

HUNTING AS A PIG CONTROL METHOD  
IN HAWAI'I VOLCANOES NATIONAL PARK\*

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The use of hunting dogs with professional hunters has been a highly successful and cost-efficient pig control method at Hawaii Volcanoes National Park. Since 1980, 16,468 acres of the 65,000 acres of pig habitat in the Park have been fenced, delineating eight control units. These units range in size from 348 acres to 5,560 acres representing the major montane habitat types in the park. Pigs have been eliminated from four units (7,451 acres) and reduced to low densities in the other units (9,017 acres) at an average cost of \$109/pig (hunter salary only). In two of the units with low densities a research program is being conducted to test the efficiency of several alternative control methods and hunting.

Planning for each hunt utilizes information gathered from various aspects of the program to ensure strategic and systematic coverage. Data from pig activity transects, population structure, food and cover preference, and results of scouting, fence inspections and previous hunts are considered in planning hunt strategy. Up to eighteen dogs and six hunters may be deployed for a hunt depending on the approach selected.

Upon eliminating pigs from a management unit, long-term monitoring of activity transects and monthly fence inspections are undertaken to detect pig ingress. Vegetation recovery is recorded through systematic transects and plots in units by management and research personnel.

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\* ABSTRACT