

# **OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND FORESTRY**

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**PRESS RELEASE: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Conservation Districts to Receive Feral Hog Traps**

Join the Oklahoma Association of Conservation Districts at 11:00 a.m. on Thursday, March 30 on the lawn northwest of the Oklahoma Capitol for a feral hog trap demonstration as part of “The Campaign for Conservation @ the Capitol.”

The trap demonstration will highlight a six-panel trap with a steel head gate and use of a bait tube provided by the Wildlife Services of the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food, and Forestry (ODAFF). The Wildlife Services program is cooperatively funded by ODAFF and USDA-APHIS Wildlife Services, Oklahoma counties, and other State and Federal agencies, city governments and private organizations.

Feral swine are an invasive species that cause more than \$1.5 billion annually in damage and management costs nationwide according to USDA. Elimination of feral swine is of special interest to the Oklahoma Associations of Conservation Districts because feral hogs’ rooting and wallowing activity is proven to increase erosion, especially in wetlands and along waterways. Large groups of feral swine are responsible for contaminating water sources through deposition of fecal material in concentrated areas which results in an increased risk for disease among humans, wildlife, and livestock.

A variety of techniques are used by Wildlife Services to manage feral swine, but trapping is considered one of the most effective methods in states like Oklahoma with high feral swine populations because of the ability to eliminate multiple hogs at one time. Last year, Wildlife Services eliminated 11,206 feral swine in Oklahoma.

ODAFF is dedicated to the elimination of feral swine and introduced aggressive measures to reduce the population in Oklahoma through the Feral Swine Control Act. Fees collected from the captive feral swine hunting licenses will be used to make available \$20,000 to conservation districts for trap materials such as panels, wire, and bait. The traps will then be available to rent from each conservation district.

Experts in the field will be available Thursday during the demonstrations to answer questions regarding feral swine and the traps, including State Wildlife Director Kevin Grant and Assistant

State Director Scott Alls from ODAFF, as well as Wildlife and Range Consultant Josh Gaskamp and Landscape Ecologist Stephen Webb from the Noble Foundation in Ardmore, Okla. No live feral swine will be present at the demonstration.

“The Campaign for Conservation @ the Capitol” is an opportunity for the conservation districts to inform elected officials of the conservation efforts taking place in various parts of the state to preserve water, soil, air native plants and wildlife.

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