

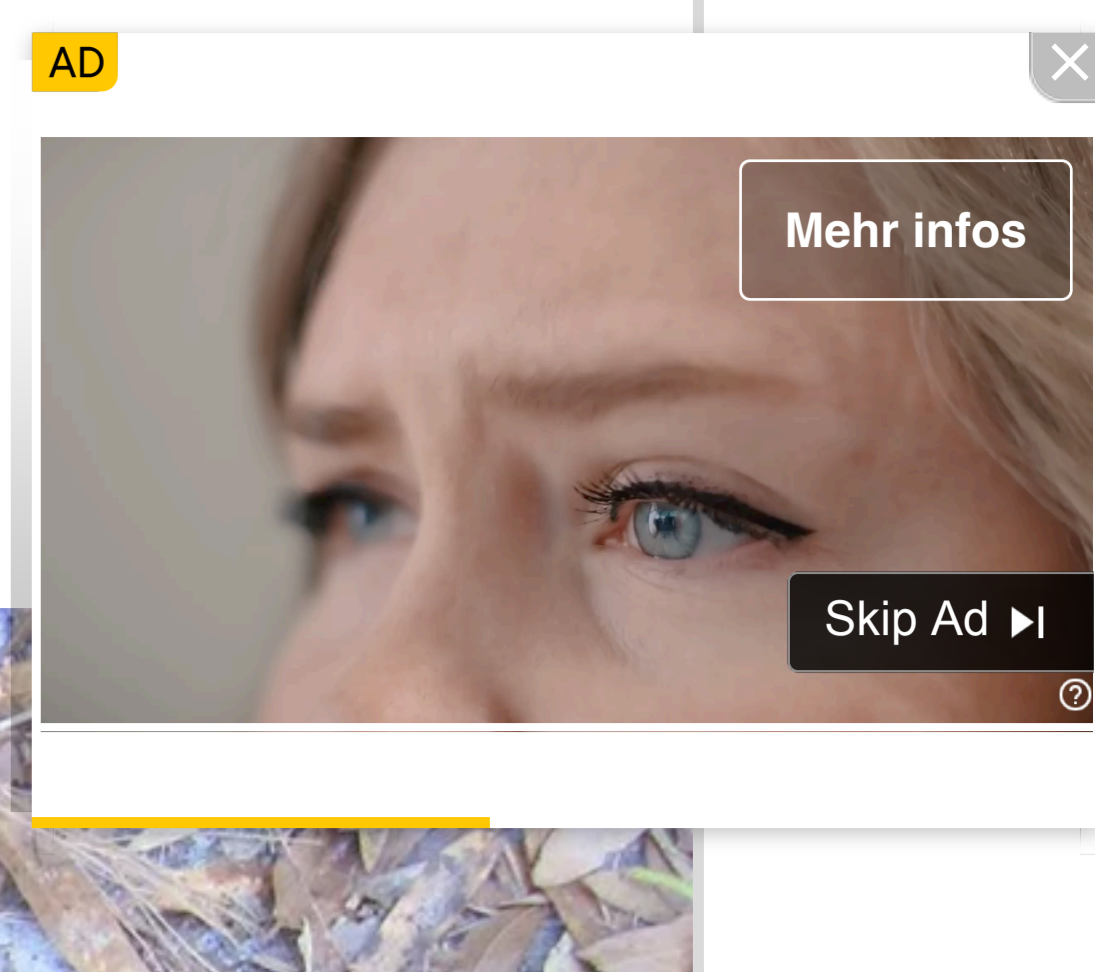


Hunters Oppose Plans to Sterilize Wild Hogs in Hawaii

Local hunters are voicing their concerns regarding the use of HogStop contraceptive to manage wild pig populations

BY BOB MCNALLY | PUBLISHED JUN 29, 2022 4:20 PM

CONSERVATION HUNTING



Hunters in Hawaii oppose plans to sterilize wild pigs. Bob McNally

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Wild hogs have thrived on the Hawaiian Islands for more than a thousand years, but too many pigs in paradise creates ecological problems for the islands' rainforests and causes headaches for residents. Feral pig numbers are out of control on Oahu, where one resident has become a distributor for a contraceptive product called HogStop, which is a feed that acts like birth control for wild animals such as pigs, deer, and goats. The prospect of widespread HogStop use, which has been deemed legal by the state, has hunters concerned.

Hawaiian hog hunters are now rallying against the plan to sterilize wild pigs, and they voiced their concerns at a June 28 Hawaii Department of Land and Natural Resources board meeting in Honolulu, according to ABC affiliate KITV 4. The unknown, long-term effects of HogStop are especially concerning to island hunters.



Pig hunter Abram Correia told KITV 4 that hunters can manage the pig population, rather than eradicate it, which is one of the fears around the HogStop contraception plan.

"The word here is manage. Not eradicate. But manage the population of the pigs so that way we can pass it down to our children and our children's children and the future to come," says Correia.

Pig hunting has long been a part of Hawaiian culture. Hog hunters want more land on the islands open to hunting so they can effectively put more of a dent in the population. They believe traditional hunting and uses of wild hog meat should take priority over programs that aim to sterilize the population.



Oahu resident Kau Lucas is the island distributor of HogStop and he says the product is non-toxic, with ingredients including molasses, corn and salt, plus cotton seed, according to Hawaii News Now. It's the cotton seed that works as a natural contraceptive, Lucas explained.

However, HogStop can affect fertility in other animals and should only be used in specific styles of feeders to keep birds and other animals out.

According to the HogStop website: "It acts as a male contraceptive on feral boar hogs. Sperm counts in feral boar hogs are reduced and hence fertility. Births of baby pigs are decreased and feral hog populations decrease over time. HogStop is not a poison to kill the hogs."



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The Pig Hunters Association of Oahu opposes use of the contraceptive because, among other reasons, they're concerned about eating wild pigs that have been fed HogStop.

"I feel that [HogStop] shouldn't be used because we use the meat for cooking," Roy Kainoa, president of the Pig Hunters Association of Oahu, told Hawaii News Now.



Along with other local hunters, he believes their traditional methods could be more effective if they were given more opportunity.

"So, from April until now, we had taken out almost 230 pigs on the eradication taskforce," Kainoa said.

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