

Competitive Research Grant Program

Feral hog landscape impact study

Investigators: Richard Minnis, Wildlife and Fisheries; Delta Council; Numerous Landowners in the Delta; Delta National Forest; USFWS Refuge System



Project Goal:

1. To determine the ecological and economic effectiveness of four indices of feral hog abundance.
2. To evaluate the economic effectiveness of feral hog removal.

Project Objectives:

1. Develop and test the sensitivity of four indices of abundance for feral hogs in the southern delta region of Mississippi.
2. Evaluate three measures of control for reducing feral hog abundance.

Synopsis of research activities per objective:

1. The indices to be developed include passive track count surveys, spotlight surveys, and damage assessment surveys. The indices will be conducted over an area of one township (36 mi²). Three of the areas will undergo a controlled removal of feral hogs. Afterwards, the indices will be conducted again for evaluation of sensitivity of change.
2. Three control programs will be established to evaluate effectiveness. An intensive trapping program will be conducted on one area, an intensive night shooting will be conducted on a second area, and the third area will have a

combination of both techniques. The forth area will remain as a control.

Significant findings/results per objective to date:

Four study areas of >20,000 acres comprised of private agriculture and public lands have been established. Indices and trapping will continue through 2008.

Project success relative to original objectives:

The project is on target to reach its objectives.

Project leveraging:

A pre-proposal has been submitted and accepted to the CSREES invasive species program to enhance and expand this project. The project expands the population index study, incorporates ecology movement, economic damage assessment and an extensive outreach program

List post-docs and graduate students with title of thesis or dissertation, if completed, and estimated graduation date:

Sims, C. Expected graduation date in 2009. Thesis, Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, Mississippi State University.

