



## OREGON INVASIVE SPECIES COUNCIL

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### **PACIFIC NORTHWEST LAUNCHES “SQUEAL ON PIGS” CAMPAIGN TARGETED AT FERAL SWINE**

SALEM, Oregon—Feral swine face a new threat in the Pacific Northwest—the wrath of the Oregon, Washington, and Idaho Invasive Species Councils—as the three states launch a “Squeal on Pigs” campaign.

The campaign is intended to raise awareness about feral swine and the threat they pose to Pacific Northwest waterways and natural resources. The regional effort is intended to stop the expansion of feral swine populations, inform private landowners of the need to report feral swine, provide a convenient and easy way for people to report sightings of feral swine, establish baseline population estimates and distribution, and connect landowners with agencies that can provide technical assistance in feral swine management.

According to Rick Boatner, chair of the Oregon Invasive Species Council and Invasive Species, Wildlife Integrity Coordinator for the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, “We are trying to reduce the impacts of invasive species—in this case, feral swine—in the Pacific Northwest and also provide a model for a collaborative, regional strategy for protecting our regional natural resources. This project will leverage the strengths of all the partners to collectively reduce the environmental and economic impacts of feral swine throughout the Pacific Northwest.”

The invasive species councils define feral swine as any pig that is not confined within a fenced property. Feral swine have invaded the Pacific Northwest, causing damage to agricultural crops, rangelands and fish and wildlife habitat. Their destructive rooting and grubbing activities increase erosion and degrade water quality in streams; encourage the growth of noxious weeds; and cause millions of dollars in agricultural, environmental and property damage. Feral swine also prey on lambs, calves, fawns, upland birds and other types of terrestrial wildlife. Feral swine can transmit diseases such as brucellosis, pseudorabies, toxoplasma, Leptospirosis, E. coli and influenza to wildlife, livestock and humans.

To help people report sightings of feral swine, the Oregon, Washington and Idaho Invasive Species Councils are providing a toll free number—a SWINE LINE, if you will—for people to report sightings of suspected feral swine. **The number to dial is 888-268-9219.** The call is answered by a call center that then

reports the suspected sightings of feral swine to agency representatives in each state. People will not be able to obtain hunting information at the toll free number.

To address the threat of feral swine in Oregon, Dr. Mark Sytsma, Director for The Center for Lakes and Reservoirs at Portland State University (PSU), and Arick Rouhe, then a Master of Science candidate at PSU, developed a feral swine action plan in 2007 to eradicate this invasive species in Oregon. Their plan came on the heels of an Oregon State University feral swine pest risk assessment for Oregon by Dr. Bruce Coblenz, released in 2004, which designated feral swine as a “very high-risk species” due to great potential for establishment, environmental and economic impacts, and disease transmission to wildlife, livestock, and humans.

“Feral swine pose a tremendous threat to native Oregon fish and wildlife species and their habitats, particularly riparian corridors, and they are capable of transmitting serious diseases to humans and other livestock such as sheep,” said Sytsma. “Other states have lost the fight to control feral swine because they waited until populations became widespread and established. The key to controlling non-native species is early detection and rapid response. Oregon still has time to eradicate feral swine and prevent them from establishing along Oregon’s streams and waterways.”

A recent estimate of economic impact from feral swine in the U.S. is nearly \$1.5 billion annually, with heavily-infested states like Texas reporting \$52 million in damages each year.

As you enjoy your favorite camping, hunting, and hiking spots, this fall, keep your eyes out for feral swine, an unwelcome intruder in the Pacific Northwest. And if you happen to see any, don’t hesitate to “Squeal on Pigs.”

*The Oregon Invasive Species Council was established by the Oregon Legislature in 2002. Its mission is to conduct a coordinated and comprehensive effort to keep invasive species out of Oregon and to eliminate, reduce, or mitigate the impacts of invasive species already established in Oregon. Current members of the council hail from the Oregon Marine Board, USDA Forest Service, USDA-APHIS, Northwest Weed Management Partnership, Turf Merchants, Inc., Bureau of Land Management, City of Portland-Bureau of Environmental Service, Native Plant Society of Oregon, and Willowa Resources. In addition, agency representatives include Portland State University, Oregon Department of Forestry, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, Oregon State University, Oregon Department of Agriculture, and Oregon Department of Environmental Quality.*

