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Columbia Shuswap  
Invasive Species Society

# PRESS RELEASE

## For Immediate Release: Hogs Gone Wild - Potential for invasive feral pigs in the Shuswap following wildfires.

The Columbia Shuswap Invasive Species Society (CSISS) is encouraging everyone to be aware of domestic pigs that may have escaped captivity during wildfire season this past summer in the Columbia Shuswap region. Escaped pigs can establish wild populations and have negative environmental, economic, and health impacts.



Photo 1: Feral pig in their preferred habitat.

### What are feral pigs?

Feral pigs are a combination of wild boars, escaped domestic pigs, and hybrid offspring of the two. The varied genetics of feral pigs gives rise to a wide range of appearances. They are light reddish brown to white to black in colouring and have coarse, dark hair on their bodies. Established populations of feral pigs are not present in BC, but are known in Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba.

### Wildfires allowing for pigs to escape

The summer of 2023 saw many wildfires in the Columbia Shuswap region. These fires destroyed fencing and likely allowed for pigs to escape captivity. The number of pigs still in the wild following this outbreak is unknown, which raises concern for the possibility of feral pig populations beginning.

### Impacts of Feral Pigs

Feral pigs threaten wildlife through predation and decrease biodiversity by outcompeting with native species. Disruptive rooting and wallowing behaviours increase erosion in aquatic environments. They cause major economic losses through crop and infrastructure damage, and transmit diseases to humans, livestock, and wildlife.

### What can be done?

Report any sightings of wild pigs or pig activity such as tracks, wallows, and rubbing to the CSISS through the [website](#), or with the Report Invasives [mobile app](#). Do not hunt feral pigs, this causes them to spread out and form new groups that learn to avoid humans. Other management steps include more fencing, and vaccination of farm animals to prevent the spread of diseases from feral pigs. Never release captive pigs into the wild.



Photo 2: Canadian Council on Invasive Species program to increase awareness of feral pigs, manage their spread, and to promote the reporting of sightings.

For media inquiries or more information, please contact:  
Robyn Hooper, Executive Director

1- 855- 785-9333

[info@columbiashuswapinvasives.org](mailto:info@columbiashuswapinvasives.org)

[www.columbiashuswapinvasives.org](http://www.columbiashuswapinvasives.org)

