



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Marketing &
Regulatory
Programs

Animal and
Plant Health
Inspection
Service

Wildlife Services

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To: Dr. Edwin Herricks

Subject: Avian Radar Research at O'Hare International Airport

Date: March 7, 2008

Dr. Herricks,

This letter was prepared to identify the critical need to investigate the utility of avian radar systems at O'Hare International Airport (ORD). As you are aware, research has been conducted using avian radars on a few airports, but ORD offers a unique situation that will help airport managers, wildlife professionals and researchers expand the utility of these radars as a wildlife damage management tool on a national basis. In addition, limited research on avian radars has been conducted on large commercial airports and such research can provide insights on how the tool can aid in wildlife damage management on an airport undergoing a modernization program. Since Wildlife Services (WS) is predominately responsible for the wildlife hazard management at ORD and many other civilian and military airports throughout the U.S., it is important to examine how these radars can be used by WS as another wildlife damage management tool.

Even though airports in general can be very attractive environments for many species of wildlife, ORD's geographic location and proximity to large water bodies make it excellent habitat for wildlife and ideal site to test these radar systems. Wildlife collisions with airplanes have been estimated to cost more than \$603 million to civil aviation annually, and there have been significant wildlife strikes causing damage at ORD in the past. Therefore, the research of avian radar systems at ORD is essential for us to better understand and expand the tools we have at hand which can ultimately help us to reduce wildlife hazards to aircraft.

If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to contact me,

Scott Beckerman
State Director
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