

UNITED STATES ANIMAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION - 2005

RESOLUTION: 8 APPROVED

SOURCE: COMMITTEE ON DIAGNOSTIC LABORATORY AND
VETERINARY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HEALTH AND RABIES

SUBJECT MATTER: A NEW BIOSAFETY LEVEL 3-AG (BSL-3-AG) WILDLIFE
DISEASE RESEARCH LABORATORY AT THE NATIONAL
WILDLIFE RESEARCH CENTER

DATES: Hershey, Pennsylvania – November 3-9, 2005

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The introduction and emergence of infectious diseases of wildlife is becoming increasingly more important because many diseases of domestic animals and humans involve wildlife as hosts or reservoirs. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Wildlife Services (WS), National Wildlife Research Center (NWRC) has unique capabilities to address national disease control efforts in wildlife.

It is crucial that USDA-APHIS-WS expand its capacity to effectively deal with wildlife diseases of concern. An essential part of this increased capacity is the construction of a stand-alone Biosafety Level 3-AG (BSL-3-AG) research laboratory at the NWRC to support expanding research and operational efforts to better understand and combat these emerging and invasive wildlife diseases.

The laboratory should be used to conduct research on wildlife diseases; to develop methods to identify, monitor, control, eradicate and prevent the introduction of wildlife diseases into the United States; to respond to outbreaks of wildlife disease and emergency situations; and to provide emergency surge capacity to the USDA-APHIS-VS National Veterinary Services Laboratories (NVSL) and the National Animal Health Laboratory Network (NAHLN).

RESOLUTION:

The United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) urges the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Wildlife Services (WS) to secure funding for the construction and operation of a 25,000 square foot (approximate) Biosafety Level 3-AG (BSL-3-AG) laboratory at an estimated cost of \$50 million at the National Wildlife Research Center (NWRC) at Fort Collins, Colorado.

RESPONSE:

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Wildlife Services (WS) agrees and is committed to support USAHA Resolution Number 8. We recognize the importance of increased Biosafety Level 3 facilities to both conduct wildlife research and carry out critical wildlife disease diagnostics in support of biosafety to humans, domestic animals and wildlife, and has supported the planning and construction of a Biosafety Level 3 Wildlife Disease Research Building as part of the APHIS/WS National Wildlife Research Center's (NWRC) Master Plan on the campus of Colorado State University, Fort Collins, Colorado. While this facility is currently scheduled to be constructed under a private construct/USDA lease arrangement, APHIS supports Federal ownership of this important, unique wildlife disease facility due to bio safety concerns and the need to manage this kind of research to protect human safety.