



Media Alert

Bankhead National Forest

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For Immediate Release

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Help is Needed to Control Feral Hogs from Rooting up the Bankhead National Forest

(Double Springs, Al) November 19, 2010 ---- A growing problem is facing land managers on the Bankhead National Forest and private landowners in northwest Alabama and feral hogs are at the root of it. Biologists with the U.S. Forest Service and the Alabama Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries Division are noticing feral hogs invading the Bankhead National Forest and surrounding areas. They are encouraging hunters to help them with managing the populations by harvesting feral hogs when permissible opportunities arise.

“Feral hogs are nuisance animals that take a toll on native game animals, like deer and turkey, and cause extensive damage to the land and native plants,” says Allison Cochran, Bankhead National Forest wildlife biologist. “Their populations in the Bankhead are increasing rapidly, and we need help before the problem gets much worse,” added Cochran. Feral hogs damage crops and property by rooting and wallowing.

The feral hog population is concentrated in the northern portion of the national forest that includes the Black Warrior Wildlife Management Area (WMA). According to Elrand Denson, district ranger for the Bankhead National Forest, feral hogs are legal game that can be hunted. “We want hunters to understand the regulations for hunting feral hogs are different in the Bankhead National Forest and in Black Warrior Wildlife Management Area,” said Denson.

Within the Bankhead National Forest, it is legal to hunt feral hogs year round with a valid state

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hunting license; however, within the Black Warrior WMA, hunters may take feral hogs during any open hunting season with a permit, legal firearms and ammunition for that season. There is also a special feral swine season scheduled from March 1-14, 2011 for the Black Warrior WMA. Trapping of feral hogs is currently not allowed in the Bankhead National Forest or within a wildlife management area. The Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources on-line version of hunting regulations are located in the 2010-2011 Hunting Digest at <http://www.outdooralabama.com/>.

“Feral hogs are the number one enemy for native wildlife and plant species,” said Cochran. Recognized as non-native species, feral hogs compete with native wildlife species, like deer, raccoon, turkey, fox and squirrel for food, water and cover. They destroy native ecosystems and many areas experience erosion and water quality problems due to increase hog populations.

Please contact the Alabama Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries Division at (256) 353-2634 for information on hunting in the Black Warrior WMA, and the Bankhead National Forest’s district office at 205-489-5111 for further information on hog hunting the national forest.