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# MULBERRY CREEK

Wildlife Management Association

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# Wildlife Management Association

## What is Ag vs. Wildlife?

### 1-D Ag:

1966 - Requires the property owner to be an individual, and that agriculture is the property owner's primary occupation and source of income. The property owner must show that agriculture is conducted for profit, land is then taxed on the value of its productivity.

### 1-D-1 Ag Open Space:

1978 - Allows both individuals and corporations to qualify. Has no occupation, income or profit requirements - instead, it focuses on whether the land is used to the degree of intensity typical in the area for a particular agricultural enterprise.

### Wildlife Management:

1995 - Land on which the owner engages in wildlife management, and which meets certain agricultural use requirements may qualify for special appraisal and is technically in agricultural use. Property may qualify for special appraisal for wildlife management if the land is being actively used as qualified open-space land under Tax Code Chapter 23, Subchapter E, and was appraised as such at the time wildlife management use began in at least three of the following ways to propagate a sustaining breeding, migrating or wintering population of indigenous wild animals for human use including food, medicine or recreation: Habitat Control; Erosion Control; Predator Control, Supplemental Water; Supplemental Food; Providing Shelter; Census Counts

2001 - Legislature passed H.B. 3123, requiring the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) to develop and the Comptroller to adopt rules for the qualification of agricultural land in wildlife management use.

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## Why does Texas allow a break on property taxes for Wildlife Management?

- To create a mechanism in addition to traditional agricultural use that allows ranchers, farmers, and land managers to conserve open space.
- To encourage the preservation of open space for wildlife management and conservation of the state's natural heritage in all areas of the state.

# Wildlife Management Association

Why do we have to form an Association? What is it?

- An Association allows contiguous properties to work in unison to meet the Wildlife Practices required to propagate a sustaining breeding, migrating or wintering population of indigenous wild animals for human use including food, medicine or recreation.
- An Association also allows contiguous properties to consolidate the initial Wildlife Plan, and subsequent Annual Wildlife Reports into one.
- The work is One for All, and All for One.

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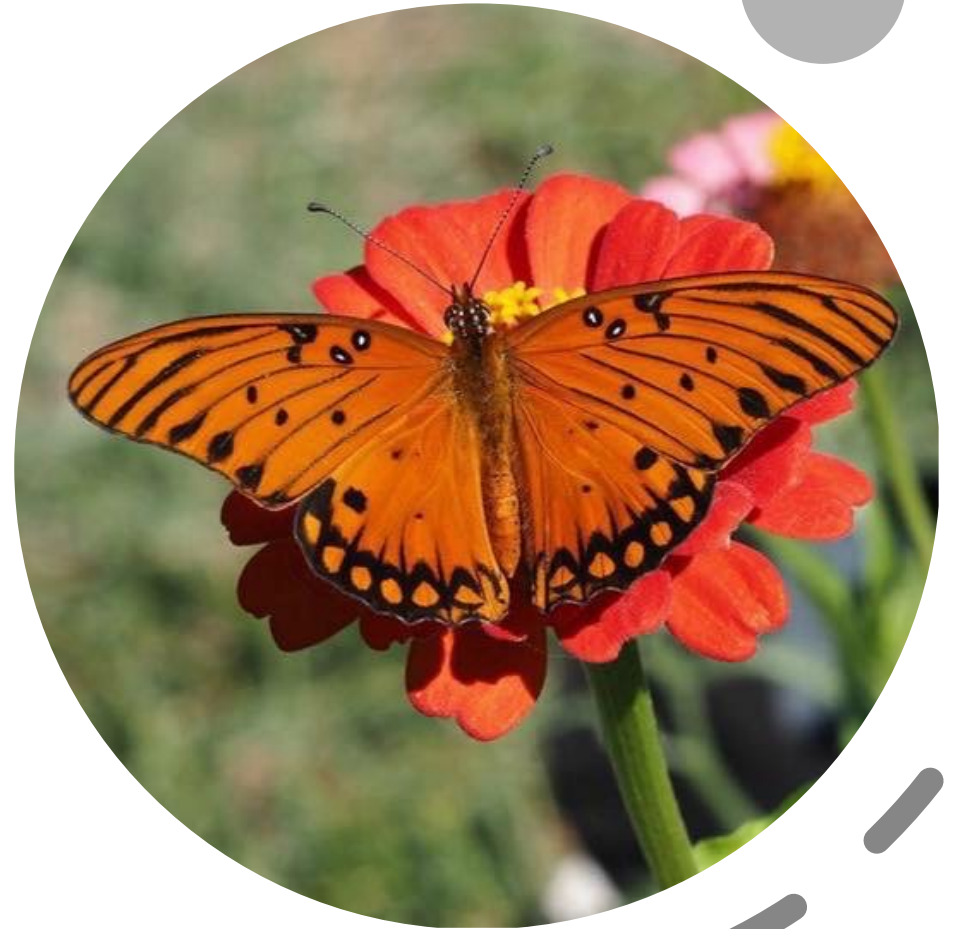
## What are the requirements?

- Your land must have been qualified and appraised as agricultural land during the year preceding the potential conversion to Wildlife, and in at least 5 of the past 7 years.
- Submit an approved Wildlife Plan to your local Appraisal District before April 30 of the year you want to begin, then follow your Plan, and submit subsequent Reports each year.

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## What should my Plan be?

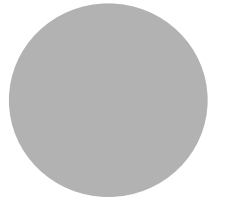
- To participate in at least 3 of the 7 recommended Practices specified in the Guidelines for Wildlife Management:
  1. Habitat Control
  2. Erosion Control
  3. Predator Control
  4. Supplemental Water
  5. Supplemental Food
  6. Providing Shelter
  7. Census / Survey Counts
- Be realistic and choose activities you will enjoy.



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## Habitat Control

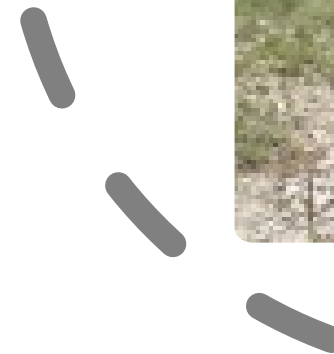
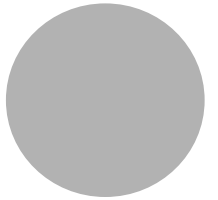
- Grazing Management
- Prescribed Burning
- Range Enhancement
- Brush Management
- Fence Modification
- Riparian Management
- Wetland Enhancement
- Habitat Protection for Species of Concern
- Prescribed Control of Native, Exotic and Feral Species
- Wildlife Restoration



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## Erosion Control

- Pond construction
- Gully shaping
- Streamside, pond and wetland revegetation
- Establishing native plants
- Dike, levee construction or management
- Water diversion





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## Predator Control

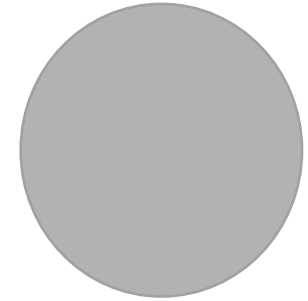
- Feral hogs
- Imported red fire ants
- Brown-headed cowbirds
- Grackle/starling/house sparrows



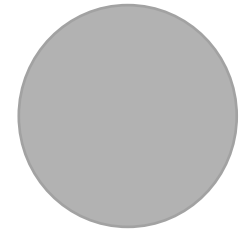
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## Supplemental Water

- Marsh/wetland restoration or development
- Wells, troughs, windmill overflow, guzzlers
- Spring development and/or enhancement

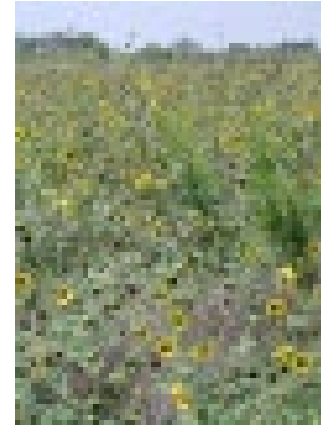


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## Supplemental Food

- Grazing management
- Prescribed burning
- Range enhancement/reseeding
- Food plots
- Feeders and mineral supplementation
- Managing tame pasture, fields & croplands



*Managing the habitat to increase the quantity and quality of “naturally produced” foods should be the primary objective.*

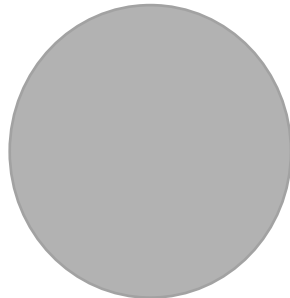
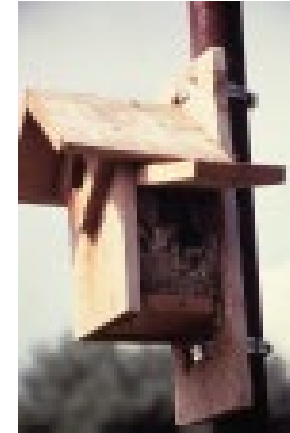
*Providing “artificial” supplemental food (feeders, food plots) is not a substitute for good habitat management.*

*Artificial feeding should only be a part of a comprehensive plan.*

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## Supplemental Shelter

- Nest Boxes, Bat Boxes
- Brush Piles and Slash Retention
- Fence Line Management
- Hay meadow, Pasture and Cropland Management for Wildlife
- Half-cutting Trees and Shrubs
- Woody Plant/Shrub Establishment
- Natural Cavity/Snag Development



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## Census / Surveys

- Spotlight counts
- Aerial counts
- Daylight deer herd/wildlife composition counts
- Harvest data collection/record keeping
- Browse utilization surveys
- Census and monitoring of endangered, threatened or protected wildlife
- Census and monitoring of non-game wildlife



1 Buck  
16 Hogs  
4 Does  
5 Mockingbirds

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Which Practices should I choose?

*Food*

*Water*



**Cover**

**Time**

**Usable Space**

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For each activity, answer the following:

- What species are you targeting?
- How will your activities benefit that species?
- How will you implement your chosen activities (when and how often)?
- How much will be “done” or acreage affected (intensity)?
- Where on the property will the activity be conducted? (Show on Map)



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How will the County Appraiser know I did these things each year?

- After the initial plan is submitted, the Association is required to do a follow-up Wildlife Report each subsequent year. The intent is to always have a successful Wildlife program, but Wildlife Management is activity based, and not results based.
- An example is:
  - You “plan” to control fire ants and provide sheltering brush to re-populate the area with quail.
  - You follow your plan, initiate your practices, but if the quail don’t show up, it isn’t a failure – it just means you adjust your plan when or as needed, and continue trying.
  - As long as you are trying, you are being successful...



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Do I have to do it all myself?

- That's a big **NO**, and the beauty of belonging to a Wildlife Management Association!
- Rather than multiple Wildlife Plans and subsequent Wildlife Reports, the Association will only do one that represents all of you. Everyone works individually, while succeeding as a group

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What if I don't live in the area?

That is no problem – it just means that you choose Practices that are self managing:

- Habitat Control – letting brush grow under trees for birds and small mammals to nest in.
- Predator Control – allow your neighbors to trap or shoot a sounder of hogs crossing your property.
- Supplemental Shelter – a cross over to Habitat Control – let fields of native grass and wildflowers grow naturally without mowing.
- Supplemental Food – Plant Wildflowers, Peas or other flora for grazing and pollination.
- Supplemental Water – Put a tub on the back of your property that will collect rainwater.

# Wildlife Management Association

How did we start?

- Legal Formation of Mulberry Creek Wildlife Management Association
- Interim Board of Directors Determined
- Wildlife Association Membership Agreements Distributed
- Ag Wildlife Management 1-D-1 Applications Completed and Signed
- Wildlife Plan Formulated
- Wildlife Plan Submitted with Attachments:
  - Wildlife Plan
  - Map with Practice Locations Denoted
  - Roster of Members
  - Membership Agreements for each Member
  - Ag Wildlife 1-D-1 Applications for each Member

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This and each year to come?

- Wildlife Report Compiled and Submitted by March 1:
  - Wildlife Report
  - Map with Practice Locations Denoted
  - Roster of Members
  - Annual Meeting Notes
  - Activity Reports
  - **Signed Practice Logs**
  - **Receipts for any Purchases related to your Practices or Wildlife Support**
  - **Photos – did the Wildlife really show up?**
  - New Membership Agreements for each Member
  - New Ag Wildlife 1-D-1 Applications for each Member
- Then go to Next Steps...

# Wildlife Management Association

## Next Steps?

- Conduct an Annual Meeting
- Annually Elect Officers and Special Project Coordinators
- Enjoy your Land, and collect data for next year's Report:
  - Work on your chosen Practices
  - Keep **RECEIPTS** of any Purchase related to your Wildlife Practices
  - Take **PHOTOS** of any Wildlife stopping by

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Most of all, enjoy your land... 

