



United States
Department of
Agriculture

USDA Wildlife Services Work in Prineville

Submitted by Mike Slater, District Supervisor (541-963-7947)

Animal and
Plant Health
Inspection
Service

May 18, 2009

Wildlife
Services

Eastern Oregon
District Office

60015 Smith Loop
LaGrande, OR
97850
(541) 963-7947

Intro: The U.S. Department of Agriculture- Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service- Wildlife Services (WS) program is a small federal agency whose sole mission is to work with landowners to resolve wildlife conflicts. This is very similar to being a wildlife extension agent, but WS Wildlife Specialists respond on-site and actually assist complainants with damage control methods. WS responds in this fashion where cooperative funds exist, and this activity is very well received by the public because of most citizens' lack of expertise and/or equipment to resolve the wildlife complaint.

Crook County WS program Overview: WS has an equivalent of one WS Specialist that work Crook County. This is actually accomplished by two individuals that each work half time. Each specialist offers unique expertise, and as such this arrangement truly offers Crook County expertise in dealing with all wildlife conflicts. Predatory animals such as cougar and coyote consume a large amount of the specialist's time. However, WS deals with marmots, beaver, ground squirrels, skunks, starlings, vultures, and other species as well.

WS Interaction in the City of Prineville: WS activities in Prineville are actually quite diverse. Most commonly, WS assists Prineville residents in dealing with nuisance wildlife such as skunk and raccoon. Marmots and other rodents also cause issues. WS has even responded to cougar complaints in the City, and in one case a cougar was taken by WS in the City. WS has worked with landowners on bird problems, also, including starlings and the turkey vultures that have caused a stir for quite some time. Most WS calls are referred through the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, OSU Extension Service, or by word of mouth. However, several calls in the last year came directly from the Prineville Police Department, and in a couple of these cases WS was asked to assist the Prineville Police Department. WS has assisted with capturing feral dogs and cats that were causing conflicts.

From looking at our reports, it appears that approximately **10%** of our time is spent in the City of Prineville last year. This was a low to moderate year for urban/suburban complaints, compared to other cities. This will vary from year to year, though. When nuisance wildlife populations are high, requests from WS assistance can be very high. In order to stay afloat at the 1 FTE service level, WS needs **\$60,000** this year from Crook County and or entities within Crook County. Any assistance is greatly appreciated.

Please let me know if you have any questions.



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*Eastern
Oregon*

*MIKE SLATER
U.S.O.A WILDLIFE
SERVICES*

RECEIVED
MAR 04 2009

541-963-7947

COUNTY ADMINISTRATION

301-7100 520.60-11

*2008/09
\$47,000
Budget*

United States
Department of
Agriculture

March 2, 2009

Animal and
Plant Health
Inspection
Service

Crook County Courthouse
Attn: County Commissioners
300 NE 3rd Street
Prineville, OR 97754

Wildlife
Services

Subject: FY 2009-2010 Wildlife Services Budget Request

Oregon State Office

This letter is to serve the purpose of informing you of our budget request to maintain the Wildlife Services program in Crook County. The program is cooperatively funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Wildlife Services (WS), the County, the State of Oregon (Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) & the Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife (ODFW)), private cooperators and/or groups to provide wildlife damage management to the citizens of Crook County.

6135 NE 80th Ave.
Suite A-8
Portland, OR 97218
(503) 326-2346

As State Director for the past 12 years I have had to prepare annual budget requests for counties that place a disproportional burden of covering the increased cost of doing business on the counties to compensate for the state of Oregon's failure to provide its share of funding through ODA and ODFW. This year I must prepare a draft budget in an economic climate that is extremely difficult for all partners in the cooperatively funded program. ODA and ODFW have cut our funding by \$20,000 and \$25,000 respectively in the last 5 months of this contract year and their proposed budgets for the 09-11 biennium will cut funding by 73% and 33% respectively. Since every dollar we receive from the counties and the state goes to support our field positions, cuts in State funding of such magnitude will create a hole of \$8,200 in funding for each position per year. Therefore, I will have to pass on the increase in the cost of doing business and the \$8,200 in State cuts for each position within this draft budget proposal to the county. This will result in a preliminary budget request of \$60,065. I am enclosing a draft budget sheet that outlines the program's costs and proposed sources of funding that cover the costs.

I am calling this a preliminary budget because I have always worked with the Counties throughout Oregon to deliver the maximum level of service with the funding that is available. In every county we historically have had to incorporate soft funded projects and detail assignments for our employees to cobble together enough funding to support full time employment for our employees. This way of maintaining our county positions was already running its course before these drastic State funding cuts, which is why the County is being asked to cover the State cuts in this proposed budget for 2009 - 2010.

In addition to the preliminary budget sheet I am also enclosing information on funding trends and the effects of State funding cuts on the cooperatively funded WS program. If the decision makers in the Legislature hear about the value of the cooperatively funded WS program from our stakeholders and decide to eliminate or reduce the harmful cuts of State funding, then I will work with cooperating counties to reduce the budget requests I am proposing.

With all of the talk of economic stimulus packages I believe that the magnitude of State cuts to the WS program jeopardizes a long standing cooperatively funded program that is vital to local economies. Currently if we relied on State funding (ODA \$442,616 and ODFW



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\$310,000 per the 07-09 biennium) we would have just 5 WS positions statewide, but because we have the mechanism to incorporate county and federal funding through cooperative agreements with 26 county areas we have 27 field positions. That is more than 5 times the number of positions the State would have without the cooperative funds from counties and the federal WS program to carry out their statutory responsibilities to address wildlife damage/conflicts. These are real family wage jobs that assist agricultural producers produce crops and livestock which in turn contributes to local economies in every county. Over the years we have developed working relationships with nearly 11,000 landowners that call on WS field employees to address predator losses, threats to human health & safety, and property damage. If the State cuts the WS program as drastically as proposed it will jeopardize the great economic return it presently receives from the modest investment it makes in WS.

Should efforts by the counties and agricultural associations to reduce or eliminate the proposed ODA and ODFW cuts meet with success, county budget requests could be reduced.

In closing, I want to thank the County for its support of the USDA-APHIS-Wildlife Services program. Your support is critical to our ability to maintain our 27 field people assigned to 26 counties and associations. Wildlife Services looks forward to continuing to serve the County to the best of our abilities. I welcome your questions or concerns regarding this budget request, the supplemental information package or the USDA-Wildlife Services program in general. If you want me to attend a county commission meeting in person or via a conference call to discuss the WS program and this budget request I will do my best to make this happen.

Sincerely,



David E. Williams
State Director

CC: Gil Riddell, AOC Policy Manager

Encl:

Draft- Proposed Budget Plan Crook County

Listed below are the costs and sources of funding for the wildlife services program outlined above:

Costs include:

Salary & Benefits	\$62,400
Truck Rental from GSA	\$11,575
ATV/Dog/mule Reimbursement	\$2,340
Miscellaneous Expenses	\$600
Total Costs	\$76,915

Funding Sources

USDA	\$10,975
ODA Funds	\$2,075
ODF&W Funds	\$3,800
Crook County Funds	\$60,065
Total Funds Available	\$76,915

State Director
USDA, APHIS, Wildlife Services
Portland, Oregon

Date

Representative
Crook County, Oregon

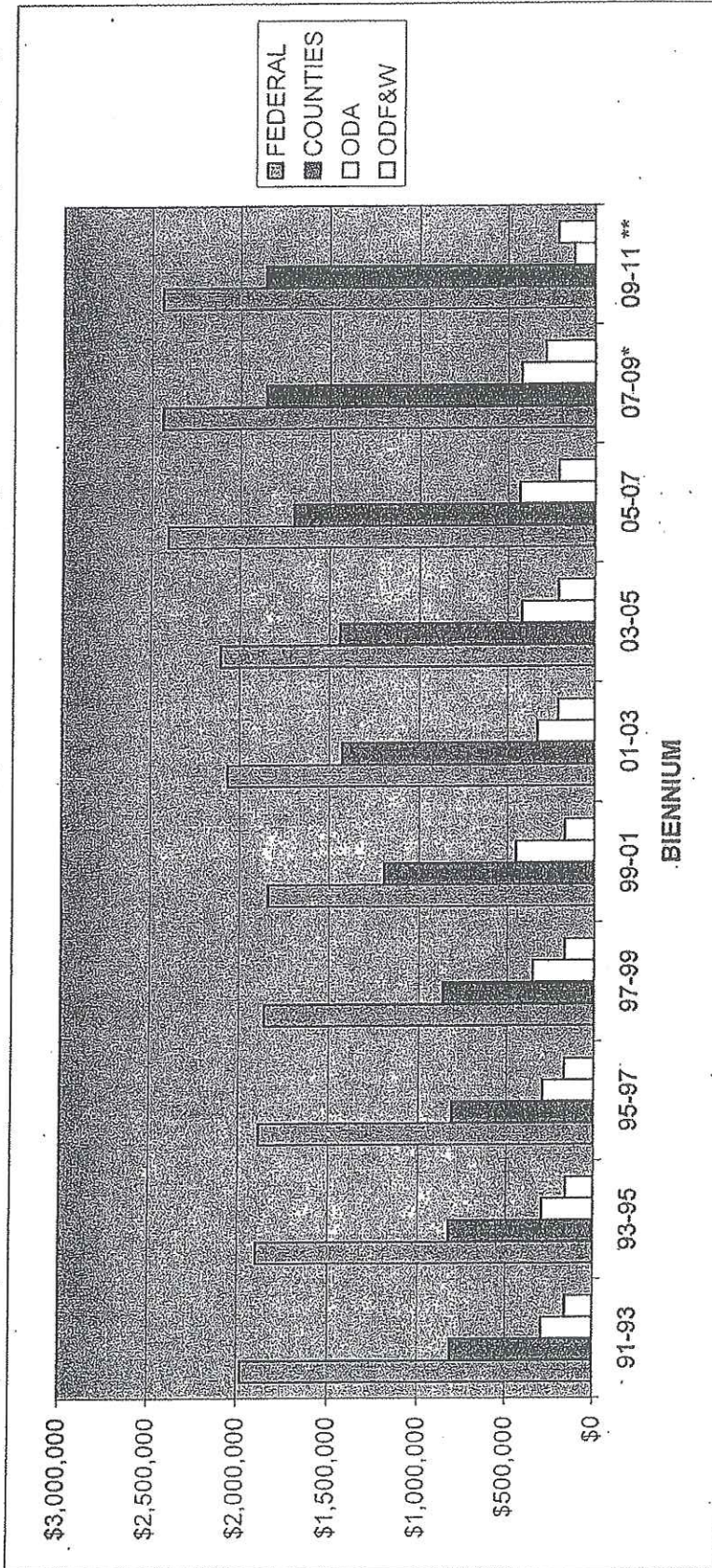
Date

Regional Director
USDA, APHIS, Wildlife Services
Fort Collins, Colorado

Date

Funding Trend for the Cooperatively Funded Wildlife Services Program

BIENNIUM	91-93	93-95	95-97	97-99	99-01	01-03	03-05	05-07	07-09*	09-11**
FEDERAL	\$1,979,530	\$1,895,111	\$1,883,844	\$1,854,910	\$1,837,582	\$2,064,032	\$2,105,680	\$2,402,256	\$2,436,359	\$2,436,000
COUNTIES	\$817,348	\$826,112	\$813,230	\$863,485	\$1,192,526	\$1,429,719	\$1,442,894	\$1,697,613	\$1,852,041	\$1,852,000
ODA	\$295,000	\$295,000	\$294,920	\$353,900	\$449,444	\$329,625	\$419,245	\$431,864	\$422,616	\$120,000
ODF&W	\$160,000	\$160,000	\$170,000	\$170,000	\$170,000	\$210,000	\$210,000	\$210,000	\$285,000	\$210,000
TOTALS	\$3,251,878	\$3,176,223	\$3,161,994	\$3,242,295	\$3,649,552	\$4,033,376	\$4,177,819	\$4,741,733	\$4,996,016	\$4,618,000



*Reductions in funds from ODFW (-\$25,000) and ODA (-\$20,000) were made Feb 09. These state funding reductions will reduce services to many Counties in the 07-09 Biennium.

** If cooperative funds from Counties remain at the same level in the 09-11 Biennium there will be a reduction of services to cooperative programs because of the 75% cut of funds from ODA and the 33% cut of funds from ODFW. Federal funds for 09-11 are based on continuing resolution figures for '09 and projections for 2010.

5

Federal Funds

Year	Base	ASI	Aerial	Disease	AI	Total
FY 07	\$1,065,629	\$37,911	\$152,633	\$34,581	\$205,689	\$1,496,443
FY 08	\$1,050,196	\$0	\$129,990	\$44,568	\$68,851	\$1,293,605

* Disease and Avian Influenza (AI) funding is not available to support cooperative county positions involved in traditional livestock protection activities.

FY 08 Cooperatively Funded Wildlife Damage Management Program

ODFW	=	\$155,000 - \$25,000=	\$130,000
ODA	=	\$219,935 - \$20,000=	\$199,935
26 Counties	=	\$950,401	\$950,401
Subtotal	=	\$1,325,336	*\$1,280,336
APHIS-WS	=	\$263,400 for field positions out of the \$1,050,196 Base Federal allocation	

*Reduction in State and County funding made 2/09 which results in reduced funding to support Wildlife Services field positions during the last 4 months of the current contract year. Furloughs of field personnel may result.

Proposed State Funding Cuts

Source	Biennium 07-09	Proposed cut	Projected Biennium 09-11
ODA	\$442,616	-\$322,616	\$120,000
ODFW	\$310,000	-\$100,000	\$210,000

The Impacts of State Funding Cuts on Field Employees

	07-09	09-11
ODA	\$8,300	\$2,000
ODFW	\$5,700	\$3,800
Total	\$14,000 avg/yr	\$5,800 avg/yr

* Each Wildlife Services field position will be short approximately \$8,200 due to ODA and ODFW cuts

Honorable
Ways & Means Subcommittee on Natural resources
H-178
State Capitol
Salem, OR 97301

Chair XXXXX and Ways & Means Natural Resources Subcommittee Members;

The natural resource community representing thousands of individuals and members of Oregon's agriculture, ranching and forestry community wish to express our strong support for USDA-APHIS-Wildlife Services (WS). In Oregon, WS has working agreements with nearly 11,000 individuals. There are 27 WS Wildlife Specialists based in 26 county areas throughout the State. Ninety-five percent of farms assisted by WS are small family operations with a great deal to lose. WS is an invaluable asset to producers who are continually plagued with predation of their livestock despite investing millions of their own money to implement non-lethal predator deterrents. The latest National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) survey of Oregon cattle losses (2006) caused by predators was documented to be 400 adult cattle worth \$386,000 and 4,100 calves worth \$1,464,000. A 2005 NASS survey of sheep losses in Oregon reported 2,800 of adult sheep worth \$325,000 and 5,800 lambs worth \$331,000 killed by predators.

WS also addresses wildlife threats to human health and safety, wildlife damage to public and private land and protects natural resources including threatened and endangered species. In FY 08 WS addressed 257 cougar complaints across the state with 72 (28%) involving threats to human health and safety.

This cooperatively funded program has three primary government sources of funding and a growing private and other agencies funding component. During the current biennium the federal, state and county funding sources that support the 27 Wildlife Services field employees are as follows:

USDA-APHIS-Wildlife Services= \$2,436,359 (48%)
Counties- cumulative of 26 county areas= \$1,852,041 (37%)
Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) = \$442,616 (9%) - 20,000 = 422,616
Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife (ODFW) = \$310,000 (6%) → 25,000 = 285,000
Total all government sources, Federal/state/county= \$5,041,016

* as of
Since WS covers the expenses of supervision and administration with federal funds and do not take overhead out of any of the funds they receive from State agencies or Cooperating Counties any State funding cut will come at the expense of service delivery. With the magnitude of funding cuts to WS proposed by ODA (73% down to \$120,000) and ODFW (33% down to \$210,000) it is unlikely that the counties with their own budget problems will make up the difference. WS is likely to lose positions in the field, meaning that most counties will end up with partial programs and some county programs will cease to exist. Clearly the State has the responsibility for the damage that the publicly owned wildlife causes, yet the State is proposing to become an insignificant financial partner in the cooperatively funded Wildlife Services program.

The proposed ODA allocation for the 09-011 biennium will be <\$60,000/yr and the ODFW allocation will be \$105,000/yr. The average WS position cost is \$70,000 - \$75,000/yr to cover salaries/benefits, vehicle expenses, equipment and supplies. ODA funding would support < 1 position (.78) for the entire state and ODFW proposed funds would support just 1.5 positions. The State can not expect counties to replace the drastic funding cuts to WS proposed in the ODA and ODFW budgets. The Association of Oregon Counties (AOC) has already voiced that they

can no longer carry a disproportionately heavier load when it comes to funding wildlife damage management in Oregon.

In addition to the great financial collaboration the state receives through the WS program there is also an impressive benefit to cost ratio. As reported in a Government Accounting Office (GAO) report to Congress (GAO-02-138), studies on WS program activities have shown that the WS program benefits exceed costs by ratios ranging from 3:1 to 27:1. This should be a serious consideration during these difficult economic times. Agriculture is an economic force in all of Oregon's counties. When WS prevents agricultural losses they are increasing agricultural revenues that ripple through the local economies.

In 2001, the Wildlife Damage Advisory Council (WDAC), established by HB 2049, identified a foundational need for additional state funding from both ODFW and ODA for WS to meet the increasing demand for the states growing wildlife damage and health & human safety issues. The majority of the WDAC recommended that in order to maintain the financial stability, which equates to ensuring a viable capability of the WS program, state funding through the ODA should be raised to \$625,000/biennium and that ODFW should contribute \$315,000/biennium (amounts recommended in 2001). But because of the budget difficulties in 2001 the Council was realistic and advised ODA and, ODFW to hold the WS allocation in each of the agencies budgets harmless from any cuts. A significant cut from ODA actually occurred later that year. Funding from these State agencies continues to be significantly lower than the HB 2049 committee recommended levels. At this time we recognize that once again State budgets do not allow for enhancements to WS, but we believe that WS is a great investment for ODA and ODFW and the State's economy and ask that the WS funding remain intact.

Thank you for your time and consideration for our support. We believe the recommendations made by HB 2049-Wildlife Damage Advisory Committee were valid in 2003 and left unaddressed since then are even more critical today.

Oregon Cattlemen's Association

Oregon Farm Bureau Federation

Oregon Sheep Grower's Association

Oregonians for Food and Shelter

Western Oregon Livestock Association