

## **Black Vulture Management Assistance Project**

Vultures are migratory birds, Federally protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, which is administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. While they do perform an important ecological function they can also cause serious damage. Because of their adaptable nature, increasing numbers, and complex behavior, vultures may be associated with a wide range of conflicts, including predatory behavior that often can seriously injure livestock.

U.S. Department of Agriculture's Wildlife Services (WS) provides information and direct management for vulture conflicts and its state offices can assist producers through the required depredation permit process. A Migratory Bird Depredation Permit must be obtained from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and State laws must be consulted and followed, prior to initiating actions to remove vultures.

To combat this growing threat and provide substantive relief to producers, WS partnered with USFWS in a multi-state black vulture damage management program in 2020, specifically in Arkansas, Florida, Kentucky, Mississippi, and South Carolina. This Management Assistance Project (MAP) was designed to run concurrently with, and enhance, the ongoing research component of the overall WS black vulture management strategy. This MAP will continue in 2021.

Changes this year include the addition of the state of Missouri. Additionally, conflicts with property and human health and safety can be addressed along with livestock depredation.

In South Carolina, WS personnel will provide on-site technical assistance regarding black vulture conflicts, which will consist of site visits, damage documentation, permit acquisition (WS Form 37), and general advice on black vulture management. WS may also loan supplies and equipment if available.

When necessary South Carolina WS personnel will implement direct control using conventional methods in response to requests for assistance. Direct control can include harassment with pyrotechnics and propane cannons; vulture effigies; harassment shooting; lethal shooting and trap/euthanize programs in severe cases. In addition to direct control activities, WS personnel will conduct outreach/education programs designed to teach individuals about alternative non-lethal methods.

Services will be provided when damage is occurring or to conduct proactive management for individuals that have a history of black vulture conflicts. This MAP will run through September 30, 2021 or until funding is exhausted.

### Contact Information

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