



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Animal and  
Plant Health  
Inspection  
Service

FY 2006

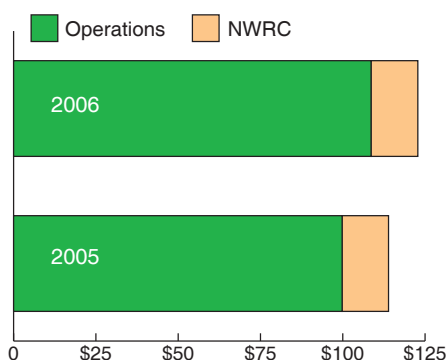
## The Facts About Wildlife Services

### Wildlife Damage Management

#### 1. 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 conflicts that cannot be solved 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.

**Wildlife Services Budget (Millions)**

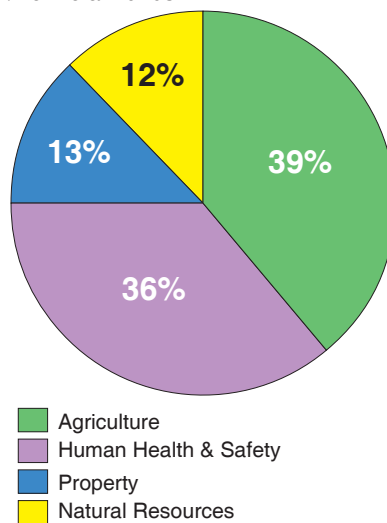


#### 2. Assistance Is Locally Based

WS professional biologists work in every State and U.S. territory to resolve wildlife conflicts at a local level, coordinating wildlife damage management activities with State and local governments, resource management agencies and individuals. WS provides assistance, on a request basis, to individuals, businesses, or groups, who experience conflicts to address specific local concerns.

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

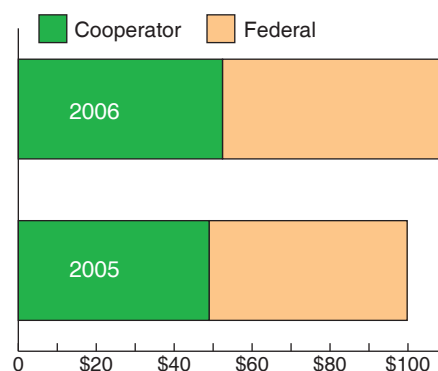
**Resources Protected FY 2005 & 2006**  
% of Total Funds



#### 3. WS Works Cooperatively

WS works with cooperators to resolve damage in effective and acceptable ways. Those requesting assistance pay for a majority of the costs associated with wildlife damage management. In protection of property and of natural resources, these cooperators contributed 67% and 64% of the FY05 and 06 costs. In agriculture protection, cooperators contributed 49%. The federal contribution was greatest in human health and safety in which cooperators contributed 37%.

**Wildlife Services Operations Funding (Millions)**



#### **4. 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 2002, 98% of conflicts were resolved with nonlethal means, such as the use of pyrotechnics and low-powered laser lights to disperse a large crow roost. In some cases, both lethal and nonlethal methods are necessary. In such instances, WS directs its activities at specific wildlife populations responsible for the damage and new research has improved the program's ability to target nuisance wildlife. During 2004, 87% of animals lethally removed were invasive or exotic species, such as feral swine, brown tree snakes, European starlings, and feral pigeons. Studies reflect that WS lethal activities have no significant impact on predator populations.

#### **5. 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 lions, exceed \$71 million annually. 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 \$550 million each year and put the lives of passengers and crews at risk.

#### **6. Wildlife Services employees are knowledgeable and skilled wildlife damage management experts.**

WS employs a professional staff of 1,600 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 International 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 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. 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.

## **7. WS Invites Public Input**

The National Wildlife Services Advisory Committee provides guidance to the Secretary of Agriculture on the direction of WS. It is comprised of a diverse membership that 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. WS conducts an average of 25 environmental assessments annually.

## **8. WS Assists Small Producers**

Small farms and ranches depend on WS' expertise in reducing losses to predators and agricultural damage. Small farms nationwide struggle to survive. These are farms producing less than \$250,000 in gross annual receipts, many less than 1,100 acres in size. WS estimates that the majority of cooperative agreements are with small farms, ranches, and other private entities. Studies suggest farmers and ranchers spend up to \$184 million annually on nonlethal predator control. Most seek WS assistance only when nonlethal methods do not resolve problems.

## **9. 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.