

# Wildlife Services

Protecting People  
Protecting Agriculture  
Protecting Wildlife

## State Report

FY 2008

# New Hampshire



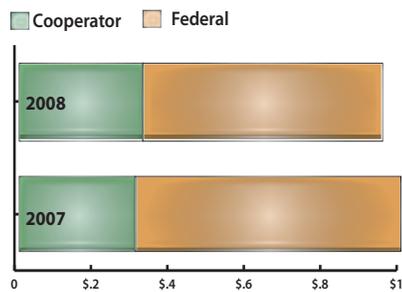
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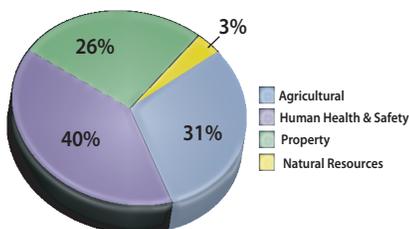
### Major Cooperators

- New Hampshire Departments of Fish and Game, Agriculture, Health, and Environmental Services
- New Hampshire Cooperative Extension Service
- University of New Hampshire
- Pease International Tradeport and regional airports
- The cities of Nashua and Lebanon
- Waste Management of NH, Inc.
- NH Air National Guard
- Androscoggin Valley Regional Refuse Disposal District
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- Federal Aviation Administration

### Total Funding (Millions)



### Resources Protected % of Total Funds



### USDA Resolves Wildlife Conflicts in New Hampshire

Every day, residents, industries, organizations, and agencies call on Wildlife Services (WS) in New Hampshire 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 humane strategies to resolve wildlife conflicts.

New Hampshire's landscape is a diverse mix of urban, suburban, and rural environments with forests and agricultural lands hosting an equally wide array of wildlife. WS' work reflects that diversity. WS cooperates with State and Federal officials, municipalities, industry, and individuals to prevent game animal damage to fruit, row crops and livestock; protects property; guards natural resources from wildlife depredation; reduces wildlife hazards to aviation; protects people, pets, and livestock from wildlife-borne diseases; and educates the public about wildlife and wildlife damage management.

Specific projects conducted in New Hampshire by WS include: mitigating bear-human interactions; protecting endangered piping plovers and Karner blue butterflies; conducting sampling and monitoring for rabies, chronic wasting disease, and avian influenza (AI); and managing damage caused by deer, waterfowl, gulls, starlings, and other wildlife.

### Applying Science & Expertise to Wildlife Challenges

WS enables people to resolve wildlife conflicts by providing sound technical advice and the loan of damage management equipment and materials. Often, 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 these efforts, WS conducts scientific research across the Nation to develop solutions to new problems posed by wildlife and to ensure that WS and others benefit from the latest science and technology.

**Bear Damage Management and Assistance**—Black bear foraging impacts honey and other agricultural producers. In cooperation with State agencies, WS increased staff stationed throughout the State, provided statewide coverage and timely response, abatement, and assessment capabilities. Threats to human safety as well as damage to apiaries, property, livestock, and agriculture were addressed via site visits, harassment, fencing distributions, and trap-and-relocate activities. A toll-free Bear Information and Referral Service aided information transfer. Since FY 2006 an expanded program has assisted municipalities, campgrounds, and restaurants experiencing bear conflicts and enabled the State to reduce the total of funds reimbursed to producers for bear damage.

**Reducing Deer Damage**—In cooperation with the State Fish and Game Department, WS reduces deer and other wildlife damage to orchards, truck gardens, horticultural commodities and livestock, which the National Agricultural Statistics Service estimates comprise over 65 percent of all farm marketing cash receipts in New Hampshire. WS mitigates agricultural damage through the distribution of materials including temporary and permanent electric fencing, repellents, pyrotechnics, and site-specific depredation permit issuance. The program served over 600 cooperators experiencing game animal damage in FY 2008.

**Protecting Dairies and Feedlots**—WS helps reduce European starling and blackbird damage at dairies and feedlots. The program, coordinated with the NH Division of Pesticide Control, combines technical assistance, recommendations for exclusion, modification of cultural practices, and population management activities.

**Wildlife Disease Management**—To prevent the northward spread of raccoon rabies, WS assisted State departments to distribute over 30,000 baits containing oral rabies vaccine (ORV) for the sixth consecutive year. The ORV zone encompassed several hundred square miles of the Upper Connecticut River Valley. WS conducted raccoon sampling in



United States Department of Agriculture  
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

the ORV zone to determine bait uptake, program effectiveness, and rabies movements.

WS again assisted with chronic wasting disease (CWD) monitoring as part of a national CWD detection program. CWD in the wild cervid populations would present significant challenges to wildlife agencies due to the impact on deer as well as perceptions regarding public health. WS' collection and sampling of deer heads from check stations and meat processors comprised 80 percent of all specimens submitted for FY 2008 testing.

WS, in cooperation with State agencies, continues to collect live bird samples and hunter-harvested birds as well as selected individual mortalities to test for the highly pathogenic avian influenza H5N1.

**Protecting Human Health and Safety at Airports**—Wildlife/aircraft strikes cost U.S. civil aviation over \$625 million annually and pose a safety hazard. WS is recognized for its scientific expertise in reducing wildlife hazards to the aviation industry. The WS' National Wildlife Research Center, conducts research to develop methods to reduce hazards and maintains a national strike database to monitor trends and species of greatest concern. This research assists seven airports in the State.

A 2003 turkey strike at Pease International Tradeport caused over \$3 million in damage. Subsequently, WS has conducted integrated turkey and large bird harassment, removal, and monitoring. No turkey strikes were recorded in 2008. In a cooperative study, WS attached transmitters to 30 wild turkeys and monitoring continued for two years to evaluate the population, movements and risks to air traffic. A final report from the study is forthcoming.

WS conducted harassment, control, and hazard assessments at the Lebanon Municipal Airport in conjunction with an integrated gull harassment program at a nearby landfill. No gull strikes were reported in 2008. WS consulted with and trained airport personnel throughout the State and assisted in acquiring Federal and State permits that allow designated personnel to address bird and mammal hazards at these facilities.

**Protecting Human Health and Safety From Canada Geese**—An estimated 20,000 Canada geese reside in the State. Although people enjoy observing geese, conflicts often develop as feces accumulate, overgrazing damages landscaping, and aggressive geese attack humans. WS assists over 70 state residents and businesses annually through advice, equipment, and local population reduction projects.

**Protecting Endangered Karner Blue Butterflies and Piping Plovers**—To enhance recovery of the Federally and State endangered butterfly, WS conducted woodchuck management activities to reduce foraging at two sites where wild lupine is essential for the butterfly's life cycle. The small population of 50 Karner blue butterflies in 2000 has grown to over 1,500 in 2008.

WS trapped feral cats to enhance nesting success of the Federally threatened and State endangered Piping plover at Hampton Beach State Park. Previously, WS had installed protective fencing enclosures which reduced nest and chick loss to predators, minimized human disturbance, and prevented beach erosion, which had previously negatively impacted plover nesting success.

**Protecting Property**—WS conducted on-going integrated gull harassment and monitoring projects at four separate landfills to reduce conflicts associated with large concentrations of birds attracted to the facilities. Woodchuck control activities addressed burrowing activity and structural damage to an earthen dam operated by Trans Canada and reduced property loss at a Housing and Urban Development facility. WS addressed over 2,100 requests for assistance from the public in FY 2008.

### Looking to the Future

WS strives to provide safe, effective solutions to diverse wildlife conflicts. The growing resident Canada geese populations pose increasing challenges. WS continues to try new gull deterrence methods including model airplanes, foggers, bird balls and eagle kites. WS continues work on more effective, integrated management strategies to reduce animal feed consumption and contamination by starlings, turkeys and pigeons. Emerging health issues related to wildlife-born diseases represent continual challenges. Education will remain central as an effective strategy for managing conflicts associated with bears and bird feeding activities. WS plays an increasing role in training of other wildlife workers, including nuisance wildlife control operators and hotline operators.

### New Hampshire Wildlife Services Funding

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

### Top 5 Major Assistance Activities:

- Protecting agricultural commodities and property from bear and deer damage
- Protecting civil and military aviation from wildlife strikes
- Protecting endangered species from habitat loss and predation
- Wildlife disease management and surveillance
- Managing damage caused by Canada geese, gulls and European starlings

### Top 5 WS Research Projects of Interest to New Hampshire:

- Defining and reducing wildlife hazards to aviation
- Managing public and animal health issues
- Defining and reducing agricultural losses to turkey, deer, and bear
- Improving Canada goose damage management methods
- Improving gull deterrent methods at landfills