

April 18, 2006

Winter efforts to control CWD in wild deer in Alberta wrap up

Edmonton... The results are in from this winter's provincial efforts to control chronic wasting disease (CWD) in wild deer along the Alberta-Saskatchewan border. A total of nine wild deer collected in Alberta from January to March 2006 tested positive for CWD, bringing the total number of cases in the province to 13 since the first case that was found in September 2005. The federal Canadian Food Inspection Agency confirmed the province's latest findings on April 10.

"These results confirm that our aggressive response to the first case was justified. The disease seems to have entered from Saskatchewan along the South Saskatchewan River valley," said David Coutts, Minister of Sustainable Resource Development. "We must continue to do whatever is required to control the spread of chronic wasting disease in Alberta's wild deer."

Alberta's winter disease control program removed 1,688 wild deer in the vicinity of Empress and Acadia Valley (where four wild deer were found with CWD in late 2005) as well as Chauvin (where infected deer continue to be found just over the Saskatchewan border). Alberta's first case of CWD in wild deer was found about 30 kilometres southeast of Oyen, near the Saskatchewan border. Subsequent cases are clustered along the South Saskatchewan (seven cases) and Red Deer (two cases) rivers within 10 kilometres of the border.

Changes to the 2006 deer-hunting quotas along Alberta's eastern border area are being considered. The goal is to provide increased hunting opportunities that will build on the winter disease control efforts and prevent buildup of local deer populations. Sparse deer populations will reduce the risk of CWD spreading.

Alberta's disease control actions are based on recommendations of an International Expert Scientific Panel on CWD and guided by Canada's National CWD Control Strategy. The recommendations call for local deer culls to eliminate new areas of infection and population reduction in high-risk areas to control and prevent the spread of the disease.

Chronic wasting disease is a nervous system disease; infected animals cannot maintain weight and they slowly waste away. There is no scientific evidence to suggest that CWD can affect humans. As a precaution, however, the World Health Organization advises against allowing products from animals known to be infected with any prion disease into the human food system.

- 30 -

Attachment: Map of locations where deer with CWD have been found

For further information visit website at

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

Media enquiries may be directed to:

John Lear
Communications
Alberta Sustainable Resource Development
Edmonton

Dr. Margo Pybus
Fish and Wildlife Division
Alberta Sustainable Resource Development
Edmonton

To call toll-free within Alberta dial 310-0000.

Backgrounder

April 18, 2006

Locations where deer with CWD have been found



- 30 -

Media enquiries may be directed to:

John Lear, Communications, Sustainable Resource Development, Edmonton, 780-427-8636

Dr. Margo Pybus, Fish and Wildlife Division, Sustainable Resource Development, 780- 427-3462

To call toll-free within Alberta dial 310-0000.

Alberta Government Home | Ministries Listing | Sustainable Resource Development Home Page | News Releases | [Top of Page](#) |

Send us your comments or questions

Copyright(c); 2006 Government of Alberta

Return to Government Home Page

Return to [Government Home Page](#)