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AGENDA ITEM REQUEST FORM

Hays County Commissioners Court

Tuesdays at 9:00 AM

Request forms are due in Microsoft Word Format via email by 2:00 p.m. on Wednesday.

AGENDA ITEM

Discussion and possible action to appoint Shane Scott as the Hays County representative on the Caldwell County Feral Hog Task Force.

ITEM TYPE	MEETING DATE	AMOUNT REQUIRED
ACTION-MISCELLANEOUS	July 16, 2013	

LINE ITEM NUMBER

AUDITOR USE ONLY

AUDITOR COMMENTS:

PURCHASING GUIDELINES FOLLOWED: N/A AUDITOR REVIEW: N/A

REQUESTED BY	SPONSOR	CO-SPONSOR
	JONES	N/A

SUMMARY

Hays County will partner with Caldwell County and local organizations to request and participate in the Texas Department of Agriculture's County Hog Abatement Matching Program (CHAMP). Efforts will support a feral hog action plan developed by the Caldwell County Feral Hog Task Force to reduce and manage the rapidly growing feral swine population Hays and Caldwell County. The grant will be managed by the Caldwell County Feral Hog Task Force. Shane Scott will represent Hays County on the Task Force as the CHAMP program is administered.

FILED: **07 16 13**
HAYS COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' COURT
Resolution # **29137** VOL **V** PG **194**

June 12, 2013

Dear Partners, Friends and Caldwell County Feral Hog Task Force Members,

I have been speaking with many of you about an important funding opportunity to achieve some significant feral hog control in Caldwell and Hays County. The purpose of this letter is to provide some background information for those of you considering a partnership with the Caldwell County Feral Hog Task Force to leverage our funding with the Texas Department of Agriculture's new grant program.

Below is a list of bullet points for your consideration as you determine your commitment level to the TDA's County Hog Abatement Matching Program (CHAMP). **Applications are due July 1**, so if you have been thinking about what your group can do to address this invasive and destructive species, now is the time to act. Thank you so much for your dedication to this issue and to the folks out there watching their fields and pastures being destroyed, vehicles damaged, fisheries and wildlife habitat depleted and streams polluted by feral swine. In Hays and Caldwell County alone, property damage from feral hogs may be exceeding \$2,000,000 per year!

- The CHAMP grant will provide matching funds from TDA to selected counties on a 1:1 basis up to **\$30,000**
- Requires at least two Texas counties working together (Hays and Caldwell for us!)
- The Caldwell County Feral Hog Task Force will take the lead on the grant application and management
- Based on our action plan and commitment to continued feral hog control, **USDA-APHIS, Texas Wildlife Services, has offered aerial control of feral hogs for the Plum Creek Watershed and surrounding area at no cost to the County** - Plans are for this to take place sometime between December 2013 through February 2014. Landowners wishing to participate should contact me for further details. Participating landowners will be asked, but not obligated, to consider a donation to the Caldwell County Feral Hog Task Force to include a \$25 registration fee and \$0.10 per acre. Donated funds will be used for additional feral hog population control and maintenance. They will also serve as matching funds toward this grant application.
- **CHAMP grant funds will be used to supplement aerial control from Wildlife Services and provide one year of additional control and maintenance.**
- Goal is for rapid reduction in feral hog numbers and long term maintenance of a manageable feral hog population in Hays and Caldwell County.
- Proposed primary feral hog management includes: contracted large-scale professional trapping; purchase of several wireless traps for landowners to rent/borrow from the Counties; purchase of magnetic feral hog drop net for landowner use; landowner incentives and competitions including bounties or cash prizes; targeted aerial control/maintenance from local helicopter company
- Additional grant funds may be used for: completion of a feral hog population study and annual damage/harvest survey; water quality monitoring; feral hog exclosures; advertising, education, administration of services and project website

Proposed project partners are listed below. REMEMBER every dollar we can scrape together in June stands to be matched 100% by TDA if we are selected. If your group is not able to contribute financially, but would like to be a part of this project, please let me know how you would like to participate. Your *volunteer hours and/or labor* can count toward our match! **We also need Letters of Support to go with the application!!!** I will send out a template to those of you willing to lend support this project.

Technical and Financial Project Partners and/or Letters of Support are requested from the following groups:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caldwell County Feral Hog Task Force • Hays County • Caldwell County Farm Bureau • State Farm Insurance • Plum Creek Conservation District • Bastrop-Caldwell County WMA • Tri-Community WMA • Hays County Master Naturalist • Mid-Tex Chapter of the Independent Cattlemen's Association of Texas • Texas A&M AgriLIFE Extension Service • Natural Resource Conservation Service • Caldwell-Travis County SWCD • City of Lockhart • City of Kyle | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caldwell County • SH130/TXDoT • Hays County Farm Bureau • Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority • Plum Creek Watershed Partnership • Clearfork WMA • Lost Pines Master Naturalist • San Marcos River Foundation • Texas Parks and Wildlife Department • Texas Wildlife Services • Farm Service Agency • Hays County SWCD • City of Luling • City of Uhland |
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******Last but certainly not least, local citizens and stakeholders**

On behalf of the Caldwell County Feral Hog Task Force Leadership Committee, I would like to thank you all for your support and consideration of this project. I am happy to provide additional details on this project to any group considering funding and/or willing to listen to why we feel that this opportunity is our best shot at effectively addressing the rapidly growing feral hog problem before it's too late. Our land, our water, our property and our wildlife are at risk of significant losses due to a Texas feral hog population standing at an estimated 2.6 million and expected to double over the next 5 years if significant action is not taken.

Sincerely,

Nick Dornak,

Plum Creek Watershed Coordinator and
Caldwell County Feral Hog Task Force Leadership Committee Member

See grant announcement and links to information below:

The Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) is pleased to announce the 2013 County Hog Abatement Matching Program (CHAMP). CHAMP is designed to encourage counties across the State of Texas to create partnerships with other counties, local governments, businesses, landowners, and associations to reduce the feral hog population and the damage caused by these animals in Texas.

Selected applicants (Grantee) will receive project funding on a cost reimbursement basis. Applicants may request up to \$30,000 in funding. Projects are required to meet a minimum match of 1:1, for every dollar requested; the applicant must show at least an equal amount in Applicant Matching Funds. Budgets, including match level, will be reviewed in the competitive evaluation process.

Eligibility

To be eligible for an award under the CHAMP, the applicant must be a Texas county (County). In addition, the County must partner with at least one other Texas county, and may partner with other local governments, private or non-profit businesses, landowners, ranchers or entities that have an interest in feral hog abatement.

- Additional details may be downloaded on TDA's website for Feral Hog Abatement Grant Program under the County Hog Abatement Matching Program. Applications are due by the close of business on July 1, 2013.

If you have any additional questions please let myself or Meghann Jezek know. Meghann may be reached at [\(512\) 463-6695](tel:5124636695), or by Grants@TexasAgriculture.gov.