

QUICK FACTS ABOUT CWD

ADF&G has a testing program to monitor for the possible appearance of Chronic Wasting Disease in Alaskan wild moose, deer, elk and caribou

- ✓ CWD affects only members of the deer family such as white-tailed deer, mule deer, black-tailed deer, elk and moose.
- ✓ The first naturally occurring case of CWD in a moose was found Sept 05 in the CWD endemic area of Colorado. To date, the only wild moose testing positive for CWD have been in Colorado and Wyoming.
- ✓ Recent laboratory studies have been able to transmit CWD to reindeer.
- ✓ No scientific evidence to date has shown that CWD can be transferred between wildlife and humans.
- ✓ CWD can be transmitted via urine, saliva, feces and nervous/lymphoid tissues of infected members of the deer family
- ✓ Confirmation of CWD diagnosis is made by examination and analysis of brain tissue and lymph nodes from dead animals.
- ✓ Surveillance is targeted to at risk moose populations near privately-owned elk facilities in GMUs 14 (Wasilla/Palmer), 15 (Homer), and 20D (Delta Junction), 20B (North Pole).

To help prevent Chronic Wasting Disease in Alaska, please take the following precautions when hunting:

- ❖ Check the CWD status of the area you travel to and its local recommendations.
- ❖ Do not handle, harvest or consume wild animals that appear to be sick.
- ❖ Wear rubber gloves while field dressing carcasses.
- ❖ Minimize handling of brain and spinal tissues.
- ❖ Bone out carcasses. Discard the brain, spinal cord, eyes, spleen, lymph nodes and other inedible parts in the location where the animal was harvested.
- ❖ Wash hands and tools thoroughly afterwards with warm, soapy water and then disinfect tools with bleach diluted 1:10 in water.
- ❖ Do NOT bring unprocessed carcasses or heads from Outside deer, elk or moose into Alaska.
- ❖ Do not use urine-based scent lures, this is now prohibited by regulation.
- ❖ Do not use elk carcasses for bear baiting as this may infect the environment

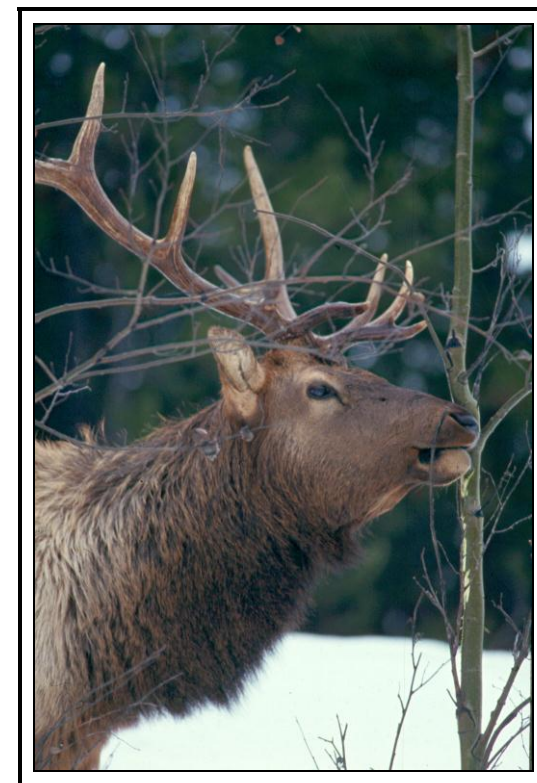
ADF&G thanks you in advance for your support in maintaining healthy wildlife populations for all of us to enjoy.



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Chronic Wasting Disease and Alaska

DISEASE MONITORING OF DEER, ELK, AND MOOSE



2013

To date, Chronic Wasting Disease has not been detected in Alaska. Limited surveillance continues in 2013.

WHAT IS CWD?

Chronic Wasting Disease or CWD belongs to a group of diseases known as transmissible spongiform encephalopathies, which cause a degeneration of the brain.

CWD affects **white-tailed deer, mule deer, black-tailed deer, elk and moose**. CWD was first detected in deer in northern Colorado in 1967. Until 2005, CWD was found only in deer and elk. In Sept 2005, the first positive case of CWD in moose was found in Colorado in a CWD endemic area. Since then, a small number of positive moose have been found in Colorado and Wyoming.

Animals infected with CWD show changes in behavior and may exhibit extreme weight loss, excessive salivation, stumbling and tremors. CWD can take many months for signs to appear but the disease is 100% fatal once signs develop.

The prion causing CWD is an abnormal piece of protein, not a living organism, so it cannot be killed. Once it is in the environment, it is nearly impossible to get rid of.

Recent studies have demonstrated CWD transmission from animal to animal directly and through environmental contamination by saliva, feces, urine and nervous/lymphoid tissues. Additionally, crows, at least, can carry infective prions in their gut and infect the environment through their droppings.



PLEASE REPORT
SICK WILDLIFE

WHERE IS IT FOUND?

To date, CWD has not been detected in any Alaska wildlife. Currently, it is found in **deer or elk** in CO, IA, IL, KS, MD, MN, MO, ND, NE, NM, NY, PA, SD, TX, WV, WY, WI, UT, VA, Saskatchewan and Alberta. The only known cases of CWD in **moose** have been in Colorado and Wyoming.

WHAT'S BEEN TESTED IN ALASKA SO FAR?

HUNTER HARVESTED DEER AND ELK
Sitka black-tailed deer and elk from hunters' harvests were tested yearly from 2003 through 2009. A total of 89 elk and 1966 deer were tested and all were negative.

TARGETED TESTING

In **all of Alaska**, targeted testing has been done on moose, deer, elk, or caribou that are sick, found dead, or a portion of those hit by vehicles. Since 2001, 671 moose and 101 caribou have tested negative for CWD. See our CWD web page for maps of locations by game management units. Targeted testing is ongoing.

WHAT IS BEING TESTED NOW?

In 2013, targeted testing will focus on moose dying within 5 miles of a captive elk facility (within GMU 14 -Palmer, GMU 15 – Soldotna / Homer, and GMU 20 - Delta Junction / North Pole).

Special registration hunt permit holders in GMU14 will be informed if they must submit the head from their kill to ADFG in Palmer. Road-killed moose salvaged by charities in Delta Junction and the portion of North Pole SW of Bradway Road to Eielson AFB will also be tested. Sick and found dead moose, deer, elk or caribou will be tested.

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

Report sick deer, elk, moose or caribou to your area wildlife biologist at the nearest Alaska Dept of Fish & Game office. Also email reports or questions about any wildlife disease issue to dfg.dwc.vet@alaska.gov

WHAT SAMPLES ARE TESTED?

1) A small piece of the brain stem called the obex. This can be removed through the natural hole at the base of the skull with no damage to the skull. 2) Tonsils and two lymph nodes from the back of the throat.

HOW DO I FIND TEST RESULTS FROM ALASKAN WILDLIFE?

This program is a large surveillance conducted for disease and research purposes. Results from individual samples may not be finalized for months. Results, the numbers and species of animals tested, and maps showing the locations by Game Management Units are posted on our website.

For more information see our website:

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=disease.cwd>

or email dfg.dwc.vet@alaska.gov