

**State Technical Committee Virtual Meeting**  
**Input - Feral Swine Eradication and Control Program**  
**December 29, 2025**

NRCS Texas State Resource Conservationist Charles Kneuper opened the meeting at 9:00 AM by introducing himself and welcoming the participants to the meeting. He stated the purpose of the meeting was to discuss the opportunities associated with the Feral Swine Eradication and Control Pilot Program.

He then provided an opportunity for all participants to introduce themselves. There were 34 members and 7 NRCS employees present for the meeting.

NRCS Texas State Conservationist Kristy Oates welcomed the group and thanked everyone for attending. She introduced the opportunity that was included in part of the One Big Beautiful Bill signed in July that reauthorized funding for the Feral Swine Eradication and Control Pilot Program. Fourteen states, including Texas, have been asked to submit proposals for potential projects by January 5, 2026. Once again, this effort will be in partnership with USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) Wildlife Services Division. Funding for the opportunity is limited.

Charles Kneuper shared a map of preliminary identified priority areas based on USDA APHIS resources and NRCS identified resource concerns such as water quality.

APHIS Acting State Director Cory Wilson gave an overview of the identified areas including how and why they were chosen.

- Fannin/Lamar/Red River Counties – there is an active footprint in the area with manpower. In addition, there is a lot of cropland that has had substantial negative impacts from feral swine in the area.
- Sherman County – this county joins a previous pilot project where there was great success in eradication of feral swine.
- Knox/Baylor/Haskell/Throckmorton Counties – there is an active footprint in the area with manpower and there is a large population of feral swine in the area.
- Brown, Coleman, and Runnels Counties
- Brazos/Burleson/Washington Counties – this area does not have an active footprint with manpower and was identified through correspondence. It is the lowest priority area for APHIS.

TPWD Wildlife Biologist Will Newman asked if this round of the pilot program was going to work the same as the previous version.

Kristy Oates responded that just like before NRCS and APHIS would work hand-in-hand on the program. A notice of funding opportunity (NOFO) will be published and used to solicit partner proposals to be considered for funding. The projects will have an APHIS component, partner component, and potential NRCS component for restoration activities through Farm Bill programs.

Will Newman stated he sent Charles Kneuper an e-mail with written comments. He emphasized to the group that another aspect to consider with the program is that feral swine are a vector for the New World Screw Worm.

Texas Corn Producers Executive Director David Gibson asked about the projects continuing in previous priority areas.

Kristy Oates responded that the projects would not continue. All proposals must be new even if they contain or overlap previous pilot project areas.

David Gibson responded that there was a lot of damage to corn crops along the corn belt of I-35 and the Texas coastal bend and would like a project to take that into consideration. He specifically mentioned Hill, Ellis, and Victoria counties along with counties along the coast and southern Texas toward the Rio Grande Valley.

Deydra Steans explained that there has been a grassroots effort in Caldwell County in the Plum Creek Watershed and working closely with two universities they have started a trapping program that they are trying to expand to neighboring counties.

TPWD Wildlife Biologist Will Newman asked about the population data from previous efforts and asked when those projects ended. He stated that maintaining the efforts in those areas needed to continue or the areas would once again see the feral swine population increase.

Cory Wilson explained that APHIS efforts have been maintained in the project areas on the aerial front. APHIS has been using their own budget for this and with budgets being limited is unsure how long these efforts can continue.

Texas A&M AgriLife Research John Tomecek explained that a damage assessment from the previous efforts was completed and that for every dollar spent, the return on investment was between \$7.00 and \$15.00. He emphasized that the Extension Service worked heavily on maintenance education for landowners and others.

Charles read questions from Jeanette Lombardo, CEO of the Farmer Veteran Coalition:

1. Which counties/watersheds show the highest documented damage and highest landowner readiness?
2. Where are NRCS conservation investments most vulnerable to swine damage?
3. What partner groups (SWCDs, watershed groups, Extension) can support recruitment and mapping?
4. Which area has the best “block participation” potential for eradication zones?
5. Are there sites where swine damage threatens water quality or critical habitat?

Ty Wilson from Texas Grain Sorghum Producers asked what a statewide feral swine program would look like.

Kristy Oates explained that a statewide feral swine eradication program would have to involve everyone for collaborative efforts. She reminded the group that this effort is still a “pilot” program and must remain in targeted areas for consideration.

Cory Wilson stated that he was not sure what a statewide effort would look like for APHIS.

Deydra Steans asked what the requirements of the program are and what is allowed with the pigs once they are contained.

Kristy Oates responded that all requirements will be outlined in the notice of funding opportunity.

Owner of Plateau Land & Wildlife Management, Inc., Beryl Armstrong emphasized that sustained funding with incremental increases needs to be considered for feral swine eradication programs based on the experiences from a locally-led effort in western Bandera County.

John Kinsey stated that education and resources for landowners is important to achieve long-term impacts from feral swine eradication.

North Texas Municipal Water District Watershed Manager Lauren Plunk asked who to send feedback to at NRCS.

Kristy Oates responded to send feedback to Charles Kneuper and Cory Wilson this week.

Upper Trinity Regional Water District Water Education Coordinator Blake Alldredge asked who we are looking for proposals from? Partners or landowners?

Kristy Oates responded that once the notice of funding is published, it will give details on who is eligible to apply and how to apply.

Kristy then read Jeanette Lombardo's second set of questions from the chat:

- Priority Focus

Integrate feral swine removal with biosecurity and disease-risk reduction in areas with mixed agriculture, timber, and livestock.

Proposed Target Area (Texas)

Pineywoods / East Texas where swine are widespread and interface with livestock:

- Sabine, Neches, Angelina River areas
- Counties such as Nacogdoches, Angelina, San Augustine, Shelby, Rusk, Polk, Trinity (finalize based on county-level participation and impact)

Why this region?

Kristy Oates responded that due to the area being heavily forested it was very difficult to have success with aerial operations. She noted there are other efforts for feral swine control underway with Soil and Water Conservation Districts in east Texas.

Kristy Oates then thanked the group for participating and expressed appreciation for everyone's collective efforts on feral swine eradication. She put her e-mail address in the chat so that everyone would have it to send additional questions and feedback.

Charles thanked everyone and closed the meeting at 9:53 AM.