



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Animal and
Plant Health
Inspection
Service

Wildlife Services

1400 Independence
Avenue, SW
Washington, DC
20250

November 19, 2007

Mr. Jeff Ruch
Executive Director
PEER
2000 P Street, NW
Suite 103
Washington, DC 20036

Dear Mr. Ruch:

This is in response to your letter dated November 14, 2007, where you requested further information regarding the National Safety Review of the Wildlife Services (WS) program.

The program is unique among APHIS programs in that a high percentage of our employee's daily duties involve hazardous procedures and materials. Recognizing the risk involved in these duties, WS has implemented an extensive safety program review to ensure that our work environment is as safe as possible for our employees.

The safety review is being conducted by parties unaffiliated with WS to ensure the most objective review possible. All of the organizations selected for the review are outside of APHIS and were selected because of their demonstrated professional expertise in that field. The safety review will examine nine WS program components: aviation/aerial operations, explosives and pyrotechnics, firearms, hazardous materials, immobilization and euthanasia drugs, pesticides, vehicles, watercraft and water safety, and wildlife disease. To facilitate the program-wide review process, one WS employee will be the primary contact for each component. The WS contact person is responsible for assisting the outside reviewer with any needs to be identified during their review of various areas associated with the respective safety component. The safety reviews will be completed by July 2008, and the public will have the opportunity to read the final report document after that time.

As with past reviews or on our own initiative, WS has implemented major safety improvements to ensure the continued safety of our employees. Thus, the goal of this safety review is to seek recommendations for program-wide improvement from the independent review contractors and to continue improvement of employee safety.

William H. Clay
Deputy Administrator
Wildlife Services

cc: Wendy Keefover-Ring, SINAPU



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