MONTANA FWP

CWD MANAGEMENT

MONTANA DPHHS Healthy People Healthy Communities

MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF LIVESTOCK

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY COUNCIL 2017-18

January 17, 2018 Exhibit 11

Chronic Wasting Disease FAQs

Q. Where has CWD been found?

A. CWD was found in a mule deer buck shot Oct. 22 10 miles southeast of Bridger in hunting district 510 in Carbon County.

A second buck shot Nov. 5, 3 miles south of Belfry also in HD 510, was found suspect for CWD. Confirmation test results should be back during the week of Nov. 20.

Q. What is FWP going to do?

A. On Nov. 7, FWP initiated an incident command team in accordance with our CWD Response Plan. The IC team will do several things including contacting local landowners, governments and public; establish an Initial Response Area and Transport Restriction Zone; and conduct a Special CWD Hunt to find out more about the prevalence and extent of CWD. Long-term management of the hunting district will depend on what is learned about the prevalence and distribution of the disease during the Special CWD Hunt.

Q. What happens if I shoot a sick deer?

A. This circumstance will be handled on a case-by-case basis. In the past, FWP has provided new licenses for people who have harvested sick animals that were inedible. However, circumstances vary, and this prevents us from simply having a blanket policy. Guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention do advise against consuming an animal that is from a CWD positive area without having it tested. If you have harvested an animal that appears sick, please don't hesitate to contact your local FWP office.

Q. How did CWD get to Montana?

A. The most recent detection along our southern border is likely the result of the natural spread of the disease from Wyoming to Montana. There have been several CWD positive deer identified in Wyoming within 10 miles of our southern border. This recent detection falls within one of Montana's priority surveillance areas identified as being at high risk of becoming infected through the natural spread of the disease.

Q. What is an Initial Response Area?

A. The Initial Response Area (IRA) will include a roughly 10-mile radius around where the first CWD infected deer was killed. This area includes both private and public lands. It will be the focus area for a Special CWD Hunt.

Q. What is a Special CWD Hunt?

A. The Special CWD Hunt has not been initiated yet. If it is, a Special CWD Hunt is a hunt designed to sample enough harvested animals to determine the prevalence and spatial distribution of the disease. It will occur only within the IRA and special rules and regulations will apply. Additional Special CWD Hunt B Licenses will be available to accomplish the desired harvest level. All animals harvested during a special hunt must be

brought to FWP Special CWD Hunt check stations for sampling and to be tagged with a tag reading "MTFWP CWD TEST" and a unique identification number. To prevent spread of the disease, brain and spinal column material of animals taken during a Special CWD Hunt will not be allowed out of the county or counties that contain the IRA, an area defined as the Transportation Restriction Zone. The Special CWD Hunt will end when enough deer are sampled to precisely measure the prevalence and spatial distribution of the disease, which is estimated to be between 150-400 animals.

Q. What is the Transportation Restriction Zone?

A. The Transport Restriction Zone (TRZ) is one or more counties, or portions of counties, that contain the IRA. To prevent the spread of CWD no brain or spinal column material from animals taken in the IRA are allowed outside the TRZ. The IC team will identify the TRZ with consideration to game processors, taxidermists, and landfills so that hunters have the option for processing and disposing of animals taken in the IRA. The spinal column may be left in the field at the kill site. Carcass parts that may be taken out of the TRZ include:

- meat that is cut and wrapped or meat that is removed from the bone;
- quarters or other portions of meat with no part of the spinal column or head attached;
- hides with no heads attached;
- skull plates or antlers with no meat or tissue attached;

Q. Where will I be able to get licenses for the Special CWD Hunt?

A. Licenses will be available at FWP Helena and Region headquarters. In addition to regular deer A and B licenses valid in the hunting district, additional either-sex and/or antlerless-only Special CWD Hunt B Licenses only valid within the IRA will be available over-the-counter first-come-first-served. Hunters are limited to up to seven B Licenses, one or more of which may be for an antlered buck, depending on the number and type of other licenses they already have. Individual hunters may take a maximum of eight deer per year in Montana, including any taken within the IRA. Only in this or another special hunt circumstance can a hunter in Montana harvest more than one buck per year. Establishment and sale of CWD Special Hunt Licenses will be coordinated with FWP's Licensing Bureau.

Q. Do I have to get my deer from a Special CWD Hunt tested?

A. YES! All animals harvested during the Special CWD Hunt must be checked at a FWP Special CWD Hunt Check Station within two days. FWP will establish at least two check stations at access points to the IRA to collect samples and aid hunters. Check stations will be open from 10 a.m. to 1 hour after sunset as determined from sunrise/sunset tables in FWP hunting regulations. These check stations will be operated only as part of the CWD management action and may be staffed by volunteers or people from partner agencies. Hunters will be required to document the exact location of the kill using a GPS or USGS Topographic Map. Sex and age of the animal will be recorded and retropharyngeal lymph nodes, a tooth for aging, and a genetic sample will be collected. Hunters who quarter or bone out their animal must bring the head and meat to the check station.

Q. How long will it take for me to find out if my deer has CWD?

A. Results from CWD testing of animals out of the IRA will be expedited, but it still may take up to three weeks. We recommend obtaining results before consuming meat from deer killed

in the IRA. If your harvested deer is found to be positive, you can dispose of the meat appropriately at a landfill.

Q. Will FWP secure access to private land for hunters during the special CWD hunt?

A. No. The IRA is likely to include private land, but hunters are still required to secure access to hunt on private land.

Q. What is Chronic Wasting Disease and how do deer, elk and moose catch it?

A. Chronic wasting disease (CWD) is one type of a class of diseases called Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies, or TSEs, that infect members of the deer family, including deer, elk, moose, and caribou. TSEs are caused by infectious, mis-folded prion proteins, which cause normal prion proteins throughout a healthy animal's body to mis-fold, resulting in organ damage and eventual death. These prions are found throughout bodily tissues and secretions and are shed into the environment before and after death. When other animals come in contact with the prions, either from infected live animals or from contaminated environments, they can be infected. The disease is slow acting, degenerative and always fatal. The name comes from the appearance of symptomatic animals, which get very skinny and sick-looking before they die.

Q. How will CWD impact deer and elk herds?

A. The short answer is we don't know yet. If CWD infects enough animals it will probably reduce the herd in the long term. Other states have seen deer populations decline when CWD infects 20 to 40 percent of a herd. In Wyoming, heavily-infected herds of mule deer declined 21 percent *per year* and whitetails 10 percent. Colorado saw a 45% decline in infected mule deer herds over 20 years. Clearly, if left unchecked CWD could result in large-scale population declines.

Because the distribution and intensity of CWD infections are variable across a broad landscape, the impacts across the landscape will also be variable. Keeping deer numbers down and dispersed, and reducing buck: doe ratios, may keep the prevalence low and manageable. FWP's focus will be on managing CWD infected areas for prevalence at 5 percent or lower and preventing spread. This may also mean keeping deer or elk numbers low.

Q. Can humans be infected by CWD?

A. There is no known transmission of CWD to humans. However, the World Health Organization and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommend not consuming meat from an animal known to be infected with CWD. Furthermore, the CDC recommends that hunters strongly consider having their animals tested before eating the meat when hunting in areas where CWD is known to be present.

Some simple precautions should be taken when field dressing deer, particularly in CWD surveillance areas:

- Wear rubber gloves and eye protection when field dressing your deer.
- Minimize the handling of brain and spinal tissues.
- Wash hands and instruments thoroughly after field dressing is completed.

- Avoid consuming brain, spinal cord, eyes, spleen, tonsils and lymph nodes of harvested animals. (Normal field dressing coupled with boning out of a carcass will essentially remove these parts.)

Q. Is CWD dangerous to pets or livestock?

A. Currently, no evidence exists that domestic pets, companion animals, or livestock can be infected with CWD. Natural transmission of CWD to other North American animals outside the cervid family has not been found.

Q. How do you test for CWD?

A. The standard test is to look at an animal's retropharyngeal lymph nodes or brainstem for evidence of CWD. These samples can only be collected from dead animals and are submitted to a certified CWD-testing diagnostic laboratory. Unfortunately, there are no non-invasive CWD tests for live animals. For research purposes, rectal or tonsil biopsies from live animals will work, but these tests are less sensitive and require capture, anesthesia, and minor surgery, making them impractical for widespread surveillance.

Q. How can you tell if an animal has CWD?

A. Animals with CWD cannot be diagnosed based on clinical signs because they are unspecific and mild at the beginning of the disease. Diagnosis is therefore made by testing central nervous system and lymph node tissues. Symptoms of infected animals can include emaciation, excessive salivation, lack of muscle coordination, difficulty swallowing, excessive thirst, and excessive urination. Clinically-ill animals may have an exaggerated wide posture, may stagger and carry the head and ears lowered, and are often found consuming large amounts of water. However, these symptoms don't appear until the terminal stage of the disease. It is important to remember that infected animals may not have symptoms, but can still be shedding infectious prions.

Q. Why should Ranchers and Farmers care about CWD?

A. Hunters are a key tool FWP uses to help rancher, farmers and other landowners manage the impact of wildlife on their property and to their crops and livestock. If CWD were to increase in prevalence, FWP anticipates some localized decline in hunting interest. Additionally, in many parts of the state property values are tied to existing recreational values. Hunting and wildlife viewing are key components. If CWD was left unmanaged and prevalence were to increase uncontrolled, it may impact property values.

Recent research has shown that plants, including plants used for livestock food, can uptake CWD prions from the soil. If continued research shows that animals can catch CWD by eating infected plants, it could have huge repercussions on the agricultural industry. Concerns nationally and internationally about CWD transmission through feed has may states and other countries to restrict the sale of such products from CWD positive areas. It is already the case that deer and elk protein, mostly from game farms, from CWD areas cannot be used in livestock feed.

Q. Why should Business owners care about CWD?

A. In Montana, outfitting and hunting make significant contributions to local economies. Across the state deer, elk and antelope hunting brings in about $400 million. This includes hotels, restaurants and gas stations in big and small communities. We anticipate the possibility that

CWD will initially chill interest in deer hunting in the affected area. However, effective management will require participation from hunters and support from communities.

Q. Where does CWD come from?

A. The origin of CWD is unknown. It was discovered in 1967 in mule deer at a research facility in Colorado. Shortly thereafter it was also found in captive mule deer and elk in Ontario, Colorado, and Wyoming. By the 1990s it was discovered in wild white-tailed and mule deer, elk, and moose in Colorado and Wyoming and among captive animals in Saskatchewan, South Dakota, Montana, and Oklahoma. By the early 2000s, CWD was found in the wild in Saskatchewan, Alberta, Illinois, and Wisconsin.

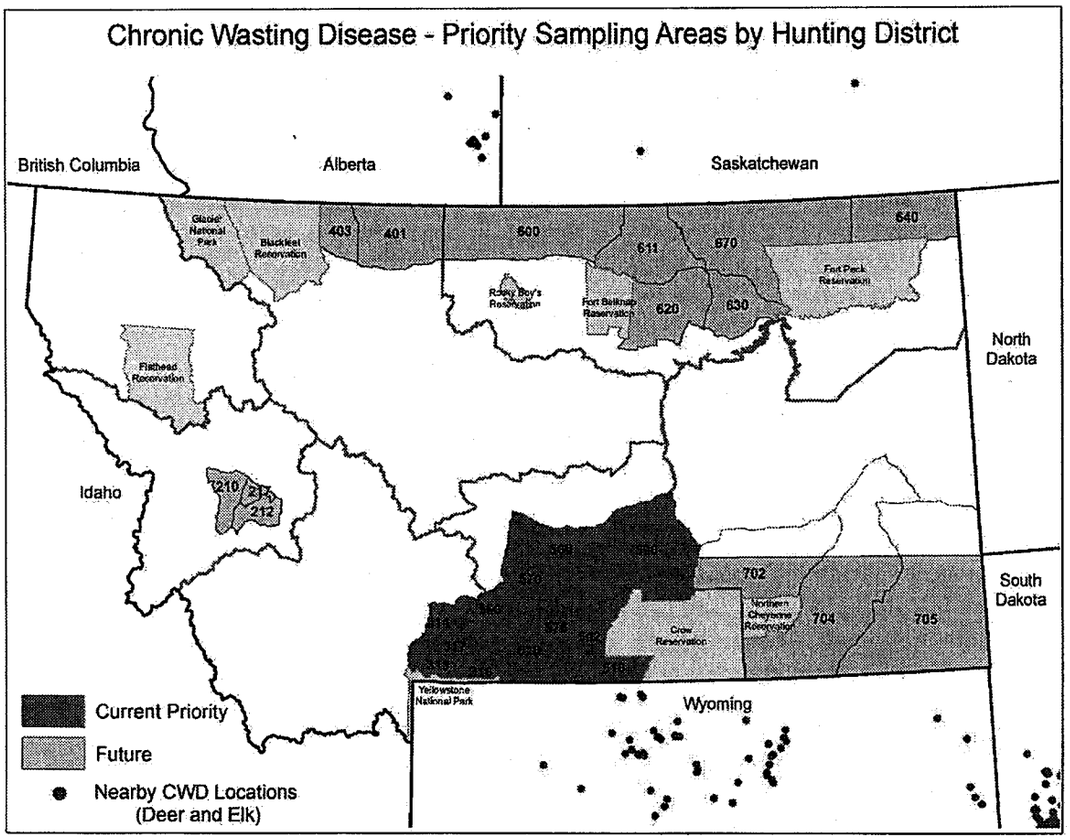
CWD has continued to spread. As of 2017 it is in captive or free-ranging herds in 24 states, three Canadian provinces, Norway and South Korea. While it has not been found among wild deer or elk in Montana yet, it will likely arrive from infected wild animals in neighboring states or provinces.

Q. Can CWD be eradicated?

A. After decades of CWD management across the country, most agencies and researchers agree that CWD cannot be eradicated once it infects a herd. Eradication is not the goal of FWP. Other states have attempted eradication and set up unreasonable expectations with hunters and the public. Once it is found here FWP's goal is to limit the prevalence and spread of CWD.

Q. Where is Montana looking for CWD?

A. Montana FWP has identified priority surveillance areas in which we will be focusing our surveillance efforts (map below). These areas have been identified as those at highest risk of becoming infected through the natural spread of the disease. Since CWD could be spread through the inadvertent or illegal movement of a CWD positive deer or elk carcass into the state, we also plan to periodically survey other areas of the state that fall outside of the high priority surveillance zones.


Chronic Wasting Disease - Priority Sampling Areas by Hunting District
British Columbia
Alberta
Saskatchewan
North Dakota
South Dakota
Wyoming
Idaho
Glacier National Park
Blackfeet Reservation
403
401
500
611
670
640
Rocky Boy's Reservation
Fort Belknap Reservation
620
630
Fort Peck Reservation
Flathead Reservation
210
211
212
702
704
705
Northern Cheyenne Reservation
Crow Reservation
Yellowstone National Park
Current Priority
Future
Nearby CWD Locations (Deer and Elk)