

Next Feral Swine Listening Session scheduled for Anson County on May 23

The N.C. Feral Swine Task Force was formed about a year ago to help address the growing issue of feral swine to the state.

Feral swine is not a new problem to North Carolina. Our wildlife officials, parks and farmers have all been dealing with them for years. It is estimated that this invasive species causes about \$1.5 billion annually nationwide in agricultural damages.

The creation of the task force was an effort to coordinate state and federal groups working on feral swine issues and to help develop solutions.

This group consists of representatives from the N.C. Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, N.C. Wildlife Resource Commission, N.C. Division of Public Health, USDA APHIS Veterinary Services, USDA Wildlife Services.

Feral swine pose a threat to human, livestock and pet health, agricultural lands, wildlife and natural habitats, cultural and historic sites and lawns, parks and other recreational property. We do not know the extent of the feral swine population in the state or the economic impact, but USDA Wildlife Services and the NC Wildlife Resource Commission are working on gathering that data.

In late November, the task force held their first listening session in Davie County. About three dozen farmers met with members of the task force to discuss their concerns and have their questions answered regarding feral swine. The session included presentations on the resources and services offered by N.C. Wildlife Resource Commission and USDA Wildlife Services to control feral swine. The session ended with a trapping demonstration.

The task force has started planning more listening sessions across the state.

The next session is in Anson County on May 23 from 6 to 8 p.m. The meeting will be held at the Anson County Cooperative Extension at 501 McLaurin Street in Wadesboro. More sessions will be announced in the coming months.

Farmers, residents and other groups interested in the control of feral swine are encouraged to participate. If you cannot attend, there are other ways to help the task force.

The N.C. Wildlife Resource Commission is working to develop a comprehensive map of feral swine and the damage they cause. Report Feral Swine sightings, damage and kills to the NC Wildlife Helpline, 866-318-2401 or email wildlifehelpline@ncwildlife.org.

If you are a hunter or trap feral swine on your farm, you can request feral swine test kits. These kits are free, confidential and will help us determine diseases prevalent in feral swine in N.C. Kits are available through the NCDA&CS Veterinary Division, 919-707-3250.