

Statewide deer carcass disposal regulations approved

Statewide deer carcass disposal regulations were adopted by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission last month. They will go into effect for the upcoming hunting season.

Commission officials said the regulations are an effort to reduce the risk of transmission of chronic wasting disease (CWD) across the state and that the new regulations will not change how most hunters currently care for their deer

after harvest.

“Proper disposal of all potentially infectious material is critical for reducing the risk of disease transmission,” said Blaise Korzekwa, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) White-tailed Deer Program leader. “These new regulations provide hunters more options when it comes to processing their deer to reduce that risk. If CWD is not managed and efforts are not made to mitigate potential spread of the disease, the implications for Texas and its multibillion-dollar ranching, hunting, wildlife management and real estate economies could

be significant.”

The new regulations will allow hunters to debone a carcass at the site of harvest, provided proof of sex and tags are maintained until the hunter reaches the final destination. By leaving the unused parts at the site of harvest, the chance of spreading CWD to other parts of the state is greatly reduced, TPWD said.

Meat from each deboned carcass must remain in whole muscle groups (i.e., not chopped, sliced or ground) and maintained in a separate bag, package or container until reaching the final destination.

These disposal measures

apply only to unused carcass parts from native deer, such as white-tailed deer and mule deer, harvested in Texas that are being transported from the property of harvest. If carcass parts from native deer species are not being transported from the property of harvest, these carcass disposal rules would not apply, TPWD said.

Since many hunters take their harvest to a commercial processor, TPWD noted it will be the processor who then properly disposes unused parts for them. For hunters processing deer at home, disposal in a commercial trash service is

preferred, but other options are available.

Acceptable disposal options include:

Directly or indirectly disposing of the remains at a landfill permitted by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality to receive such wastes, Burying the carcass at a depth of no less than three feet below the natural surface of the ground and covered with at least three feet of earthen material, or Returned to the property where the animal was harvested.

For more information visit TPWD’s CWD webpage or contact a wildlife biologist.

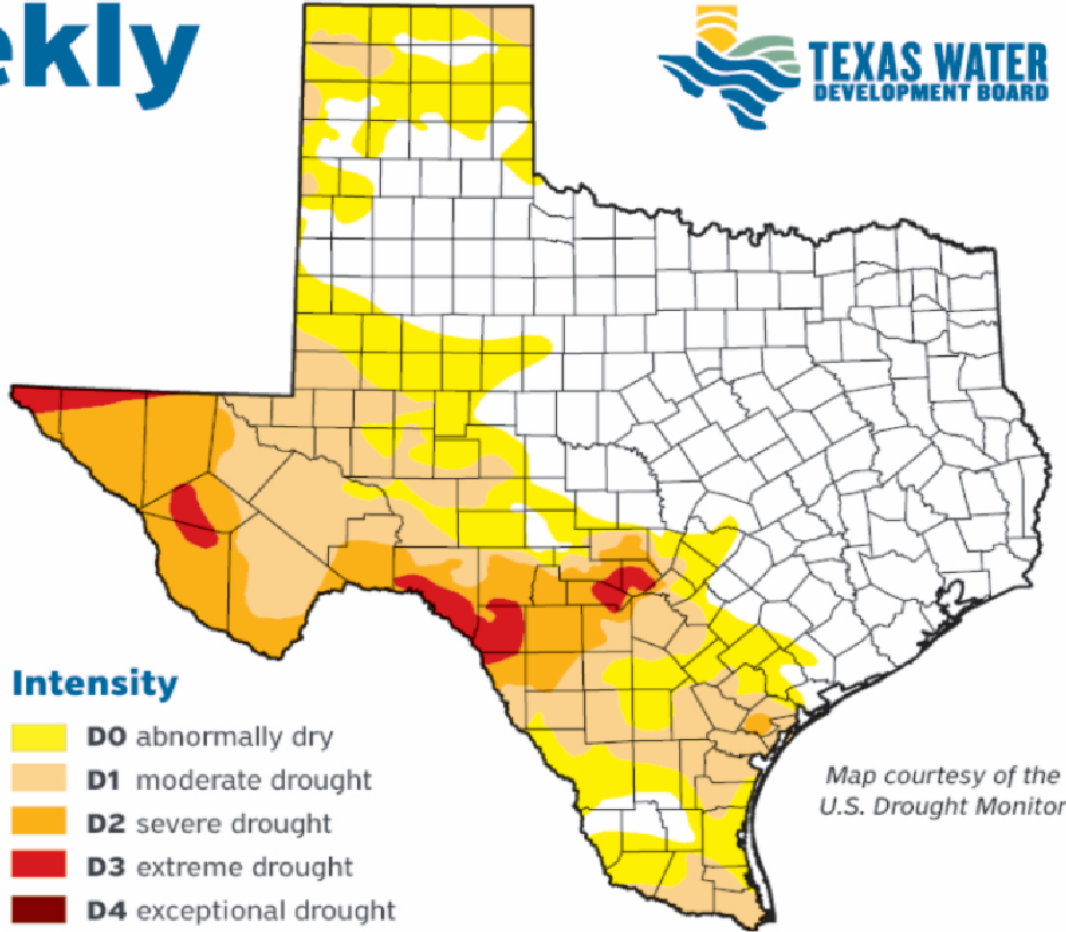
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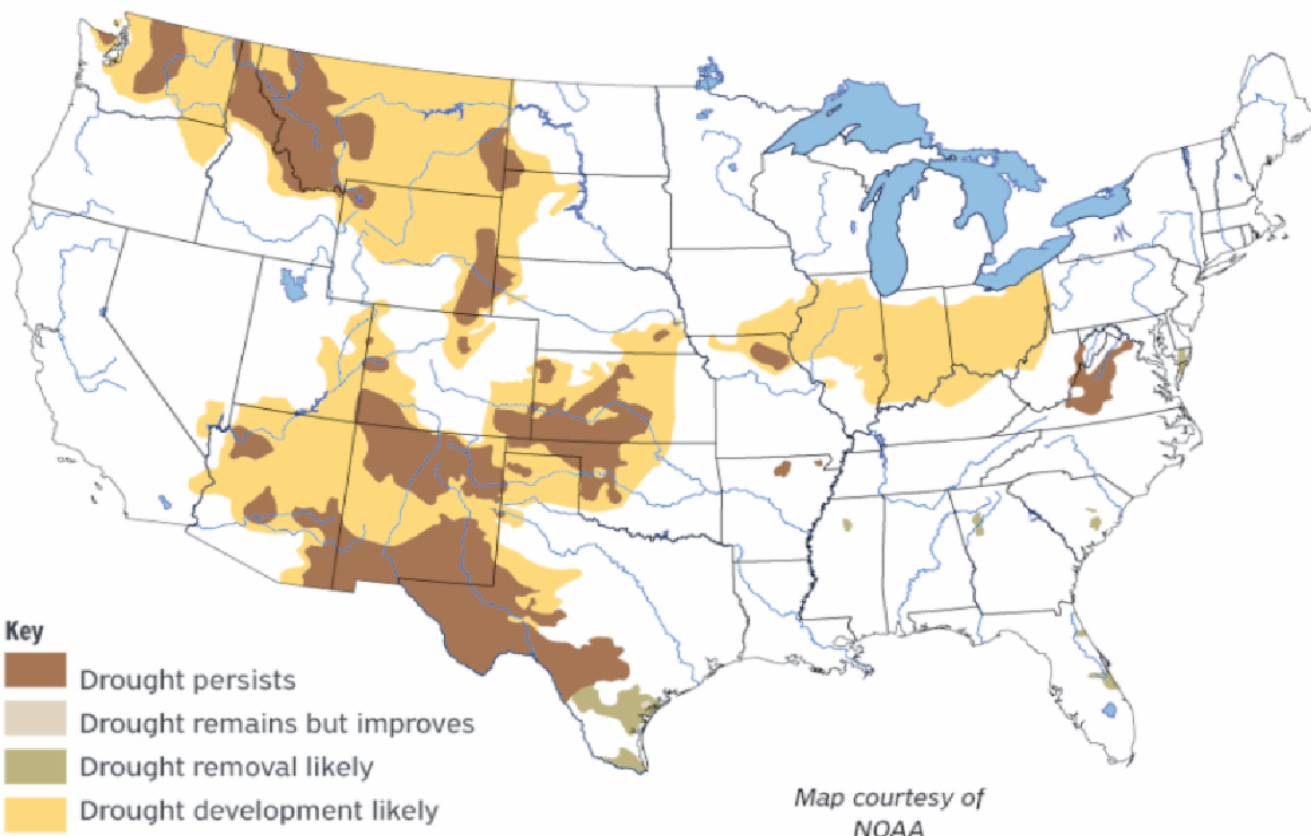
Water conditions

The latest drought map for conditions as of June 18 shows a small area of improvement in West Texas but a larger area of degradation in the Panhandle. Precipitation from Tropical Storm Alberto, which made landfall in Mexico on June 20, should bring some improvement to next week’s map.



Drought conditions

- 30%** now
- 29%** a week ago
- 24%** three months ago
- 23%** a year ago



U.S. seasonal drought outlook

The latest seasonal drought outlook anticipates drought removal in most of South Texas but drought expansion in the Panhandle and West Texas by the end of September. Summer is expected to be warmer than normal for the entire state and drier than normal for the western half.

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