CWD Update 85

March 24, 2007

State and Provincial Updates

Ontario:

John Dungavell, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, provides the following: Since 2002, Ontario has conducted CWD surveillance of hunter-harvested deer. The program has tested more than 3500 deer with all negative results to date. Ontario will continue to conduct surveillance activities in the 2007 hunting season. In 2005, the Government of Ontario developed the Ontario CWD Surveillance and Response Plan which outlines the province's actions with regards to CWD. In November 2005, Ontario passed a regulation restricting the importation of high risk cervid parts (head, spinal column etc.) from other jurisdictions. For more information on the Ontario plan, the regulation, or our surveillance program, please see our CWD website at http://www.mnr.gov.on.ca/MNR/hunting/cwd.
Additionally, if an Ontarian harvests a CWD positive cervid in your jurisdiction, please contact John Dungavell at 705-755-1573.

Pennsylvania:

Bob Boyd, Pennsylvania Game Commission, provides the following on their recent CWD exercise: On Nov. 11, 2006, Pennsylvania Game Commission (PGC) Executive Director Carl G. Roe announced that the agency would conduct a CWD response simulation exercise in the first quarter of 2007. To more fully evaluate their preparedness, the Pennsylvania Game Commission developed different scenarios for each of the six region offices and the Harrisburg headquarters. Each scenario had a different set of constructs, variables and challenges that staff had to work through. One week after the exercise commenced, each team reported on their efforts to respond to the simulated discovery of CWD. Details of each response will be incorporated into the agency's Operational Plan. The decision to hold the drill was a product of two meetings to review and update the state's CWD response plan, as well as the agency's internal operational plan. "Currently, there are no confirmed or suspected cases of CWD-infected deer or elk in Pennsylvania, and we are working to ensure that it stays that way," Roe said. "While there always is room for improvement, I believe that, having gone through this planning exercise, our agency response plan provides a solid foundation should CWD be identified within our borders. Pennsylvania Game Commission CWD information is at:
http://www.pgc.state.pa.us/pgc/cwp/view.asp?a=458&q=163873.

South Dakota:

Steve Griffin, South Dakota Game, Fish, and Parks, provides the following: In the South Dakota CWD Surveillance period of July 1, 2006 to February 28, 2007 a total of 2,515 samples were collected for CWD surveillance. Breakdown of the sampling is as follows:
596 elk sampled—3 positive; 590 not positive; 3 pending
606 mule deer sampled—4 positive; 602 not positive
1,313 white-tailed deer sampled—3 positive; 1,310 not positive

Below is a listing of the positive cervids that have been found in South Dakota during the surveillance period of July 1, 2006 to February, 2007.

1. Elk female from Unit H3A in Custer County. (Hunter Harvest)
2. Elk female from Custer State Park Unit CU2 in Custer County. (Hunter Harvest)
3. Mule deer male from Unit 27A in Fall River County. (Hunter Harvest)
4. White-tailed deer male from Unit 27B in Fall River County. (Hunter Harvest)
5. White-tailed deer male from Unit 27B in Fall River County. (Hunter Harvest)
6. White-tailed deer female from Unit 21A in Pennington County. (Hunter Harvest)
7. Mule deer male from Unit 27A in Fall River County. (Hunter Harvest)
8. Mule deer male from Unit 21B in Pennington County. (Hunter Harvest)
9. Mule deer male from Unit BH1 in Custer County. (Hunter Harvest)
10. Elk female from Custer State Park Unit CU1 in Custer County. (Hunter Harvest)

In Summary:
To date, South Dakota has found 57 cases of CWD (39 deer and 18 elk) in free ranging deer and elk since testing began in 1997. Wind Cave National Park accounts for 16 of these animals (8 elk, 8 deer). Three elk have been found in Custer State Park. A total of 14,817 wild deer and elk have been tested for CWD since 1997.
South Dakota Game, Fish, and Parks CWD information is at:
http://www.sdgfp.info/Wildlife/hunting/BigGame/CWD.htm.

Virginia:
After extensive testing, the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (VDGIF) has not found any evidence of chronic wasting disease (CWD) in Virginia's white-tailed deer population. In 2006, over 800 samples were collected from white-tailed deer throughout the state. Approximately 500 samples were collected from the active surveillance area, which includes the western and northern parts of Shenandoah, Frederick, Clarke and Loudoun Counties, the area of Virginia closest to where CWD has been detected in West Virginia.
All hunters and members of the public are asked to keep a look out for any deer showing symptoms consistent with the disease. These clinical suspects are defined as adult (16 months or older) deer or elk that have poor body condition with neurological signs such as abnormal behavior, tremors, stumbling, incoordination, poor posture including droopy ears and a lowered head, drooling, and excessive thirst, and urination. Anyone who sees a CWD suspect deer should not attempt to contact, disturb or kill the animal. Instead, accurately document the location and immediately contact the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries by calling 1-804-367-1258.
Press Release is at: http://www.dgif.virginia.gov/news/release.asp?id=119.
Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries CWD information is at:
www.dgif.virginia.gov/cwd.

Wisconsin:
Donna Gilson, Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection, provides the following: The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) has confirmed a second CWD-positive white-tailed deer at a Crawford County captive cervid facility. The first positive on this farm was discovered in January 2005, in a 19-month-old buck that died from respiratory causes and was routinely sampled as required for deer that die or are killed at 16 months and older. Subsequent to the initial positive, the State Veterinarian ordered the herd depopulated for testing. However, the owner challenged the USDA's test results (the USDA's National Veterinary Services Laboratories in Ames, Iowa, conducts

Wisconsin's captive cervid testing for regulatory purposes). That case is in federal court and therefore the depopulation order is on hold.
The second positive was a male born in June 2004. It was found dead Jan. 4, 2007, after an apparent fight with another buck. Again, it was sampled as required under rule. The State Veterinarian was notified by the USDA Area Veterinarian in Charge on Feb. 5 that it was positive for CWD.

Recent Publications

Detection of PrP^{CWD} in postmortem rectal lymphoid tissues in Rocky mountain elk (*Cervus elaphus nelsoni*) infected with chronic wasting disease.
Terry R. Spraker, Thomas L. Gidlewski, Aru Balachandran, Kurt C. VerCauteren, Lynn Creekmore and Randy D. Munger
Journal of Veterinary Diagnostic Investigation Vol. 18 Issue 6, 553-557.

Abstract: Preclinical diagnostic tests for transmissible spongiform encephalopathies have been described for mule deer (Odocoileus hemionus), using biopsy tissues of palatine tonsil, and for sheep, using lymphoid tissues from palatine tonsil, third eyelid, and rectal mucosa. The utility of examining the rectal mucosal lymphoid tissues to detect chronic wasting disease (CWD) was investigated in Rocky Mountain elk (*Cervus elaphus nelsoni*), a species for which there is not a live-animal diagnostic test. Postmortem rectal mucosal sections were examined from 308 elk from two privately owned herds that were depopulated. The results of the postmortem rectal mucosal sections were compared to immunohistochemical staining of the brainstem, retropharyngeal lymph nodes, and palatine tonsil. Seven elk were found positive using the brainstem (dorsal motor nucleus of the vagus nerve), retropharyngeal lymph nodes, and palatine tonsil. Six of these elk were also found positive using postmortem rectal mucosal sections. The remaining 301 elk in which CWD-associated abnormal isoform of the prion protein (PrP^{CWD}) was not detected in the brainstem and cranial lymphoid tissues were also found to be free of PrP^{CWD} when postmortem rectal mucosal sections were examined. The use of rectal mucosal lymphoid tissues may be suitable for a live-animal diagnostic test as part of an integrated management strategy to limit CWD in elk.
http://jvdi.org/cgi/content/abstract/18/6/553.

Miscellaneous

UK Red Deer Surveillance for CWD
Following agreement between the EU Commission and Member States, a one year Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathy (TSE) surveillance programme which targets farmed and wild red deer will be undertaken across the Community. The Scottish Executive has announced details of how the surveillance protocols will apply in Scotland. With the assistance of the Deer Commission for Scotland and Forestry Commission Scotland, the sample target of 598 wild red deer animals over 18 months of age will be achieved by taking a percentage of deer culled as part of the normal stock management arrangement, with a further smaller number of animals uplifted following road kills. The sample target is expected to be collected over one hunting season. A further 598 farmed deer are also to be collected under the surveillance target. This part of the sample will be collected through a specialist deer abattoir in England. All animals collected for

surveillance purposes will be subject to screening for the presence of TSEs. The sale of venison for public consumption is not under investigation and trade in venison should be unaffected. Scotland press release at: http://www.scotland.gov.uk/News/Releases/2007/01/23140934. More information on the UK program: http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/bse/pdf/comms_strat.pdf.