

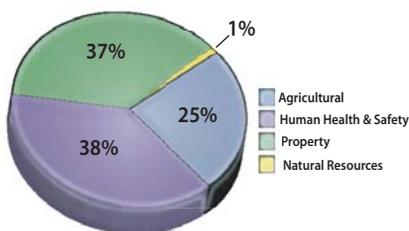
Major Cooperators

- North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission
- North Carolina Department of Transportation
- North Carolina Division of Aviation
- North Carolina Dept. of Agriculture and Consumer Services
- Seymour Johnson Air Force Base
- Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point
- Marine Corps Air Station New River
- Piedmont Triad International Airport
- Columbus, Duplin, Nash, New Hanover, Pender, Pitt, Robeson, Wayne Counties
- Fayetteville Storm Water
- North Carolina State University

Total Funding (Millions)



Resources Protected % of Total Funds



USDA Resolves Wildlife Conflicts

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

WS works to protect property and reduce human health and safety risks at airports, schools, and along roadways. The program also protects people, pets and livestock from wildlife-borne diseases, such as rabies, guards natural resources, like timber and fisheries, from wildlife depredation, protects wildlife from man made disasters, and educates the public about wildlife and wildlife damage management. Specific projects conducted by WS in North Carolina include protecting the flying public and military aviators (both in North Carolina and overseas) from wildlife strikes to aircraft, sampling, monitoring, and vaccinating wildlife for rabies, managing damage caused by beavers, Canada geese, pigeons, feral swine and other wildlife, and providing emergency response services in Louisiana and Florida during the Gulf oil spill.

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 Agricultural Resources—WS works closely with the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (NCDA&CS) and private industry to monitor feral swine populations for diseases such as brucellosis and pseudorabies that are transmittable to domestic swine. WS worked with NCDA&CS to organize a feral swine task force composed of members from State, Federal and private industry to address biosecurity concerns at domestic swine production facilities.

Protecting Human Health and Safety at Airports—Wildlife collisions with aircraft pose a significant hazard to both the flying public and military aviators, costing both U.S. civil aviation and the Department of Defense (DoD) more that \$615 million annually in property damages, not to mention threats to human health and safety. In FY 2010, WS assisted 18 civilian and DoD military airports throughout the State evaluate wildlife hazards, develop hazard management plans and conduct direct operational assistance when requested. Through a cooperative service agreement with the North Carolina Division of Aviation, WS also provided technical assistance to 74 general aviation and regional airports, including on-demand rapid response direct assistance. As part of this agreement, WS conducted three wildlife hazard abatement workshops for 81 airport staff representing 14 different airports in FY 2010. Together, all of these efforts reduced the potential costs and dangers associated with wildlife strikes.

Of special note is WS' involvement in protecting our military aviators overseas. In FY 2010, North Carolina WS' personnel completed a four-month tour at Joint Base Balad, Iraq. The deployment was requested by the US Air Force's Central Command to help mitigate wildlife hazards at the Base. During his stay he developed wildlife survey protocols for the Base, initiated a one-year long wildlife hazard assessment and reduced bird strikes by 89 percent as a result of his direct operational assistance.

Working with WS' National Wildlife Research Center (NWRC) and North Carolina State University—WS personnel in North Carolina work closely with NWRC research scientists and North Carolina State University wildlife researchers to develop management



United States Department of Agriculture
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

techniques to reduce wildlife hazards at airports and protect commercial operators from disease transmission by feral swine. Some recently completed research projects involved using satellite transmitters to monitor movements of Canada geese at Piedmont Triad International Airport (PTIA), determining the effects of bio-solids application on airport grassland habitats at Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point (MCASCP), testing the use of different varieties of fescue grass that are not palatable to Canada geese at PTIA and MCASCP, comparison of avian radar and visual bird counts at MCASCP, collaborating with Naval, academic and industry leaders on further development of portable radar units used to detect and reduce real-time bird hazards at airports, and determining the potential exposure of commercial swine facilities to feral swine.

Protecting Property and Human Health and Safety in Urban Areas— WS advise property owners on wildlife damage issues ranging from Canada geese in the backyard to squirrels and bats in the attic. The vast majority of technical assistance requests WS receives involve urban wildlife causing property damage and human health and safety concerns, with the majority of requests involving resident Canada geese and vultures. WS provides recommendations to cooperators to address these problems. Integrated approaches include habitat manipulation to make the area less attractive to wildlife, egg treatment to render waterfowl nests infertile and visual and audio harassment to frighten birds away. For particularly difficult problems, WS provides direct assistance that may involve goose removal, if necessary. WS is an active partner in annual training for certifying and licensing Wildlife Damage Control Agents in the State, which enables private enterprise to address many residential wildlife damage issues.

Wildlife Disease Issues—WS continues to assist the State wildlife and agriculture agencies in monitoring for wildlife diseases that could impact agriculture or human health, such as rabies, feral swine diseases and chronic wasting disease. WS also participates in a national program to eradicate rabies in the United States through vaccination of raccoons and other rabies-susceptible wildlife.

Protecting Sea Turtles and Shore Birds—WS assists other agencies and organizations with the removal of predators to protect endangered or threatened sea turtles and shorebird nesting colonies.

Protecting Resources from Beaver Damage—Historically a valuable economic and natural resource, decreased demand for beaver products has led to a decrease in trapping and subsequent increase in beaver populations. Beaver now occupy nearly all State watersheds, and statewide population estimates are over 500,000. Escalating beaver activity brings some benefits, such as increased wetland habitat and reduced downstream sedimentation, but also detrimental impacts such as loss of bottomland hardwood forests, flooded agricultural lands, flooded roadways, flooded electrical and municipal sewer and water treatment facilities, damaged landscape plantings and increased mosquito populations in beaver-created wetlands.

To address beaver damage problems, WS worked with the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission (NCWRC) and State, county, and Federal officials to establish the Beaver Management Assistance Program (BMAP). The BMAP assists the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT), local

governments, soil and water conservation districts, private landholders, and others with beaver problems. WS runs the program through a cooperative service agreement with the NCWRC and the NCDOT. Funding comes from State, county, Federal and private cost-share fees. In FY 2010, BMAP activities prevented the loss of, or damage to, an estimated \$6.2 million in resources, including protecting motorists and saving the NCDOT an estimated \$1.1 million in repair costs by alleviating flooded roadways and damaged roadbeds. In FY 2010, the cost-benefit ratio for BMAP services was 1:3.34; for every \$1 spent, \$3.34 in resources were saved.

Looking to the Future

In North Carolina, public health and safety are significant concerns. Additional attention will be given to protecting the flying public and military personnel, protecting the traveling public from beaver-flooded and washed-out roadways and rail beds, and protecting the public from the spread of rabies. Awareness of these concerns dramatically increased as a result of recent aircraft collisions with birds, derailment of a train carrying hazardous chemicals due to a railroad trestle being undermined by beaver, and increased incidences of rabies, including attacks on people by rabid foxes, coyotes and even beavers. With increases in non-Federal cooperatively-funded programs, WS envisions increasing work on all of these activities.

North Carolina Wildlife Services Funding

In addition to receiving Federally allocated funds, WS 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 in 2010:

- Protecting property and public health/safety from beaver damage
- Protecting civil and military aviation from wildlife strikes
- Monitoring and surveillance of wildlife disease
- Managing damage caused by Canada geese
- Managing damage caused by pigeons, starlings, and blackbirds

Top 3 WS Research Projects of Interest to North Carolina in 2010:

- Improving existing aquatic rodent damage management methods and identifying new ones
- Identifying and reducing wildlife hazards to aviation
- Evaluating wildlife disease issues impacting human, livestock, and wildlife health