



WILDLIFE SERVICES

The American Sheep Industry Association (ASI) urges Congress to provide sufficient funding to the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) Wildlife Services (WS) program. ASI opposes any effort to restrict or eliminate WS funding and strongly urges continued vigilance to stave off any potential WS program attacks during House/Senate consideration of the FY 2026 Agriculture Appropriations Bill.

Wildlife Services provides Federal leadership and expertise to resolve conflicts between people and wildlife, allowing them to coexist while protecting aircraft, pilots and the passengers they transport; agriculture; natural resources, including threatened and endangered species; property and infrastructure; and public health and safety. WS personnel and programs minimize the billions in losses incurred annually by producers of livestock, aquaculture, small grains, fruits, vegetables, and other agricultural products.

Wildlife causes more than **\$12.8 billion** in damage every year to natural resources, public infrastructure, private property, and agriculture. Additionally, wildlife predators cause more than **\$232 million** in death loss to livestock. WS prevents and reduces livestock predation through technical assistance (education and outreach) to producers and operational management programs.

In FY23, WS provided more than 20,800 technical assistance activities that enabled 6,061 livestock producers to implement improved husbandry and methods such as use of guard animals, exclusion, fencing, and predator dispersal. These activities included 53 predator management workshops attended by more than 2,700 individuals from 14 states.

WS supported USDA's Animal Plant Health Inspection Services' emergency response efforts to animal diseases, natural disasters, and hazardous spills. In FY23, WS deployed 102 personnel on 172 deployments for Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) and African Swine Fever (ASF). WS personnel have physically deployed to assist 12 states in response to HPAI. WS responded to the ASF detection on the island of Hispaniola and since detection in July 2021, have removed a total of 4,921 feral swine and have sampled 3,042 for ASF on Puerto Rico and US Virgin Islands through FY23. The National Wildlife Disease Program (NWDP) also coordinated sample collection and evaluation or assisted state agencies with many other diseases in wildlife to include SARS-CoV-2, plague, tularemia, leptospirosis, rabies, chronic wasting disease, and rabbit hemorrhagic disease virus.

Wildlife Services is an Agency that is uniquely important to the livestock industry and has the knowledge and skill, as well as the equipment, to track, capture and remove predators when they cause serious damage. Livestock producers are not the only beneficiaries – every single American citizen also benefits.

ASI supports an increase of \$5 million for Wildlife Damage Management to account for increased predation and wildlife interaction and reduced services as a result of WS' increased NEPA compliance costs.

For more information, please visit the ASI website at www.sheepusa.org.
Please contact Jim Richards at jrichards@cgagroup.com or (202) 448-9509 for more information.

**Appropriations Bill**

Agriculture

AgencyAnimal and Plant Health Inspection
Service**Account**

Wildlife Services

Program

Wildlife Damage Management

Requested Amount

\$127,5000,000

Description

The Wildlife Damage Management (WDM) program resolves human/wildlife conflicts and protects agriculture, human health and safety, personal property, and natural resources from wildlife damage and wildlife-borne diseases in the United States. This program protects agriculture by protecting livestock from predators, managing invasive species such as feral swine and beaver damage, conducting a national rabies management program, and managing wildlife species and diseases.

Livestock losses attributed to predators cost producers more than \$178 million annually, according to the most recent surveys by National Agriculture Statistics Service. Cost-benefit analyses have shown that for each dollar spent on livestock protection, APHIS saves producers between \$2 and \$7 in losses. APHIS prevents and reduces livestock predation through education, technical assistance to producers, and management programs. In FY 2014, APHIS' WDM program helped more than 11,000 producers in the western United States with livestock valued at more than \$2.3 billion.

Authorization7 U.S.C 426-426d (Control of predatory
and other wild animals)**President's FY 2026 Budget Request**

TBD

**FY 2025 (CR – funded FY25 at FY24
levels)**

\$122,500,000

Appropriations Bill

Agriculture

Agency

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

Account

Wildlife Services

Program

Wildlife Services Methods Development

Requested Amount

\$25, 500, 000

Description

The Wildlife Services Methods Development (WSMD) program works with cooperators to conduct research and develop socially responsible methods to prevent and mitigate damage caused by wildlife and invasive species on agricultural productions, and to detect and prevent wildlife diseases that may impact animal health and agricultural biosecurity. This program provides scientific information to support the development and implementation of methods for managing wildlife damage. These methods enable APHIS, cooperators, and individuals to protect crops, livestock, natural resources, property, and public health and safety. The WSMD program serves as an international leader in non-lethal research to reduce wildlife damage.

Authorization7 U.S.C 426-426d (Control of predatory and
other wild animals)**President's FY 2026 Budget Request**

TBD

**FY 2025 (CR – funded FY25 at FY24
levels)**

\$25,500,000