

Big Country Wildlife Alliance

Over the past year, work has been done to create a new wildlife alliance between Jones, Haskell, Stonewall and Fisher counties. The alliance is intended to bring landowners, hunters and businesses together to achieve common goals of wildlife & natural resource management, economic development, landowner relations, and youth education to benefit the greater four-county area.

The new Big Country Wildlife Alliance membership is open to anyone who seeks to further enhance and improve wildlife and natural resources in the aforementioned area. Landowners/managers, businesses, and wildlife enthusiasts are encouraged to join.

Through educational outreach and sponsorship of programs, the alliance intends to assist landowners in managing and producing high quality wildlife on their properties. Along with this, the alliance will also be able to assist landowners and businesses with providing a link of advertising between themselves and hunters, which in turn will help bring additional revenue into area communities. The alliance will also open doors to youth opportunities through wildlife and natural resources.

The following is a list of initial goals set forth by the alliance:

- 1. To improve and bring the majority of acreage in Jones, Haskell, Stonewall and Fisher counties under successful game management practices through education. Quality and Quantity of wildlife will be emphasized.*
- 2. Promote economic development through hunting/nature tourism for alliance members and area businesses.*
- 3. To encourage better hunter/landowner and neighbor relations.*
- 4. To encourage "managing" and not "mining" of wildlife.*
- 5. To encourage members to share education and emphasize to non-members the importance of wildlife/land management.*
- 6. To make harvest recommendations for pre-determined land areas.*
- 7. To sanction predator control as recommended by the Big Country Wildlife Alliance and Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.*
- 8. To promote hunting and education within our area youth.*
- 9. To curtail illegal hunting and poaching within the geographic area of the alliance.*

Annual membership in the alliance has been set at \$25, for both individuals and businesses.

Landowners who join the alliance will also have to opportunity to apply for hunting lease licenses through TPWD at a discounted rate. Hunting lease licenses are required by TPWD of all landowners who charge a fee for hunting on their property. These can be purchased through the alliance for an additional \$5. (Individual non-member lease licenses through TPWD range from \$79 to \$252.)

For more information, contact any of the Extension offices in the following counties:

Jones: 325-823-2432
Haskell: 940-864-2658

Fisher: 325-776-3259
Stonewall: 940-989-3510

Landowner/Manager Membership

Membership in the alliance is completely voluntary, and landowners and/or managers are encouraged to join. By joining the alliance, landowner/managers can become involved in various activities and events that will help them produce and manage high quality wildlife on their properties. Members are in no way obligated to the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, or the Big Country Wildlife Alliance to implement some, or all recommended management practices. However, it is important that each member supports the general principles of land and natural resource conservation, as well as, recognize the need for wildlife management on his or her property.

Members who have land available to outside hunting will have the opportunity to list their acreage in the alliance directory. This directory will serve as an advertising link between potential hunters and landowners. This is an optional service to members, in which landowners who do not wish to seek outside hunting will not be listed in the public directory.

Business Membership

The hunting and nature tourism industry affects many community businesses which provide goods and services relating to wildlife and natural resources. (Game processors, hotels/motels, convenience stores, restaurants, supply stores, real estate firms, lending agencies, etc.) As such, local businesses in the alliance area are encouraged to join. By becoming members, businesses will be listed in the public alliance directory, as well as supported through alliance events and activities.

Alliance Structure

The Big Country Wildlife Alliance shall be a “grassroots” organization in which it is completely managed by its members. A board of directors will serve as an advisory committee to oversee the function of the alliance. This board will be comprised to two representatives from each county, and one “at-large” member. Board members will be elected by the membership during an annual meeting to be held each summer. This meeting will rotate each year between the participating counties.