

DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

news release

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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McGarvey 202/343-5634

FINAL EIS ON USE OF BIRD CONTROL CHEMICAL PA-14

A final environmental impact statement on the use of Compound PA-14, a bird stressing agent, was filed with the Council on Environmental Quality by the Interior Department's U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on July 15, 1976.

The Statement examines the use of Compound PA-14 Avian Stressing Agent at sites approved by the Fish and Wildlife Service to alleviate problems associated with blackbird and starling roosts.

Blackbird and starling roost problems include the spreading of human diseases such as histoplasmosis, and creating safety hazards by interfering with aircraft takeoff and landing operations. In addition, they cause serious economic losses through bird aircraft strikes, by defacing buildings in urban areas, and damaging agricultural crops such as wheat, and causing feed loss at livestock feedlots.

The Service anticipates that between 5 and 20 million blackbirds and starlings will be removed annually through this proposal. In no case will the Service remove more than 50 million blackbirds annually. According to current Service information, removal of not over 50 million should not adversely affect the national breeding population of these avian species. The total post breeding blackbird population for 1974 was estimated to be 675 million birds.

PA-14 is not to be considered a panacea for resolving blackbird and starling roost-related problems, but rather is one of several techniques that are used for alleviating these conflicts.

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At successfully treated sites there will be a short-term reduction of roosting blackbirds and starlings. These reductions will not significantly reduce the national population but may reduce local breeding populations.

The short-term impacts on the environment from the use of PA-14 are minor, local in nature, and compatible with the need for protecting long-term natural values.

This statement also examines several alternatives which include:

1. No Action
2. Moving roosts through repellents
3. Moving roosts through habitat manipulation
 - a. complete removal of vegetation at roost site
 - b. thinning of vegetation at roost site
4. Changing agricultural practices
5. Trapping at feeding and loafing sites
6. Trapping at roosting sites
7. Moving the birds from feeding or loafing sites through repellents
8. Birdproofing of man-made structures
9. Reducing problem blackbird and starling populations at feedlots through DRC-1339, another chemical
10. Combinations of alternatives 2 and 9.

The draft statement was issued in April 1976. Comments were solicited from nine other Federal departments and agencies, 48 State governments, and 26 private conservation groups.

Additional data were incorporated whenever they contributed to a better evaluation of the impacts, alternatives, or objectives of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service regarding implementation of the proposed action. Minor editing, factual changes, and updating of information have been incorporated into the final statement without acknowledgement.

Copies of the final environmental statement are available by writing to the Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Washington, D.C. 20240.

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