

DECISION

SUPPLEMENT TO THE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT: REDUCING FERAL HOG DAMAGE THROUGH AN INTEGRATED WILDLIFE DAMAGE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM IN THE STATE OF GEORGIA

I. INTRODUCTION

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Wildlife Services (WS) program has prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) to analyze the potential environmental and social impacts to the quality of the human environment from resolving damage and threats associated with feral swine (*Sus scrofa*) when requested in Georgia (USDA 2005). The EA documents the need for feral swine damage management and assesses potential impacts on the human environment of four alternatives to address that need. After consideration of the analysis contained in the EA and review of public comments, a Decision and Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the EA was issued on April 11, 2005. The Decision and FONSI selected the proposed action alternative which implemented an integrated damage management program using multiple methods to adequately address the need to manage damage associated with feral swine.

II. AUTHORITY AND COMPLIANCE

WS is authorized by law to reduce damage caused by wildlife through the Act of March 2, 1931 (46 Stat. 1468; 7 U.S.C. 426-426b), as amended and the Act of December 22, 1987 (101 Stat. 1329-331, 7 U.S.C. 426c). The authority for management of wildlife species in Georgia is the responsibility of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources (GDNR). The EA and the supplement ensures WS' actions comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), with the Council on Environmental Quality guidelines (40 CFR 1500), and with APHIS' NEPA implementing regulations (7 CFR 372). All feral swine damage management activities, including disposal requirements, are conducted consistent with: 1) the Endangered Species Act of 1973, 2) the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA), 3) applicable Executive Orders, and 4) applicable Federal, State, and local laws, regulations and policies, including WS' Directives.

III. PURPOSE

The EA evaluates feral swine damage management under four alternatives to reduce damage and threats of damage wherever such management is requested by a cooperator. The analyses in the EA are intended to apply to any action taken by WS to alleviate damage or threats of damage associated with feral swine that may occur in any locale and at any time within Georgia. The EA emphasizes major issues as they relate to specific areas; however, the issues addressed apply wherever damage and the resulting management activities would occur. The standard WS Decision Model (Slate et al. 1992, USDA 1997, USDA 2005) would be the site-specific procedure for individual actions conducted by WS. The supplement adds to the analysis in the EA and the 2005 Decision and FONSI. The information and analyses in the EA remain valid unless otherwise noted.

Purpose of the Supplement to the EA

The supplement to the EA was prepared to examine potential environmental impacts of the proposed action alternative based on new information that has become available from public comments, research findings, and data gathering since the issuance of the Decision and FONSI in 2005 along with new methods that have become available since the Decision for the EA was issued. WS has also been requested to participate in disease surveillance and monitoring programs involving feral swine. In

addition, the supplement communicates to the public the analysis of individual and cumulative impacts of the proposed action alternative since 2005 and documents the analyses of WS' feral swine damage management activities in Georgia since the Decision/FONSI was issued in 2005 to ensure program activities remain within the impact parameters analyzed in the EA. This new Decision is based on the analyses in the EA, the 2005 Decision/FONSI, and the supplement to the EA.

IV. NEED FOR ACTION

The need for action arises from requests for assistance received by WS to reduce and prevent damage associated with feral swine from occurring to four major categories: agricultural resources, natural resources, property, and threats to human safety. The need for action to manage feral swine damage remains as addressed in the EA and remains applicable to the supplement to the EA. WS continues to receive requests for both operational assistance and technical assistance from those persons experiencing damage or threats of damage associated with feral swine. Since FY 2005, damage has been reported to WS or WS has verified over \$124,000 in damages caused by feral swine in the State.

V. RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTS

WS has developed a programmatic Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) that addressed the need for wildlife damage management (USDA 1997). The FEIS contains a detailed discussion of the potential impacts to the human environment from wildlife damage management methods and techniques employed by WS, including methods used to manage damage associated with feral swine. Pertinent information in the FEIS has been incorporated into the EA, the supplement to the EA, and this decision document by reference.

VI. WS' RECORD KEEPING

The Management Information System maintained by WS includes requests for assistance and the associated actions that are received by WS, including those requests for assistance associated with feral swine.

VII. PROPOSED ACTION

The no action/proposed action alternative continues the current implementation of an adaptive integrated approach utilizing non-lethal and lethal techniques, as deemed appropriate using the WS Decision Model, to reduce damage and threats caused by feral swine in the State. The adaptive approach to managing damage associated with feral swine would integrate the use of the most practical and effective methods to resolve a request for damage management as determined by site-specific evaluation to reduce damage or threats to human safety for each request. City/town managers, agricultural producers, property owners, and others requesting assistance would be provided information regarding the use of appropriate non-lethal and lethal techniques.

Non-lethal methods include, but are not limited to: behavior modification, lure crops, visual deterrents, dogs, live traps, exclusionary devices, frightening devices, chemical immobilization (see the EA for a complete list and description of potential methods). Lethal methods considered by WS include: live-capture followed by euthanasia and shooting.

VIII. DECISIONS TO BE MADE

Based on the scope of the EA and the supplement, the decisions to be made are: 1) should WS continue to conduct feral swine damage management to alleviate and prevent damage, 2) should WS continue to

implement a management strategy using an integrated methods approach, including technical assistance and direct operational assistance, to meet the need to reduce damage and threats of damage, 3) if not, should WS attempt to implement one of the alternatives to an integrated management strategy as described in the EA, and 4) would continuing the proposed action alternative, as supplemented, result in adverse impacts to the environment requiring the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) based on activities conducted since the completion of the EA and/or based on new information available.

IX. SCOPE OF ANALYSIS

The EA evaluates alleviating or preventing damage associated with feral swine under four alternatives wherever such management is requested by a cooperator. The analyses in the EA are intended to apply to any action taken by WS to alleviate feral swine damage that may occur at any time within the State. The EA emphasizes major issues as those issues relate to specific areas; however, the issues addressed apply wherever feral swine damage and the resulting management activities would occur. The standard WS Decision Model (Slate et al. 1992, USDA 1997, USDA 2005) would be the site-specific procedure for individual actions conducted by WS. The supplement adds to the analysis in the EA and the 2005 Decision and FONSI. The information and analyses in the EA remain valid unless otherwise noted in the supplement.

The GDNR has jurisdiction over the management of wildlife in the State and has specialized expertise in identifying and quantifying potential adverse effects to the human environment from management activities. There is no closed season for feral swine in the State which allows feral swine to be lethally removed at any time, including at night. There is no limit on the number of feral swine that can be removed, including no daily possession limit.

The EA and the supplement analyze the potential impacts of feral swine damage management and address activities on those properties currently under a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or cooperative service agreement with WS where activities have been and currently are being conducted. The EA and the supplement also address the impacts of feral swine damage management where additional agreements may be signed in the future. Because the objective is to reduce damage and because the program's goals and directives are to provide services when requested, within the constraints of available funding and workforce, it is conceivable that additional feral swine damage management efforts could occur at additional locations in the State. Thus, the EA and the supplement anticipate the potential expansion and analyze the impacts of such efforts as part of the program.

The supplement to the EA along with the EA and the 2005 Decision and FONSI were made available for public review and comment through the publication of a legal notice announcing a minimum of a 30-day comment period. The legal notice was published in the *Atlanta Journal and Constitution* and posted on the APHIS website located at http://www.aphis.usda.gov/wildlife_damage/nepa.shtml according to WS' public notification requirements (72 FR 13237-13238). A letter of availability was directly mailed to agencies, organizations, and individuals with probable interest in feral swine damage management in Georgia. WS received no comment letters during the public involvement process.

X. AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

Damage or threats of damage caused by feral swine can occur statewide in Georgia wherever feral swine occur. However, feral swine damage management would only be conducted by WS when requested by a landowner or manager and only on properties where a cooperative service agreement or other comparable document has been signed between WS and a cooperating entity. Feral swine are capable of utilizing a

variety of habitats in the State. Feral swine can be found throughout the State; therefore, requests for assistance to manage damage or threats of damage could occur in areas occupied by feral swine.

XI. ISSUES ANALYZED IN DETAIL

Issues related to wildlife damage management were initially identified and defined during the development of WS' programmatic FEIS (USDA 1997). Issues related to feral swine damage management in Georgia were defined and preliminary alternatives were identified through consultation with the GDNR. The EA and the supplement to the EA were also made available to the public for review and comment through notices published in local media and through direct notification of interested parties.

Chapter 2 of the EA describes in detail the issues considered and evaluated in the EA and the supplement to the EA (USDA 2005). The following issues were identified as important to the scope of the analysis (40 CFR 1508.25) with each alternative evaluated in the EA relative to the impacts on the major issues:

- Issue 1 - Effects on feral hog populations
- Issue 2 - Effects on other wildlife species, including T&E species
- Issue 3 - Effects on human health and safety
- Issue 4 - Humaneness and animal welfare concerns of methods used

Those issues identified during the development of the EA were evaluated in the supplement by each issue as those issues related to WS' activities conducted since the original Decision was signed in 2005. Each of those issues was also evaluated as those issues relate to conducting the proposed action alternative as described in the supplement to the EA.

XII. ISSUES ADDRESSED BUT NOT CONSIDERED IN DETAIL

In addition to those issues analyzed in detail, several additional issues were identified during the development of the EA, but were not considered in detail. The rationale for the decision not to analyze those issues in detail is discussed in the EA. WS has reviewed the issues not considered in detail as described in the EA and has determined that the analysis provided in the EA has not changed and is still appropriate.

XIII. ALTERNATIVES ANALYZED IN DETAIL

Four alternatives were developed to respond to the issues identified in Chapter 2 of the EA and to address the need for action discussed in Chapter 1 of the EA (USDA 2005). Chapter 4 of the EA analyzes the environmental consequences of each alternative in comparison, to determine the extent of actual or potential impacts on the issues. The following alternatives were analyzed in detail in the EA:

- Alternative 1 – Technical Assistance Only
- Alternative 2 – Integrated Feral Hog Damage Management Program (Proposed Action/No Action)
- Alternative 3 – Non-lethal Feral Hog Damage Management Only By WS
- Alternative 4 – No Federal WS Feral Hog Damage Management

The EA contains a detailed description and discussion of the alternatives and the effects of the alternatives on the issues identified. The EA provides a description of the methods that could be used or

recommended by WS under each of the alternatives. The supplement to the EA provides additional discussion of methods available for use since the completion of the EA.

XIV. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED BUT NOT ANALYZED IN DETAIL

Additional alternatives were also considered to address the issues, but were not analyzed in detail with the rationale discussed in the EA (USDA 2005). WS has reviewed the alternatives analyzed but not in detail and determined the analyses in the EA are still appropriate for those alternatives considered.

XV. STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

The WS program in Georgia uses many standard operating procedures and conducts work pursuant to WS' Directives. Standard operating procedures are discussed in detail in Chapter 5 of WS' programmatic FEIS (USDA 1997) and in Chapter 3 of the EA (USDA 2005). Those standard operating procedures would continue to be incorporated into activities conducted by WS when addressing damage and threats of damage associated with feral swine.

XVI. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES FOR ISSUES ANALYZED IN DETAIL

Chapter 4 of the EA analyzes the environmental consequences of each alternative in comparison, to determine the extent of actual or potential impacts on those major issues identified in the EA. The proposed action/no action alternative serves as the baseline for the analysis and the comparison of expected impacts among the alternatives. The analysis also takes into consideration mandates, directives, and the procedures of WS and the GDNR. The analyses in Chapter 4 of the EA indicated the potential impacts to the quality of the human environment would be similar across the alternatives.

Based on the analyses in the EA, the 2005 Decision determined the need for action and the issues identified in the EA were best addressed by selecting Alternative 2 (proposed action/no action alternative) and the implementation of the selected alternative would not significantly affect the quality of the human environment (USDA 2005). Between FY 2005 and FY 2010, WS has implemented a feral swine damage management program which responds to requests for assistance using an adaptive integrated methods approach as described under Alternative 2 in the EA. The supplement to the EA evaluates the implementation of Alternative 2 from FY 2005 through FY 2010 to ensure individual and cumulative activities conducted pursuant to the alternative were and would continue to be within the impact parameters evaluated in the EA based on current information and methods. Potential impacts of Alternative 1, Alternative 3, and Alternative 4 on the human environment related to the major issues have not changed from those described in the EA.

The following resource values in Georgia are not expected to be significantly impacted by any of the alternatives based on the analyses in the EA and in the supplement to the EA: soils, geology, minerals, water quality/quantity, flood plains, wetlands, critical habitats (areas listed in T&E species recovery plans), visual resources, air quality, prime and unique farmlands, aquatic resources, timber, and range. The activities proposed in the alternatives would have a negligible effect on atmospheric conditions including the global climate. Meaningful direct or indirect emissions of greenhouse gases would not occur as a result of any of the alternatives. Those alternatives would meet the requirements of applicable laws, regulations, and Executive Orders, including the Clean Air Act and Executive Order 13514.

The following issues were analyzed in detail in the supplement as they relate to those activities conducted by WS under the selected alternative from FY 2005 through FY 2010 and those additional activities proposed in the supplement to the EA:

Issue 1 - Effects on feral hog populations

Under the proposed action alternative (Alternative 2), WS provides technical and direct damage assistance using methods described in the EA in an integrated approach in which all or a combination of methods may be employed to resolve a request for assistance. As addressed in the supplement, those methods that have become available since the completion of the EA could also be used as part of an integrated approach to reducing feral swine damage. Of primary concern is the magnitude of take on a species' population from the use of lethal methods.

Lethal methods are employed to remove an individual or a group of individuals responsible for causing damage or the threat of damage and only after requests for such assistance are received by WS. The use of lethal methods could therefore result in local population reductions in the area where damage or threats were occurring. The number of feral swine removed from the statewide population under the proposed action would be dependent on the number of requests for assistance received, the number of feral swine causing damage, and the efficacy of methods employed.

The total take of feral swine by WS to reduce damage or threats of damage did not exceed anticipated annual take levels evaluated in the EA during any year from FY 2005 through FY 2010. Based on those quantitative and qualitative parameters addressed in the EA and the supplement to the EA, the take levels addressed under the proposed action alternative (Alternative 2) have been and would continue to be considered of low magnitude when compared to population trend data, population estimates, and harvest data for feral swine. WS' damage management activities were site specific, and although local populations of feral swine may have been reduced, there was no probable adverse impact on statewide, regional, or national populations from WS' activities conducted from FY 2005 through FY 2010. The potential impacts of program activities on wildlife species have not changed from those analyzed in the EA. Therefore, based on the analyses in the EA of the proposed action alternative and WS' activities being within the scope analyzed in the EA, WS' activities have not had an adverse impact on feral swine populations in the State.

Since the completion of the EA, trap monitors, FLIR devices, and night vision equipment have become available for use while reducing feral swine damage. Those methods aid in the use of other methods or allow other methods to be applied more selectively and efficiently. Since those methods are components of other methods, there would be no adverse effects on feral swine populations from the use of those methods. The sampling of feral swine for diseases would not adversely affect the populations of feral swine and would not result in any take that would not have already occurred in the absence of disease sampling (*e.g.*, hunter harvest) or would not exceed those parameters evaluated in the EA or the supplement to the EA.

Issue 2 - Effects on other wildlife species, including threatened and endangered species

While every precaution is taken to safeguard against taking non-targets during operational use of methods and techniques for resolving damage, the use of such methods can result in the incidental take of unintended species. Those occurrences are minimal and should not affect the overall populations of any species. Based on current information, WS' unintentional take of non-targets from FY 2005 through FY 2010 during feral swine damage management activities has not adversely affected populations of those species based on the analyses in the supplement. No adverse effects to non-targets were observed or reported to WS during feral swine damage management activities. Take of non-targets under the proposed supplement is not expected to reach a magnitude that would cause adverse effects to those non-target populations likely to be taken during activities based on the analyses in the supplement. WS would continue to monitor the take of non-target species to ensure program activities or methodologies used in

feral swine damage management do not adversely impact non-targets. WS' take of non-targets is expected to continue to be extremely low to non-existent.

No threatened and endangered (T&E) species were taken or adversely affected by WS' actions conducted from FY 2005 through FY 2010. A review of T&E species listed by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Marine Fisheries Service, and the GDNR showed that additional listings of T&E species in Georgia have occurred since the completion of the EA in 2005. Based on the review of available information in the supplement to the EA, WS determined the proposed action alternative, as supplemented, would have no effect on those species listed since the completion of the EA. In addition, the use of trap monitors, night vision equipment, and FLIR equipment would have no effect on any T&E species listed within the State. WS' determination in the EA for those species listed during the development of the EA is still valid and appropriate (USDA 2005).

Issue 3 - Effects on human health and safety

WS' implementation of the proposed action alternative from FY 2005 through FY 2010 did not result in any adverse impacts to human safety. The potential impacts of program activities on human health and safety have not changed from those analyzed in the EA. Based on the analyses in the EA and WS' programmatic FEIS, when WS' activities are conducted according to WS' directives and standard operating procedures, according to federal, state, and local laws, and to label requirements, those activities pose minimal risks to human safety (USDA 1997, USDA 2005).

Management activities conducted by WS from FY 2005 through FY 2010 did not result in any injuries or illnesses to any members of the public or to WS' personnel. No injuries or illness from WS' activities were reported to WS from FY 2005 through FY 2010.

Night vision equipment, FLIR equipment, and trap monitors are employed as components of other methods that when employed, allow those methods to be employed more efficiently and effectively. In addition, night vision equipment and FLIR equipment are most often employed with the use of a firearm which allows activities to be conducted at night when human activity tends to be lowest; therefore, the use of night vision equipment and FLIR equipment would not adversely affect human safety, but potentially could further reduce risks. Trap monitors are attached directly to traps and would not pose a threat to human safety. Impacts of the proposed action alternative, as supplemented, on this issue are expected to remain insignificant.

Issue 4 - Humaneness of methods to be used

The issue of humaneness was also analyzed in detail in relationship to the alternatives in the EA. Since many methods addressed in the EA are available under all the alternatives, the issue of method humaneness would be similar for those methods across all the alternatives. WS' personnel are experienced and professional in their use of management methods. When employing methods to resolve damage, methods are applied as humanely as possible. Methods used in feral swine damage management activities since the completion of the EA and their potential impacts on humaneness and animal welfare have not changed from those analyzed in the EA.

Trap monitoring devices would be employed when applicable that indicate when a trap has been activated. Trap monitoring devices would allow personnel to prioritize trap checks and decrease the amount of time required to check traps which decreases the amount of time captured wildlife are restrained. By reducing the amount of time wildlife are restrained, pain and stress can be minimized which would reduce the distress of captured wildlife. Therefore, the use of trap monitoring devices proposed under the supplement would likely result in traps being used more humanely. Additionally, the use of FLIR and

night vision equipment to remove feral swine may improve the perceived humanness of killing feral swine using firearms since those components would aid in identifying target species and allowing for more accurate shot placements when using firearms.

XVII. CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

No cumulative adverse effects have been identified as a result of program activities implemented over time based on analyses contained in the EA, from monitoring reports, or from analyses contained in the supplement. WS continues to implement an integrated damage management program that adapts to each request for assistance with managing damage. WS only targets feral swine causing damage or posing a threat of damage and only after a request for assistance is received.

WS' activities are conducted on a small portion of the land area of the State and although local declines in populations could occur from WS' activities, those activities would not reach a level where populations would be adversely affected from those actions. Feral swine are non-native species and could be considered as negatively affecting native fauna. Therefore, any reduction in local populations of feral swine could be viewed as benefitting native fauna and flora.

The methods described in the EA and the supplement to the EA all have a high level of selectivity and can be employed using standard operating procedures to ensure minimal impacts to non-targets species. Based on the methods available to resolve damage and damage threats, WS does not anticipate the number of non-targets taken to reach a magnitude where declines in those species' populations would occur. Therefore, take of non-targets would not cumulatively impact the populations of non-target species.

WS has received no reports or documented any adverse effects to human safety from WS' feral swine damage management activities conducted from FY 2005 through FY 2010. Personnel employing methods would continue to be trained to be proficient in the use of those methods to ensure the safety of the applicator and to the public. Based on the use patterns of methods, those methods would not cumulatively impact human safety. WS employs methods as humanely as possible by applying measures to minimize pain and that allow wildlife captured to be addressed in a timely manner to minimize distress. Through the establishment of WS' Directives and standard operating procedures that guide WS in the use of methods to address damage, the cumulative impacts on the issue of method humanness are minimal.

Since those persons seeking assistance could remove feral swine from areas where damage is occurring, WS' involvement would have no effect on the aesthetic value of feral swine in the area where damage was occurring since the removal would likely occur whether WS was involved with taking those individuals or not.

XVIII. DECISION AND RATIONALE

Based on the analyses of the alternatives developed to address those issues in the EA, including individual and cumulative impacts of those alternatives, the following decision has been reached:

Decision

The information and analyses in the supplement to the EA have been carefully reviewed, including the analyses in the EA, the comments received during the public involvement processes, and the 2005 Decision/FONSI. After review and consideration, the proposed action alternative, based on the analyses in the supplement to the EA, has been determined to be environmentally acceptable by addressing the issues and needs while balancing the environmental concerns of management agencies, landowners,

advocacy groups, and the public. The analyses in the EA and the supplement to the EA adequately address the identified issues which reasonably confirms that no significant impact, individually or cumulatively, to wildlife populations or to the quality of the human environment are likely to occur from the proposed activities addressed in the EA or the supplement to the EA. Therefore, the analysis in the EA, as supplemented, remains valid and does not warrant the completion of an EIS.

Based on analyses in the EA and the supplement to the EA, the issues identified are best addressed by continuing the proposed action alternative, as supplemented, and applying the associated standard operating procedures discussed in Chapter 3 of the EA. The proposed action, as addressed in the supplement, successfully addresses (1) feral swine damage management using a combination of the most effective methods and does not adversely impact the environment, property, human safety, and/or non-target species, including T&E species; (2) it offers the greatest chance of maximizing effectiveness and benefits to resource owners and managers while minimizing cumulative impacts on the quality of the human environment that might result from the program's effect on target and non-target species populations; (3) it presents the greatest chance of maximizing net benefits while minimizing adverse impacts to public health and safety; and (4) it offers a balanced approach to the issues of humaneness and aesthetics when all facets of those issues are considered. Further analysis would be triggered if changes occur that broaden the scope of feral swine damage management activities, that affect the natural or human environment, or from the issuance of new environmental regulations.

Finding Of No Significant Impact

Based on the analyses provided in the EA, the 2005 Decision/FONSI, the monitoring reports, and the supplement, there continues to be no indications that WS' activities have had or would have a significant impact, individually or cumulatively, on the quality of the human environment. I agree with this conclusion and therefore, find that an EIS should not be prepared. This determination is based on the following factors:

1. Feral swine damage management as conducted by WS in Georgia would not be regional or national in scope.
2. Based on the analyses in the EA and in the supplement, the proposed action alternative would pose minimal risk to public health and safety. Risks to the public from methods available to address damage were determined to be low in a formal risk assessment (USDA 1997).
3. The proposed action, as supplemented, would continue to have no significant impact on unique characteristics such as park lands, prime farm lands, wetlands, wild and scenic areas, or ecologically critical areas. WS' standard operating procedures and adherence to laws and regulations that govern impacts on elements of the human environment would assure that significant adverse impacts are avoided.
4. The effects on the quality of the human environment are not highly controversial. Although there may be opposition to killing wildlife, this action is not controversial in relation to size, nature, or effects. Based on consultations with the GDNR, the proposed action, as supplemented, is not likely to cause a controversial disagreement among the appropriate resource professionals.
5. Based on the analysis documented in the EA, the supplement to the EA, and the accompanying administrative file, the effects of the proposed damage management program on the human environment would not be significant. The effects of the proposed activities are not highly uncertain and do not involve unique or unknown risks.

6. The proposed action, as supplemented, does not establish a precedent for future actions. This action would not set a precedent for future actions that may be implemented or planned within the State.
7. No significant cumulative effects were identified in the analyses conducted in the EA and the supplement.
8. The proposed activities would not affect districts, sites, highways, structures, or objects listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, nor would they likely cause any loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural, or historical resources.
9. Based on a review of activities conducted under the proposed action alternative, the determination made in the EA remains appropriate to those species listed as threatened and endangered at the time the EA was completed. The supplement to the EA determined that activities conducted pursuant to the EA, as supplemented, would continue to have no effect on those species listed since the completion of the EA.
10. The proposed action alternative has been and would continue to be in compliance with all applicable federal, State, and local laws.

Rationale

The rationale for this decision is based on several considerations. This decision takes into account public comments, social/political and economic concerns, public health and safety, and the best available science. The foremost considerations are that: 1) feral swine damage management would only be conducted by WS at the request of landowners/managers, 2) management actions are consistent with applicable laws, regulations, policies, and directives and 3) no adverse impacts to the environment were identified in the analysis. As a part of this Decision, the WS program in Georgia would continue to provide effective and practical technical assistance and direct management techniques that reduce damage.



Charles S. Brown, Director-Eastern Region
 USDA/APHIS/WS
 Raleigh, North Carolina

11/11/11
 Date

XIX. LITERATURE CITED

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