

**Use of a Border Collie to Reduce Runway Incursions by Deer at Cold Lake Air Force Base**

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**Abstract**

In June 2000, Cold Lake Air Force Base in Alberta, Canada employed a Border Collie in its wildlife control program to help prevent deer runway incursions and manage bird populations on the airfield. The airbase is surrounded by an 8-foot high chain-link fence but a significant number of deer still venture onto the airfield by going over and under the fencing, and through gaps in gates. There is also a moderately-sized resident population living on the airfield. Cold Lake AFB has large islands of mature tree stands on the aircraft operating area (AOA), where the deer find refuge and remain well hidden from airfield personnel. During the fall mating season, groups of deer, routinely cross runways and taxiways, posing a serious threat to aircraft operations. Lethal control is not an option at Cold Lake AFB due to environmental sensitivities of the local community and attempts to herd the deer off the airbase have been ineffective. A complex deer trap was installed but resulted in limited success, as the number of deer trapped was roughly equivalent to deer immigration onto the base.

After commencement of the Border Collie program, data collected by airbase officials showed the virtual elimination of runway incursions by deer, Runway incursions averaged 45 per week in 1998, and 61.25 per week in 1999, but dropped to 3.5 per week after the introduction of the dog in 2000. Though it is uncertain at this point whether the dog ultimately reduces the number of deer on the airbase itself, deer do stay well clear of the open areas of the airfield (even if the dog is not present at the time), thereby dramatically reducing the risk of an aircraft/deer collision.

**KEYWORDS:** Control Methods, Predators, Border Collie, Harassment, Wildlife Control, Deer, Cold Lake Air Force Base