

Wildlife Services

Protecting People
Protecting Agriculture
Protecting Wildlife

State Report

FY 2008

Arizona



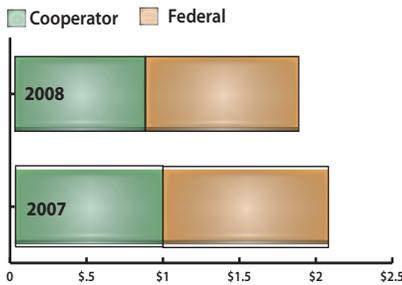
Contact Information:

David Bergman, Arizona Wildlife Services
State Director
8836 North 23rd Avenue, Suite 2
Phoenix, AZ 85021
Phone: (602) 870-2081
FAX: (602) 870-2951
Toll-Free Number 1-866-4USDAWS
1-866-487-3297
E-mail: david.l.bergman@aphis.usda.gov
www.aphis.usda.gov/wildlife_damage/

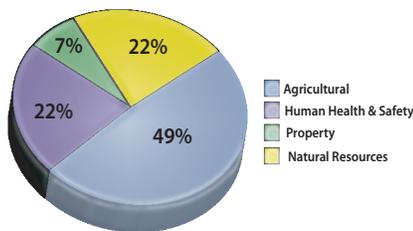
Major Cooperators

- Arizona County Governments
- Arizona Dairies
- Arizona Department of Agriculture
- Arizona Game and Fish Department
- Arizona Sheep Producers
- City of Tempe
- National Park Service
- Navajo Nation
- U.S. Air Force
- U.S. Army
- White Mountain Apache Tribe

Total Funding (Millions)



Resources Protected % of Total Funds



USDA Resolves Wildlife Conflicts in Arizona

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

WS works to protect property and reduce human health and safety risks in urban, suburban, and rural settings such as airports and schools. The program also protects people, pets, wildlife, and livestock from wildlife-borne diseases; guards many natural resources, such as pronghorn and fisheries from wildlife depredation; and educates the public about wildlife and wildlife damage management. Specific projects conducted by Arizona WS include protecting endangered black-footed ferrets from predation and wildlife disease; conducting sampling and monitoring for plague and rabies; and managing damage caused by beavers, coyotes, mountain lions, pigeons, starlings, and other wildlife.

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 Crops—Wildlife damage to agriculture crops comes in many forms. WS works with pecan and pistachio growers to manage damage to nuts by birds and mammals and to stop damage to irrigation canals by mammals. WS also works proactively with Maricopa County and citizen groups to prevent the large scale invasion of roof rats to protect the State's citrus industry.

Protecting Livestock—In addition to the many factors that can cause economic losses to livestock producers (disease, severe weather, etc.), predation is a serious concern. Coyotes, Mexican wolves, mountain lions, and blackbirds cause significant losses to some producers by attacking sheep and cattle, spreading diseases, and consuming and contaminating feed. Unfortunately, these losses are felt most acutely by small farmers and ranchers. In Arizona and other western States, approximately 75 percent of WS' cooperative agreements to manage damage are with small farmers and ranchers.

Protecting Human Health and Safety at Airports – Every year lives are endangered worldwide and billions of dollars are wasted when birds and other wildlife damage aircraft. Experts estimate that wildlife strikes on aircraft cause more than 600,000 hours of aircraft downtime and cost the U.S. civil aviation industry more than \$625 million annually. WS biologists provide both technical assistance and direct assistance at airports and airfields across the State to protect aircraft and public safety.

Protecting Pronghorn Fawns from Predation by Coyotes—Ordinarily, populations of predators and their prey develop some static balance within the environment. Changes to the environment, however, caused by man or natural phenomenon like drought, can disrupt that balance so that one species suppresses another. Many endangered species are affected either by predation or competition from other, more successful wildlife species. Arizona, like many western States, has sparse pronghorn populations despite an abundance of habitat. In some areas, their numbers are not increasing rapidly enough to sustain population levels. In other parts of the State, predation has severely limited opportunities to restore wildlife populations, such as bighorn sheep. Using research findings and method developments, the Arizona WS program has teamed up with the Arizona Game and Fish Department on efforts to protect native wildlife from predation. In



United States Department of Agriculture
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

areas where pronghorn herds are suffering from excessive fawn predation, WS works with the State wildlife agency to increase survival rates through selective coyote removal.

Looking to the Future

In Arizona, a primary issue related to public safety and economic loss involves the increased need to monitor and manage disease threats due to bioterrorism and borderland security. Attacks on people with bioterrorism agents and the number of illegal immigrants have increased the public's awareness of this issue. Arizona WS is working with a multi-agency partnership to increase awareness and improve response time to outbreaks.

The State also has a need to manage the transmission and spread of rabies. Arizona WS is participating in our national effort to develop vaccines and application materials, and, hopefully, to eliminate rabies from the United States. Much of the work conducted in Arizona has worldwide implications especially in management of rabies in dogs and endangered species such as the Ethiopian wolf.

Another issue tapping WS' resources is the growing Mexican gray wolf population. Reestablished after becoming extirpated in Arizona, Mexican wolves continue to spread outside of the reintroduction area. Natural reproductions is also occurring within the reintroduced packs. The increased demand for WS' assistance in addressing depredation complaints, makes it difficult to respond to the number of requests.

Arizona Wildlife Services Funding

In addition to receiving Federally allocated funds, WS also receives funds from cooperators; such as producers; private individuals; businesses; and other Federal, State, tribal and local government agencies who have a vested interest in the program. In most cases, these cooperators need help to resolve wildlife damage problems or they play a role in wildlife damage management.

Major Assistance Activities:

- Protecting livestock from coyote, black bear, mountain lion, Mexican gray wolf, and blackbird damage
- Protecting civil and military aviation from wildlife strikes
- Protecting public safety from coyotes and mountain lions
- Managing damage caused by ducks and geese
- Protecting the public, livestock, and wildlife from wildlife disease, especially rabies

Top 5 Research Projects of Interest to Arizona:

- Improving aquatic rodent damage management methods
- Defining and reducing wildlife hazards to aviation
- Defining and reducing carnivore damage to livestock
- Managing invasive species
- Managing wildlife transmission of rabies