

October 3, 2005

Chronic wasting disease found in two more wild deer in Alberta

Alberta now has a total of three cases, all found near Saskatchewan border

Edmonton... Two more wild deer in Alberta have been identified with chronic wasting disease (CWD), bringing the number of cases found in the province to three. The new cases were found as a result of tests done in immediate response to the first case.

The wild mule deer that first tested positive for CWD on September 2, 2005 was found about 30 kilometres southeast of Oyen, near the Saskatchewan border. To reduce the spread of the disease, Alberta Sustainable Resource Development staff, with the co-operation of landowners and residents, collected 133 wild deer in the same area in mid-September. Testing of the deer led to the discovery of the two recent positive cases, found in deer within a 10-kilometre radius of the first infected deer.

"It is most unfortunate that more wild deer were found with the disease, but this was not unexpected and confirms that Alberta's CWD surveillance process is working," said David Coutts, Minister of Sustainable Resource Development. "We want to do everything we can to keep new deer from becoming infected and will be following up with another collection of deer in the area."

To update local residents, a public information meeting will be held at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, October 11 at the Acadia Valley Community Hall.

Extra deer licences have already been provided in the eastern border areas. Hunters are encouraged to take advantage of the additional hunting opportunities and help reduce large deer populations in these areas. Hunters in the eastern border areas are asked to assist by submitting the heads of deer they harvest. Heads can be taken to any Fish and Wildlife office, or the CWD collection freezers located in Empress, Jenner, Hilda, Oyen or Medicine Hat. More details on collection sites outside the local area are available from Fish and Wildlife offices and the website of Sustainable Resource Development.

Chronic wasting disease is a nervous system disease; infected animals cannot maintain weight and slowly waste away. There are 68 known cases of chronic wasting disease in wild deer in Saskatchewan.

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Map attached

For further information visit website at

<http://www3.gov.ab.ca/srd/fw/diseases/CWD/index.html>

Media enquiries may be directed to:

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To call toll free within Alberta dial 310-0000.

Backgrounder

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Chronic wasting disease found in two other wild deer in Alberta

Alberta now has a total of three cases, all in the same area (wildlife management unit 151, southeast of Oyen)



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