

## Crime Stoppers reward up to \$10K for tips on cattle thefts

Written by By FAITH HUFFMAN, News-Telegram News Editor  
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Information about the rash of cattle thefts in the North Hopkins-southern Delta County area could prove very profitable.

The reward being offered by Lake Country Crime Stoppers has now increased to more than \$10,000 for tips that lead to the arrest or indictment of those responsible for theft of more than 60 head of cattle from the area since June of 2012, according to Texas and Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association Special Ranger Toney Hurley.

The reward was set at \$6,000 following a meeting last year in North Hopkins community in which ranchers and farmers kicked in additional funds, increasing the Crime Stoppers reward from \$2,500 in hope someone would step forward with information. After seven head of cattle were reported stolen from FM 71, just across the county line in southern Delta County, additional funds were donated by local ranchers and farmers, bringing the payoff to more than \$10,000 for anyone who provides tips that help crack the case and lead to the arrest or indictment of those responsible.

Until last week, the thefts were contained predominantly to the North Hopkins area, with the last big theft — 14 head of cattle — reported in November. The losses have been significant to the cattle owners, upwards of \$1,000 per 500-pound calf. The stolen cattle have been a mix of calves, cows, yearlings and other bovine.

“We do not believe this is the work of just one individual based on evidence from different locations. We believe two – but it could be more – are involved. The reason we believe these series of thefts are connected is all have similarities, some information and some things left at some scenes,” Hurley said.

The special ranger said that since the community meeting last year in North Hopkins, about 25 additional head of cattle have been reported stolen, bringing the total to 63 head of cattle taken in what are believed to be connected cases.

Hurley reminds residents of North Hopkins and southern Delta County to remain vigilant in watching for suspicious individuals or vehicles in the area. If anyone sees a suspicious vehicle,

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the special ranger encourages residents to take down as much information as possible about vehicles and call law enforcement immediately.

“Pay attention to your property and your neighbor’s. If you see something out of place or suspicious, especially in the early and odd hours of the day, jot down any license plate numbers and descriptions and call law enforcement immediately so we can get someone out there to check it out,” Hurley recommends.

To report tips to Crime Stoppers about any of the thefts which have occurred, call 903-885-2020. Callers will be given a number and rewards will be issued if their tip results in arrest or indictment of the people responsible in these thefts.