



JARRETT'S MEAT SERVICE
936-348-3868

335 CROSSROADS - MADISONVILLE, TEXAS

Woods, Waters, and Wildlife by John Jefferson
It Rained Antlers!

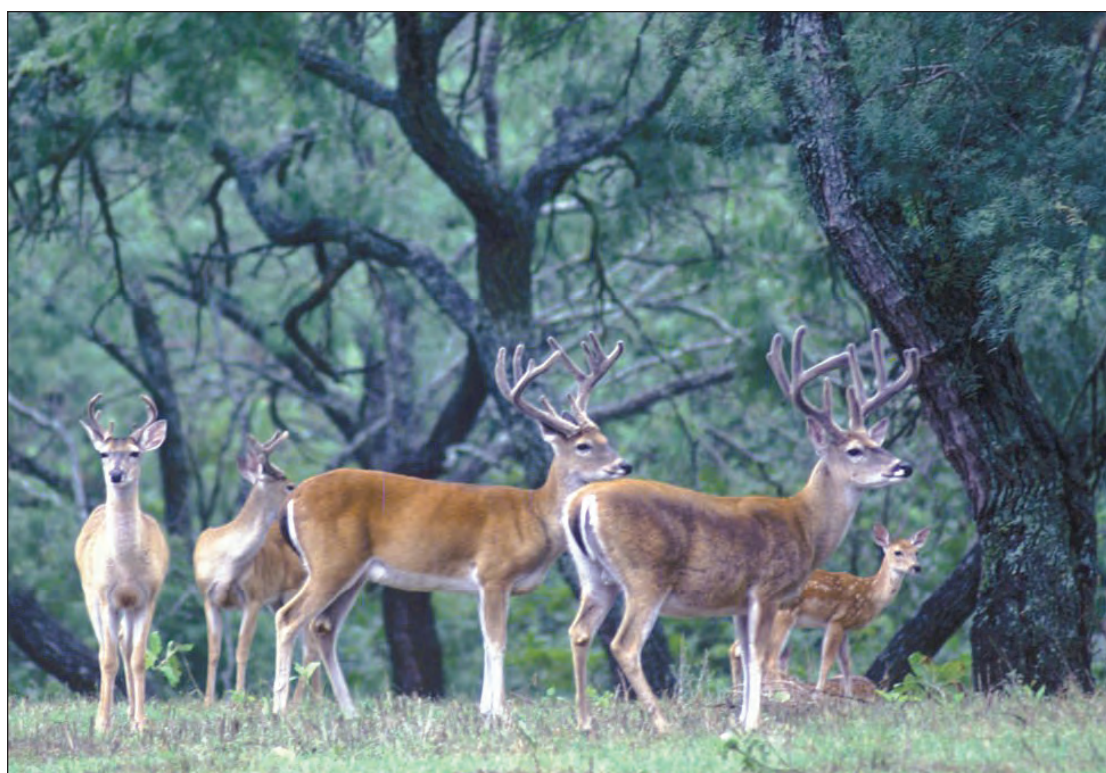
Texas Parks and Wildlife's press release last week predicted an "exceptional white-tailed deer season this fall." It quoted my friend, Blaise Korzekwa, TPWD's Big Game Program Leader, as saying over half the state had excellent habitat conditions.

I spoke with Blaise and got more specific information.

Good habitat conditions are critical to a healthy deer herd. And since most deer hunters are interested in antler production, habitat quality must exist in the spring. Deer managers and most hunters know that whitetails usually lose their antlers in late winter. There are exceptions, and I recall a time around the late '60s when deer started dropping their antlers in December, frustrating hunters.

As soon as antlers hit the ground each year, new ones begin to form. And that's when a healthy habitat becomes critical. Proper nourishment provides protein needed for antler growth. With enough, antlers can be superb. During a spring drought, antlers will still develop but could be merely average. Remember: this is Texas; average antlers here can still be remarkable to many hunters.

Last winter was fairly mild compared to the two previous years' ice and snow-filled weather. (Our utilities didn't even get shut off last February!) And deer could find the needed woody forbs to maintain fairly good health as they began recovering from the stress of breeding season ... poor guys. They were in better shape than most years. Nutritional intake could flow more to antlers than to recovering a well-spent body,



BLESSED SPRING RAINS fell over much of the Texas white-tailed deer range in the spring when it was needed to nourish vegetation that provides the protein for antler production. Even in some of the state that did not receive as much rain as others, buck deer there will still develop decent antlers. It looks like it will be a fine year for deer hunters.

(Photo by John Jefferson)

which is what often occurs.

Springtime rains began falling on much of Texas at the right time, revitalizing plants that would deliver the needed protein for antler development. That made a difference.

I asked Korzekwa if there were any areas that stood out as probably having unusually fine antlers, and some that would be merely average. He jumped on that!

He indicated that two areas in the central part of the state that received good rains were east of I-35 and another west of Fort Worth. Having received more spring rain than the previous

two years and, coupled with several years of good fawn crops, hunters in those areas could see more "wall hangers" this season.

The area west of Fort Worth received rain on many ranches, but it didn't fall on the entire area, as mentioned previously about quail and rain. Deer, however, move more to well-watered habitats than quail do, so probably benefited more than the little less-travelled birds.

Blaise told me the Pineywoods and Post Oak regions had good rains and has improved age classes being

harvested. Last seasons' locker plant surveys showed 65 to 75% of bucks were 3.5 years-old or older. Antler restrictions and several years of good fawn recruitment there have helped.

Some of South Texas missed the rains, but better managed ranches and rich, natural habitat help offset that.

But the Hill Country area around Kerrville missed much of the rains and drought has affected nutrition. Again, well-managed ranches will fare better than others in this heavily hunted region.

JJ



FAIRFIELD POLICE REPORT
Chief David Utsey

Monday, September 16th

12:00 PM-Officer Warren on report of suspicious subject.
 4:42 PM-Cpl. Ashley and Warren on reported domestic.

Tuesday, September 17th

7:30 AM-Officer Warren on report of business alarm going off.
 7:40 AM-Officer Warren on report of minor wreck.
 7:10 PM-Cpl. Ashley assisted deputy on traffic stop where subject was wanted on warrant.

Wednesday, September 18th

6:30 AM-Officer Beaver on report of suspicious person.
 12:30 PM-Cpl. Scarrow on report of truck parked in the roadway.
 2:10 PM-Officer Beaver on report of stolen vehicle.
 4:10 PM-Officer Beaver on report of reckless driver.
 6:00 PM-Officer Mills on report of missing female, was located minutes later and all was ok.
 11:23 PM-Cpl. Scarrow and Mills on report of subject yelling and cussing.

Thursday, September 19th

4:40 PM-Cpl. Scarrow on welfare check.
 5:50 PM-Cpl. Scarrow to meet with a complainant.
 9:20 PM-Cpl. Scarrow and Silas to meet with a complainant about an incident that had happened at a restaurant.

Friday, September 20th

2:20 AM-Officer Mills on report of alarm going off.
 10:30 AM-Officer Warren on report of minor wreck.
 2:41 PM-Cpl. Ashley and Sgt. Markham served warrant on subject.
 3:30 PM-Officer Warren to PD to meet a complainant.
 8:45 PM-Cpl. Ashley on report of minor wreck.
 9:32 PM-Cpl. Ashley on report of reckless driver.

Saturday, September 21st

8:00 AM-Officer Warren to PD to meet a complainant about being scammed.
 8:30 AM-Officer Warren to meet a complainant over child custody issues.
 10:00 AM-Officer Warren assisted Fairfield EMS on medical emergency.

1:08 PM-Cpl. Ashley on report of theft of power pole.
 4:43 PM-Cpl. Ashley to meet a complainant.

Sunday, September 22nd

2:29 PM-Cpl. Ashley on open door.
 3:20 PM-Officer Warren and Ashley on burglary of habitation.
 6:20 PM-Cpl. Ashley and Ashley on report of truck hitting tree limbs and breaking them off and were blocking the roadway.
 9:20 PM-Officer Ashley and Tinsley on reported verbal disturbance.

AgriSafe Network's 'Texas Peace of Mind' Campaign at State Fair

AgriStress Helpline provides critical mental health supports to farmers and ranchers

Texas Agriculture Commissioner Sid Miller and the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) are proud to announce the launch of the "Texas Peace of Mind" campaign—a vital initiative dedicated to supporting the mental well-being of our state's farmers, ranchers, and agricultural workers. Through TDA's AgriStress Helpline, this campaign offers a lifeline to those who are the backbone of Texas agriculture.

The campaign will officially launch at the Texas State Fair, promoting optimism and resilience with inspiring messaging and powerful imagery. Visitors to the GO TEXAN Pavilion, presented by Southwest Dairy Farmers, will have the chance to learn more about the AgriStress Helpline, shop for local agricultural products, and engage in interactive activities that celebrate the strength and spirit of Texas agriculture.

"Our farmers and ranchers face challenges that most folks can't fathom, and their mental health is just as critical as their physical well-being," Commissioner Miller emphasized. "That's why we're teaming up with the AgriSafe Network in this essential campaign—because when we support our agriculture community, we're standing up for the future of Texas."

"Texas Peace of Mind" aims to reduce the stigma surrounding mental health issues within the agricultural community while promoting proactive stress management via the AgriStress Helpline. By offering a supportive and confidential platform, the AgriStress Helpline seeks to increase awareness of its services and encourage individuals to prioritize their mental health.

Farmers, ranchers, and agricultural workers face a serious mental health crisis. According to the National Center for Biotechnology Information, one in four people worldwide experiences mental health issues each year. If this statistic holds true for our agricultural community, it means that about 25 percent of farmers worldwide are grappling with mental health challenges. Recent studies indicate a sharp rise in stress and mental health issues among farmers, driven by economic pressures, climate change, and the isolation that comes with the job. These factors are creating a perfect storm, making it more critical than ever to address mental health in the agricultural sector.

"Our agricultural community is up against challenges like never before, and it's time we address the mental health needs of those who work day in and day out to feed this nation," said Commissioner Sid Miller. "With the 'Texas Peace of Mind' campaign, we aim to embrace open dialogue and unwavering support, ensuring our farmers, ranchers, and agriculture workers feel empowered to reach out when they need it most."

For more information on the AgriStress Helpline or additional resources that support the mental health of farmers and ranchers, visit FarmLifeHelp.com.

To learn more about TDA, visit TexasAgriculture.gov.



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SALE EVERY TUESDAY

Receipts from Corsicana Livestock for Tuesday, September 17, 2024 with 491 Head

Steers/Best #1 Quality

300-down	340-435
300-400	290-363
400-500	267-321
500-600	226-269
600-700	216-243
700-800	201-220

Heifers/Best #1 Quality

300-down	300-330
300-400	260-320
400-500	225-290
500-600	210-245
600-700	204-222
700-800	195-205

Bulls

600-700	220-230
700-800	210-220

High Yield Packers

Best Cows	115-125
Lower Yield	85-110
Best Bulls - Large	150-160
Best Bulls - Light	125-145

Pairs

Top	2050-2250
Low middle	N/T

Best Stocker Cows

Young	1750-2150
Older	N/T

These prices are for the best #1 quality steers and heifers. Prices based lower according to quality, age, condition and fill. Gary Brunton 903-654-8031 Ben Brunton 903-879-3456

Buffalo Livestock Marketing, Inc.

Russell L deCordova Cody deCordova Ty deCordova
 P.O. Box Drawer P, Buffalo, Texas 75831
(903) 322-4940

SALE EVERY SATURDAY - 12 NOON

Receipts from Buffalo Livestock Marketing showed a total of 1444 cattle on September 21, 2024.

Class of Stock Prices this week

Slaughter Cows & Bulls

Cows	65-124
Bulls	95-157

Stocked Cows

Stocked Cows	1250-2450
Pairs	2200-2450

Steer/Bull Calves & Yearlings

150-200 lbs.	200-355
200-300 lbs.	230-405
300-400 lbs.	225-395
400-500 lbs.	220-324
500-600 lbs.	210-223
600-700 lbs.	195-245
700-800 lbs.	170-229

Heifer Calves and Yearlings

150-200 lbs.	200-300
200-300 lbs.	210-330
300-400 lbs.	205-300
400-500 lbs.	200-257
500-600 lbs.	190-244
600-700 lbs.	165-226
700-800 lbs.	155-226

These prices reflect the GOOD to CHOICE cattle, and the plainer cattle would be 25 to 40 dollars behind these figures. Next Pre-Con sale October 9th Wean date August 9th

Groesbeck Auction & Livestock Co.

Stephen Bradley - Don Henderson - Charlie Williamson
254-729-3277

SALE EVERY THURSDAY - 12 NOON

Receipts from Groesbeck Auction & Livestock Co. LLC showed a total of 1382 head of cattle on September 5, 2024.

Steady / Higher trend.

Slaughter Cows & Bulls

Cows	85-140
Bulls	80-170

Stocker Cows

Stocker Cows	1000-3000
Pairs	750-16000

Stocker & Feeder Calves & Yearlings Steers Good & Choice

300-400 lbs.	265-385
400-500 lbs.	220-350
500-600 lbs.	275-270
600-700 lbs.	180-245
700-800 lbs.	170-230

Heifers Good & Choice

300-400 lbs.	220-340
400-500 lbs.	200-305
500-600 lbs.	180-260
600-700 lbs.	165-230
700-800 lbs.	150-215

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White-tailed Deer Population Looks Strong Ahead of Archery-Only Season

Good news for hunters! Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) biologists anticipate an exceptional white-tailed deer season this fall. The 2024-25 archery-only season kicks off Sept. 28 and hunters should expect to have good harvest numbers and opportunities for quality bucks.

"Given that over half the state experienced excellent habitat conditions this spring, it will be another great season to pull the bow out and spend time hunting," said Blaise Korzekwa, TPWD White-tailed Deer Program Leader. "Whether you're looking to fill the freezer with venison or harvest the trophy of a lifetime, it will be time well spent in the field this year."

Much of the state received drought-quenching rain in the spring, which allowed for excellent habitat growth during the initial part of the growing season. Even those regions that missed out on spring rainfall will

still have a good number of mature bucks this season.

Spring forb (weeds and flowering plants) production, which is a critical component of a deer's diet coming out of winter, was abundant and offered essential nutrients to boost antler development in bucks and aids does in meeting lactation demands for nursing fawns. Additionally, the improved habitat conditions over the summer helped keep fawns healthy enough to survive their first few months (also known as fawn recruitment).

While the archery-only and Managed Lands Deer Program seasons begin Sept. 28, the general season opens more than a month later, on Nov. 2. The general season runs through Jan. 5, 2025, in the North Zone and Jan. 19, 2025, in the South Zone. A youth-only gun deer season is set in both zones for Oct. 25-27 and Jan. 6-19. For additional late season deer hunting opportunities, county

specific regulations and information on how to properly tag and report a harvest, consult the 2024-25 Outdoor Annual.

Landowners and hunters play a critical role in managing Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD). Before heading to the field, hunters are reminded that several new CWD zones are in place for the 2024-25 season, and some have transitioned to voluntary sampling. New carcass disposal requirements are also in place this license year, so Texas hunters harvesting white-tailed deer and mule deer must comply with carcass disposal requirements when transporting the carcass away from the property of harvest.

The most effective way to help slow the spread of CWD is by reporting sick deer, properly disposing of unused carcass parts and voluntarily testing harvests. More information about carcass disposal requirements, zone boundaries and requirements, and check

station dates and hours of operations can be found on TPWD's CWD website.

Archery hunters are required to purchase an Archery Endorsement in addition to their hunting license. Hunters taking advantage of Texas Public Hunting Lands must have the Annual Public Hunting Permit. Public land hunters should also consult the Public Hunting Lands Map Booklet to review regulations that may apply to specific areas. The Texas Hunt & Fish app (formerly My Texas Hunt Harvest) can be used to complete on-site registration electronically at a public hunting area.

Those interested in learning more about archery and bowhunting, or anyone who is looking to brush up on their skills ahead of the season, are encouraged to explore Bowhunter by Fall, a newsletter series presented by TPWD's Community Archery Program.

Headed Out to the Country for Dove Season?

Keep An Eye Out for Abandoned or Deteriorated Water Wells

Texas hunters headed out for dove season are asked to watch for abandoned or deteriorated water wells, and to report any they find to the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation.

There are thousands of abandoned or deteriorated water wells in Texas, so chances are that hunters could spot these potential safety hazards that also contribute to groundwater pollution. Abandoned or deteriorated water wells can contaminate groundwater by providing a direct conduit for chemicals and other surface contaminants, such as animal waste and pesticides, to directly enter aquifers. Uncapped wells also present a physical danger to humans and animals who can be severely injured or killed when they fall partially or completely into the well.

What does an abandoned or deteriorated water well look like? There could be a plastic, steel, brick or concrete casing (pipe) that extends above ground, or there could be a hole in the

ground with no apparent bottom. Some abandoned wells have concrete or brick casing extending above ground or a windmill with missing blades. Abandoned or deteriorated well casings or pipes may be cut off at ground level, posing an additional threat.

--Wells are "abandoned" when they are not in use, as defined by Texas Occupations Code, Section 1901.255.

--A "deteriorated" well is a well that is causing or likely to cause pollution of any water in the state, including groundwater.

If you're aware of abandoned or deteriorated wells, please report them to TDLR: <https://www.tdlr.texas.gov/abwells/default.aspx>. When filing the report, please include an address or GPS Coordinates and any photos or video of the well, if possible.

To avoid problems related to a water well that's no longer

-Abandoned Wells-
Page 13-A



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Teal Season Begins in Texas this Month

Teal hunting season opens Sept. 14, and with wet conditions prevailing in many areas of Texas, hunters will have ample opportunities to harvest birds.

Habitat conditions across much of the state are currently above average to excellent. In East Texas, near record precipitation filled reservoirs to capacity and created tens of thousands of acres of flooded shorelines rich in food for teal. Tropical weather along the Gulf Coast this summer established an abundance of fresh shallow water, a significant improvement for habitat compared to last year.

Blue-winged teal are the second most abundant duck in North America and by far the most prevalent duck found in Texas during the special early teal season. They primarily breed in the Prairie Pothole Regions of North Dakota, South Dakota, Saskatchewan and Alberta.

The Canadian portion of their breeding grounds is in its fifth consecutive year of significant drought. Parts of North and South Dakota have also experienced multiple years of drought, though conditions began to improve in May across key areas.

“Unfortunately, the final blue-winged teal

breeding population estimates are now at a two decade long low,” said Kevin Kraai, Waterfowl Program Leader for the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD). “The population estimate this past May was 4.55 million birds and is down 15 percent from last year’s estimate.”

The upshot is that above average summer rainfall across much of the breeding grounds is expected to have a positive impact on duckling production and survival for 2024.

“Despite the decade-long decline in the breeding population, production of blue-winged teal is expected to be strong,” said Kraai. “Overall, I anticipate an above-average teal season this September across much of Texas due to the wet conditions.”

The 16-day statewide 2024 early teal season in Texas will run Sept. 14 through 29. The daily bag limit on teal is six, with a possession limit of 18. Kraai said the threshold for a liberal 16-day early teal season is 4.7. Due to the decline in population, the 2025 early teal season will be restricted to nine days for the first time since 2005.

As for conditions and prospects for teal season around the state, TPWD waterfowl biologists report:

--Water restrictions, due to the continued drought in Central Texas, will play a significant role in the availability of waterfowl habitat this fall and winter. Most of the rice prairies will not have access to canal water and will have to rely on rainfall to fill wetlands and fallow rice fields.

--Landowners and managers that have access to irrigation water/groundwater will have a distinct advantage. Birds will concentrate heavily in these areas and reports indicate birds are arriving daily at these locations. These areas should expect an excellent teal season.

Kraai reminds migratory bird hunters that they need to make sure they are Harvest Information Program (HIP) certified and confirm the HIP questions are answered correctly. HIP surveys allow biologists to get an accurate sample of hunters so the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service can deliver harvest surveys to a subsample of hunters later in the year.

Hunters should purchase their new 2024-25 Texas hunting license prior to hitting the field. In addition, teal/waterfowl hunters will also need a migratory game bird endorsement, federal duck stamp and HIP certification. It’s

also required by law that hunters have proof of their completion of a hunter education course.

This past year, the Duck Stamp Modernization Act of 2023 passed into law. This act modifies provisions of the Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp, commonly referred to as the Duck Stamp, now allowing an individual to carry an electronic stamp (E-stamp) for the entire waterfowl hunting season. A physical Federal Duck Stamp will be mailed to each E-stamp purchaser after the hunting season between May 10 – June 30, 2025.

Hunters can find teal season dates, regulations, bag limits and more on this year’s Outdoor Annual. Hunters can also access digital copies of their licenses via the Outdoor Annual and Texas Hunt & Fish apps.

Anyone hunting on Texas public hunting lands must purchase an Annual Public Hunting Permit. Texas has more than one million acres of land for public access. More information about these lands and locations can be found on the TPWD website. Hunters using public lands can complete their on-site registration via the Texas Hunt & Fish app.

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Texas Harvest Mobile App Gets a New Name

Last month, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department launched an updated version of the official mobile app used by hunters and anglers across the state for harvest reporting, electronic onsite registration, digital license display, and more.

Formerly named My Texas

Hunt Harvest, the mobile app will have an updated look and a new name, Texas Hunt & Fish, but will have all the same great features users are familiar with from the previous version of the app.

With the Texas Hunt & Fish mobile app hunters and anglers can satisfy mandatory reporting requirements for wild turkey, white-tailed deer and alligator gar harvest, as well as complete electronic on-site registration for most public hunting sites

accessed when using the Annual Public Hunt (APH) Permit. Fully digital license holders must use the Texas Hunt & Fish app to execute digital tags for deer, turkey, oversized red drum and spotted seatrout.

One of the newest features, launched during the 2023-24 hunting season, is the app’s ability to show Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) zones relative to the hunter’s location if they have the location services turned on.

A full list of features includes:

- Online and offline functionality
- use the app regardless of data service once it has been installed and your account is connected
- Connect and display your hunting and fishing license (note that paper license holders must still carry physical tags when pursuing tagged species)
- Perform mandatory hunt harvest reporting for wild turkey, white-tailed deer, and alligator gar
- Digitally tag harvested game and fish (requires purchase of an appropriate digital hunting and/

or fishing license)

--Track and view your harvest history

--Perform electronic onsite registration (eOSR) for many public hunt areas

--Download maps of many public hunt areas for use with or without data service

--View CWD Zone boundaries and, with location service enabled, determine your position in relation to the nearest zone

--Reportar su cosecha en español o en inglés - report your harvest in English or Spanish

Users not wishing to use the app can complete mandatory harvest reporting online.

Users that already have the old version of the app downloaded on their devices will need to update to the new version, starting on Aug. 15, to get all the latest features and to ensure proper app functionality.

Get the free Texas Hunt & Fish app in Apple and Google Play stores (links to download also available at tpwd.texas.gov/thf.



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Freshwater Fish Stamp Celebrates 20th Anniversary

Over the past 20 years, the Texas Freshwater Fish Stamp has been instrumental in advancing the management and conservation of freshwater fisheries resources in the state.

Established by the 78th Texas Legislature in 2004, the stamp has generated more than \$130 million in funding dedicated to the construction, renovation, and operations of Texas freshwater fish hatcheries, construction and renovation of other facilities dedicated to the management and conservation of freshwater fisheries resources, and the expansion of angler access and enhancement of fish habitats in Texas public waters.

The \$5 Freshwater Fish Stamp is included with the purchase of all freshwater fishing licenses. It replaced a \$7 Freshwater Trout Stamp, which was sold from 1985-2003 supplemental to a freshwater fishing license to enable Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) to purchase rainbow trout from coldwater fish hatcheries outside the state. Those fish were stocked in Texas creeks, rivers, and community fishing lakes to sustain popular winter trout fishing opportunities throughout the state. The winter trout program continues to be supported by the Freshwater Fish Stamp.

Funds made possible through the Freshwater Fish Stamp have enabled TPWD to purchase fish as needed to supplement production of the state fish hatchery system, but the central purpose of the stamp has been to construct new and to renovate and repair the state's existing freshwater fish hatcheries.

With aging infrastructure, advancements in fish hatchery technologies and practices,

and related modernization needs, each of TPWD's five freshwater fish hatcheries has received Freshwater Fish Stamp investments to renovate, repair, or upgrade facilities. Projects have included installation of new water intakes, upgrades to water treatment and filtration systems, construction of a new water supply reservoir, replacement of pond liners, and construction of new fish spawning, nursery, and grow-out facilities.

In the 20 years that the Freshwater Fish Stamp has been supporting facility improvements, Texas freshwater fish hatcheries have produced and stocked half a billion fish in over one thousand waterbodies through the state.

The Freshwater Fish Stamp also funded construction of the John D. Parker East Texas Fish Hatchery, which draws its source water from Sam Rayburn Reservoir. Built as a replacement for the aging

Jasper State Fish Hatchery, it has raised and stocked 37.5 million fish in Texas public waters since opening in 2012.

"The Freshwater Fish Stamp has been absolutely vital to sustaining recreationally and economically important fisheries throughout Texas," said Tim Birdsong, Director of TPWD's Inland Fisheries Division. "Texas has 4.1 million anglers who spend \$11.1 billion annually going fishing. Without dedicated funding to maintain our state hatchery system, put-grow-take fisheries for species such as striped bass, hybrid striped bass (striped bass x white bass), and rainbow trout could not be sustained."

Popular programs such as the ShareLunker and Neighborhood Fishin' programs are also sustained with Fish Stamp funds.

"Public fisheries resources sustained and managed by TPWD provide billions of dollars in economic impacts to local surrounding

communities statewide," added Birdsong. "The annual economic impact of the Lake Texoma striped bass fishery alone is valued at over \$46 million, and similar studies of largemouth bass fisheries at individual lakes have been valued at \$19 to \$47 million annually."

Two additional major legislative milestones have occurred in the life of the Freshwater Fish Stamp. In 2011, anglers supported lifting the original 10-year sunset provision, extending the life of the stamp into the future. In 2017, Texas anglers once again provided their support, expanding the eligible uses of stamp revenue. The expansion paved the way for investments in other needed fisheries enhancement strategies, namely fish habitat and shoreline-based angler access improvements.

Funded primarily through the Freshwater Fish Stamp, TPWD launched the Habitat and Angler Access Program

(HAAP) in 2021 to focus on shoreline-based angler access and enhance freshwater fish habitats on public creeks, rivers, ponds and lakes throughout the state. HAAP facilitates cooperation between TPWD Inland Fisheries Division biologists and local partners to improve fishing for all Texans. Since 2023, the program has supported 32 projects with more than \$1 million of funding from the sale of

freshwater fishing licenses and more than \$1.9 million of matching support from partners.

The dedicated funds from the Freshwater Fish Stamp have made an indelible mark on Texas fisheries and the landscape of fishing in the state. The freshwater anglers who buy licenses each year play a pivotal role to provide world class fishing in Texas for the current and future generations of anglers.



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-Abandoned Wells- Continued from 10-A

in use, landowners should install a locking well cap or sanitary well seal – not just a cover over the well – to prevent unauthorized use or entry into the well. The well cap should not be easily removable by hand and should be capable of withstanding 400 pounds of weight. Septic systems should be pumped and inspected as often as recommended by the local health department. Care should be taken when mowing or working near the well.

Landowners are responsible for abandoned or deteriorated water wells on their property, and once they're aware of an abandoned well on their property, they must plug it within 180 days. Landowners can plug the well themselves (in compliance with Title 16, Texas Administrative Code, Section 76.104: Capping and Plugging Wells Standards) or hire a well driller or pump installer licensed by TDLR to plug the well or bring the well into compliance.

If a landowner chooses to plug the well themselves, they are required to plug the well in accordance with TDLR's well plugging specifications (<https://www.tdlr.texas.gov/wwd/wwdspecs.htm>) and submit a State of Texas Plugging Report to TDLR within 30 days from the date the well was plugged.



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Habitat and Angler Access Program Enhances Freshwater Fishing Across Texas

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD)'s Habitat and Angler Access Program (HAAP) supplies funding for projects that develop and increase shoreline and bank fishing access as well as restore and enhance fish habitat in Texas' public inland waters.

The HAAP is looking for project ideas and proposals for the third round of funding for fiscal years 2026-2027. Potential partners are required to contact, discuss and develop project ideas, as well as draft and submit project proposals in coordination with TPWD Inland Fisheries Biologists.

"The Habitat and Angler Access Program is an exciting opportunity for us to collaborate and support partners interested in expanding fishing opportunities and bettering the quality of fisheries for Texans," said Michael Homer Jr., fisheries biologist for the TPWD Inland Fisheries Division. "The program is intended to identify and implement projects with the highest potential to enhance freshwater fisheries resources and improve bank and shoreline access in public waters."

Since 2023, the program has supported 32 projects with more than \$1 million of funding from the sale of freshwater fishing licenses and over \$1.9 million of matching support from partners. HAAP enables the TPWD Inland Fisheries Division to support habitat and angler access improvement projects conducted with eligible partners such as

other agencies, local municipalities, water authorities, educational institutions, angler groups and other non-profit organizations.

Funding is used to support individual fish habitat improvement and angler access projects on public ponds, reservoirs, streams and rivers. Example habitat projects include bank and shoreline stabilization projects, installation of erosion control features, deployment of habitat structures, native vegetation plantings, as well as dredging excessive silt and organic materials from reservoirs that have high potential for quality fisheries development.

Bank or shoreline-based angler access projects that could be supported through HAAP include the development or improvement of fishing piers, installation of fish attracting features (e.g., underwater dock lighting and habitat structures), the creation of jetties, as well as the construction of non-motorized boat launches for kayaks, canoes and other small watercraft for fishing access.

For more information or to submit a proposal, visit the TPWD HAAP webpage. Proposal submissions will be accepted beginning at 5 p.m. CDT Sept. 16 - March 31. Proposal submissions as well as additional program information may be obtained by contacting FishGrants@tpwd.texas.gov. Approved projects will have a completion deadline of Aug. 31, 2027.

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