



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Animal and
Plant Health
Inspection
Service

Wildlife Services

1400 Independence
Avenue, SW
Washington, DC
20250

May 14, 2013

The Honorable Collin C. Peterson
Ranking Member
Committee on Agriculture
U.S. House of Representatives
1305 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Peterson:

I write to you today regarding the Wildlife Services (WS) program within the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, and its work on urban rodent control. We understand there is a need to clarify our policy in regard to WS rodent work in urban areas.

Below is language that further defines APHIS' policy on "urban rodent control." We commit to making this definition available to the public in the coming weeks and are hopeful that this clarification will alleviate the expressed concerns.

For the purposes of activities authorized under the Act of December 22, 1987 (7 U.S.C. 426c), the term "urban rodent control" shall mean actions to directly control mice, rats, voles, squirrels, chipmunks, gophers, woodchucks, and groundhogs in a city or town with a population greater than 50,000 inhabitants and the urbanized area contiguous and adjacent to such a city or town, except actions involving: (1) federal agencies; (2) government entities engaged in a cooperative service agreement with APHIS to provide direct control of rodents as of October 1, 2013; (3) a state in which direct control of the rodent species has been expressly authorized by state law, rulemaking, or a local jurisdiction's ordinance promulgated by public notice and an opportunity for public comment or as otherwise promulgated as required and authorized by the respective state or local law; and (4) railways and airport air sides areas. APHIS will refer all requests for operational assistance with "urban rodent control" from private entities such as home and business owners and associations to the private sector.

Thank you for your continued support of the Wildlife Services program. A similar letter is being sent to Chairman Lucas.

Sincerely,

William H. Clay
Deputy Administrator



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Chairman
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