



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Marketing and
Regulatory
Programs

Animal and
Plant Health
Inspection
Service

Wildlife
Services

Roseburg District
Office

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January 26, 2015

Mark Orndoff, Human Health Director
Jackson County
1005 E. Main St.
Medford, Oregon 97504

Dear Mr. Orndoff,

This is a report of the Wildlife Services program and its activities within Jackson County in 2014 (Jan.1-Dec. 31).

In 2014, the one Wildlife Services (WS) position in Jackson County was cooperatively funded by Jackson County, Oregon Department of Fisheries and Wildlife, Oregon Department of Agriculture, Oregon Department of Transportation, as well as the United States Department of Agriculture.

Jackson County is home to a diverse abundance of wildlife species with healthy populations. Wild animals are commonly found in their natural habitats surrounding human developments, but many species have also adapted and live right within our communities. WS works with Jackson County communities when there is conflict between humans and wild animals.

WS frequently provides information, advice, equipment, and materials that enable people to resolve wildlife conflicts on their own. This technical assistance is provided in person, by telephone, or through the internet. WS also provides solutions on-site, through direct management assistance, when the wildlife-related problem is complex and cannot be safely or effectively resolved by others. These on-site operations usually involve capturing and removing the offending animal causing the damage. (See Table 1)

Every day, WS in Jackson County helps citizens, organizations, industries, and government agencies resolve conflicts with wildlife to 1) safeguard human health and safety; 2) protect property and agriculture; 3) and natural resources. Here are some of the highlights for the year:

Human Safety and Health

WS responds to over a hundred calls each year in Jackson County regarding mountain lions. With a state cougar population exceeding 5,700, local densities exceed any documented in North America. Young and displaced cougars looking to establish territories encroach on residential areas, threatening public safety. WS works cooperatively with the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) and the Oregon State Police (OSP) to resolve cougar conflicts.

In 2014, WS was diligent in responding to potential rabies threats from small mammals county-wide after several wild animals (foxes) were confirmed rabid in southern Oregon.

Avian Influenza, or “Bird Flu” (H5n8) was confirmed in one flock of Oregon poultry in Douglas County late in 2014. This is a serious concern for poultry producers, including backyard poultry producers as it is deadly to both poultry and other bird species. WS has taken over 350 samples from southwestern Oregon wild waterfowl in the past two months for testing. Of these birds, there have been several birds that have tested positive for avian influenza which shows the prevalence of the flu in wild bird populations and the potential threat to poultry producers. If you have any questions about Avian Influenza or want to report a sick domestic bird, please call the U.S. Department of Agriculture at 866-536-7593.

Wildlife strikes cause more than 760,000 hours of aircraft down time and cost the nation’s civil aviation industry approximately \$700 million annually. American military aircraft sustain losses exceeding \$10 million annually.

WS collaborates closely with the Rogue Valley International Medford Airport by providing technical assistance, conducting wildlife hazard assessments, writing wildlife hazard management plans, and dispersing or removing wildlife. In April, WS provided training to airport staff on ways to minimize wildlife threats. The Oregon Department of Aviation (ODOA) relies on WS to review land development projects to evaluate the potential to attract wildlife and create wildlife hazards to aircraft operations.

Property, Pets, and Livestock

WS receives numerous calls daily from frustrated citizens with wildlife damaging their property. These calls can range from bats in an attic, foxes in the chickens, to bears in garages. WS responds and provides technical assistance or direct-management assistance depending on each situation. In 2014, over 40 black bear damage complaints were documented in the county in the fall and early winter months.

WS has recently met with the Jackson County Animal Control Department to discuss how the WS program’s expertise with wildlife behavior, damage, patterns can assist the Animal Control and Sheriff’s Department when dealing with cases dealing with potential wildlife. There will be a one-day training course for local law enforcement personnel, provided by WS, scheduled in February that will go over procedures in evaluation predation in livestock and wildlife.

Despite producers’ best efforts to protect their livestock, thousands of domesticated farm animals are killed by predators each year. The most recent reports by the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) livestock producers in Oregon reported that producers lose about 7,700 sheep and 3,800 cattle to predators annually. In Jackson County, coyotes, cougars, and bears regularly kill livestock. Producers often turn to WS for assistance in reducing and preventing further predation.

Natural Resources

WS implements nonlethal exclusion and bird harassment at bridge sites slated for repair or replacement, allowing ODOT to complete critical highway infrastructure projects while minimizing impacts on federally protected migratory birds. WS-Oregon works at hundreds of sites, many inside Jackson County, to prevent birds and bats from using them for nesting or roosting, saving the state hundreds of millions of dollars. WS assistance to the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) received a Federal 2011 Exemplary Ecosystem Initiative Award.

We look forward to working with Jackson County this next year. If you have any questions please feel free to call me.

Sincerely,

Michael Burrell
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Table 1.

2014 Take by Species

Species	Removed
Black Bear	3
Beaver	9
Coyotes	28
Grey Fox	2
Mountain Lions	4
Raccoon	2
Muskrat	4