

**BROWN COUNTY APPRAISAL DISTRICT
403 FISK
BROWNWOOD, TX 76801
325-643-5676**

WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT PLAN INFORMATION

The appraisal staff in this office cannot help you fill out the applications or help write your wildlife managements plans. We can only advise you if your plan does not meet the criteria to qualify for the agricultural appraisal under wildlife management. Detailed information on how to qualify for the Wildlife Management can be obtained from the *Texas Parks and Wildlife* website:

www.tpwd.state.tx.us/landwater/land/private/agricultural_land/

This is not a comprehensive list of all the rules, policies, and procedures on qualifying land under 1-d-1 agricultural use appraisal for wildlife management, but rather a list of common mistakes and misunderstandings gathered from property owners trying to qualify for this special appraisal. We hope that you find the following information useful when thinking of converting your property from traditional agricultural to wildlife management.

1. Property must have had a traditional 1-d-1 agricultural appraisal in place in the year prior to converting to a wildlife habitat.
2. If the property was a subdivided from a larger tract after January 1, 2001, and had an existing agricultural appraisal, it must be a minimum of 15 acres to be considered.
3. Hunting is not wildlife management. Hunting can play a small role in managing the population of your targeted management species. Conducting recreational hunts will not disqualify a property from meeting the criteria for wildlife management as long as it is a secondary use to the land and not the primary use of the land and does not conflict with your wildlife management plan.
4. Even though we do not have a minimum acreage for each species beyond the 15-acre limit, a whitetail deer management plan will not usually be considered on tracts smaller than 100 acres. Your tract *might* be considered if your plan involves a coop or association with adjoining property owners.
5. Exotics are not considered for wildlife management. Under the right circumstances, they can be considered under the traditional 1-d-1 agricultural appraisal.
6. We do not require you to hire a professional to help you with your plan. If you need technical advice, we do encourage you to seek assistance from the biologist at the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. We also encourage you to attend Wildlife Management seminars that can be found at various times throughout the state. Please be aware that some of these companies conducting these seminars are trying to sell you their services and/or products. The appraisal district does not require you to purchase these companies' services or products to meet the requirements for qualifying for wildlife management.

7. If the species you wish to manage is an endangered or threatened species such as the Black-capped Vireo or Golden-cheeked Warbler, then you must work with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department in developing your plan. Technical assistance for these plans is available through the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, Texas Cooperative Extension, or U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service. For a list of Endangered and Threatened Animals, please consult the Texas Parks and Wildlife Website.
8. You must list a primary native indigenous species found on the list developed by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department for the Edwards Plateau and Cross Timbers & Prairies Ecological Region.
9. When developing a plan, you must clearly state your primary, targeted, native species (only one). All other species are secondary. Checking all species on the application is not encouraged. If you have never seen the species on your property, then you cannot list that species in your wildlife management plan. For instance, if you desire to have a bobwhite quail habitat and have never seen a covey on your property, then you cannot claim bobwhite quail as a management species. You can, however, implement good management practices with another native species that would complement a bobwhite quail habitat so that your property may become desirable for a future bobwhite quail habitat.
10. Your plan must be very detailed in a minimum of 3 out of 7 categories for managing wildlife and must be compatible with your targeted species. For example: you cannot list food plots for deer under supplemental food; bird houses under supplemental shelter; and census counts for turkey. Even though your plan may include more than one species, we must be able to determine you are meeting the requirements in 3 out of 7 categories for your targeted species.
11. Supplemental food: if your plan includes food plots, you must list a warm and a cool season crop. Feeders must contain nutritious supplements, especially during the stressful times of the year. To meet the annual reporting requirements, only providing copies of receipts showing the purchase of deer corn is not proof of supplemental feeding and does not distinguish your wildlife management program from a hunting lease. Providing only copies of feed receipts dated during the hunting season does not prove a year-round management program under this category either.
12. Habitat Control: Brown County has consistently been under burn bans causing some property managers not to be able to meet their goal of prescribed burns to fulfill the requirements for habitat control. When submitting the annual report, simply stating that you have not met this requirement because of a law does not exempt you in this category. You must take the effort to find another method for habitat control. A cattle grazing rotation plan may be a good substitute.
13. Predator Control: This category must be compatible with your targeted species and must be a real problem. Simply seeing a single predator does not necessarily mean you have a problem. For instance, if you have only seen one fox on your property, then chances are that fox is not a real problem for your habitat. Checking all predators on the application and/or stating you will monitor these predators is not encouraged. We highly suggest working with a professional in determining if predation is a problem for your native species.

You must keep predator control logs and provide copies when submitting your annual report.

14. Supplemental Water: an existing stock pond, river, or natural waterway on your property is not providing supplemental water. Providing a different source of water is required. Building a stock pond does qualify. Repairing a stock pond is handled under erosion control.
15. Census: depending on the method used, a census usually contains a minimum of three dates. Listing only 3 dates just before deer season is a sign of a weak plan. A better plan not only includes census counts of the targeted species, but those of other species including predators. A harvest log is not the same as a census log.
16. Don't forget to sign and date your applications!

When getting ready to submit your plan, be sure to note the following:

1. Your plan must be submitted on the form that is found on the Texas Parks and Wildlife website. You must also include a new 1-d-1 agricultural application which can be found on our website or obtained through this office. The wildlife management plan form does not contain enough room to give the details we need to approve your plan, so attaching additional information is highly encouraged. A map of the property showing the locations of certain parts of your management areas, such as food plots, feeders, shelters, brush control areas, etc. is highly recommended. If you wish to send pictures, you may print them on plain paper and print more than one to a page. Please date and label them so that we know what it is you want us to see and to know about your habitat.
2. Please do not put your plans and future reports in a binder book. It will save you money and will make it easier for us to scan your documents if the pages are not bound. It will also not take up valuable filing space. If your documents are bound, they will still be accepted, just not processed as quickly.
3. Please be aware that the appraisal district is required to see all property at least once every 3 years. If you have a wildlife management plan, we have been advised to inspect the property yearly. We do not have the staff to always make appointments and inspect your property every year, so we rely heavily on the annual reports to justify the properties receiving this special appraisal. For those who have locked gates, we ask for your cooperation when one of the appraisers from this office contacts you for a property inspection.
4. Your plan and future annual reports are due in this office on or before April 30th. A few of you have voiced concerns about receiving certified mail from this office regarding the removal of the agricultural use and receiving appraisal notices showing no agricultural use, even though you have been meeting the April 30th deadline. Appraisal districts are on a tight schedule to mail appraisal notices as close to April 1st as possible. In order to meet this deadline, we have to remove the agricultural value from all accounts in which there has been no receipt of documentation and send letters notifying the property owners of this fact beginning about March 1st. All agricultural applications and wildlife management plans and reports are still due by April 30th, but we can't meet the notification requirements if we wait until this date. This process is frustrating to this office too but is a necessary process.

To avoid getting caught up in this cycle, it is highly recommended that you set a personal deadline at the end of February.

5. All appraisal districts operate under the Texas Property Tax Code and have the same laws regarding wildlife management. Each county in the state of Texas is assigned to one of seven ecoregions. Each ecoregion has a separate set of guidelines for qualifying for wildlife management. Each county has adopted their own agricultural policies, especially in regard to tract sizes. If your property is located in a different county, you will need to contact that appraisal district and request their guidelines before developing your plan.

If you have any other questions, please feel free to contact this office. The Agricultural Appraiser is Brent Jackson. You may reach him at 325-643-5676 ext. 107 or email him at bjackson@brown-cad.org. During the months of January through April, the best time to contact him is between 8:00 – 9:00 a.m. Monday through Friday.