

2003 Feral Hog Distribution Survey and Trapping Report
North Rosillos Area, Big Bend National Park
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Survey Results

Water sources were surveyed in the North Rosillos Area of Big Bend National Park to determine the limits of feral hog distribution. The results are recorded on the attached database spreadsheet (including *Instructions for Feral Hog data entry*) and a 2003 distribution map (NAD 83). A 2002 distribution map is attached for comparison. An updated list of Tanks/Areas is also attached.

Water sources were surveyed for feral hog tracks and sign from 8/21/03 to 12/10/03. Visited water sources are noted as green points and identified feral hog tracks are noted as red points on the attached map of Feral Hog Surveys 2003. Blue points indicate water source locations not visited during 2003 (by 12/16/03). Note that points marked in red may or may not be a tank location. Hog tracks were occasionally seen while walking into an area.

Seven hogs were seen at Tank 38 – 2 adults and 5 shoats. Tracks were seen repeatedly at this tank throughout the season. Based on surveys at all water sources, a maximum of 3 adults and 5 young were identified.

Hog tracks were also located at the following tanks or areas: Tanks 28, 29, 29A, 30, 31, 32, 37, 38, 39, 46, 59, 62, 63, 94, 212 and near Tanks 26, 27 and 204. The largest concentration of hog tracks were located at tanks surrounding the Tank 32 area. An isolated set of tracks were located in the far northern region at North Windmill (Tank 212).

Trapping Efforts

Frequent rain events during the season made it difficult to isolate a preferred water source location for trapping the hogs (see Big Bend National Park Precipitation from Aug 16 through Dec 16, 2003 attached).

Trap prebaiting at Rattlesnake Tank (Tank 39) was unsuccessful, attracting only raccoons and javelinas, however, a feral hog did visit this tank at the final drying of the tank around 12/8/03. A remote-sensing camera set at Rattlesnake Tank was only successful at capturing images of javelinas, raccoon, and Greater Roadrunners. This trap and camera was moved on 12/15/03 to Surprise Tank A (Tank 44).

Neighboring Feral Hog Distribution Information

Mac Forbes, ranch manager of the Pittcock-Rosillos Ranch, stated that he has been at the ranch for 11 months and neither he, nor his ranch personnel, has encountered feral hogs or feral hog tracks or sign. Mr. Forbes stated that they run cattle over much of the property and he believes they would have seen activity if feral hogs had moved into the ranch area. The property is fed by three springs and no tracks have been seen in these areas. There are also 2 earthen tanks on the

property which are currently dry. The ranch is bounded by 5 foot tall fencing to keep cattle inside. Mr. Forbes stated that they ranch over 300 goats on the property. He is appreciative of the Park's concern regarding feral hog invasion and is supportive of its efforts to survey the area and of trapping hogs.

According to Joe Louis, ranch manager of the Chalk Draw Ranch, hogs have yet to be trapped on their property this season, however, they have seen a few tracks on the ranch. They intend to pursue trapping of hogs during the colder, drier months of the winter.

A report by an NPS maintenance employee revealed that a feral hog was killed in the Terlingua Ranch area, however, it is uncertain who or where this was done. A report from a conversation between an NPS VUA employee and the trapper for the Chalk Draw Ranch revealed that someone may have released hogs on the Terlingua Ranch area for hunting. This information is not yet confirmed.

Navigation

The following off-roads were travelable during the 2003 season:

Road to Tank 94 – up to Nine-Point Draw

Road to Tank 44 – up to Tank 44

Road from Airport Road at Tank 28 to Tank 39 and out onto N. Rosillos Ranch Road

Powerline Track between Airport Road and N. Rosillos Ranch Road

North/South Road from Chalk Draw Ranch to Airport Road (Note – after rain, this road can be muddy; vehicle has been stuck just south of Tank 212 – deep ruts)

Short Road to Tank 60 from North/South road mentioned above

Road from Chalk Draw Ranch Road to Tank 5

Road from Chalk Draw Ranch Road to Tank 15

Future Work

Water source Surveys

At the end of the season, water sources were drying up and future efforts at trapping during the drier winter season may be more successful. Some areas that continue to hold water and may be considered for future trapping efforts are Tanks 3, 4, 6, 15, 28, 42, 44, and 46. An effort to visit springs in the North Rosillos Mountains and other unvisited tanks will improve knowledge of feral hog distribution (see distribution map for unvisited sites).

Traps

Four unset traps are currently on site. Box traps are located at Tanks 42 and 44, and corral traps are located at Tanks 5 and 115.

Information

Electronic files containing feral hog information are located on Computer #2 in the Biological Technician office in C:\Wildlife\Feral Hog. The database is a Microsoft Access file in C:\Wildlife\Feral Hog\Feral Hog – Data\hogsurveys to 2003.mdb. The ArcView map project is

C:\feral hog map 2003\feralhog.apr. Hard copies of information are located in the SCRM Library in the file cabinet labeled *Integrated Pest Management and General Information*.

Miscellaneous

Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC) policy states that one must complete TAHC brucellosis training in order to test for swine brucellosis. It may also be necessary to be working under a licensed veterinarian's supervision. Further information can be obtained from TAHC at 1-800-550-8242.

Attachments:

2003 Feral Hog Distribution Survey Database Spreadsheet

Instructions for Feral Hog data entry

Distribution Map - Feral Hog Surveys 2003

Distribution Map - Feral Hog Surveys 2002

Big Bend National Park Precipitation from Aug 16 through Dec 16, 2003