

Item 5(a)

VOL.

53 PAGE 268

EAST TEXAS COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS,
DEEP EAST TEXAS COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS,
AND ARK-TEX COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

Northeast Texas Beaver and Feral Hog Management Program Joint Resolution

Whereas, in Northeast Texas most large reservoirs, private lakes, and U.S. Army Corp of Engineers and U.S. Soil Conservation lakes have been constructed to provide water supply and recreational opportunities for hundreds of thousands of residents and visitors; and

Whereas, beavers, a non-native Texas species, were introduced in Northeast Texas by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department as late as 1973; and

Whereas, feral hogs are also a non-native Texas species, introduced to the area through a combination of accidental releases and intentional stockings; and

Whereas, feral hogs are prolific breeders, sometimes one hog producing up to 24 offspring in a single year. The beaver population has also changed to where they have shorter gestational periods; and

Whereas, the increase in suitable habitat coupled with the species' reproductive patterns results in a surge in the population of these species in the 35 county Northeast Texas region (Bowie, Cass, Delta, Franklin, Hopkins, Lamar, Morris, Red River, Titus, Angelina, Houston, Jasper, Nacogdoches, Newton, Polk, Sabine, San Augustine, San Jacinto, Shelby, Trinity, Tyler, Anderson, Camp, Cherokee, Gregg, Harrison, Henderson, Marion, Panola, Rains, Rusk, Smith, Upshur, Van Zandt and Wood); and

Whereas, local government officials in Northeast Texas have witnessed with increasing frequency property damage to roads, bridges, culverts, stock tanks, and lakes along with significant agricultural damage resulting from the beaver introduction and the current surge of the population of destructive feral hogs. This damage can be especially dangerous to the state's agriculture production, potentially costing the Texas economy millions of dollars in losses; and

Whereas, feral hogs carry lethal diseases that can be transmitted to humans; and

Whereas, feral hog activity is increasing along the state's highway system; at least two recent highway deaths in Navarro County and Wood County are attributed to feral hogs; and

Whereas, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Texas A&M Cooperative Extension Service and Cooperative Extension Program Wildlife Services Unit are the cooperating agencies in Texas to alleviate or mitigate damage caused by various wildlife species; and

Whereas, the State's allocation to address the problem for the 2006-2007 biennium is inadequate to reduce the numbers of beavers and feral hogs in Northeast Texas. The total funding for wildlife control for the entire state is \$3 million per year; and

Now, Therefore Be It Resolved That, additional manpower and equipment are desperately needed to alleviate the magnitude of beaver and feral hog destruction occurring in Northeast Texas, with the potential to spread to urban areas;

Be It Further Resolved That, the East Texas Council of Governments, Deep East Texas Council of Governments, and the Ark-Tex Council of Governments requests and encourages the Northeast Texas State Legislative Delegation to provide additional manpower and equipment to the Wildlife Services Unit for the 2008-2009 biennium period for the expressed purpose of beaver and feral hog management control in the 35 county Northeast Texas region. Specifically, it is requested that an additional \$4.5 million be directed to the Northeast Texas region to hire 20 dual role wildlife specialists, furnish the necessary equipment, provide per diem and fuel costs, and administrative costs for a two year period.

PASSED AND APPROVED THIS 21st DAY OF NOVEMBER, 2006

ATTEST:

