

...Chronic

Wasting Disease

(Continued from previous page)

With the discovery of CWD in a captive deer breeding facility in south-central Texas, the Texas Parks and Wildlife (TPW) Commission adopted comprehensive CWD Management Rules on June 20, 2016. Developed through a collaborative process that involved substantial stakeholder input, these rules address CWD management associated with permitting programs that authorize intensive deer management activities — for more information, read the Comprehensive CWD Management Rules.

Additional rules regarding CWD monitoring zones and carcass movement restrictions were adopted by the TPW Commission on August 25, 2016. As new cases of CWD were discovered in additional captive deer breeding facilities as well as free-ranging deer and elk in 2016/2017, the TPW Commission adopted modifications to the rules pertaining to live-deer movements into, within, and out of CWD Containment Zones and Surveillance Zones. Both sets of rules are intended to reduce the chances of spreading CWD and increasing the chances of detecting and containing CWD in

areas where it might be present.
TPWD CWD Management Plan

The Chronic Wasting Disease Management Plan will serve to guide TPWD and TAHC in addressing risks, developing management strategies, and protecting big game resources from CWD in captive or free-ranging cervid populations. Both agencies recognize the need for full cooperation and partnership among government agencies, conservation organizations, private landowners, hunters, and the general public should CWD occur in Texas. CWD is a reportable disease and TAHC has authority for reporting and

tracking this disease in alternative livestock, which includes elk, red deer and sika deer. TPWD has regulatory authority for free-ranging white-tailed deer and mule deer, and both agencies share regulatory authority over captive deer held under the authority of Deer Breeder Permits.

This management plan is intended to be dynamic; management strategies described within are likely to change as both the epidemiology and management of this disease become better understood through time. Specific response plans may be developed and incorporated into this plan

following local or regional discoveries of CWD. Three major goals of this CWD management plan are:

- Minimize CWD risks to the wild and captive white-tailed deer, mule deer, and other susceptible species in Texas.
- Establish and maintain support for prudent CWD management with hunters, landowners, and other stakeholders.
- Minimize direct and indirect impacts of CWD to hunting, hunting related economies, and conservation in Texas.

The information regarding Chronic Wasting Disease is courtesy of the Texas Parks and Wildlife.

Managing hogs or managing the damage?

By Katy Baldock

Photos by Russell Graves & Larry Ditto

The growing feral hog problem in Texas has proven to be very tough to manage. However, there are some new possibilities on the horizon that could lessen the impact of this invasive species. Dr. John Tomecek, Assistant Professor and Extension Wildlife Specialist at Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, gave me a rundown of feral hogs' history in Texas, the impacts they have on Texans, various methods used to manage populations,

and how landowners can contribute to the effort to reduce the damage done by feral hogs.

How did we get here?

Pigs are a non-native species that were first introduced to North America in the 1500s. They were brought over by Spanish conquistadors who planned to herd them, but they ended up getting loose and multiplying in the wild.

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While a small population formed from this introduction, the primary population increase came in the 1800s during early American settlement, such as Austin's Colony. During this era, most pigs were raised as free range. When winter came, they were gathered into pens, killed and used for cured meat. Free-ranging pork production

declined in the 19th century when refrigeration came into the picture, and many pigs were released.

The modern pig problem, however, came in the late 20th century with the rise of the hunting industry. In addition to the existing released domestic pigs, wild boars were imported from Europe and Asia for

hunting. "The birth of the pig hunting industry came somewhere in the 1980s, and folks started putting these pigs on trailers, moving them around, and encouraging their growth for things to hunt year-round," Tomecek said. "Nobody moving pigs expected them to become the problem they are—like most exotic

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