

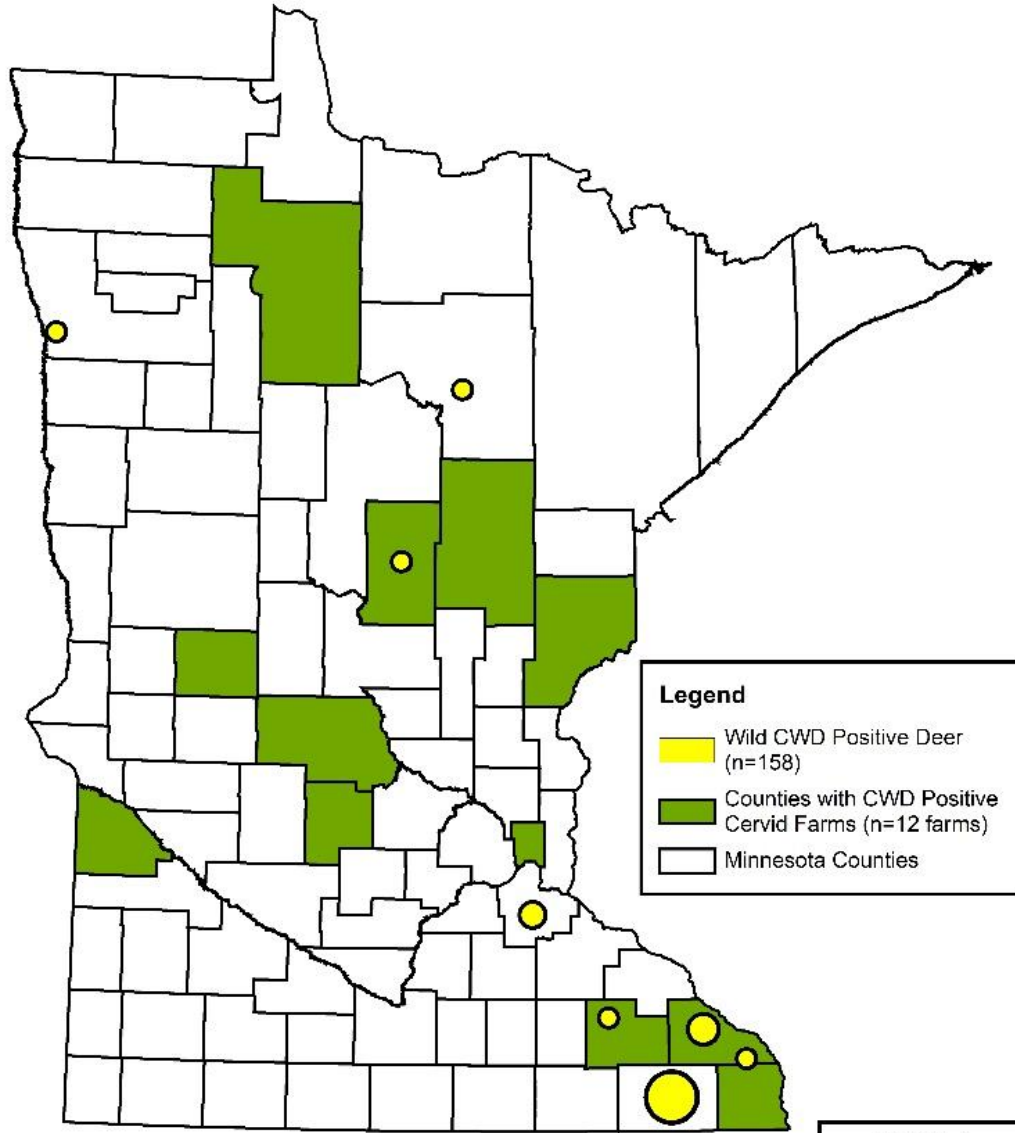
Chronic Wasting Disease Update

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Wildlife Health Program

- Fall 2021 hunting season recap
- Southeast agency culling update
- Grand Rapids positive and initial response
- Approaches to statewide surveillance and (broadly) anticipated needs

History of Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) in Minnesota



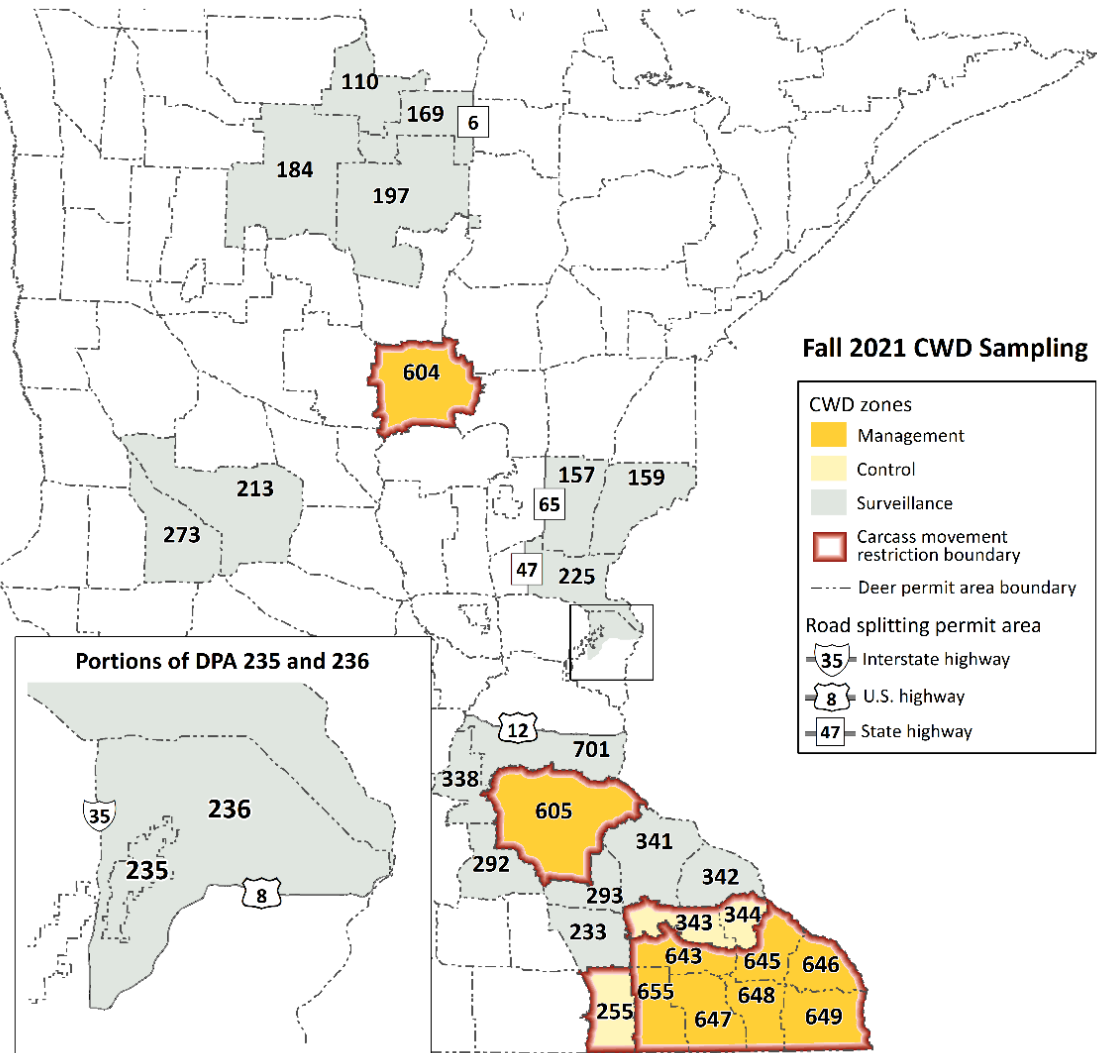
Updated March 22, 2022



Chronic Wasting Disease in Minnesota

- CWD has been found in 12 captive cervid facilities since 2002, most recent detection was Beltrami County in 2021
- 106,000 wild deer have been tested for CWD since 2002; 158 deer have tested positive, primarily in southeast MN
 - MN also has a wild elk population in NW MN; over 250 hunter-harvested elk have been tested for CWD since 2004 with no detections
 - MN also has moose in the northeast; over 350 moose have been tested for CWD from 2004 to present with no detections

Overview of Fall 2021 CWD Surveillance

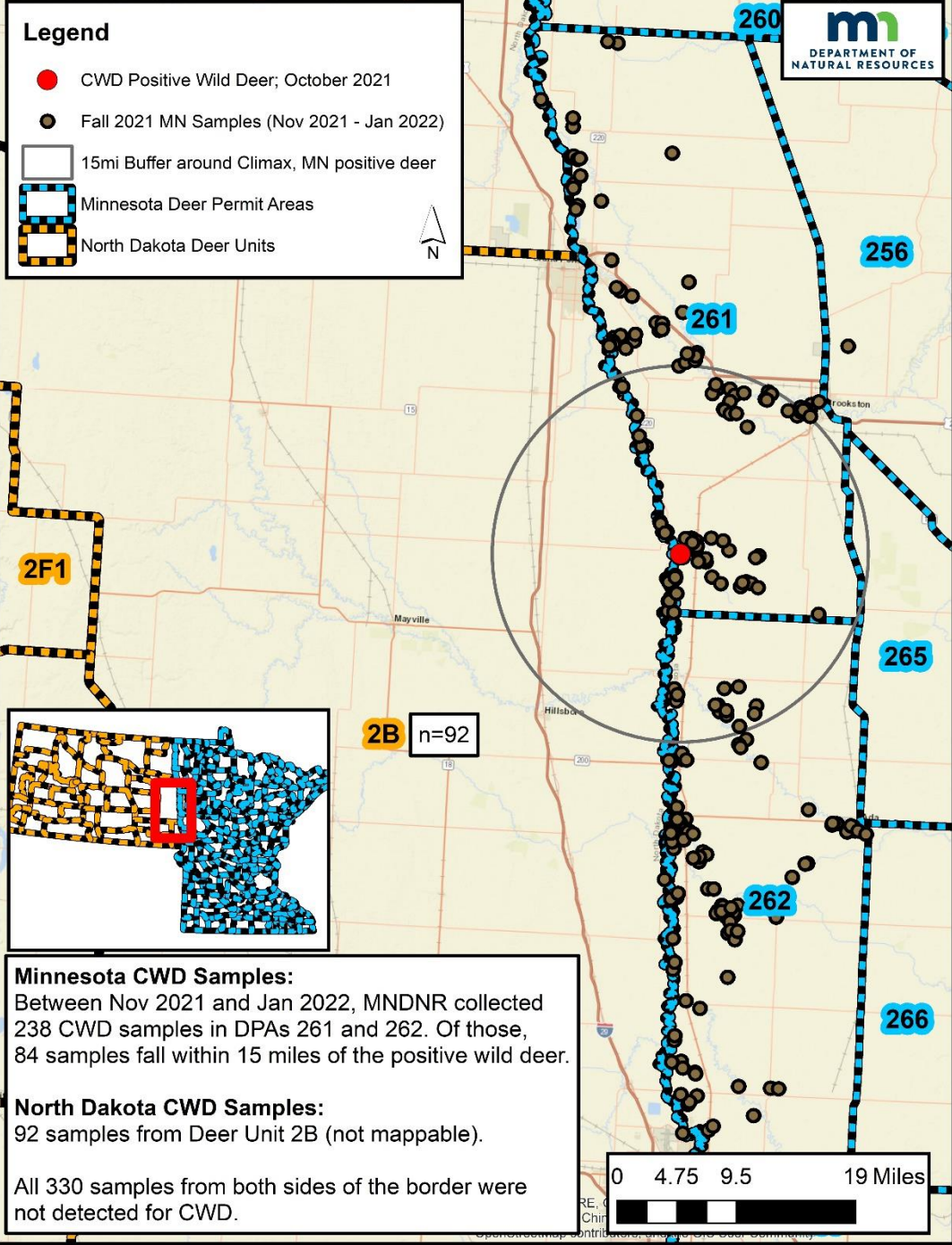


- Nearly 15K total samples have been collected
 - 31 new CWD detections within existing management zones
 - 28 in the southeast
 - 2 in the south metro
 - 1 in the north central
 - One new CWD detection in Climax, MN (Polk County)
- We spent approximately \$1.6M
- 263 DNR staff worked 21,645 hours
- 181 students worked from 13 colleges/universities across the state

CWD Sampling Fall 2021 (Polk County)

Legend

- CWD Positive Wild Deer; October 2021
- Fall 2021 MN Samples (Nov 2021 - Jan 2022)
- 15mi Buffer around Climax, MN positive deer
- ▨ Minnesota Deer Permit Areas
- ▨ North Dakota Deer Units

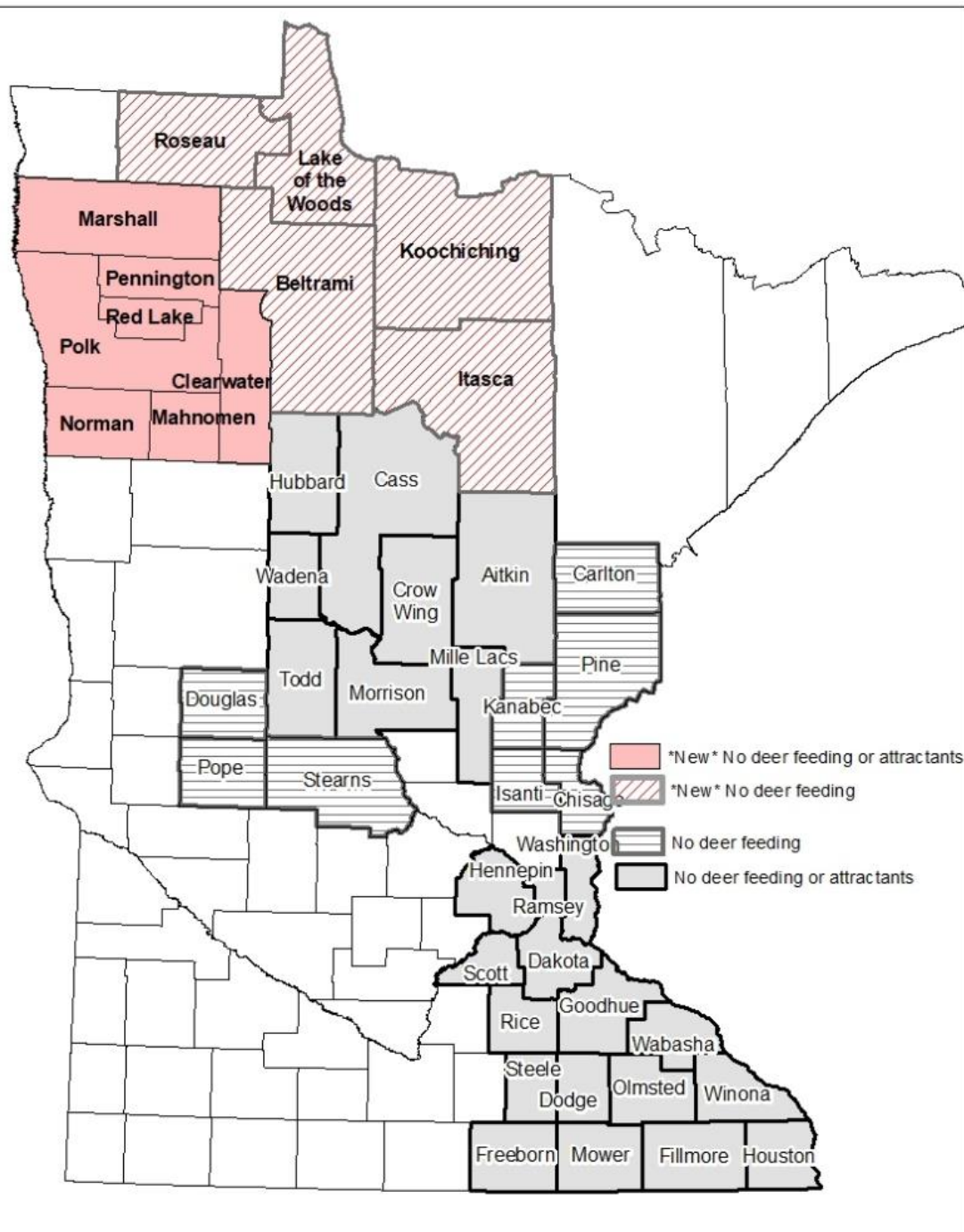
Minnesota CWD Samples:
Between Nov 2021 and Jan 2022, MNDNR collected 238 CWD samples in DPAs 261 and 262. Of those, 84 samples fall within 15 miles of the positive wild deer.

North Dakota CWD Samples:
92 samples from Deer Unit 2B (not mappable).

All 330 samples from both sides of the border were not detected for CWD.

- A hunter submitted his own samples for CWD screening and on 2-Nov; estimated as 2-yr old male
- Past CWD sampling occurred in early 2000s
- Closest wild positive in MN is Brainerd, about 190 miles away. Closest wild positive in ND is >200 miles away.
- Collected 238 samples on MN side, 84 samples of which are within 15 miles of the positive
- NDG&F collected 92 samples in hunt unit 2B (data only to unit level)
- All samples from both sides of the border were not detected!

Expansion of Deer Feeding and Attractant Bans



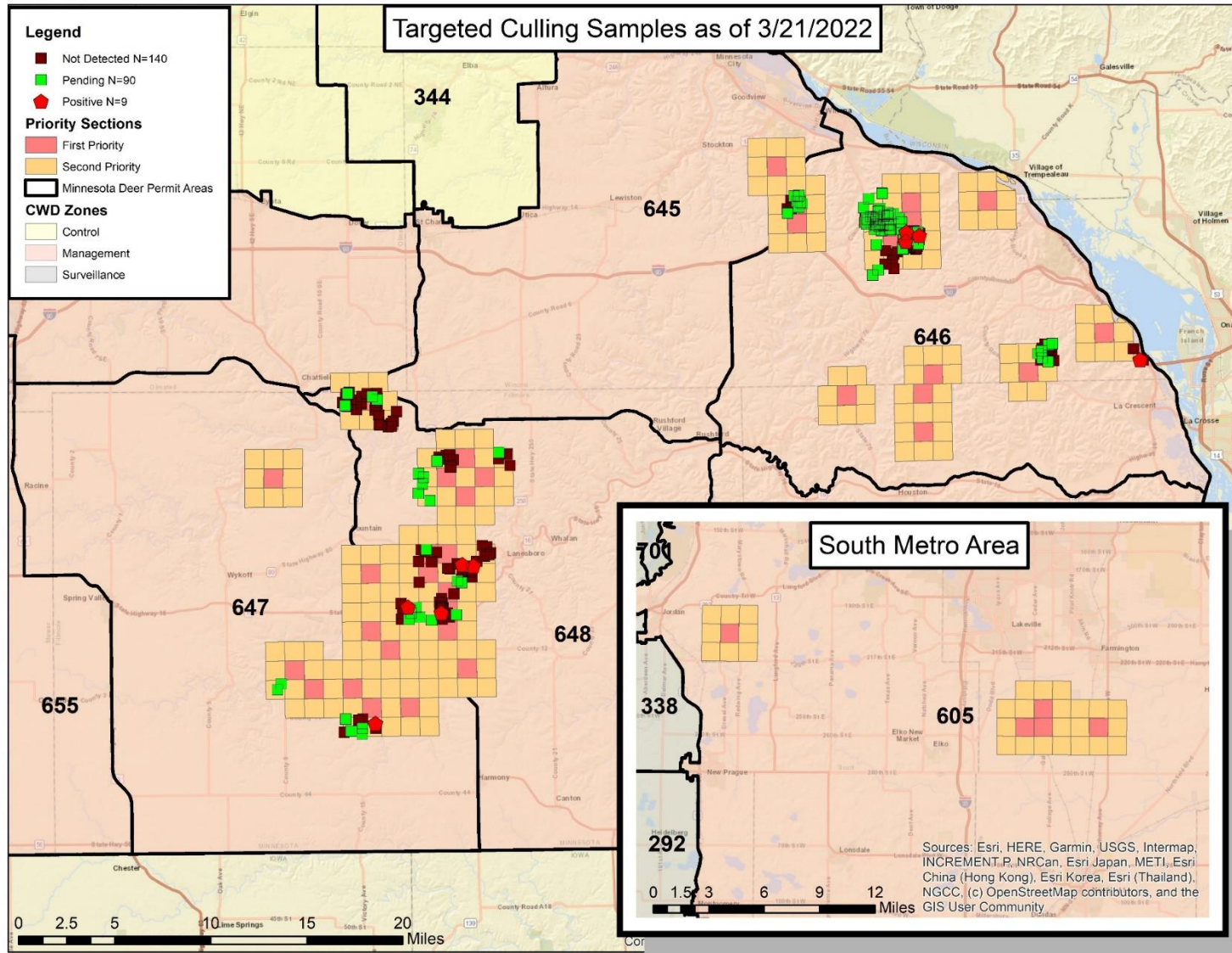
- On Thursday, Dec 30th, the deer feeding ban was expanded to include 44 counties
- New counties were added in response to wild CWD-positive deer found in Polk county and a CWD-infected deer farm in Beltrami county
- To reduce disease transmission risk, expansion includes the county where the disease was detected as well as all surrounding counties
- In areas where disease has been confirmed in wild deer, attractants (salt, minerals, and urine) are also banned

Winter CWD Efforts: Agency Culling – USDA WS

- *Objective 1:* Use targeted culling to remove deer from within 2-3 miles of known CWD infected wild deer. Trying to remove social group with higher risk of having CWD.
- *Objective 2:* Through a funded research grant, we are also assessing degree of genetic relatedness among culled deer within 2-3 miles of known CWD-infected wild deer
 - Assess the distribution of the prion protein gene (PRNP) in all deer culled within 2-3 miles of known CWD-infected wild deer



Progress from SE culling project thus far



- Samples through 21-March: 239 deer
- 9 CWD-positives
- 6% of total deer culled are CWD-positive thus far, compared to population-level prevalence, which is 1%
- Demonstrates tool works to target positive deer

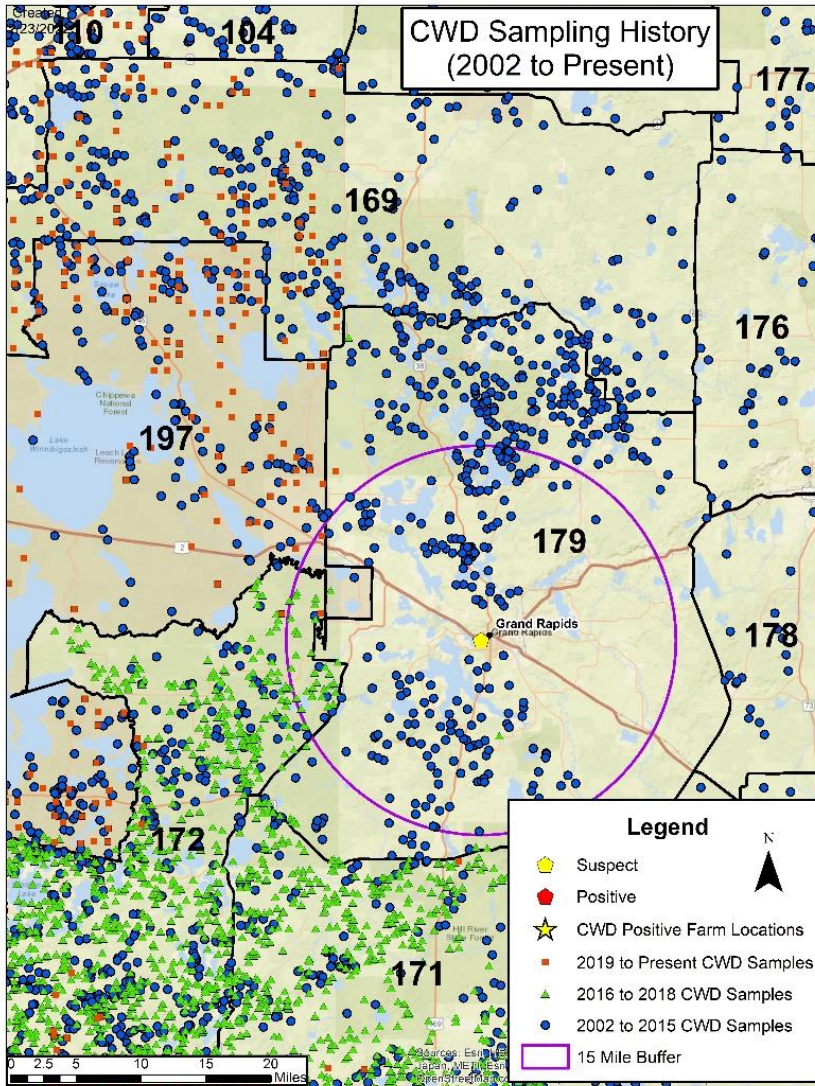
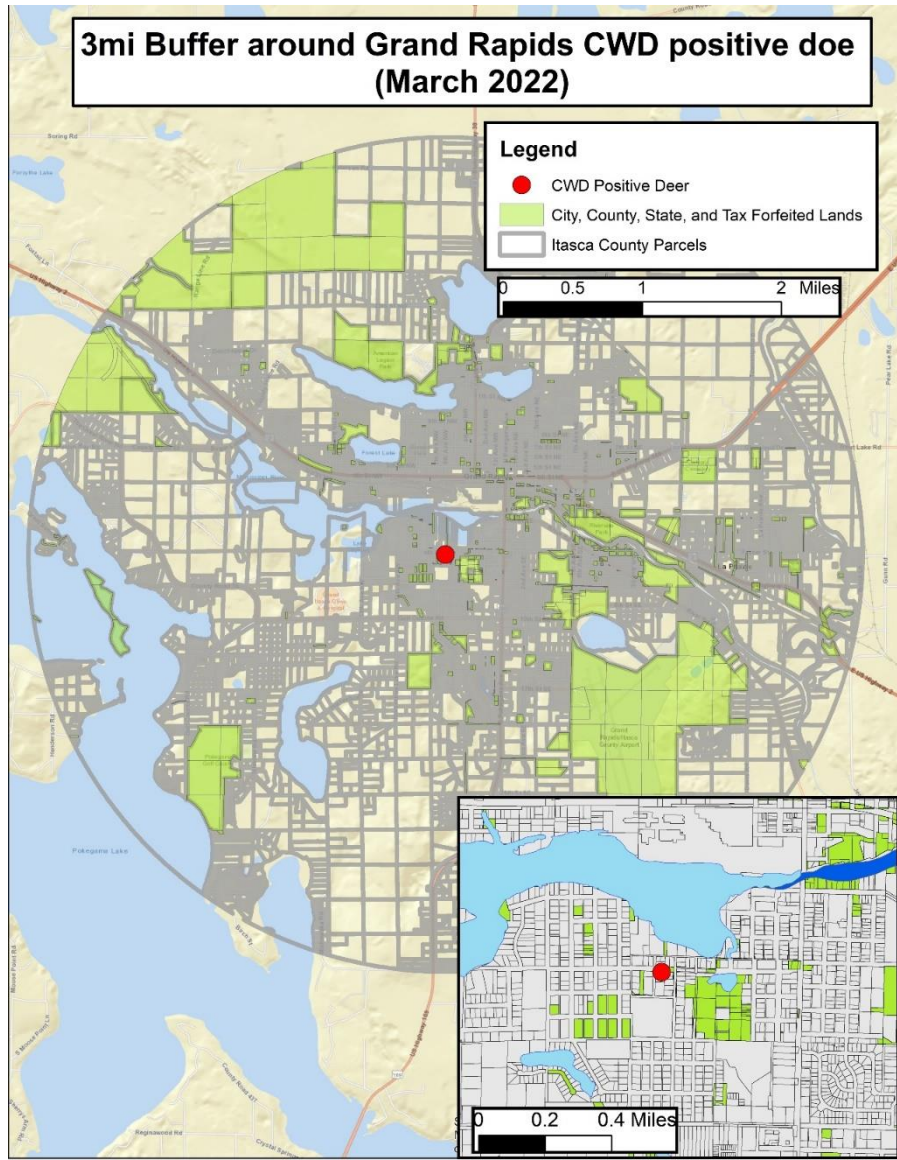
What happens to agency culled deer in Minnesota?



Share the Harvest Program

- We have a meat processor on contract that is processing all deer from the culling program into whole cuts and trim
- Once test results are received, all ‘Not Detected’ deer are released for human consumption
- We plan to work through our list of 500+ members of the public that signed up to receive venison harvested by USDA-WS and testing CWD-not detected.
- All meat from deer testing positive for CWD are brought to the alkaline digester at the UMN Veterinary Diagnostic lab; carcass remains are routed to a lined landfill in LaCrosse, WI

New CWD detection in Grand Rapids



- 15-Feb: homeowner reported a deer that died suddenly, no apparent injuries; DNR staff collected carcass and samples for CWD testing
- 8-March: initial CWD-suspect results received
- 11-March: necropsy of deer carcass at UMN VDL suggest vehicular collision was cause of death (CWD was an incidental finding)
- 15-March: confirmatory CWD test results received
- No recent CWD sampling has occurred in DPA 179

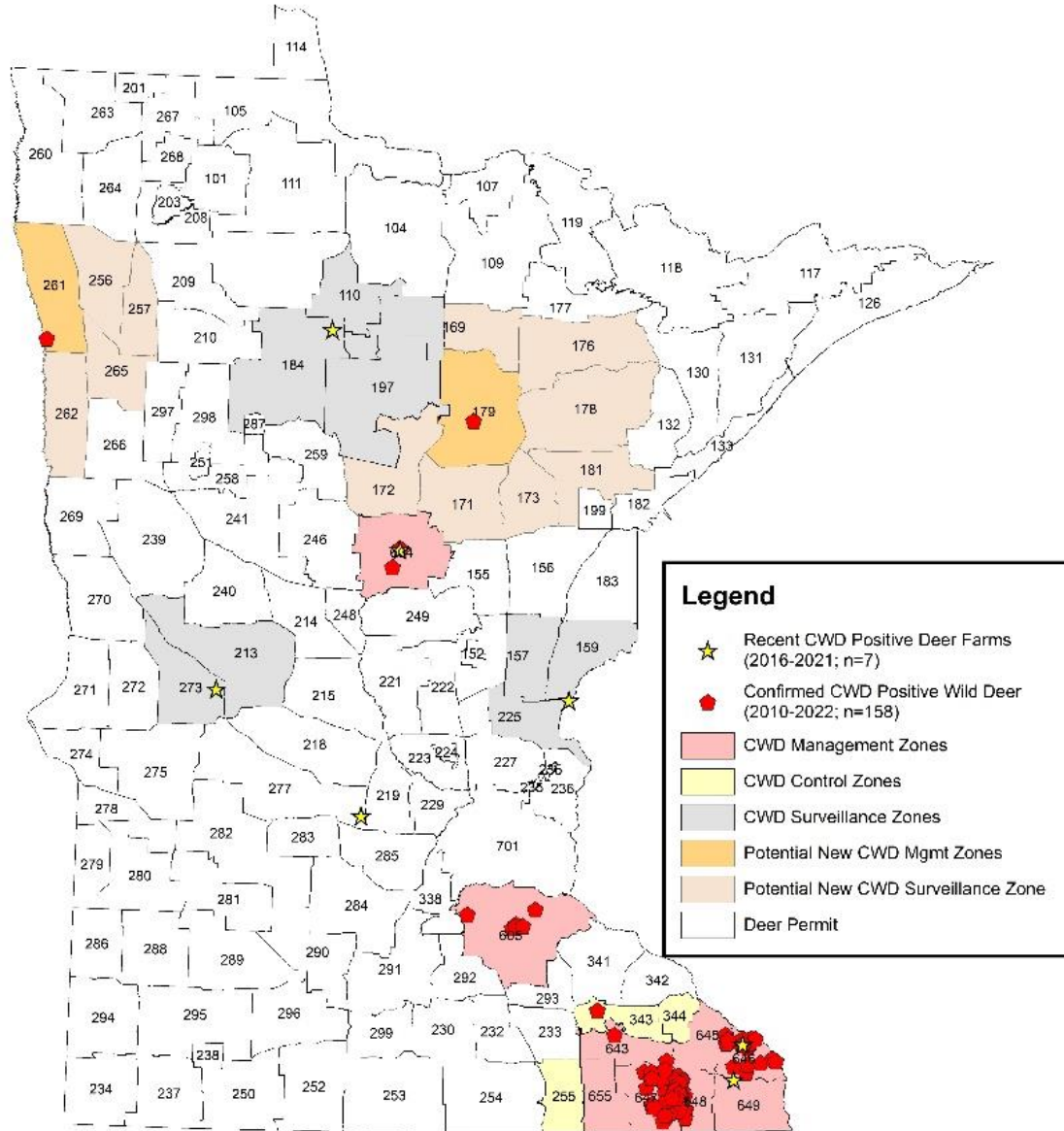
Local Response

- DNR will work with city and county road officials to obtain samples from vehicle-killed deer in the area
- Encourage the public to continue to report sick deer to DNR
- Localized agency culling effort within 2 miles of CWD-positive deer
 - Deer in this immediate area are more likely to be infected with CWD, due to the proximity to the positive adult female
 - Removing potential CWD-positive deer now prevents additional transmission that could occur between deer from now until next fall's hunting season
 - Deer that do not test positive for CWD will be released for human consumption

Statewide Response

- Updating the DNR's CWD response plan this spring to reflect the expanded footprint of CWD in the state and improve capacity and flexibility for response strategies
- Investigating options for hunters to use a self-mailing kit for free testing statewide
 - Working on cost estimates for kits and testing;
 - Depending on hunter interest and harvest success rates, program may cost anywhere from \$128K (1,000 hunters) to \$2.7M (100,000 hunters)
- Expanding the taxidermist network (partner sampling program) statewide
 - 566 registered taxidermists statewide
 - Depending on level of participation, could cost \$150,000-\$600,000
- Upgrading and improving current design for self-service sampling stations for hunters

Planning for Fall 2022



- CWD footprint has now expanded to 8 areas of the state
 - Sampling efforts would include both in-person, staff stations and self-service options for hunters
 - Recruit interdivisional staff to assist with surveillance in priority areas
- 2 new CWD Management Zones would be created in DPAs 261 and 179
 - Increased hunting opportunities, carcass movement restrictions, enhanced testing opportunities
- Dumpster program would be expanded, likely costing about \$350,000 in fall 2022
- Fall CWD surveillance costs likely to exceed \$3M

Summary

- CWD remains a rare disease in MN
- Aggressive approach to protect statewide deer population, hunting heritage
- Adapt as we assess effectiveness
- We cannot be successful in managing this disease without the help of hunters, cooperators, and businesses



Thank You Any Questions?

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