

## **One Health Research Project Abstract**

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**Title:** Reducing Human-Wildlife Conflict Through the One Health Lens: An Exploration of the Reasoned Action Approach, Risk Perception Attitude Framework, and Anthropogenic Food Sources

### **Research Abstract:**

Wildlife access to anthropogenic food sources can lead to the transmission of zoonotic diseases between humans and animals, physiological and physical harm, and the conditioning of wildlife, which may lead to increased human-wildlife conflict. Anthropogenic food sources can take on many forms, including but not limited to trash cans, fruit trees with fallen fruit, and campsites with unsecured food. Wildlife professionals offer recommended actions people can take to help mitigate the availability of these food sources and subsequent consequences (i.e., only take the trash out at the latest possible moment, secure garbage, proper storage of food at campsites, etc.). Nonetheless, compliance with these recommendations is not always achieved among targeted populations. In addition to the risks posed by conflict interactions, negative views prompted by increased conflict and/or conflict-focused media may contribute to decreased support for conservation, which carries implications for environmental health. The potential for negative implications for human, environmental, and wildlife health at the center of such interactions grounds the issue within the One Health Framework. This has not gone unrecognized, as scholars in the field have called for further research on One Health issues, including human-wildlife interactions and the human psychological and behavioral elements that may be addressed.

Accordingly, the proposed research aims to provide valuable insight into determinants of human behavior, risk perceptions, attitudes, beliefs, norms, and perceptions of efficacy, which can then be used for further research on campaign design used to mitigate human-wildlife conflicts and the associated potential for negative human, environmental, and wildlife health consequences. The Reasoned Action Approach (RAA; Fishbein & Ajzen, 2011) and the Risk Perception Attitude Framework (RPA; Rimal & Real, 2003) will serve as theoretical frameworks for the proposed research. The RAA has been increasingly used in the human-dimensions field to identify relationships between the above factors and behavioral intention and has been at the core of successful education and campaign efforts to influence behavior change. RPA, used often in the context of health behaviors, provides a conceptualization of the relationship between efficacy and risk perception, and explains how the two constructs facilitate or act as a barrier to engaging in certain behaviors.

To conduct the proposed research, a multi-wave mixed methods design with a combination of qualitative and quantitative components (i.e., a survey with both close-ended and open-ended questions and an experiment) will be used to 1) measure participants' risk perceptions, attitudes, beliefs, perceived social norms, perceptions of efficacy and perceived barriers, as well as behavioral intentions regarding wildlife and actions toward reducing conflict, and 2) test the effectiveness of different message interventions in promoting focal behaviors. The study will conclude with a short debriefing message detailing the harms of feeding wildlife on wildlife, human health, and the environment more broadly. Results yielded from the proposed research will inform research with the goal of

developing effective campaign messages that can be used to encourage the adoption of conflict mitigating behaviors.

### References

- Fishbein, M., & Ajzen, I. (2011). *Predicting and changing behavior: The reasoned action approach*. Psychology Press. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203838020>
- Rimal, R. N., & Real, K. (2003). Perceived risk and efficacy beliefs as motivators of change. *Human Communication Research*, 29(3), 370–399. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2958.2003.tb00844.x>