



ASSOCIATION *of*
FISH & WILDLIFE
AGENCIES

FERAL SWINE WORKING GROUP

Chair: Gray Anderson (Virginia)
Vice-Chair: Jim LaCour (Louisiana)

Monday, September 25th
3:00 PM – 5:00 PM (MDT)
Macleod A3- Lower Level

[113th AFWA Annual Meeting](#)

Agenda

- **Call to Order/Review Agenda (G. Anderson)**
 - Dr. Jim LaCour (LA DFW) chaired the meeting
 - ~30 working group members and guests were in attendance
- **Introductions (G. Anderson)**
 - Led by Dr. Jim LaCour, participants introduced themselves
- **National Feral Swine Damage Management Program update (Dana Cole, APHIS)**
 - Wildlife Services has been testing the feral swine toxicant sodium nitrite. Field trials were conducted in Texas and Alabama. The challenge has been to develop a delivery system that will target swine and avoid lethal intoxication of non-targets (mainly birds). Vigilant monitoring of application sites by operatives and efforts to keep birds away has practically eliminated non-target uptake, however, better delivery systems are needed to make the application safer for non-targets and more efficient. Seasonal use of the toxicant could avoid birds.
 - African Swine Fever surveillance has ramped up since detections occurred in islands in the Caribbean, but no detections have occurred in the mainland U.S. Initially, surveillance was occurring primarily in 4 states that were believed to be at high risk for ASF (Louisiana, Florida, Texas, and Georgia). That surveillance has expanded to a few additional states in the southeast and along the U.S. southern border. In conjunction with Veterinary Services, a playbook/contingency plan has been developed to set a course of action if ASF is detected in feral or domestic swine on the mainland.
 - This year marked the last year of a 5-year pilot Feral Swine Eradication Program that was funded through the Farm Bill. That funding delivered 30+ projects in 12 States over the past 4 years. Some advanced tools were developed and swine were removed from key areas. WS hopes to maintain this funding but no longer as a Pilot program.
 - WS sponsored two national training workshops on technologies/techniques for staff regarding feral swine. There were some participants from Alberta, Canada as well.



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- There is a transboundary US/Canada working group and trilateral work is being conducted between both parties and Mexico
 - A “squeal on pigs” app has been developed for reporting feral swine sightings by the public
 - The federal Feral Swine Task Force had its first meeting recently to discuss ASF and a contingency plan if ASF enters the US mainland
 - WS will soon be providing a state level report on what was accomplished with the Farm Bill Pilot program funding
- **Louisiana State University sodium nitrite bait program (Jim LaCour)**
 - After several years of testing, Louisiana State University has patented a sodium nitrite based bait for feral swine. All testing of the bait has been conducted on penned swine. The bait must undergo field trials prior to EPA approval but field trials cannot begin until a permit is acquired from the EPA. This process could easily take up to 3 years and it is likely that the product will not be available for use for 5 years. If approved, the product could be applied by anyone with an applicator license. The product was very effective in penned tests and caused death in swine, typically, with about 2 hours of ingestions. The primary concern with sodium nitrite is non-target uptake. Sodium nitrite is lethal even in small doses to many other species of wildlife. The bait patented by LSU prevents most species of wildlife from being able to ingest the toxicant because the bait is a medium sized pellet (about the size of golf ball; made of fish meal) which birds and smaller animals cannot ingest. In addition, this bait does not crumble, which is one of the problems with other baits. Ingestion by black bears is a primary concern though application of the product during periods when bears are in hibernation and use in areas where black bears do not occur could alleviate that concern.
- **SEAFWA/WMI Black Bear Resistant Product Testing Program/feral swine toxicant delivery devices (Jim LaCour)**
 - The SEAFWA Wild Hog and Large Carnivore working groups petitioned SEAFWA to work with WMI to develop a black bear resistant container testing program. That program is in place and has tested some containers. Manufacturers can now have products tested. They are also working to develop a toxicant delivery system for feral swine that would exclude black bears.
- **Report on feral swine eradication efforts in Canada (Nick Wong-Science and Research Manager)**
 - A report on feral swine and removal efforts was provided by Nick Wong of the Canadian Council on Invasive Species. They hope to reduce the spread of feral swine through implementing best practices. There are established populations in Alberta, Manitoba and Saskatchewan.



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- Canadas Wild Pig Strategy:
 - Progress forward
 - Leadership group established, coordinated by CCIS
 - Work planning to implement the strategy
 - Action to strengthen Indigenous engagement and consultation to build partnerships with Métis and First Nations communities
 - Translation and post on Animal Health Canada ASF website
 - Met with CWHC/CanSpotASF team to discuss and review existing wild pigs database capabilities and potential needs
 - Support coordinated Squeal on Pigs! awareness campaign
 - AHC seeking funding to support actions under the strategy in collaboration with CCIS and CWHC.
- **Report from the SEAFWA & MAFWA Feral Swine Groups (Terri Brunjes (KY), Alan Leary (MO))**
 - Joel Porath (MDC) delivered a report for the MAFWA wild hog working group. In Missouri hunting of feral pigs on public lands became illegal in 2016. This allowed the various agencies to better implement eradication efforts. Feral hogs have been eliminated from approximately 60% of the watersheds in Missouri since 2016 where feral hogs occurred. Missouri only uses non-lead ammunition to dispatch feral swine. USFS is also involved in these efforts because many wild hogs occur on USFS managed lands. (for the full report see: [Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies -Feral Swine Committee 2023 Annual Report](#))
 - Terri Brunjes provided a report for the SEAFWA Wild Hog Working Group. Highlights included that KY DFW is considering a prohibition on wild pig sport hunting. Wild hogs occur in small, scattered populations across the state of Kentucky, but a prohibition on hunting, which would disincentivize relocations, could allow for complete eradication. (For the full report see: [SEAFWA 2023 Annual State Summary Report](#))
- **Report from the National Wild Pig Task Force (G. Anderson)**
 - The NWPTF met in April, 2023 in Logan, Utah during the 20th Wildlife Damage Management Conference. Moving forward, the group will meet on odd years during the SEAFWA Conference and even years during the International Wild Pig Conference.
 - The International Wild Pig Conference is scheduled for April 2024 in Nashville, Tennessee.
 - Operations of the NWPTF have moved to Texas A&M University. Professor John Tomecek is the President of the NWPTF.
- **Updates on progress from last meeting (Bryant White, AFWA)**
 - Hunter education pamphlet/one pager: Impacts of feral swine on popular game species in the United States
 - Efforts to continue to develop this document, in conjunction with numerous partners. The goal is to get participation and buy-in from many hunting NGO's and agencies to produce a document that will educate hunters about the perils of feral swine.