



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

**Animal and  
Plant Health  
Inspection  
Service**

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## WILDLIFE SERVICES—WASHINGTON

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### USDA Resolves Wildlife Conflicts in Washington

Every day, residents, industries, organizations, and agencies call on Washington Wildlife Services (WS) 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.

Washington is a diverse mix of urban and suburban settings, agricultural lands, forests, coastline, and desert environments. This ecological and geographic diversity gives the State a remarkable variety of wildlife species. With about 6 million residents, and population growth that is higher than the national average, human conflicts with wildlife are expected to increase.

WS biologists and field technicians help Washington's fruit and livestock producers reduce losses from birds and predators. WS protects aircraft and the lives of pilots and air passengers from dangerous wildlife collisions with airplanes. The program also addresses serious bird damage to the State's transportation infrastructure, municipal properties, and public and private buildings. In addition, WS helps protect public health and safety, crops, and natural resources, including threatened and endangered species like salmon and steelhead.

### 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

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#### Top 5 WS Research Projects of Interest to Washington:

- Defining and reducing wildlife hazards to aviation
- Evaluating waterfowl as disease, parasite, and noxious weed reservoirs
- Managing predators to protect livestock and wildlife
- Developing wildlife-deterrent grasses
- Improving rodent damage management methods

#### Top 5 Major Assistance Activities:

- Protecting livestock and poultry from wildlife predators
- Protecting passengers and aircraft from collisions with wildlife
- Protecting Washington's transportation infrastructure, crops, dairies, feedlots, and fish hatcheries from bird damage
- Protecting urban properties, crops, and public health and safety from damage by Canada geese
- Protecting threatened and endangered species and other sensitive wildlife from predators



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 Air Travel**—Experts estimate that wildlife strikes with airplanes cost the U.S. civil aviation industry more than \$470 million annually. In Washington, 136 public-use civilian airports, 318 private airports, and three major military air bases conduct well over 1 million aircraft operations each year. At the same time, populations of gulls and geese, which pose the most serious threats to airports, are at record levels. These birds are of particular concern at several of the State's busiest airports.

The WS program is recognized nationally and internationally for its scientific expertise in reducing wildlife hazards to the aviation industry. WS' National Wildlife Research Center (NWRC) continually conducts research to understand the nature of wildlife hazards at airports, develop management tools to reduce these hazards, and provide airport personnel with information to control or prevent these hazards. NWRC personnel also maintain the National Wildlife Strike Database used by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and airports to monitor trends and wildlife species that pose the greatest concern to aviation.

Applying this scientific expertise, WS provides assistance to more than 40 civilian and military airports each year. On-site evaluations, as well as comprehensive Wildlife Hazard Assessments, are completed before direct management work is done.

#### Protecting Human Health and Safety, Property, and Crops—

Several bird species cause extensive damage to property and crops and threaten the health and safety of Washington residents. Bridges, buildings, and other structures in Washington sustain millions of dol-

