

NATIONAL WILDLIFE SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE (NWSAC) MEETING
 Summary/Decision Document
 June 20-24, 2005

RECOMMENDATION	TARGET	DECISION
<p>1. The Committee recommends the Secretary of Agriculture continue to recognize the need for base support for the Wildlife Disease Surveillance and Monitoring program and to seek an additional \$5.5 million annually to fully implement the program to maximize its ability to respond to federal and state disease emergencies (or seasonal needs) while allowing for continuous (routine) Wildlife Disease Surveillance and Monitoring coverage of all states and U.S. territories, including border surveillance. This expansion should ultimately include 2 Wildlife Disease Biologists per state and U.S. territory.</p>	<p>FY 2006- 2007</p>	<p>This recommendation is accepted. The Department included a \$5 million request for additional funds in the FY 2006 President’s budget. This activity will continue to receive Agency and Department priority in subsequent years.</p>
<p>2. The Committee recommends the Secretary of Agriculture seek additional funding in the amount of \$5 million for the Oral Rabies Vaccination program, including the development of new vaccines for control and elimination of raccoon, fox, coyote, skunk, and mongoose rabies, and seek supplemental funding in the amount of \$10 million for the development and implementation of a bat rabies control program.</p>	<p>FY 2006 - 2007</p>	<p>This recommendation is accepted. The FY 2007 President’s budget included a request for an increase of \$1.75 million for oral rabies vaccination and this will continue to be a high priority within the Agency. In addition, while terrestrial rabies continues to be of concern to wildlife and public health, existing technology to address bat rabies is currently limited. Should resources become available to develop improved bat rabies control strategies, emphasis will be placed on the following areas: implementing enhanced surveillance and population monitoring to better define the scope of the problem (ongoing); characterizing the economic impact of bats and bat rabies (FY 2006 and 2007); enhanced public health education strategies (ongoing); studies designed to better understand the biology and pathology of different variants (FY 2006 to FY 2009) and research and development toward effective vaccines and delivery systems (FY 2006- FY 2010)</p>
<p>3. The Committee recommends the Secretary of Agriculture seek \$1.5 million of supplemental annual funding to sustain requirements of Homeland Security for protection of WS facilities without subtraction from existing annual budgets.</p>	<p>FY 2006</p>	<p>While the Department is unable to provide additional Homeland Security funds and has directed all agencies to absorb security costs in their budget, APHIS will continue to make security a high priority item.</p>
<p>4. The Committee recommends the Secretary of Agriculture reaffirm protection of livestock and agriculture from offending animals as a high priority of WS, and seek additional funding for their protection to implement field programs for control of offending wildlife.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>The Department concurs with this recommendation. Protection of agriculture and livestock from wildlife damage is part of the core mission of USDA/APHIS/WS and will continue to be a high priority within the program.</p>

NATIONAL WILDLIFE SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE (NWSAC) MEETING
 Summary/Decision Document
 June 20-24, 2005

<p>5. The Committee recommends the Secretary of Agriculture seek supplemental funding for WS to increase research concerning feral pigs, including, but not limited to, identifying property and ecological damage, expanding distribution, associated disease risks, and development of control methods (especially contraceptive research).</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>The Department concurs with this recommendation. In 2004, USAD/APHIS/WS established a research laboratory in Kingsville, Texas related to assessing damage caused by feral pigs, methods research for control of feral pigs, and risk assessment for disease transmission by feral pigs. As additional funding become available, the program will initiate additional behavioral and ecological assessments on feral swine.</p>
<p>6. The Committee recommends the Secretary of Agriculture support; in cooperation with the appropriate federal, state, and tribal agencies, the International Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies (IAFWA), the U.S. Animal Health Association, the Conservation Trust, The Wildlife Society, the Wildlife Disease Association, and other appropriate non-governmental organizations, development of a Wildlife Disease Strategy for the United States as recommended by the Delegates to the 15th meeting of the US/Canada/Mexico Trilateral Committee for Wildlife and Ecosystem Conservation & Management.</p> <p>The Committee further recommends that the Secretary seek supplemental funding in the amount of \$7.5 million for the development and implementation of a United States Wildlife Disease Strategy.</p>	<p>FY 2006-2007</p>	<p>The Department supports the development of a North American Wildlife Health Initiative with the States assuming a leadership role since management authority for resident wildlife rests with State wildlife agencies. However, many wildlife species are migratory and levels of interest among specific wildlife disease issues may vary considerably among States. Thus any such strategy/initiative should hinge heavily on functional partnership and shared leadership among State and Federal agencies, Canada and Mexico. The Department will support the development of a wildlife disease strategy/health initiative though its wildlife disease monitoring and surveillance plan as developed and implemented by Wildlife Services. Funding will be made available as resources become available.</p>
<p>7. The Committee recommends the Secretary of Agriculture seek \$4.2 million in new funds to control Double-crested Cormorant damage to natural resources and aquaculture.</p>	<p>FY 2006</p>	<p>The Department recognizes the increasing problems being caused by cormorants to the aquaculture industry and natural resources throughout the U.S., but can not endorse additional \$4.2 million in new funds because of current budget restraints within the Department.</p>
<p>8. The Committee recommends the Secretary of Agriculture seeks an additional \$700,000 for NWRC to expedite research to develop and register an avicide, repellants, and management techniques specific to blackbirds and starlings, and to continue support of operational baiting in rice and sunflowers.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>The Department concurs with this recommendation to increase research on new and existing methods for use in operational control of blackbird damage. However, the Department can not endorse additional funds due to other budget priorities within the Department.</p>
<p>9. The Committee recommends the Secretary of Agriculture support new funding for research into non-lethal dispersal and innovative lethal or non-lethal control of depredating animals including but not limited to crows, blackbirds, Canada geese, coyotes, fish-eating birds, and whistling ducks.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>This recommendation is accepted. Currently, 75 percent of WS research funds are devoted to non lethal methods development. WS will continue to submit budget requests in support of these issues. This work will continue and new methods development will be enhanced as additional funds are acquired.</p>

NATIONAL WILDLIFE SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE (NWSAC) MEETING
 Summary/Decision Document
 June 20-24, 2005

<p>10. The Committee recommends the Secretary of Agriculture in cooperation with the Dept. of Transportation, specifically the FAA, seek adequate funding to manage wildlife hazards at airports.</p>	<p>FY 2006-2007</p>	<p>The President's FY 2007 budget request included a proposed increase of \$3 million for WS to begin addressing hazardous wildlife conditions at 200 airports. However, this was not included in the House and Senate proposed budget bills.</p>
<p>11. The Committee recommends the Secretary of Agriculture seek an increase in funds (\$183,000) allocated by Congress for protection of rice crops from blackbirds in Louisiana including adjustments for inflation and increasing resource needs. The House of Representatives has recommended continued funding of work to protect rice from blackbirds in Louisiana in 2005, although at a reduced amount of \$125,000 (a \$25,000 reduction) which will decrease the service that WS performs.</p>	<p>FY 2006-2007</p>	<p>The Department will continue to support WS in the conduct of field trials of repellents and avicides and other projects for the protection of rice crops in Louisiana. The proposed FY 2007 House budget includes a \$17,000 increase for continuing the operational rice/blackbird project in Louisiana. WS will continue to support blackbird control operations in Louisiana as resources will allow. While appropriated funding has been limited since 1993, the blackbird control activities have been expanded, with additional support from cooperators, from two to eight rice-growing parishes in southwest Louisiana.</p>
<p>12. The Committee recommends the Secretary of Agriculture seek dialogue and cooperation with the Secretary of the Interior on all levels, in allocating one source of additional funding to increase field resource capacity for WS to resolve increasing conflicts involving humans, livestock, and other domestic animals resulting from restored and expanding wolf populations.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>The Department recognizes that growing wolf populations have resulted in increasing conflicts with people and livestock, and will continue to dialogue with the FWS, to discuss management of these expanding populations. Ongoing dialogue includes annual requests to FWS for funding support of all wolf damage management activities in the Northern Rocky Mountains, Western Great Lakes regions, AZ and NM. In the past, FWS has provided limited funding for the wolf damage management activities. However, WS will continue to dialogue with FWS to discuss support needs for their ongoing wolf recovery efforts.</p>
<p>13. The Committee recommends the Secretary of Agriculture seek new funding for the National Wildlife Research Center to conduct research on methods of preventing wildlife from obtaining food from trash transfer-facilities and landfills as these sources may have serious consequences for airport safety, threatened and endangered species, and human health and safety.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>The Department, through WS, is currently conducting research into dispersal methods and repellents of gulls and other birds at landfills and trash transfer facilities because of potential for wildlife hazards associated with these types of facilities when located in close proximity to airports. While this issue is not rated as a high priority item in the WS Research Needs Assessment which combines input from NWRC scientists, State Directors, and NWSAC members, this research activity will continue as funds become available.</p>
<p>14. The Committee recommends the Secretary of Agriculture seek new funding to develop and implement a program to provide cost-sharing on non-lethal methods to prevent wildlife damage to agricultural resources.</p>	<p>FY 2006</p>	<p>Cost sharing of program services is a basic tenet of WS' mode of operations. Services consisting of integrated approaches of both lethal and non lethal methods are currently provided to cooperators on a cost-share basis. WS will continue to use this approach. However, the Department will not seek additional funding due to other budget priorities.</p>

NATIONAL WILDLIFE SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE (NWSAC) MEETING
 Summary/Decision Document
 June 20-24, 2005

<p>15. The Committee recommends the Secretary of Agriculture have WS along with the collaboration of national, regional, state and local government entities, and private organizations, especially the US Conference of Mayors, the National Association of Counties, and the National League of Cities develop a business plan from the Urban/Suburban concept paper that addresses solutions to wildlife damage in urban settings.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>WS has developed a Wildlife Services Urban-Suburban Concept Paper which identifies broad wildlife damage management goals for urban and suburban areas. The concept paper serves as a basis for developing business plans that focus on specific wildlife/human conflicts in urban-suburban environments and provides guidance to WS programs for collaborating with national, regional, state and local governments and private organizations to develop effective programs suited to individual state, regional, and local needs. The emphasis is on establishing statewide or regional cooperative programs with multiple cooperators. The Department supports WS' efforts to implement these kinds of programs as resources are identified.</p>
<p>16. The Committee recommends the Secretary of Agriculture work with the Secretary of Interior to develop a cooperative arrangement between Wildlife Services and the US Fish and Wildlife Service to process and respond to migratory bird depredation permit applications in a timely (7 days) manner.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>USDA/APHIS/WS has developed an internal working group to address this issue. Representatives from WS and FWS met twice in FY 2005 and will meet in FY 2006 to discuss this issue and develop alternatives to assessing migratory bird damage situations and processing permit requests on a timely basis.</p>
<p>17. The Committee recommends the Secretary of Agriculture that any funding for conservation of the Ivory-billed woodpecker not be diverted or reallocated from existing and further Wildlife Services budget.</p>		<p>The Department concurs with this recommendation.</p>
<p>18. The Committee recommends the Secretary of Agriculture investigate the feasibility of a national program, working with cooperators such as State Wildlife Agencies, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services, NGO's and private industry to provide limited compensation for damage and depredation by specific individual or groups of wildlife.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>This recommendation is not accepted for the following reasons. A new federal program of this nature would be costly and redundant. The concept of federal compensation for wildlife damage to agricultural resources was considered in detail during WS' programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process. There currently is no federal authority for such a program, and implementation would therefore require legislation to be passed by Congress. A new federal program of this nature would also be redundant with the State programs that currently have compensation.</p>
<p>19. The Committee recommends the Secretary of Agriculture initiate discussions with the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, State Wildlife Agencies, and the US Fish and Wildlife Service to establish a task force to work with college and university wildlife programs to identify and study population numbers of depredating wildlife species specifically in the area of agriculture practices that are impacted by said species. The intent of these studies is to explore management options to address present and future wildlife agriculture</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>The Department supports WS continued efforts to seek a wide range of management options to address conflicts between increasing numbers of depredating wildlife and agricultural practices. Thru participation in the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AFWA) Wildlife Resources Policy Committee, WS conducts ongoing discussion and seeks solutions to wildlife damage management activities with AFWA members, FWS, and academic institutions. WS will next participate in such a discussion at the</p>

NATIONAL WILDLIFE SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE (NWSAC) MEETING
 Summary/Decision Document
 June 20-24, 2005

<p>conflict issues such as depredation and wildlife diseases, as well as public health and safety issues, while minimizing detriment to wildlife species.</p> <p>20. The Committee recommends the Secretary of Agriculture approve a working capital fund for WS for capital property management.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">FY 2005</p>	<p>AFWA meeting in September 2006. Various management options are also explored with our ongoing research programs that have existing partnerships in place with various universities and through the two Berryman Institute programs.</p> <p>The Department does not support working capital funds for individual programs. However, in FY 2006, the General Provisions of the appropriations bill provided no-year funding (carry-over) authority up to \$1 million for the Wildlife Services Methods Development line item and up to \$1 million of the Wildlife Services Operations line item for aviation safety. This accomplishes the same objective of allowing funds to be carried from one year to the next. Additionally, WS began assessing a percentage of all new funds for IT support. There are no plans to further pursue the establishment of a working capital fund.</p>
---	--	---