
State law regulates trapping, transporting of feral hogs

State law regulates the trapping, transportation and relocation of feral hogs. Texas AgriLife Extension Service experts recommend landowners understand the regulations concerning what can be done with feral hogs prior to implementing management methods. (Texas AgriLife Extension Service photo)

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COLLEGE STATION – Landowners who trap feral hogs on their property also need to know about the regulations regarding the transportation, potential release and other means of utilizing these creatures, said Texas AgriLife Extension Service experts.

“Landowners in the Plum Creek Watershed of Hays, Caldwell and Travis counties who decide to trap feral hogs should ask themselves what they’re going to do with them after they’re trapped,” said Jared Timmons, AgriLife Extension assistant supporting the Plum Creek Watershed Partnership.

Timmons said trapping, then cooking and eating feral hogs is one viable option.

“Feral hog meat is delicious when properly prepared,” he said. “And with this option, the trapped animals never have to leave your property.”

However, he added, some people may be averse to eating feral hog or sometimes trapping yields more than can be consumed.

“In such instances, moving live feral hogs must meet a set of rules, and this plays into management decisions,” he said.

The Texas Animal Health Commission regulates the movement of feral hogs, holding facilities and some aspects of hunting preserves, said Dr. Jim Cathey, AgriLife Extension specialist in wildlife ecology.

“However, some clarification is needed here,” Cathey said. “Hunting preserves must have a hunting lease permit issued by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. And feral hog gender is regulated differently.”

Cathey said female feral hogs, sows and gilts, may not be transported and released onto another property.

“Instead, female feral hogs may be held for up to seven days in an escape-proof pen or trailer,” he explained. “They can then be taken directly to slaughter or sold to an approved holding facility which would take them to slaughter.”

A list of approved feral hog holding facilities may be found at the commission’s website at http://www.tahc.state.tx.us/animal_health/feral_swine.html.

Male feral hogs, boars and barrows, also may be held for up to seven days in an escape-proof pen or trailer and may be taken directly to slaughter or sold to an authorized holding facility, he said.

That facility then may either take them to slaughter or sell them to an authorized hunting preserve.

“Authorized hunting preserves must have swine-proof fencing and must individually identify every feral hog released on the property,” he noted. “They are also subject to periodic inspections by the Texas Animal Health Commission.”

Domestication of feral hogs is allowed, but discouraged as a further option, Cathey said.

“This process would require quarantine of a minimum of 150 days, and each animal must be tested four times as being free of pseudorabies and swine brucellosis.”

Timmons said that in addition to damaging the property of Plum Creek Watershed residents, feral hogs also have been identified as possible contributors to non-point pollution of the watershed and may be partially

responsible for the water source's elevated levels of bacteria and nitrogen.

"Feral hogs are among the topics addressed in the Plum Creek Watershed Protection Plan, which addresses multiple aspects of water quality and source preservation," he said.

Several publications on feral hogs developed by AgriLife Extension can be downloaded free from the Plum Creek Partnership website at <http://plumcreek.tamu.edu/feralhogs>.

These publications address evidence of feral hogs, hunting and trapping methods and other salient topics. The site also contains online tools for use by landowners and the general public in reporting feral hog sightings or control measures.

Funding and support for the development of the Plum Creek Watershed Protection Plan is provided through a Clean Water Act §319(h) non-point source grant from the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

For more information or technical assistance with feral hogs in Plum Creek Watershed area, contact Jared Timmons at 254-485-4886 or jbtimmons@ag.tamu.edu.

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