

Meeting Date: January 26, 2023

Agenda Item No. 9

Agenda Item: Chronic Wasting Disease Update

Bureau Chief Approval: JR

Prepared by: Rick Ward, State Wildlife Manager

Background:

IDFG has been monitoring for Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) in deer and elk since 1997 and has sampled approximately 22,000 animals over the last 25 years. CWD was first detected in the state in Unit 14 in late 2021 and the Commission designated Units 14 and 15 as a CWD management zone at that time. That designation remains in effect.

In March 2022 meeting, the Commission adopted modifications to the 2022 hunting seasons in Unit 14 and implemented a mandatory check requirement for all deer, elk, and moose harvested in Units 14 and 15 for the 2022 hunting season.

In addition to the mandatory sampling of all harvested deer, elk, and moose from Units 14 and 15, the *2021 Strategy for Chronic Wasting Disease* prescribes surveillance that includes sampling animals from portions of the state annually and rotating focused sampling among other areas of the state.

Annual CWD-sampling areas for white-tailed deer include Units 1, 2, 3, 4, 4A, 5, 6, 7, 8, 8A, 9, 10, 10A, 11, 11A, 12, and 13. Annual CWD-sampling areas for mule deer and elk include Units 21, 21A, 29, 30, 30A, 37, 37A, 51, 58, 59A, 59, 60, 60A, 61, 62, 62A, 63A, 64, 65, 66, 66A, 67, 69, 71, 72, and 76 (see map on page 2). The CWD sampling period begins July 1 each year and samples are collected over the 12-month sampling period, but most samples are collected from hunter-harvested animals in October and November.

Focused sampling areas rotate throughout southern Idaho on a three-year rotation. The 2022 focused sampling area includes Units 54, 55, 56, 57, 70, 73A, 73, 74, 75, 76, and 77, as well as some targeted sampling in 11, 11A, 13, 18, and 23 near the border of GMU 14 (see map on page 2).

Staff will present current CWD data and information, both within the CWD management zone and statewide, as well as current CWD prevalence estimates and distribution of CWD-positive samples by deer species in Unit 14, and a freedom-from-disease estimate for white-tailed deer in unit 15. Staff will also discuss season setting implications.

Statutory Authority and/or Policy Issues:

Monitoring and management of chronic wasting disease is described in the *Idaho Department of Fish and Game 2021 Strategy for Chronic Wasting Disease*.

IDAPA 13.01.08.350.03 provides the Commission authority by proclamation or emergency hunt order to designate seasons and areas in which portions of carcasses must be presented to the Department within a specified time frame.

Public Involvement Process:

N/A

Justification:

This agenda item is for Commission information on the status of chronic wasting disease in Idaho.

Staff Recommendation:

None. This agenda item is for Commission information.

