

RESPONSE

U.S. Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Wildlife Services (WS)

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Wildlife Services (WS) agrees with USAHA Resolution 22 on the importance of continued surveillance and control of the canine rabies variant to prevent reintroduction into the United States. We recognize the importance of continued surveillance and control of the canine variant of rabies to prevent the reintroduction of this strain into the United States. In 2007, the United States was declared free of canine rabies variant as a result of ongoing cooperative efforts among Federal, State, and local authorities. WS and counterparts in Mexico and Canada completed a North American Rabies Management Plan (NARMP) to facilitate effective border rabies control during FY 2007. The plan identifies four primary areas for international collaboration: information exchange, enhanced rabies surveillance, control and research. The NARMP is in a final review process by administrative entities in each country leading to formal signatures to the plan during FY 2008. WS also agrees with USAHA that there is a need for expanded support of regional wildlife rabies management programs. In addition to the broad objectives outlined in the NARMP, the focus of wildlife rabies management in the United States will be further detailed in a National Plan for the Management of Rabies in Wildlife. The ability to provide enhanced support at the local and regional level will require additional resources.