

# Wildlife Services

Protecting People  
Protecting Agriculture  
Protecting Wildlife

## Wildlife Services

FY 2010

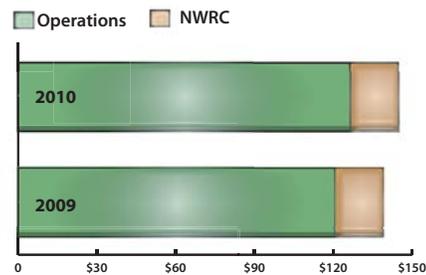
### The Facts About Wildlife Services Wildlife Damage Management



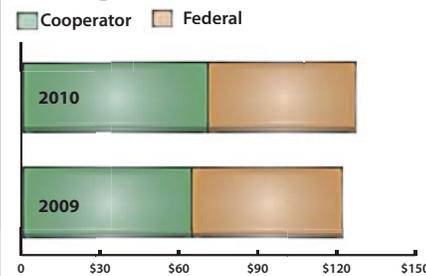
#### Contact Information:

In any state, call 1-866-4USDAWS  
(1-866-487-3297)  
For national issues, call 301-734-7921  
Wildlife Services,  
Operational Support Staff  
4700 River Road, Unit 87  
Riverdale, MD 20737-1234  
[www.aphis.usda.gov/wildlife\\_damage](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/wildlife_damage)

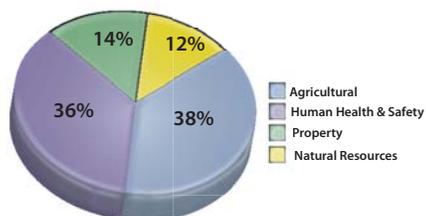
#### Wildlife Services Budget (Millions)



#### Wildlife Services Operations Funding (Millions)



#### Resources Protected FY 09 & 10 % of Total WS Operations Funds



#### WS Provides Management Assistance for Wildlife Conflicts

Wildlife Services (WS) provides Federal leadership and expertise to resolve wildlife conflicts that threaten the Nation's agriculture, human health and safety, property, and natural resources, including wildlife itself. Located within the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, WS programs include technical assistance, or advice and information, and direct assistance, or operations, that manage complex wildlife damage and conflict that cannot be solved by independently. Through its National Wildlife Research Center (NWRC), 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.

#### Protection Assists Human Safety, Property, Natural Resources and Agriculture

As a result of conservation efforts, wildlife populations are thriving across much of the country. WS professional biologists work in every State and U.S. territory to resolve wildlife conflicts at a local level in response to requests from individuals, businesses, groups, or local governments, who experience conflicts. WS coordinates wildlife damage management activities with wildlife resource management agencies and State and local governments.

WS protects people, agriculture, and wildlife through projects to protect agriculture, property, natural resources, and health and human safety.

#### WS Works Cooperatively on Local Issue

WS works with cooperators to resolve damage in effective and responsible ways. Those requesting assistance, pay for a majority of the costs associated with wildlife damage management. In agriculture protection, cooperators contributed about half of the funding. In protection of property and of natural resources, cooperators contributed more than 70%. The Federal contribution was greatest in human health and safety in which cooperators contributed 37%. Human safety protection includes airport wildlife hazards and wildlife disease efforts including rabies.

#### WS manages wildlife damage professionally and responsibly

WS uses an integrated wildlife damage management approach, combining a number of management methods in an effort to resolve the conflict or damage. This science-based approach includes the use of nonlethal and lethal management methods. Annually, about 100,000 concerns are addressed through technical, or advisory, assistance. Frequently a combination of nonlethal measures is effective in resolving wildlife damage.

In some cases, both lethal and nonlethal methods are necessary. In such instances, WS directs its activities at specific localized wildlife populations responsible for the damage and new research has improved the program's ability to target nuisance wildlife.

WS conducts management activities in consultation with Federal and state wildlife management agencies, with all required permits and NEPA reviews. Studies reflect that WS lethal activities have no significant impact on predator populations.

#### Wildlife can cause significant damage to agriculture, property, natural resources and threaten public health and safety.

A 2001 report by the General Accounting Office found that wildlife can pose significant threats to Americans and their property. When wildlife destroy crops, kill livestock, damage houses and businesses, and threaten public health and safety, the results can be costly.

- Wildlife damage to U.S. agriculture alone is estimated at \$944 million annually.
- Livestock losses to wildlife predators, such as coyotes and mountain lions, exceed \$126 million annually. More than one-half million head are lost to predators each year (cattle, calves, sheep, lamb, goats and kids).



United States Department of Agriculture  
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

- Wildlife damage to blueberries, corn and sunflowers cost producers more than \$50 million each year.
- Deer collisions with automobiles injure an average of 29,000 people annually and cause more than \$1 billion in damages.
- Wildlife collisions with airplanes cost U.S. civil aviation more than \$625 million each year and put the lives of passengers and crews at risk.

**WS employees are knowledgeable and skilled wildlife damage management experts.**

WS employs a professional staff of 1,700 scientists, wildlife biologists, field specialists and support specialists across the country. It is administered by staff, most of whom have degrees in wildlife management, biology, or environmental studies from accredited colleges and universities. Many have some form of accreditation through The Wildlife Society, the professional organization for U.S. wildlife biologists.

The Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, which represents State wildlife agencies, has recognized and commended WS biologists for their professionalism, dedication, hard work, and efforts to assist States in addressing wildlife damage problems. The Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Defense, and National Association of State Aviation Officials have identified WS as the recommended source of assistance in wildlife damage management for airports across the country.

A 2001 GAO Report noted that “Recommendations of the Leopold Report were incorporated in the program’s policy manual” and the hiring of professional trained employees and in-service training was conducted. WS employees are required to maintain several licenses and certifications, including pesticide and other hazardous materials application, wildlife euthanasia and immobilization, firearms safety, CPR, and first aid.

**WS Invites Public Input**

The National Wildlife Services Advisory Committee selected by the Secretary of Agriculture provides guidance on the direction of WS. Its diverse membership includes livestock producers, and representatives of the aviation industry, public health and animal welfare and environmental interest groups.

WS seeks input and feedback on the impact of its activities through the National Environmental Policy Act and its public comment process. NEPA documents are posted on the World Wide Web, inviting public participation.

**WS Assists Producers**

WS estimates that the majority of cooperative agreements are with small farms, ranches, and other private entities. Small farms nationwide struggle to survive and many have slim profit margins, making even small losses to wildlife important. A small farm produces less than \$250,000 in gross annual receipts with many less than 1,100 acres in size. Small farms and ranches depend on WS’ expertise in reducing losses to predators and agricultural damage. Studies suggest farmers and ranchers spend more than \$190 million annually on nonlethal predator management. Most seek WS assistance only when nonlethal methods do not resolve problems.

**WS Works Safely**

WS conducts NEPA processes for operational projects to assure no long-term negative impact to the environment. In January 2009 an Environmental Protection Agency report found that two tools under review were useful in protecting resources without negatively impacting the target species, other wildlife or humans and permitted their continued use.

A year-long review by outside experts in 2007-08, found WS programs were operated safely and offered recommendations for continued safety. The aerial predator control program was recommended for the Gold Standard Certificate for aviation activities. The review also found WS maintained its pesticides in storage more secure than required by Federal regulations. The agency had a firearms safety record that had not caused any injuries to the public.

WS continues to consult with other agencies and conduct training to maintain and elevate its safety record.

**WS Conducts Research**

WS’ National Wildlife Research Center is an international leader in nonlethal research to reduce wildlife damage. NWRC’s 160 scientists, technicians and support staff develop tools and materials for use throughout the country. About \$12 million or 75% of NWRC’s total funding is spent of developing or improving nonlethal controls including contraceptives to limit growth of overabundant wildlife populations.