

## Wildlife Hazard Mitigation Policy, Plan and Procedure

May - 2010

### I. POLICY:

The Wildlife Hazard Mitigation Plan will identify both short and long term strategies for mitigating the hazard that certain species of wildlife present to aircraft operations. Additionally, this plan will outline policies and procedures to guide airport management and operational personnel in implementing both short and long term wildlife control measures. Only current Airport employees are authorized to utilize lethal measures for wildlife hazard mitigation. The overall policy is to administer wildlife control tactics and allocate resources in a safe and legal manner; with the goal of minimizing the risks that wildlife can present to aircraft either landing or taking off from Jackson County – Reynolds Field as much as available resources will allow.

### II. RESPONSIBILITY:

**A. Airport Board** – The Airport Board is responsible for setting the overall policy for wildlife hazards and control; allocation of resources to accomplish the goals of the wildlife hazard plan; and overall policies regarding wildlife hazard reduction measures.

**B. Airport Manager** – The Airport Manager is responsible for: implementation of the wildlife hazard mitigation plan; ensuring that wildlife hazard control measures are safe; identifying potential resources and techniques to achieve the goals of the wildlife hazard plan; and, for monitoring that wildlife hazard reduction measures comply with applicable Federal, State and Local requirements.

**C. Airport Staff** - Airport Staff are responsible for compliance with the policy and procedures contained within the wildlife hazard mitigation plan; to implement wildlife control measures techniques in a safe and prudent manner; and to notify the Airport Manager of any unusual conditions that may exist related to wildlife hazards.

### III. WILDLIFE HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN

**A. Hazard Assessment** – The first step in development of an effective wildlife hazard plan is to identify the current problem. Not all wildlife present on or near an airport will present a hazard to aircraft operations. Various assessment tools should be utilized for establishment of a baseline problem assessment, among which include:

1. Observations of current maintenance staff for historical and current known wildlife hazards;
2. Feedback from pilots, airport tenants and air traffic control about known wildlife hazards;
3. An on site assessment by the USDA – Fish and Wildlife Division personnel with a written follow up report and recommendations (see attachment);
4. Networking with other airport managers across the State;
5. Monitoring construction projects in the vicinity of the airport; and,

6. An on site assessment by a wildlife professional, should the need arise.

**B. Wildlife Hazard Control Measures** – will be employed whenever practical and within allocated resources generally include:

1. Perimeter fences of such size and structure to prevent large mammals from entering the airport operations area;
2. Control of habitat so as not to attract hazardous species to the airport;
3. Lethal measures;
4. Non-lethal measures including deterrents and harassment techniques including; pyrotechnic distraction devices; vegetation sprays, etc.

**C. Communications** – about wildlife hazards must be timely, accurate and detailed. Some examples of necessary communications about wildlife hazard management are:

1. Notification of local law enforcement when special “kill” permits are issued;
2. Specific notification of air traffic control personnel when and where either lethal or distraction measures are being employed;
3. Issue wildlife hazard notifications to airport directories;
4. Issue appropriate verbal and written reports when wildlife causes aircraft damage;
5. Maintain complete administrative files concerning wildlife hazard management.

**D. Hazardous Species** – are those species of wildlife that may be present, or find habitat on the airport grounds, adjacent to runways and taxiways or in the airspace related to runways:

1. Deer are known to be present within the perimeter fence;
2. Canadian geese are periodically observed at and near the airport;
3. Sea gulls are periodically observed at and near the airport;
4. Sandhill Cranes are periodically observed at and near the airport;
5. Ducks are periodically observed at and near the airport;
6. Blue Heron are periodically observed at and near the airport;
7. Coyotes are periodically observed at and near the airport;
8. Wild turkeys are periodically observed at and near the airport;
9. Red tail hawks and turkey vultures are periodically observed at and near the airport;
10. Other species that are present at the airport are: ground hogs, muskrats, small ground nesting birds, etc.

**E. Wildlife Hazard Mitigation Strategies** – will be employed, to the extent that resources will permit, with the goal of minimizing, or eliminating the hazards posed to aircraft by certain species of wildlife.

1. **Long term strategies** -- are those strategies that cannot be immediately implemented due to cost, staffing, or other logistical barriers, but will be included in capital and runway capital planning documents for consideration and funding. Long term wildlife hazard mitigation strategies include:

- a. Installation of 10' high fencing around the remainder of the airport perimeter up to the main parking lot areas. This strategy is directly related to completion of Runway 7-25.
  - b. Installation of 6' tall fence around the main airport parking lot area.
  - c. Removal of shrub, small tree and tall grass overgrowth in the area northwest of the intersection of Runways 6-24 and 14-32.
2. **Short term strategies** -- are those strategies that will be employed on a regular basis with the goal of reducing the hazard posed to aircraft by certain species of wildlife. Short term strategies include:

- a. Obtaining permits for destruction of deer and protected bird species from respective regulating agencies i.e. State Department of Natural Resources and U.S. Environment and Department of Agriculture Fish and Wildlife division.
- b. Elimination of deer on a regular basis.
- c. Elimination of protected bird species that present a hazard including: sea gulls, blue heron, sand hill cranes and Canadian geese.
- d. Harassment of hazardous wildlife using mechanical scare crows, pyrotechnic distraction devices and other noise making devices to scare the animals away from the airport and to discourage nesting activities.
- e. Installation of fake wire fencing with reflectors to simulate taller fences in those areas of the airport perimeter fence that are not 10' tall.
- f. Implement a letter of agreement with Air Traffic Control for appropriate notification of wildlife hazards and wildlife collisions with aircraft.
- g. Eliminate habitat that attracts nesting or roosting activities to the extent that resources will permit.
- h. Trapping of small animals that present a hazard; or are destructive to the airport grounds.
- i. Maintain existing fences in good and serviceable condition through regular maintenance activities.

**F. Wildlife Hazard Mitigation Procedures** – are established for the purpose of providing routine protocols when employing wildlife mitigation measures and reporting with the overall goal of safety and effectiveness.

**1. Use, Transportation and Storage of Firearms**

- a. Airport employees must be qualified to use firearms via training and/or experience as determined by the Airport Manager;
- b. Firearms used for application of either lethal or non-lethal must be in good working condition and must be approved for use by the Airport Manager;
- c. Firearms will be stored in a locker or gun safe and locked at all times when not in use;
- d. Firearms must be legally carried at all times;
- e. Firearms must comply with State, Local and Federal regulations;
- f. Firearms will not be fired from inside of an airport vehicle;
- g. Starter pistols will be kept within a locked container within airport maintenance vehicles unless in use;

- h.** Firearms will not be transported on public roads or streets within an airport vehicle unless fully encased and unloaded;
- i.** Firearms and starter pistols will be removed from airport vehicles during when vehicle maintenance is being performed by outside vendors or when the vehicle is left unattended off of the airport grounds for any reason.

**2. Safety and Caution** – will be practiced when applying distraction or lethal measures including the following:

- a.** Air traffic control will be notified prior to employing lethal or non-lethal measures if during air traffic control tower hours;
- b.** Hunter orange safety colors will be worn when employing lethal measures for wildlife control;
- c.** A suitable safety zone behind and beyond the intended target will be maintained ensuring that an errant shot will not endanger others plus assurance that no persons are located within the safety zone at the time the lethal measure is employed;
- d.** Care will be taken not to intentionally scare wildlife toward moving aircraft;
- e.** Firearms will be handled at all times in a safe manner; never left unattended; always unloaded when not in immediate use; and, always locked and unloaded when being stored.

**3. Communications** – about wildlife hazards and wildlife mitigation efforts must be accurate, timely and thorough. Airport staff will treat wildlife hazard communications as a high priority, including:

- a.** Awareness and recognition of wildlife hazards during routine inspections of the runways and taxiways with verbal or written reporting of hazards as needed;
- b.** Communication with air traffic control personnel about unique wildlife hazards that are observed;
- c.** Communication with the Airport Manager about unique wildlife hazards that are observed;
- d.** Prior notification of air traffic control personnel when employing lethal, non-lethal, or other distraction techniques;

**4. Short term strategies** – for mitigation of wildlife hazards will be employed by airport personnel on a regular basis. Short term strategies and responsibilities include:

- a.** Obtaining special permits from DNRE and USDA Fish and Wildlife for killing protected species or hunting outside of regular designated seasons (Airport Manager).
- b.** Seeking methods and resources for enhancement of perimeter fencing, automated scare crow techniques and wildlife deterrents (Airport Manager).
- c.** Elimination of deer located inside of the fenced area of the airport on a regular basis (Airport Maintenance Staff).

- d. Harassment or elimination of protected and unprotected species of birds that present a hazard to aircraft.
- e. Trapping or destruction of non-protected species of wildlife known to present hazards to aircraft or grounds (Airport Maintenance Staff).

**IV. AUTHORITY AND REFERENCE**

FAA ADVISORY CIRCULARS “AC 150/5200-32A (Reporting Wildlife Aircraft Strikes” “AC 150/5200-33B “Hazardous Wildlife Attractants on or Near Airports”  
Letter of Agreement(s) with Midwest Air Traffic Control Inc.  
USDA Wildlife Services Letter of Wildlife Hazard Assessment

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SIGNED

POSITION

DATE

DISTRIBUTION

- Airport Manager
- Control Tower
- Airport Staff