

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

C.S.H.B. 836  
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Culture, Recreation & Tourism  
Committee Report (Substituted)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

Texas Wildlife Services estimates that feral hogs are responsible for \$400 million in direct damage to Texas every year. There are an estimated two million feral hogs in Texas, and they may be found in nearly every county. Texas Wildlife Services estimates that over \$7.50 is saved in agricultural products for each dollar spent on feral hog control.

Hunting of feral hogs from helicopters is used to reduce hog populations in applicable regions. According to the Texas Department of Agriculture, over 75 percent of the state has suitable terrain and vegetative cover for hunting of feral hogs from helicopters, and such hunting is a cost-effective method in areas where hogs have become conditioned to traditional trapping efforts or anywhere removal rates exceed 30 hogs per hour.

C.S.H.B. 836 authorizes the hunting of feral hogs from a helicopter and requires the Parks and Wildlife Commission to adopt rules governing such activity.

### **RULEMAKING AUTHORITY**

It is the committee's opinion that rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the Parks and Wildlife Commission in SECTIONS 1 and 2 of this bill.

### **ANALYSIS**

C.S.H.B. 836 amends the Parks and Wildlife Code to authorize the hunting of feral hogs from a helicopter, exempting that activity from the prohibition against hunting any wild bird or wild animal, other than an alligator, frog, or turtle, from any type of aircraft or airborne device, motor vehicle, powerboat, or sailboat, or from any other floating device. The bill requires the Parks and Wildlife Commission to adopt rules governing the hunting of feral hogs from a helicopter to ensure safety. The bill requires the commission, as soon as practicable after the effective date of this bill, to adopt rules to implement the provision relating to the hunting of feral hogs from a helicopter.

### **EFFECTIVE DATE**

September 1, 2009.

### **COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL AND SUBSTITUTE**

C.S.H.B. 836 differs from the original by clarifying that the bill relates to hunting feral hogs by helicopter, rather than to sport hunting of feral hogs by helicopter.