

THE TEXAS WATER SOURCE

UPDATING HARDIN, JEFFERSON & ORANGE CO. FOREST LANDOWNERS ON FORESTRY AND WATER ISSUES

Best Management Practices in Action

Did you know that Texas Forest Service has examples of recommended best management practices (BMPs) for forestry that you can visit? Since the mid 1990's, Texas Forest Service has been maintaining BMP demonstration areas on the W. Goodrich Jones State Forest located in Conroe, approximately 1.5 miles west of Interstate 45 on FM 1488.

The purpose of these demonstration areas is to give loggers, forest landowners, and other interested members of the general public a chance to see how properly implemented best management practices can be used to protect our waterways before, during, and after all types of forestry operations.

Seeing good examples of BMPs on-the-ground can go a long way towards understanding the concept of BMPs and recognizing their importance, so you are encouraged to visit the self-guided, interpretative BMP demonstration tour at the Jones

State Forest. Come see how a streamside management zone (SMZ) on Rice Branch has filtered sediments from surface runoff and maintained cool water temperatures for over 15 years. Take a look at different road stabilization and drainage practices that have prevented erosion along the road system while maintaining good access, even during wet conditions. There are several examples of low-impact methods for crossing streams including a sturdy bridge made with a retired flat-bed rail car. Signs at each demonstration along the tour identify the practice, highlight its purpose, and emphasize aspects of proper implementation.

The forest is open year round to the general public during daylight hours. Maps, access information, permits, and restrooms are available at the Conroe District Office on the forest itself. Call (936) 273-2261 for more information..

For more information:

- <http://texasforestsservice.tamu.edu/bmp>
- <http://texasforestsservice.tamu.edu/main/article.aspx?id=1790>

Updates on Texas Wildfires

Want updated information on the wildfires across Texas? Go to <http://texasforestsservice.tamu.edu/> and click on links to:

- Check on the current status and locations of individual fires and read fire prevention messages.
- View Google Earth maps of fire activity, fire danger, and burn bans.

- Sign up for daily wildfire updates by TFS e-News.
- Make tax-deductible contributions to help volunteer fire departments that are helping to battle these wildfire.
- Read up on how TFS Forest Resource Protection staff work on protecting the people and resources of the State of Texas.

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*Organization Spotlight***Texas Forestry Association****For more information:**

- <http://www.texasforestry.org/>

Texas Forestry Association (TFA) is the non-profit trade association for forestry in Texas, representing over 3,000 members who grow, manage, harvest and process the forest resource in Texas. TFA is headquartered in Lufkin, but its influence reaches all across East Texas and the State.

TFA was formed in 1914 by conservation-minded people motivated by a deep concern for Texas' forest resources. Today, membership is not only comprised of forest landowners, businesses, and professionals, but also includes many other people interested in conservation, business, history, education, wildlife, and more.

TFA's mission is:

- To promote an economic, social, and political climate that will advance forestry in Texas;
- Through education, political action, and public relations, promote the understanding and acceptance of forest conservation practices throughout the state;
- To serve the broad needs of the forest resource of landowners, producers, and consumers; and

- To enhance and perpetuate the Texas forest resource.

What can TFA do for you, a TFA member, forest landowner, forestry professional, business person, or citizen interested in the continued sustainability of our Texas forests? TFA:

Lobbies in Austin for environmental, forestry, and other regulatory issues affecting you and your timberlands.

Publishes a monthly newspaper to keep you informed on forest issues.

Supports pro-forestry state legislators through the Forestry Political Action Committee (FORPAC); keeps contributors informed with a government affairs update.

Sponsors meetings and workshops to provide you with the latest information on forestry and related subjects.

Provides rewards for information leading to the arrest and conviction of anyone stealing or vandalizing a TFA member's equipment, property or timber; or for timber arson.

Assists with preserving the forest productivity tax law of Texas, and helps with timber classifications for taxation.

American Tree Farm System**For more information:**

- <http://www.treefarmssystem.org/>
- <http://www.texasforestry.org/programs/treefarm/>

Established in 1941, the American Tree Farm System (ATFS) is the oldest and largest forest certification program in the U.S. It works to sustain forests, watersheds, and healthy wildlife habitats through the power of private stewardship by family forest landowners.

A Tree Farm is at least 10 acres of forestland with an implemented management plan that accounts for water quality, wildlife habitat, and soil conservation, as well as production of forest products.

ATFS has established standards and guidelines for property owners to meet to become a Certified Tree Farm. Under these standards and guidelines, private forest owners must develop a management plan and pass an inspection by an ATFS volunteer forester every five years.

Texas Tree Farm is co-sponsored by Texas Forestry Association. A task force of 30 foresters and landowners comprise the Texas Tree Farm Committee.

Feral Hogs Can Affect Water Quality

Feral hogs damage crops, livestock, pets, landscaping, and natural habitat in rural and urban areas alike. These animals also have the potential to contribute to water pollution. Due to their numbers, distribution, and behavior, feral hogs can increase the levels of sediment, nutrients, and bacteria in streams and lakes.

Habitat analysis and landowner observations indicate this is the case in many watersheds. In some situations, water quality may become so degraded that it cannot support recreation or aquatic life.

The following is an excerpt from an article by Paul Schattenberg of Texas A&M University on AgFax.com:

Though feral hogs are well-known pests to landowners throughout the state, there is still much people are unaware of regarding their behavior and what may be done to manage them, said Texas AgriLife Extension Service experts.

To help fill in the blanks on feral hogs, a group of AgriLife Extension experts have developed several fact sheets relating to management of this problematic species, said Dr. Jim Cathey, a specialist in wildlife ecology at Texas A&M University in College Station and contributing author to these publications.

Cathey and other AgriLife Extension personnel — Chancey Lewis, assistant; Matt Berg, program coordinator; Dr. Jim Gallagher, wildlife specialist; Nikki Dictson, program specialist; and Dr. Mark McFarland, soil fertility and water quality specialist — collaborated on several new feral hog fact sheets reflecting a variety of expertise and perspectives.

“We tried to address the realistic and practical aspects of feral hog identification and management through these

publications,” Cathey said. “Their content is based on what we know from our individual experience and professional expertise, as well as from input received from farmers, ranchers, and other landowners who have had encounters with feral hogs.”

The new fact sheets address topics ranging from recognizing evidence of feral hogs to methods of capturing these non-native animals.

Feral hogs cause an estimated \$52 million in damages to the Texas agriculture industry each year. They also cause problems in suburban areas, and in rural areas they compete with wildlife for food, cover, and space.

“Feral hogs not only damage crops and other property in the Plum Creek Watershed and other areas of the state, they also have been identified as a possible source of non-point pollution to the water table in many locations,” McFarland said. “And their aggressive rooting and wallowing contributes to the problem of soil erosion in many areas of the state.”

While the publications are focused on feral hog management in the Plum Creek Watershed area of Travis, Caldwell, and Hays counties, most of the information is applicable statewide, according to the authors. The publications include photographs, capture-method building instructions, and tips for successful capture.

The new fact sheets can be found on the Plum Creek Watershed Partnership website at <http://pcwp.tamu.edu/feral-hogs/capture-techniques> and may be downloaded free from that site, in English and Spanish.

Color versions of these publications may be obtained for a charge from the Texas AgriLife Extension Bookstore at <https://agrilifebookstore.org>, and also are available in Spanish from that site.

For more information:

- <http://agfax.com/Content/feral-hog-trapping-texas-04062011.aspx>
- <http://pcwp.tamu.edu/feral-hogs>

Did you know...

Feral hogs are not considered wildlife and are not classified as a game species in Texas. Instead, this exotic species is considered free-ranging livestock. However, a hunting license is required to hunt them.

Updating Hardin, Jefferson & Orange Co. Forest
Landowners on Forestry and Water Issues

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The Texas Forest Service is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer committed to Excellence Through Diversity.

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TFA Spring Tailgate Rally

Free events and outdoor learning for the entire family!

WHAT: Spring Forestry Tailgate Rally

WHERE: Texas Forestry Association's Tree Farm, 2 miles east of Mt. Enterprise on Hwy. 84

WHEN: Saturday, May 14, 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

What can you expect?

- Informational booths on forest-related topics
- Demonstrations
- Fun activities for the kids
- Trail with activity and educational stops
- Concessions
- Fellowship with fellow landowners and others
- Friendly people!

T E X A S
FOREST SERVICE
The Texas A&M University System

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