



## Legislative Fiscal Bureau

One East Main, Suite 301 • Madison, WI 53703 • (608) 266-3847 • Fax: (608) 267-6873

---

May 5, 2011

Joint Committee on Finance

Paper #479

### **Wildlife Management (DNR-- Fish, Wildlife, and Recreation)**

[LFB 2011-13 Budget Summary: Page 315, #9]

---

#### **CURRENT LAW**

The Department of Natural Resources contracts with the United States Department of Agriculture's Animal Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) Wildlife Services to control and manage wildlife causing damage. DNR currently has three contracts with APHIS related to nuisance wildlife: (a) black bear and birds (such as Canada geese); (b) beaver; and (c) wolves.

#### **GOVERNOR**

Provide \$113,300 fish and wildlife SEG annually for management of nuisance black bear and birds.

#### **DISCUSSION POINTS**

1. Under section 29.885, of the statutes, DNR is responsible for removing wild animals that cause damage, and responding to complaints about wild animals, or their structures, which are causing a nuisance. This program is primarily funded from fish and wildlife account SEG and federal funds. DNR has three contracts with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's APHIS Wildlife Services to control and manage wildlife causing damage including a contract related to nuisance black bear and birds. APHIS Wildlife Services staff operate a toll-free hotline for public complaints about black bears and birds causing damage or a nuisance, and are responsible for responding to calls. For example, if a bear is reported in an urban area, APHIS may capture and relocate the bear. However, for birds, APHIS provides technical assistance only and will not remove the nuisance-causing bird (such as geese or sandhill cranes).

2. The costs of these efforts are shared between APHIS and DNR. The contract

specifies the annual amount DNR commits to providing to APHIS, and any costs beyond that amount are borne by APHIS. DNR has two wildlife control appropriations. One is funded with wildlife damage revenues (wildlife damage surcharge on most hunting licenses and bonus deer permit revenues) which are utilized for the removal of animals causing damage or a nuisance. The other appropriation is funded from general fish and wildlife revenues (hunting and fishing license fee revenues) for beaver removal; however, DNR has recently also been utilizing this appropriation for control and removal activities related to black bear and birds. In fiscal year 2008-09, DNR provided \$164,100 (\$36,000 from wildlife control and \$128,100 from the general operations appropriation for wildlife management) to APHIS for efforts related to bears and birds, while APHIS provided \$130,200. In 2009-10, DNR provided \$164,700 (\$120,400 wildlife control, and \$44,300 general wildlife management) and APHIS provided \$147,700. The contract for fiscal year 2010-11 specifies that DNR will provide \$289,600 to APHIS for these efforts, and the Department anticipates providing \$120,100 of these funds from wildlife control and \$169,500 from the general operations appropriation for wildlife management. APHIS is to provide \$76,400.

3. While total contract costs of nuisance wildlife management activities have increased (from \$294,300 in 2008-09 to an estimated \$366,000 in 2010-11), the amount of federal funding available to support the contract has decreased (DNR expects APHIS to contribute approximately \$76,400 toward contract expenses in 2010-11). As a result, DNR has borne a larger portion of the total cost of the nuisance wildlife management efforts. Base funding of \$120,100 SEG annually from wildlife damage would be available for the contract over the 2011-13 biennium; however, in the past several years, DNR has also expended funds from the general operations appropriation for wildlife management for the contract expenses (hunting and fishing license fee revenues). This has resulted in less funding available for other wildlife management activities such as conducting wildlife surveys, monitoring wildlife populations, and administering hunting seasons. The bill would provide \$113,300 SEG annually from the general operations wildlife management appropriation. Combined with the \$120,100 in base funding from wildlife damage, this would provide \$233,400 each year for contract expenses. As the current fiscal year 2010-11 contract requires DNR to provide \$289,600; if costs continue at similar levels or rise, the Department would likely need to provide additional funding from the general operations wildlife management appropriation beyond the \$113,300 provided under the bill.

4. On the other hand, revenues to the fish and wildlife account of the conservation fund are expected to fall short of authorized expenditures in the 2011-13 biennium. Therefore, to the extent additional expenditures are authorized, base level fish and wildlife account programs would need to be reduced. Further, to the extent additional expenditures are provided, the 2013-15 structural imbalance in the fish and wildlife account will be increased. One option would be to not increase expenditure authority from the account in order to help maintain a positive balance (Alternative 2).

## **ALTERNATIVES**

1. Adopt the Governor's recommendation to provide \$113,300 SEG annually to general wildlife management operations for nuisance black bear and bird management.

2. Maintain current law.

<b>ALT 2</b>	<b>Change to Bill</b>
	Funding
SEG	- \$226,600

Prepared by: Erin Probst