



Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies

**Private Lands Working Group
And
Public Lands Working Group**

Annual Report

2013

May 24, 2013

Respectfully submitted by

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Ky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources**

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Meeting Time and Place

The Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources hosted the annual joint meeting of the Private and Public Lands Working Groups on April 29 – May 2 at Kentucky Dam Village State Resort Park in Gilbertsville, Ky.

Attendance

State agency representatives from Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota and Ohio were present at the meeting. Agency representatives from South Dakota and Wisconsin were unable to attend due to travel restrictions and prior engagements. Besides speakers from Ky Fish and Wildlife, presenters included staff from USFWS, TNC and USFS (Land Between the Lakes) (Please see attached attendance lists and agendas). With states still feeling difficult fiscal budgets it was nice to see that only a couple of states couldn't make it. Kentucky personnel would like to see a continuation of the working groups and welcome continued support from the Directors in allowing staff to attend this meeting.

Executive Summary

The 22nd annual meeting of the Midwest Private Working Group and Public Lands Working Group convened in Gilbertsville, Ky on April 29- May 2, 2013.

This years Private Lands Breakout session was productive as always. The Farm Bill dominated the discussion and below is a summary of the major topics discussed:

1. WRP Vegetation Issue
2. Wetland Compliance
3. CRP Mid-contract Management
4. CRP Marketing
5. 1619/Data Sharing Agreements
6. Access Assessment
7. Potential CAP Problem
8. Ways to increase the use of Prescribed Fire

A more detailed summary of our discussions can be found in the meeting notes located in the Appendix 1a.

The Public Lands Working Group meeting covered the following topics: State attendance at the MAFWA working group meetings, Prescribed (Rx) Burning (guidelines, training), Feral Swine and their impacts, Captive Deer Issues, Oil and Gas Development on public lands, Sequestration Issues and an introduction to a new online daily check-in/out system.

Public and Private Lands committee's attended a field tour encompassing two private lands properties in a 6000 acre quail focus area for Western Ky where the focus is encouraging landowners to use federal farm programs to implement quail and songbird habitat. The second portion of the tour included a visit to the USFS 150,000 acre LBL area which highlighted OHV (off-highway vehicle) usage, timber management and grassland management.

Thursday morning wrapped up reports and business meetings focusing on action and informational items for the MAWFA directors to consider. Those action items are listed as follows:

Director Action Items – Joint Private and Public Lands Working Group

None

Director Action Items – Private Lands Working Group

ISSUE: Wetland Determinations/Compliance

NRCS is in the process of developing a different approach to determining wetlands throughout the Prairie Pothole Region and the country. We have asked to be part of that process and were making progress with NRCS Chief White. However, Chief White recently left NRCS and the Acting Chief has not been as willing to include us in the process. The AFWA Farm Bill Representative, Bridget Collins, will be meeting with NRCS staff to determine exactly where the NRCS is at in the development of the process and what our involvement will be.

ACTION: There is no action needed at this time. However, pending additional information, a draft letter for the directors may be developed after your annul meeting.

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ISSUE: CAP Planning Process

In the current Farm Bill there is a provision that will allow NRCS to pay private contractors to develop conservation plans for the EQIP program. The money to pay for these plans comes from the same pool that NRCS uses to pay producers to install the EQIP practices. There is not a limit on how much money can be spent on these private plans. We are concerned when contractors begin to take advantage of this provision, they will significantly reduce the amount of money available to install practices. Bridget Collins will be meeting with NRCS staff to suggest several ways to address this potential issue.

ACTION: There is no action needed at this time. However, pending additional information, a draft letter for the directors may be developed after your annul meeting.

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Director Action Items – Public Lands Working Group

ISSUE: Prescribed Fire

The public lands working group recognizes the importance of Prescribed (Rx) Fire as a management tool for habitat. The Midwest states continue to be concerned about efforts to require state agencies to follow national guidelines [National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG)] for burning. The Midwest states manage land for Federal agencies such as the US Army Corps of Engineers, US Bureau of Reclamation, US Fish and Wildlife Service as well as their own and perhaps several others. There appears to be a trend for federal agencies to force state partners to adopt federal prescribed burn training guidelines. Some states have their own Rx fire burning program, which are certified fire manager programs. States do not have the time or resources to keep up with the constantly changing national training requirement resulting in less fire on the ground and more training. Rx burning is a critical management tool that is used by resource managers for a number of reasons including noxious weed control, invasive species management, or keep ecosystems diverse and vigorous. The various states in the Midwest have traditionally adopted their own respective prescribed burn training guidelines according to what is needed for that state. While these guidelines may vary somewhat from state to state, there is at least a minimum standard set to help ensure the safety of personnel and property. Prescribed burning produces results in a native prairie ecosystem that no other management tool alone can produce including grazing or haying. Lastly, the group is concerned that efforts to move towards national guidelines may minimize or halt the use of prescribed fire on wildlife areas.

ACTION: It is vitally important to keep fire as a tool for managing our landscape. The committee urges the Midwest Directors to work with our federal partners and limit mandatory training where each states fire training qualifications will be accepted as their standard for Rx burning.

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ISSUE: Feral Swine/Hogs

The committee introduced the discussion topic of feral swine and the impacts being made on wildlife habitat/management throughout the Midwest. This is a growing problem causing ecological impacts as well as spreading diseases from wildlife to humans. Once feral, the swine adapt at an alarming rate depending on resources available. Literally in weeks they change from the everyday farm swine to the mottled, long haired feral version with females producing litters twice per year. Then conception can occur at 6 months for young females. Albeit a resolution has been established on the subject, in previous years, the group feels that it is a critical issue and MAFWA members need to stay up to date on the topic. (Informational items for this topic are denoted at Appendix 4b.i, ii and iii).

ACTION: The committee welcomes the support from the Directors for the feral swine control effort and any additional assistance in controlling the issue to reduce impact on the environment. Additional assistance possibly could be a feral swine technical working group or Ad Hoc as used in the Southeast and/or support for aerial gunning of small populations.

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ISSUE: Impacts of Sequestration on Land Actions

The working group discussed the impacts of the federal sequestration on United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Region 3 Wildlife and Sports Fish Restoration Programs related to delays in processing land matter issues. Appendix (4b.iv), describes the current status. The group concurs with the USFWS's top priority to process grants so the states can receive their annual appropriated federal funds. However, multiple states have been impacted by delays in response from the USFWS to land matter issues ranked as a lower priority.

ACTION: The work group encourages the Midwest Directors to: (1) communicate the state's concerns about the delays to the USFWS, (2) to encourage the USFWS to mutually determine priority rankings with state input, and (3) to encourage the USFWS to seek alternatives in efficiency to promptly work with the states as partners in land matter issues.

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ISSUE: Captive Cervids with breeding and farming increasing transmission of Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD)

The committee continues to recognize captive cervid facilities as being a major point of interest concerning the spread of CWD throughout the nation and specifically in the Midwest. CWD results in 100% mortality in infected animals and this is a major threat to wild deer and elk populations. In the past year 3 new states have contracted CWD all tracing back to movement of deer from captive facilities. Currently, (22) states and two Canadian provinces have confirmed the presence of the disease. Also, (as appendix 4b. v.) is a publication from the Wildlife Society on its stance covering the topic.

ACTION: The committee encourages the MAFWA Directors to educate legislators/general public, as a unified group to disseminate accurate information, about the major threat of infectious disease transmission associated with the captive cervid industry and support measures to reduce the risk in wild populations.

Director Information Items – Private Lands Working Group

ISSUE: Update on AFWA Farm Bill Coordinator Position.

We wanted to ensure the Directors are aware that after several years of service as the AFWA Farm Bill Coordinator, Jen Mock Schaeffer has accepted another position within AFWA and Bridget Collins has replaced her. Further we wanted to thank the Directors for their leadership in creating this position and for your continued strong support for it. Thru the dedicated work of this position in the next farm bill we will likely have a combined easement program that should work for the states, we will have a WRP baseline for the first time, we have improved relations' with FSA and are modernizing CRP, and hopefully we have a link between crop insurance and conservation compliance. The only reason for these gains is your commitment to the Ag Policy position and Jen's and now Bridget's abilities to collect our concerns, develop solutions, and form partnerships with Congress and the Administration.

Action: Continued support for the Ag Policy position.

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ISSUE: WRP Requirement to Plant Trees

Currently the WRP program requires at least 70% of WRP sites to be planted to trees. While this requirement is fine on some sites there are many sites where we would like to opportunity to plant more than 30% of a site to other vegetation (utilize herbaceous moist soil management for example) to benefit wildlife. A strict interpretation of this requirement is currently causing a problem in the states of Michigan and Ohio with the potential to spread to other states. We will continue to monitor this situation to ensure this problem does not grow into other states. In addition, a number of suggestions were provided to the states of MI and OH.

Action: No Director level action needed at this time.

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ISSUE: CRP Marketing

Most all Midwestern state fish and wildlife agencies are currently marketing CRP sign-ups in one form or another. Current forms of marketing include radio spots, newspaper ads, press releases, and landowner workshops among others. However, there have been few studies to determine which methods are most effective. The States of Iowa and Nebraska are looking into a cooperative research project that will look at which forms of marketing are most productive and upon completion the results will be shared with the larger group.

Action: No Director level action needed at this time.

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Director Information Items – Public Lands Working Group

ISSUE: Oil and Gas Development/Exploration

With all public areas there is an increased awareness of the potential to lose valued areas to commercialization through requests to obtain mineral rights. In fact some areas were purchased without the mineral rights. Even more, in some instances the topsoil is lost and habitat may be irrecoverable. In more recent years Oil and Gas production has come to the top of the list and is expanding rapidly. Midwest states need to be proactive in identifying mineral rights ownership on public lands. The impacts of this infrastructure to wildlife management areas are not clearly understood and need to be better defined.

ACTION: No action required.

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Time and Place of Next Meeting

The 23rd annual meeting will tentatively be held at the Ralph A. MacMullan (RAM) Conference Center on Higgins Lake, near Roscommon MI, May 5-8 of 2014.

List of Appendices

1. Private Lands Meeting Agenda
 - 1a. Private Lands Working Group Meeting Notes
2. Public Lands Meeting Agenda
3. List of Attendees
4. Draft Letters, Resolutions and Informational Items
 - 4a. Public Lands Informational Items
 - i. MAFWA Feral Swine Resolution
 - ii. The Wildlife Society Final Position Statement on Feral Swine
 - iii. National Wildlife Federation Resolution on Feral Swine
 - iv. Email on Sequestration for Federal Aid Coordinators
5. State Reports

Appendix 1

Midwest Private Lands Working Group Meeting Agenda

April 30 – May 2, 2013

Gilbertsville, Kentucky

11:00 AM – 12:00 AM WRP and Wetland Issues:

- WRP and the push to establish pre-settlement vegetation (Mark Sargent)

- Wetland Compliance Issues (Todd Bogenschuts)

12:00 AM – 1:00 PM LUNCH provided

1:00 PM – 3:30 PM State Reports:

- Illinois	- Missouri
- Indiana	- Ohio
- Iowa	- Nebraska
- Kansas	- North Dakota
- Kentucky	- South Dakota
- Michigan	- Wisconsin
- Minnesota	

3:30 – 3:45

Break

3:45 – 5:00

CRP General Update (Todd Bogenschuts)

- MCM, how is it working and is there anything we can do to help it work better?
- Any successful ideas on how to encourage landowners to enroll in CRP?
- Section 1619 agreements

5:30 PM

Dinner at Park (provided)

Wednesday May 1st

7:00 AM – 8:00 AM Breakfast at the Park (provided)

8:00 AM – 8:30 AM How are states handling the growing number of Farm Bill Biologists (PF Biologists) State examples from Iowa, Missouri, and KY (Kelly Smith)

8:30 AM – 9:00 AM How are states utilizing VPA money and are you evaluating your program (Alicia Hardin)

9:00 AM – 9:30 AM Is anyone trying to get a message out to Private Landowners? Any research on how to do this? (Alicia Hardin)

9:30 AM – 10:00 AM Farm Bill update from Bridget

10:00 AM Break

10:30 AM – 11:00AM Prescribed Fire Standards for state agency burning on private land? Training for Staff? Training for Landowners? (Alicia Hardin)

11:00AM – 11:30 AM In this down economy with high crop prices, how do we
maintain landowner interest in private land management? (John
Morgan)

11:30 AM – 12:00 PM other topics??

Appendix 1a.

Midwest Private Lands Working Group KY Meeting Notes 3 May 2013

1. WRP Vegetation Issue
 - a. Problem in MI, OH, among others regarding mandate to plant at least 70% trees on WRP
 - b. Problem is largely founded on definition referencing “original condition” being interpreted as “pre-settlement”
 - c. Desire to change definition to allow wildlife habitat restoration opportunity (e.g. grassland wetland restoration)
 - d. Water control provisions also desirable
 - e. Potentially an opportunity to tie to emergency haying/grazing?
 - f. **TO-DO:** Discuss with Bridget (see #2), consider taking up with Directors, and drafting a letter (Mark Sargent lead)
2. Wetland Compliance
 - a. A lack of strong collaboration with NRCS on issue
 - b. Seeing a record number of wetland determinations
 - c. Chief White was initially hesitant to collaborate, but was gaining comfort. Transition to interim Chief stalled progress.
 - d. **TO-DO:** Discuss with Bridget via conference call (include #1), set-up a Doodle Poll for attendees to afford group participation (call by 5/17), consider a letter from the Directors to the Acting Chief (Todd Bogenschutz and Kevin Kading)
3. CRP Mid-contract Management
 - a. Lots of circuitous discussion regarding if work will be done, who will do it, if it’s done well, etc.
 - b. Lack of checks and balances
 - c. FSA lacks a good mechanism to track accomplishments outside of payments
 - d. Group would like to see a pilot(s) regarding mechanisms (largely habitat teams) to get mid-contract management completed. Ohio seemed to be a natural fit given their current process
 - e. **TO-DO:** Encourage and collaborate with OH to take the next step in their MCM commitment
4. CRP Marketing

- a. Group discussed marketing efforts to promote CRP sign-ups like radio spots and workshops
- b. Questions about effectiveness of marketing
- c. Women landowners are best recruited by women-led efforts (Kelly Smith referenced some research on the subject)
- d. CRP sign-up workshops seemed to be working
- e. Discussion about multi-state marketing efforts through current NCN
- f. **TO-DO:** Kelly Smith and Alicia Hardin volunteered to do a pre-proposal due by 13 May, states send summary of their efforts to Dan.Figert@ky.gov to be compiled for Bridget and shared with group

5. 1619/Data Sharing Agreements

- a. States making progress with 8-9 with some sharing
- b. Couple of states noted they had “everything”
- c. Recommendation to follow ND’s approach referencing AFWA MOU with FSA supported by a state-based justifications (e.g., SWAP implementation)
- d. **TO-DO:** Follow-up with AFWA regarding data sharing MOU (Todd Bogenschutz), share 1619 MOU template (Danny Hughes)

6. Access Assessment

- a. Group discussed of techniques to gain information regarding hunting access use and value
- b. NE shared their survey results
- c. **TO-DO:** Send assessment techniques, results, and a brief description of decision support tools/techniques to Dan.Figert@ky.gov, summary will be sent to the Bridget and the group

7. Potential CAP Problem

- a. EQIP plans for forestry, fish and wildlife, and pollinators could significantly reduce on-the-ground practices
- b. The cost-share of the plans may incentivize TSP consultants to recruit landowners for services that are often provided for free by state agencies
- c. Can states get variances in national ranking criteria in an effort to control the rate of CAPs?
- d. **TO-DO:** Discuss issue with Bridget (likely a national issue), consider a letter to NRCS for capping the CAP, quality concerns of the CAPs, highlighting free services offered by states; Chris McLeland draft letter (if needed) supported Mark Sargent, Reggie Thackston

8. Prescribed Fire Info

- a. Roundtable discussion on training standards for landowners and agency personnel, annual fire workshops/meetings, and agency roles in private lands burning
- b. Group concern of a movement towards the federal gov't requiring NWCG standards for prescribed burning when using federal funds
- c. **TO-DO:** John Morgan will send a fire training spreadsheet and a NWCG training program plan for KDFWR to the group, states will gather intelligence over the next year by probing federal partners about future of burning using federal funds, Mark Sargent should consider this as an agenda item at next years meeting

Appendix 2

Midwest Public Lands Working Group Meeting Agenda April 29 – May 2, 2013 Gilbertsville, Kentucky

Monday April 29th

4:00 PM – 9:00 PM Kentucky Dam Village State Resort Park. Welcome reception & registration located in Convention Center

Tuesday April 30th

7:00 AM – 8:00 AM Registration. Breakfast at the Park (provided)

8:00 AM – 8:30 AM Welcome
Benjy Kinman Deputy Commissioner/Karen Waldrop Director
Wildlife Division

8:30 AM – 8:45 AM Overview of KDFWR Purchase Region Tony Black

8:45 AM – 9:15 AM Ron Brooks KDFWR Fisheries Division

9:15 AM – 9:45 AM Steve Bloemer Land Between the Lakes USFS

9:45 AM – 10:15 AM Shelly Morris The Nature Conservancy

10:15 AM BREAK

10:30 AM – 11:00 AM Michael Johnson/Scott Simmons Clark's River Refuge
USFWS

11:00 AM – 12:00 PM Public/(Private TBA) Breakouts

State Reports

12:00 PM – 1:00 PM LUNCH provided

1:00 PM – 5:00 PM Public/Private Breakouts

State Reports

5:30 PM Dinner at Park (provided)

Wednesday May 1st

7:00 AM – 8:00 AM Breakfast at the Park (provided)

8:00 AM – 10:00 AM Breakouts

Public Breakout Kansas- Electronic Daily Permit system
Federal Rx Burn Guidelines & Rx burning in ND
Oil and Gas Development in ND
Attendance to meetings
Feral Hogs
Captive Deer Issues
Sequestration Issues

10:00 AM Break

10:15 AM – 11:00 AM

11:00 AM	Board bus Public/Private lands tour of LBL and Landowner Properties
6:00 – 9:00 PM	Cookout at Kentucky Dam “Good ‘Ol Boys”

Thursday May 2nd

8:00 AM – 12:00	Wrap-up Business Meetings, Development of Issues Document for MAFWA Directors
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Adjourn!

Appendix 3. Attendees

Private Lands Working Group Meeting

Name	Affiliation
John Morgan	Kentucky
Philip Sharp	Kentucky
Zak Danks	Kentucky
Danny Hughes	Kentucky
Eric Zach	Nebraska
Caroline Hiukelman	Nebraska
Mike Parker	Michigan
Gary Langell	Indiana
Todd Bogenschutz	Iowa
Kevin Auderseu	Iowa
Kelly Smith	Iowa
Jake George	Kansas
Mike Mitchner	Kansas
Shelly Morris	Kentucky (TNC)
Kevin Kading	North Dakota
Mark Sargent	Michigan
Kenneth Kesson	Michigan
Mike Wefer	Illinois
Bob Welsh	Minnesota
Chris McLeland	Missouri
Jason Sykes	Missouri
Alicia Hardin	Nebraska
Matt Smith	Kansas
John Kaiser	Ohio
Jeff Burris	Ohio

Public Lands Working Group Meeting

<u>Name</u>	<u>State Affiliation</u>
Tony Black	Kentucky
Chris Garland	Kentucky
Pat Brandon	Kentucky
Valerie Frawley	Michigan
Earl Flegler	Michigan
Jennifer Olson	Michigan
Scott Peterson	North Dakota
Jeff Hoffman	Nebraska
John Silovsky	Kansas
Jason Deal	Kansas
Pete Hildreth	Iowa
Jim Jansen	Iowa
Andy Robbins	Iowa
Bill Bean	Indiana
Suzann Willhite	Minnesota
Chris Smith	Ohio
Jennifer Windus	Ohio
Darlene Bryant	Missouri
Gary Potts	Illinois

Appendix 4.a.i.

MIDWEST ASSOCIATION OF FISH AND WILDLIFE AGENCIES SUPPORT THE CONTROL OF FERAL SWINE IN THE UNITED STATES RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, feral swine are present in numerous states within the United States, and

WHEREAS, feral swine damage fences, forest stands, natural communities, row and forage crops, parks, cemeteries, and lawns and gardens, and

WHEREAS, feral swine harbor diseases that affect people, pets, livestock, and wildlife, and

WHEREAS, feral swine kill young lambs, goats, calves, and deer, harass adult cattle and horses, and destroy birds' nests and other wildlife, and

WHEREAS, feral swine cause an estimated \$800 million of damage in the United States annually, and

WHEREAS, there is a standing Presidential Directive to control the spread of invasive species, and

WHEREAS, the National Governor's Association has called for joint federal/state programs to help prevent the spread of invasive species, and adequate federal financial support to enable states to control or eradicate invasive species, and

WHEREAS, the distribution and number of feral swine are increasing in the Midwest, and

WHEREAS, the undersigned agencies are responsible for protecting their state's natural resources from invasive species;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies at its annual meeting in Huron Ohio, on July 13, 2005, agrees to:

1. Cooperate in the control of feral swine populations in the Midwest;
2. Urge the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies to adopt a similar resolution;
and
3. Urge the United States Secretary of Agriculture, appropriate Congressional Representatives, and the President of the
United States to adequately fund coordinated feral hog control efforts in the United States.

Appendix 4.a.ii.

Excellence in Wildlife Stewardship Through Science and Education

THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY

5410 Grosvenor Lane □ Bethesda, MD 20814-2144

Tel: (301) 897-9770 □ Fax: (301) 530-2471

E-mail: tw@wildlife.org

Final Position Statement

Feral Swine in North America

Introduction and Biology

Feral swine (*Sus scrofa*) are members of the domestic swine family *Suidae*, which is native to Europe and Asia, not North America. Feral swine should not be confused with North America's only native pig-like animal – the collared peccary, or javelina (*Pecari tajacu*), of the family *Tayassuidae*. For centuries, though, non-native domestic swine have been propagated and released throughout the continent through accidental escapes from farms, as part of free range farming practices, or to establish feral populations for hunting. These releases occurred most frequently in the southeastern United States. The region between Texas and South Carolina remains the center of feral swine populations in North America. However, in the past decade (2000-2010), the range and abundance of feral swine has increased markedly. In 2010, feral swine are known or suspected to exist in at least 40 states and in parts of Canada and Mexico. Although a reliable estimate of the size of the continental population is not available, recent research indicates it is in the millions of individuals.

Feral swine come from 3 distinct lineages. Some releases of pigs in North America were of pure strain Eurasian wild boar, and a few isolated populations of these animals remain. Most of the populations, though, are descended from domesticated herds. In areas where both previously domesticated pigs and Eurasian wild boar exist, hybridization can and does occur. Regardless of the lineage, all wild pigs in North America are *Sus scrofa*. As noted above, it is important not to confuse *Sus scrofa* with the collared peccary (javelina; *Pecari tajacu*), a native inhabitant of the southwestern United States.

Feral swine are extreme habitat generalists. Whether released or naturally invading, they can survive in most areas of North America, feeding on plants and animals and changing food preference based on availability. They also are one of the most prolific large mammals in North America. In productive habitat, female pigs can begin breeding as juveniles and, while most produce a single litter annually, are physiologically capable of reproducing twice a year.

Individual sows may have litters of more than 10, although litter sizes of 3 to 8 are most common. These reproductive traits and a typically low natural mortality rate result in high population growth potential.

Although feral swine are the second most popular large mammal among hunters in North America, next to white-tailed deer, the problems they cause far outweigh any positive benefits they provide. Because of their population size, feeding behaviors, and tendency to exist in groups, feral swine damage agricultural commodities, aquatic

systems, forested systems, and native wildlife. In addition, they carry diseases that pose risks to humans, livestock, and other wildlife.

Damage

Feral swine are one the greatest vertebrate modifiers of natural plant communities. Feral swine damage to property, agriculture, and natural resources often occurs as a result of their aggressive rooting (i.e., grubbing, plowing, digging) activities at and below the surface of the soil. In sandy soils, feral swine may root to a depth of 1m but even shallow rooting can cause significant soil erosion. Wallowing activities may reduce water quality and disrupt sensitive wetland ecosystems. Other documented damage includes destruction of livestock fencing, damage to farm equipment in rooted areas, and predation on young livestock, ground nesting birds, amphibians, reptiles, and other wildlife. Economic losses resulting from feral swine damage is estimated at greater than \$1 billion per year and is increasing.

Disease

Feral swine are highly mobile disease reservoirs and can carry at least 30 important viral and bacterial diseases, and a minimum of 37 parasites that affect people, pets, livestock, or wildlife.

Some of the more important diseases affecting people include leptospirosis, salmonellosis, toxoplasmosis, trichinosis, bovine tuberculosis, brucellosis, and balantidiasis. Recently, there has been growing concern over the role feral swine may play in the establishment of new strains of influenza viruses (e.g., pandemic H1N1 virus). The potential for disease transmission from feral to commercial swine has serious implications to the U.S. economy. Large, widely distributed populations of feral swine jeopardize ongoing efforts to control a number of livestock diseases and the considerable financial investments that support those efforts. For example, the U.S. commercial swine industry recently achieved pseudorabies-free status after a 17-year effort and the expenditure of approximately \$200-250 million.

The role that feral swine could play in spreading and perpetuating exotic diseases is particularly troublesome. For example, foot-and-mouth disease, which was eradicated in the US in 1929, would be essentially impossible to eradicate again if it reemerged in areas with feral swine. This would cripple the US pork industry and would likely have negative impacts on wild species such as black-tailed and white-tailed deer, American bison, and pronghorn. Landowners, outdoor recreationists, and state natural resources agencies also could be impacted by strict quarantines that would prevent access to lands for hunting, wildlife viewing, and other activities. This could have serious economic impacts because wildlife-related recreation in the U.S. is enjoyed by more than 60 million people who spend over \$100 billion per year.

Management

Where feral swine are well established, multiple methods of control are needed to reduce feral swine numbers to manageable levels. The greatest threat that hogs impose is in areas where their presence is a relatively new phenomenon. These new populations are often the results of illegal releases of hogs from other states for the purpose of increasing hunting opportunities. Emphasis should be on control and/or eradication and stopping illegal releases in these states with newer populations that

may not be permanently established yet. In these areas, eradication is, and should be, the goal.

The most widely accepted methods for control and eradication include trapping, snaring, shooting, use of trained dogs, and aerial gunning. Research indicates feral swine populations must be reduced by 70 percent each year simply to keep up with reproduction. In the absence of control efforts, a local population can triple in a single year. It is also possible that at levels of control most commonly observed, the reproductive potential of the residual population is stimulated because of density dependent factors, necessitating the use of an array of control methods. Although hunting is important for controlling feral hogs, hunting alone cannot eradicate feral hog populations. In fact, hunting of feral swine may stimulate interest in maintaining established populations and creating new populations for hunting.

Because numerous methods are essential to control feral swine, approaches beyond those most commonly used must also be explored. Depending on the location, a key strategy might include curtailing the use of consistently available supplemental food sources for wildlife and livestock, which may effectively sustain a population and hinder control efforts. While no chemical toxicant is registered for use on wild pigs in the U.S., research is underway to identify species-specific toxicants or delivery systems that minimize non-target poisonings and other environmental harm.

Agencies with responsibility for feral swine include state/provincial Departments of Agriculture, Fish and Game, and Natural Resources, and federal agencies such as the U.S. Department of Agriculture/APHIS/Wildlife Services. Some governments manage them as a game species while others have little or no regulations concerning their control and eradication. These varying laws and classifications of feral swine complicate control and eradication efforts, especially for cross jurisdiction populations.

The control and eradication of feral swine is costly to state/provincial and federal agencies, placing a burden on budgets and taxpayer dollars. For example, feral swine are well established in Texas, where Texas A&M University estimates feral swine damages result in a cost to agriculture that exceeds \$51 million annually.

For successful feral swine eradication and control, management must be integrated across land ownerships and jurisdictions. Existing laws and regulations have been insufficient to deter illegal introduction of swine into wild habitats for the purpose of creating free-roaming feral swine populations. Delay in implementation of serious control efforts will result in the need for increased effort at higher cost and/or more years needed to achieve evermore elusive goals while significant ecological impacts continue to increase.

The policy of The Wildlife Society regarding feral swine is to:

1. Promote the maintenance of biological diversity and ecosystem integrity and oppose the modification and degradation of natural systems by feral swine.
2. Encourage state and provincial agencies to eradicate feral swine wherever feasible.
3. Support feral swine damage management actions that are cost effective and demonstrate results.
4. Encourage research by public and private agencies and organizations on methods to control, reduce, or eliminate feral swine and their impacts.

5. Support programs to monitor diseases in feral swine and their impact on humans, domestic livestock, pets, and wildlife.
6. Encourage the collaboration of state, provincial, and federal agricultural and natural resources agencies, private landowners, and organizations to develop and support educational programs and materials that discuss the agricultural, ecological, and social damages caused by feral swine.
7. Encourage the passing and enforcement of effective new laws and regulations at the state, provincial, and federal level that would help reduce and combat the spread of feral swine and eliminate feral swine on state, provincial, federal, and private lands.
8. Encourage state, provincial, and federal agencies to share technical data on feral swine such as maps of local populations and other information for management purposes.
9. Encourage the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies to provide leadership and consistent direction on feral swine issues including increased collaboration among all regulatory agencies and other organizations involved with feral swine management.
10. Support the establishment of a lead agency within each state or province to assume responsibility for feral swine management.

Approved by Council August 2011.

Expires August 2016.

Appendix 4b.iii.

National Wildlife Federation Resolution

Name Reductions and Eradication of Invasive Feral Hogs

Date May 19, 2012

Description Feral hogs (*Sus scrofa* and related non-native porcine species to include those referred to as feral "boar") are highly successful, non-native, extremely invasive habitat generalists, surviving and thriving in most areas of North America and increasing their range annually, threatening the well-being and ecological balance of native ecosystems and

Feral hogs are extraordinarily prolific large mammals, with the capacity for females to reproduce commonly producing two litters per year, each litter having eight to ten or more piglets, and due to high survival and low mortality, the potential for explosive population growth is occurring commonly and tripling in some locales; and

Feral hogs are opportunistic and indiscriminate omnivores feeding on a wide variety of flora and fauna, including native plant and wildlife communities that may include rare, threatened and endangered species, insects, arthropods, crustaceans, amphibians, reptiles, ground nesting birds, small mammals such as muskrats and voles, and newborn mammalian ungulates such as white-tailed deer is well documented; and

Adult feral hogs commonly reach 200 pounds, and may exceed 400 pounds, and because their rooting behavior results in tremendous damage to ecosystems even beyond feeding that includes wallowing, establishing travel routes, these mammals can devastate aquatic and wetland ecosystems, riparian systems, native wildlife, water quality and agricultural systems; and

Feral hogs may carry diseases that pose risks to other wildlife, humans, and livestock including leptospirosis, salmonellosis, toxoplasmosis, trichinosis, bovine tuberculosis, balantidiasis, and various strains of influenza viruses, and as vectors of diseases have the capacity to seriously and negatively impact the U.S. agricultural economy and the health and well being of animal and human communities; and

The role of feral hogs as vectors of exotic diseases such as foot-and-mouth disease, is a zoonotic threat that could have negative impacts on hunting, wildlife viewing, and other outdoor recreational activities; and

Feral hogs are well established in a majority of states, and continue to aggressively expand into new areas because this expansion is frequently exacerbated by illegal transport and releases of feral hogs and other introduced species for the purpose of increasing hunting opportunities; and

The most widely effective methods for control and eradication of feral hogs include trapping, hunting, use of trained dogs, and aerial gunning; and

The responsibility for the management of feral hogs include the state natural resource and wildlife agencies, state departments of agriculture, and federal agencies including the U.S. Department of Agriculture (Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service), Natural Resources Conservation Service, U.S. Forest Service, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; and other natural resource and animal management agencies; and

The regulations and policies of various state and federal agencies related to the control, management, transport, and eradication of feral hogs are extremely variable, inconsistent, and often inadequate; and

Existing laws and regulations have been insufficient to deter illegal transport and release of feral hogs into new habitats, and continued delays in implementation of serious and consistent management and control programs will result in increasingly higher economic and ecological costs and more time to achieve reductions in these invasive creatures, while their continuing devastating impacts continue at unprecedented rates;

WHEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the National Wildlife Federation, at its annual meeting assembled 2012, at the National Conservation Training Center in Shepherdstown, West Virginia, hereby urges the passage and enforcement of state ordinances and federal regulations, that result in dramatic and effective actions and, wherever possible, eradication of feral hog populations; and

BE IT RESOLVED that National Wildlife Federation supports ongoing research by state and federal universities on the effective population control of feral hogs with goals towards eradication;

BE IT RESOLVED that National Wildlife Federation supports close coordination and cooperation between rural agriculture and wildlife management programs and those of responsible state agencies, to develop additional programs to hunters and landowners regarding the destructive impacts of this non-native species and strategies for their management, and to effect policies and programs aimed at eradicating feral swine populations.

Appendix 4a.iv. Email on Sequestration for Federal Aid Coordinators

From: Hodgson, Jim
Sent: Friday, March 15, 2013 5:20 PM
To: FW3 FA and C
Subject: Freezing of Land Actions due to Sequestration

Federal Aid Coordinators.

I just want to drop you a short note to explain the impacts to Region 3 WSFR from sequestration and a hiring freeze imposed by the Department of Interior. As a result of sequestration, the Secretary of the Interior has imposed a hiring freeze for the Department affecting all bureaus, including the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. For Region 3 WSFR this means that we will not be filling our Lands Specialist (Linda Nichols) position for the immediate future. We have been told that the freeze will likely continue through the end of the federal fiscal year (September 30, 2013), and perhaps beyond.

Since Region 3 is already operating at a 2.5 FTE reduced staff level, maintaining another unfilled position creates a major impact for us. To deal with the staff reductions, I have no choice but to implement the following effective today for land-related projects coming into our office:

1. Our primary responsibility will be to review grants to obligate money. We do not want any reversions of apportionments during the remaining term of Federal Fiscal Year 2013. Projects obligating or handling financial transactions will have the highest priority.
2. Since the current frozen position is our land specialist, the major impacts will be on our land activities.
 - Region 3 WSFR will continue processing and obligating funds for land acquisition grants through our usual grant processing guidelines. As before please allow as much time as possible for us to process your grants. Land purchase actions such as appraisal and review appraisal technical assistance will still be provided as part of the grant obligation processing, but may be limited. Please contact your grant manager or me with specific questions for your State.
 - Because of the staffing freeze, Region 3 WSFR will have limited capacity to work on Audit Corrective Action Plans (CAPs) related to trespass and land record reconciliations. I know this will affect many of the States and could require time extensions of the corrective action plans, but with our limited staffing, we do not have the staff available to work on all these actions at this time. Currently 5 of our 8 States have some form of land reconciliation in process. We will seek extensions of deadlines, if needed, due to this action. If this is an issue for your State, please contact me as soon as possible. We anticipate that the land record reconciliation delays will be the biggest impact to States.
 - Region 3 WSFR will not be processing any land actions related to easements, licenses, leases, except for projects related to public utility (electric and telecommunications) construction and road or bridge construction. Many of these projects will be reviewed to determine time impacts and lower priority projects or projects with longer time lines may be delayed. Again, please let us know as soon as possible any impacts to your State. During the period of May 1, 2013 through July 1,

2013, these projects will not be processed at all due to the increase in other money-related grant actions.

- Land actions such as exchanges, easements, leases and licenses related to boundary corrections; trails; inter-government exchanges; oil, gas and mining activities; etc. will be considered a lower priority. States may submit the action at this time through our usual process and we will work on them, first in-first out, once the position is filled. Long delays are likely for these types of projects while the hiring freeze is in-place. For States that have land actions into us for consideration, please contact your grant manager or me for specific information on your State. I am sorry that we have no choice but to implement these actions. If you have concerns, please feel free to your respective grant manager or me.

Thanks for your understanding on this issue.

Jim

Jim Hodgson, Chief

Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

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Appendix 4.a. v. Captive Cervids



THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY

FACT SHEET

Captive Cervid Breeding



The massive antlers of a farm-bred deer illustrate what some wildlife professionals call "homography" – the breeding of deer to create "trophy" animals for fenced shoots.

TWS and the North American Model¹⁰

In 2007, TWS adopted the following seven principles that serve as the bedrock for the Model to guide and provide input on wildlife management policy:

- Wildlife as Public Trust Resources
- Elimination of Markets for Game
- Allocation of Wildlife by Law
- Wildlife Should Only be Killed for a Legitimate Purpose
- Wildlife Are Considered an International Resource
- Science is the Proper Tool for Discharge of Wildlife Policy
- Democracy of Hunting

Captive deer breeding operations violate and compromise all of the seven components of The Model.

Expanding commercial demand for members of the family cervidae (e.g., deer) and their products has prompted growth of a for-profit captive industry that raises animals in privately-maintained facilities with the purpose of producing cervids to be sold as breeding stock for "farming" operations or for "canned shoots". Issues related to these practices include spread of wildlife diseases; genetic mixing; privatization, commercialization and domestication of public wildlife resources; misperceptions of fair chase and hunting; and a potential future decline in ecological stewardship.

Background

Captive cervid breeders use artificial breeding to produce larger animals for meat production and males with large antlers and sell semen, impregnated does, and live animals to other cervid farming operations or captive shooting facilities for profit. The latter facilities promote situations in which clients pay for guaranteed kills under non fair-chase conditions in small, enclosed "hunting" areas that may contain only a single target animal or contain an artificially high density of deer.

Currently, there are nearly 10,000 for-profit deer breeding operations estimated in North America with

more than 500 facilities each in Minnesota, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Texas, and Wisconsin.¹ Proponents have introduced state-level legislation that includes relaxed facility regulations and, in some cases, removing aspects of deer management authority from state wildlife agencies.

Captive cervid breeders and high-fenced shooting facilities privatize public trust wildlife for private gain, threaten wildlife health and public perceptions of hunting, and violate principles of the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation which call for the science-based management of wildlife held in public trust.



Captive White-tailed deer like these on a farm in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, are sometimes bred to produce "trophy" deer for fenced shoots. (Credit: *Intelligencer Journal/Lancaster New Era*)

Risks Posed by Captive Cervid Facilities

Disease and Genetics

Infectious diseases are a concern whenever animals are maintained at high densities due to increased efficiency of pathogen transmission. Disease transmission between captive animals and wild populations is a documented, and growing, concern. Captive operations commonly involve transport of cervids throughout North America, increasing risk of disease transmission within and among states and provinces. Captive operations routinely experience escape-ment, wild animals entering private enclosures, or both.² Pathogens may also be transmitted from captive to wild deer through fence to fence contact. As a result of these and other opportunities for transmission, diseases such as chronic wasting disease (CWD) and bovine tuberculosis (TB), have become more widespread among captive cervid facilities and in wild populations across North America.

CWD, a fatal, transmissible spongiform encephalopathy (TSE) that was first recognized in mule deer (*Odocoileus hemionus* sp.) in the late 1960s, and also affects white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*), elk (*Cervus canadensis*), and moose (*Alces alces*), is of particular concern.^{3,4} There is no vaccine available, it is 100% fatal, and there is currently no known way to decontaminate an environment once CWD prions are present.^{5,6} Distribution maps of CWD suggest the disease spreads to new states and provinces through transportation of live cervids and is facilitated by presence of captive cervid breeding facilities.^{3,7} As of late

2012, CWD has been detected in 22 U.S states and 2 Canadian provinces.⁸

The critical issues with regards to disease transmission include lack of early detection, high costs of proactive surveillance programs, inability to successfully eradicate diseases once present in wild populations, and costs and consequences of managing diseases in wild populations.

In addition to disease, transfer of maladapted genetic traits from escaped captive cervids to wild populations is of serious concern. Genetic mixing can have long-term and unpredictable consequences for wild populations (e.g., lower birth rates) that may require intensive management actions by state or provincial agencies that further jeopardize wildlife as a public resource.

Threat to the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation (The Model)

Conversion of wildlife as a public resource to a privately-owned commodity jeopardizes the legal foundation for wildlife conservation and is a fundamental issue with captive cervid and high-fenced deer shooting facilities.

The Model is a critical construct of law, policy, program framework, and scientific investigation that has led to conservation and restoration of wildlife populations in the U.S. and Canada. The Public Trust Doctrine is essential to the foundation of modern wildlife management in North America and forms the cornerstone of The Model by establishing

wildlife as a public resource held in trust by the government for the benefit of the common good.

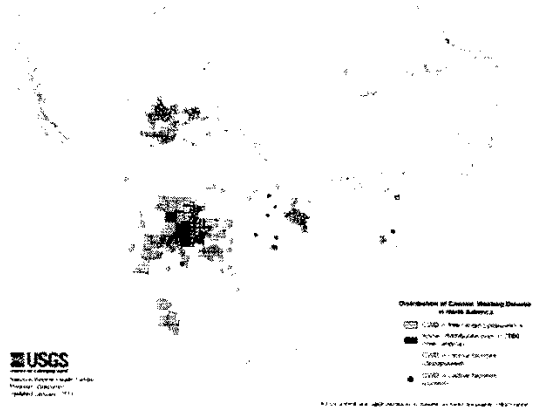
Captive deer breeding operations and confined shooting facilities that place a monetary value on wildlife and their parts threaten the Public Trust Doctrine because the markets created from this industry may provide incentive for privatization, illegal take, trafficking, and exploitation of publicly owned wildlife. These incentives can promote unethical practices to supply markets created by privatization.

Transfer of Authority over Wildlife

Once public trust resources become commercialized, they often become categorized as livestock or alternative livestock, transferring management authority from state, provincial and federal wildlife agencies to state or provincial departments of agriculture. This transfer of authority could potentially cause confusion regarding management authority for cervids and may erode authority of wildlife agencies relative to wild cervid populations. Additionally, this transfer blurs the lines between wild and captive animals, threatening other elements of The Model.

Threat to Fair-chase Hunting Heritage

Fair chase, as defined by the Boone and Crockett Club, is the ethical, sportsmanlike, and lawful pursuit and taking of any free-ranging wild, native North American big game animal in a manner that does not give the hunter an improper advantage over such animals.⁹ The roots of fair chase evolved from the Public Trust Doctrine and are fundamental to ethical hunting - addressing a balance between hunter success and animal avoidance. Confined shooting operations severely limit the animals' potential for escape throughout the activity and provide the shooter with unfair advantages, violating the principle of fair chase, threatening ethical hunting heritage and public acceptance of hunting.



This map depicts the distribution of Chronic Wasting Disease across North America. (Credit: USGS National Wildlife Health Center)

TWS on Ungulate Confinement¹¹

TWS recognizes the serious biological and social issues associated with confinement of wild ungulates and captive cervid breeding. We support state and provincial wildlife agencies as the primary regulatory authority over native North American ungulates, including those confined by high fences. State and provincial wildlife agencies should work cooperatively with other state, provincial, and federal agricultural, wildlife, and health agencies; hunting and conservation organizations; private landowners; and managers to reduce the potential for problems such as disease transmission and genetic exchange among native wildlife and captive animals.



Captive deer breeding facility in North Carolina. (Credit: North Carolina Wildlife Resources)

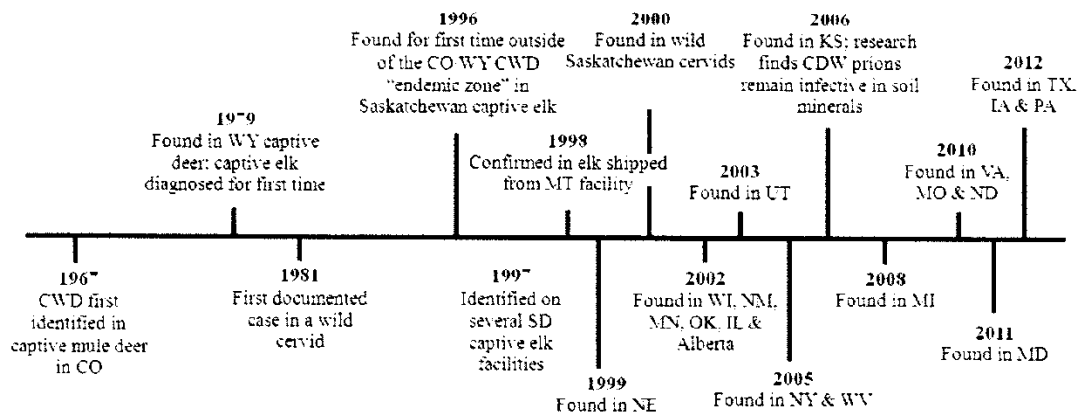
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Chronic Wasting Disease Timeline

The following timeline depicts the discovery and spread of Chronic Wasting Disease across the North American landscape.

(Adapted from Chronology of Significant Events in the History of CWD.⁸)



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See our other Fact Sheets and Position Statements at wildlife.org/policy