

News Release

Department of the Interior / U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Southwest Louisiana National Wildlife Refuge Complex
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Feral Hog Management Operations scheduled for Sabine National Wildlife Refuge this Week

Feral Hog Management Operations will be conducted at Sabine National Wildlife Refuge throughout the week of June 13-17, 2016. Several units within the refuge will be targeted as weather and time permit.

Sabine National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) hog management operations will be conducted west of Highway 27, from the north boundary to the south boundary, westward all the way to Sabine Lake. Some fishing and boating access within the refuge may be closed temporarily for safety purposes while operations are being conducted.

All Sabine NWR recreation areas along Highway 27, accessible by vehicle will remain open, including the West Cove boat launch accessing Calcasieu Lake.

The purpose of the Feral Hog Management Operation is to protect 125,790 acres of fresh, intermediate and brackish refuge marshes from feral hog (*Sus scrofa*) induced erosion, migratory bird habitat destruction and migratory bird nesting mortality. The rapidly expanding distribution of feral hogs in the United States has caused great concern for many land and resource managers. The ecologically-rich marshes of Sabine National Wildlife Refuge have not been immune to the invasion of these exotic species. Feral hogs are omnivores devouring flora and fauna alike.

Marsh habitat, throughout Sabine National Wildlife Refuge, has been compromised because of extensive rooting (foraging for food) by feral hogs. Since 1990, feral hog sightings have been primarily reported on the western side

of Sabine National Wildlife Refuge known as Marceaux Island. Marceaux Island is an area of concern, as it has been designated as “Marceaux Island Prairie Natural Area” by the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries as well as the Louisiana Natural Heritage Foundation, based on the existence of remnant prairie habitat. Since, Sabine National Wildlife Refuge was established in 1937: “...for use as an inviolate sanctuary, or for any other management purpose, for migratory birds...” (16 U.S.C. 715d (Migratory Bird Conservation Act)) and “...as a refuge and breeding ground for migratory birds and other wildlife...” (16 U.S.C. 715e (Migratory Bird Conservation Act)), controlling the feral hog population in this sensitive area and throughout the Refuge is a priority. Authority to control wildlife populations for management is governed by title 50 CFR, Part 31, Section 14:

(a) Animal species which are surplus or detrimental to the management program of a wildlife area may be taken in accordance with federal and state laws and regulations by federal or state personnel or by permit issued to private individuals.

(b) Animal species which damage or destroy federal property within a wildlife refuge area may be taken or destroyed by federal personnel.

Title 50 CFR, Part 30, Section 11 (a) states that feral animals, including horses, burros, cattle, swine, sheep, goats, reindeer, dogs, and cats, without ownership that have reverted to the wild from a domestic state may be taken by authorized federal or state personnel or by private persons operating under permit in accordance with applicable provisions of federal or state law or regulation.

Refuge personnel thank the public for their cooperation during this very important management operation. For further information about the Southwest Louisiana National Wildlife Refuge Complex or any of its programs, please call our office at 337-598-2216.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is the principal federal agency responsible for conserving, protecting, and enhancing fish, wildlife, and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. The Service manages the 95-million-acre National Wildlife Refuge System that encompasses more than 540 national wildlife refuges, thousands of small wetlands, and other special management areas. It also operates 70 national fish hatcheries, 64 fishery resource offices and 78 ecological services field stations. The agency enforces federal wildlife laws, administers the Endangered Species Act, manages migratory bird populations, restores nationally significant fisheries, conserves and restores wildlife habitat such as wetlands, and helps foreign governments with their conservation efforts. The agency also oversees the Federal Aid program that distributes hundreds of millions of dollars in excise taxes on fishing and hunting equipment to state fish and wildlife agencies.