

Guidance for Take of Certain Wildlife Related to New World Screwworm Surveillance

Background: Surveillance and removal of wildlife suspected to be infested with New World Screwworm (NWS) is critical for management, mitigation, and containment of this pest. Landowners, ranch managers, and others that live or frequent rural lands are most likely to encounter suspect infested wildlife during routine daily activities and are encouraged to remove these animals and report to TPWD. There are several legal mechanisms that landowners, hunters, and others can utilize to remove these animals.

Humane Dispatch

Parks and Wildlife Code Chapter 61. Sec 61.060 provides a defense to prosecution for anyone that dispatches a game bird or game animal that appears to be sick, diseased, or exhibiting disease symptoms. This will be the most expeditious approach to dispatch game birds or animals suspected of being infested with NWS. Please, follow the steps below to humanely dispatch an animal that is suspected to be diseased:

- Establish a relationship with your local game warden as soon as possible and discuss removal of native game birds or animals (white-tailed deer, mule deer, javelina, turkey, quail) that appear to have an NWS infestation. This communication will ensure clarity on expectations from the Game Warden prior to needing to euthanize an animal.
- Once animal is euthanized, place it on a surface that will contain larvae (e.g. tarp) and prevent them from burrowing into the soil. Then contact both your local game warden to inform them of the diseased animal and your local TPWD biologist to coordinate further instructions for sample collection.
- Any animal that is euthanized must be retained for sampling. Sampling procedures should be coordinated through your local TPWD biologist, who will either arrange to come collect samples or will provide appropriate instructions.
- No part of the animal may be retained by the person euthanizing the animal.
- Any part of the diseased animal that is not submitted for sampling must be properly disposed of and retained on the premise of take unless otherwise directed by TPWD staff.

TPWD Special Authorization for Take

Parks and Wildlife Code Chapter 12 Sec 12.013 allows TPWD to authorize a landowner or landowner's agent to take wildlife for the purposes of diagnosis, management, or prevention of disease in wildlife. The authorization will specify the conditions under which

wildlife can be taken, disease sampling requirements, number and species of wildlife to be taken and duration of authorization. The following steps provide information on how to request and utilize an Authorization for Take.

- The landowner or landowner's authorized agent must request the authorization and that request should be directed to the local TPWD biologist.
- All persons expected to dispatch animals must be listed on the authorization and those individuals must have a valid hunting license.
- All animals taken under the authorization must be retained for sample collection per instructions on the authorization.
- No portion of an animal taken under the authorization may be retained.
- All conditions for take will be listed in the authorization.
- Species of wildlife to be taken will be approved by the TPWD, but these authorizations are generally directed towards removal of white-tailed deer or javelina.

Carcass Disposal

- Immediately following lethal removal, collect as many larvae from the wound as possible and place them in a container filled with 70% isopropyl alcohol, or
 - For small wounds, cut out the entire wound from the carcass and place the tissue in a sealable bag and refrigerate.
 - For large wounds, contact the TPWD primary POC for instructions on tissue and fly larvae collections.
- Avoid moving carcasses until all living NWS larvae have been contained or removed from the carcass. A tarp or plastic barrier (i.e. 10 mil thickness) is recommended to be placed under the animal during larvae removal to mitigate larval migration into the soil.
- All larvae shall be killed via freezing, burning, placing in 70% isopropyl alcohol, or using pesticides approved by the Environmental Protection Agency for control of NWS. Larvae from deep wounds should be methodically removed to ensure no larvae remains in the carcass.