

WILDLIFE DAMAGE PROGRAM

Authorization: ss. 29.885 and 29.889, Wis. Stats.

Budget: Funding is dependent upon the number of hunting licenses issued each year.

2008-09 Fiscal Year = \$2.84 million

2009-10 Fiscal Year = \$4.02 million

2010-11 Fiscal Year = \$3.80 million

NOTE: A \$2 surcharge on all hunting licenses sold and a \$4 surcharge on all Conservation Patron licenses sold generates roughly \$2.3 million a year for use on wildlife damage and abatement. In addition, revenue generated from the sale of resident (\$12 each) and nonresident (\$20 each) bonus antlerless deer permits generated approximately \$488,000 in FY 09, \$1,673,000 FY10 and \$1,495,000 in FY11. Purchasers of hunting licenses can also voluntarily donate an additional \$1, or more, to the deer donation program. Hunters donated approximately \$16,400 in FY 09, \$12,400 in FY 10, and \$11,300 FY11 to the deer donation program.

Objective: Establish a county-administered wildlife damage abatement and claims program to assist landowners with excessive levels of agricultural crop damage from deer, bears, geese, elk or turkeys.

Eligibility and Applications: Counties are eligible to participate after passing a resolution endorsing participation and completing a DNR-approved plan of administration. A person is required; to file a statement of claim with the department on a form acceptable to the department within 14 days after the wildlife damage first occurs, to have hunting access control, and to implement recommended abatement measures.

Level of Assistance: 100% of county administration costs and 75% of abatement projects are reimbursable. Damage claims (\$500 deductible) up to \$10,000 may also be paid if funding is sufficient.

Priorities: Monies are allocated based on a statewide tiered priority system:

- Deer Donation Program
- County administrative costs
- Abatement cost
- Damage claim payment

Eligible Types of Projects: The type of wildlife damage that is eligible for wildlife damage claim payments shall be limited to damage to commercial seedlings or crops growing on agricultural land, damage to crops that have been harvested for sale or further use but have not been removed from the agricultural land, damage to orchard trees or nursery stock or damage to apiaries or livestock.

History: In 2010, 70 counties participated in the program which 375 wildlife damage claims were filed reflecting \$1,577,617 in appraised losses, with \$1,079,230 being paid to farmers. Program abatement projects and supplies totaled \$157,119. The county administration costs were \$980,543. In 2010, 59 counties participated in the deer donation program with a total cost of approximately \$209,100. A total of 3,606 deer were donated, generating roughly 162,270 lbs. of ground venison that was distributed to local food pantries.

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