



# **Report: Emergency Response to Disease Outbreaks in Wildlife**

Covering the Period January 1-March 31, 2020

As required by Minnesota Session Law 2019, 1<sup>st</sup> Special Session, Chapter 4

6/22/2020

## Report to the Minnesota Legislature

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Pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, Section 3.197, we estimate that it cost approximately \$190 to produce this report. This includes staff time for drafting and reviewing the report.

*Upon request, this material will be made available in an alternative format such as large print, Braille or audio recording. Printed on recycled paper.*

## DNR CWD Spending Legislative Report

This report fulfills the quarterly reporting requirement of Minnesota Session Law 2019, 1st Special Session, Chapter 4, Article 1, Section 3, Subdivision 6(b) “\$1,595,000 the first year and \$275,000 the second year are from the general fund, and \$1,125,000 the first year and \$1,675,000 the second year are from the game and fish fund for planning for and emergency response to disease outbreaks in wildlife (Table 1). The commissioner and board must each submit quarterly reports on the activities funded under this paragraph to the chairs and ranking minority members of the legislative committees and divisions with jurisdiction over environment and natural resources and agriculture.”

### CWD Activities, January-March 2020

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) spent approximately \$934,000 during the third quarter of FY 2020 on Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD)-related activities (Figure 1, Table 2). This spending includes invoices related to the completion of fall sampling efforts that occurred in the second quarter, such as costs related to sample collection and payments for diagnostic testing and dumpsters. New activities that occurred this past quarter included the capture and collaring of deer for the southeast deer movement study and deer culling efforts to reduce disease in the southeast. A detailed list of activities includes:

- From January 1 to March 31, a total of 632 samples were collected and submitted for CWD testing:
  - Hunter-harvested sampling: 79 samples. These included deer heads submitted for sampling at self-service sampling stations (up to a week after the close of archery and late hunt seasons) and taxidermist-collected samples. None of these samples were positive for CWD.
  - Opportunistic sampling (e.g., vehicle-killed deer, sick deer, and depredation permits): 90 samples, collected statewide; 2 of these deer were CWD-positive.
  - Targeted culling: 463 samples, all from southeast MN; 7 of these deer were CWD-positive.
- A total of 9 new cases of CWD were detected from Jan 1-March 31, 2020; 8 of these deer were in southeast Minnesota, and 1 in Dakota County.
- A targeted culling operation was implemented through a contract with USDA-Wildlife Services. All efforts were focused in southeast Minnesota, where all new cases of disease were found this fall.
- In March, there was a new detection of CWD in a wild deer in Dakota County. This is the first detection of this disease in a wild deer in this part of the state and has resulted in a new area of disease surveillance and management. The DNR is examining risk factors and has requested captive cervid records from the Board of Animal Health for farms within 15 miles of this deer.
- The southeast deer study initiated its third deer capture effort and deployed 52 new collars on juvenile deer to learn more about dispersal patterns and distances. Since the project began in 2018, over 200 landowners have participated and staff have been able to monitor movements and home ranges for 173 deer (99 males and 74 females). The study monitors three factors in order to better understand how CWD may spread in the southeast: fawn dispersal, buck movements during the rut, and seasonal migrations from summer to winter home ranges. More information on the study can be found here: [www.dnr.state.mn.us/cwd/deer-movement-study.html](http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/cwd/deer-movement-study.html).

The targeted culling operation in southeastern Minnesota began in early January by meeting with landowners in areas surrounding recent cases of CWD. In total, 63 landowners allowed USDA-Wildlife Services to remove deer from their properties. The project had access to 15,247 acres (Private = 11,603 acres; State = 3,644 acres). All

deer were brought to a DNR facility in Rushford; samples were collected for CWD testing and for the University of Minnesota's project to develop new CWD diagnostic methods. Carcasses were then transferred to a local meat processor in Spring Valley. The processor was compensated for processing deer at the same rate as the venison donation program (\$150/deer). Deer with "not detected" CWD results were made available for human consumption to participating landowners and through the Share the Harvest program. A total of 463 deer were removed: 213 deer from the Winona area (3 positives); 250 from the Preston/Lanesboro area (5 positives) (Figure 2).

In early March, a CWD positive wild deer was found in Dakota County, near Farmington (Figure 3). This adult male deer was reported by a landowner as emaciated and unable to walk or stand. A local conservation officer dispatched the deer and the carcass was transported to the Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory at the University of Minnesota for necropsy. It was confirmed to have CWD by Colorado State University. The location of this deer is nearly 100 miles from the primary CWD area in southeastern Minnesota and the extent of disease in Dakota County is currently unknown. Plans are underway to implement the DNR's CWD Response Plan and establish a new zone for surveillance by fall 2020. In the meantime, efforts have been heightened to respond to reports of sick deer and, with help from a local contractor, collect samples from vehicle-killed deer in Dakota and Scott counties. A feeding and attractant ban goes into effect in this area starting July 1, 2020.

Communication efforts continued during this reporting quarter. They included media interviews, speaking engagements, and responses to phone calls and emails from hunters or the general public. The CWD website content was updated regularly and test results were made available to hunters as soon as they were received from the lab.

Planning efforts for CWD surveillance and management for fall 2020 have begun. Information collected this past fall and winter is being evaluated. The recent discovery of CWD at two captive cervid facilities (Douglas and Pine Counties) and the infected wild deer found Dakota County will lead to new surveillance areas being established this fall. These new areas for CWD surveillance will be in addition to existing CWD management zones in north-central and southeast Minnesota.

## Tables, Charts and Figures

Table 1. Chronic Wasting Disease Appropriation Allocation FY20-21.

| Fund                             | FY20<br>Appropriated | FY21<br>Appropriated | Total App<br>FY20-21 |
|----------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| General Fund                     | 1,595,000            | 275,000              | 1,870,000            |
| Game and Fish-Emergency Response | 1,125,000            | 1,675,000            | 2,800,000            |
| Cervid Health – Adopt a Dumpster | 50,000               |                      | 50,000               |
| <b>Total</b>                     | <b>2,770,000</b>     | <b>1,950,000</b>     | <b>4,720,000</b>     |

Figure 1. Quarterly spending activity of the Chronic Wasting Disease Appropriation Allocation FY20-21.

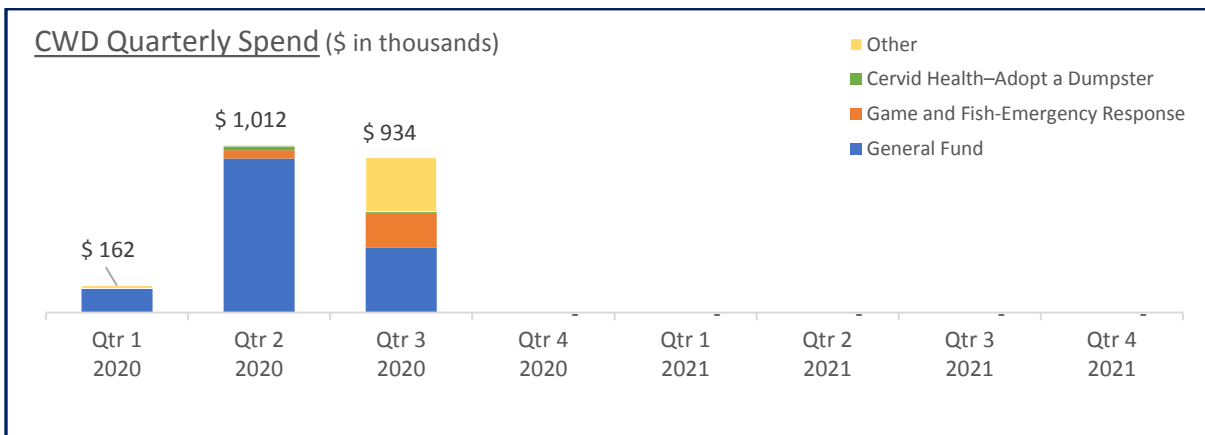


Table 2. Detailed spending by expense type for Chronic Wasting Disease Appropriation, July 1, 2019 through March 31, 2020.

| Expense Type                       | General Fund     | Game and Fish-Emergency Response | Cervid Health- Adopt a Dumpster | Other**        | Total Spend      |
|------------------------------------|------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------|------------------|
| Salary                             | 677,196          | -                                | -                               | 234,226        | 911,422          |
| CSU CWD Sample Testing             | 315,369          | -                                | -                               | -              | 315,369          |
| USDA-Culling Contract              | -                | 16,528                           | -                               | -              | 16,528           |
| Contracts: CWD Tissue Sampling     | 103,330          | -                                | -                               | -              | 103,330          |
| CWD Attitude Survey                | -                | 36,000                           | -                               | -              | 36,000           |
| Dumpsters                          | 112,060          | 71,994                           | 37,914                          | 26,524         | 248,492          |
| Helicopter Deer Capture/Surveys    | -                | 33,744                           | -                               | 2,232          | 35,976           |
| Supplies                           | 90,646           | 12,779                           | -                               | 2,669          | 106,094          |
| Printing & Advertising             | 51,079           | 1,759                            | -                               | 798            | 53,636           |
| CWD Office Lease - Rushford        | 11,998           | -                                | -                               | -              | 11,998           |
| Equipment                          | 25,216           | 660                              | -                               | -              | 25,876           |
| UMN CWD Testing (elk/moose)        | 952              | -                                | -                               | -              | 952              |
| Travel/Fleet                       | 66,339           | 68,025                           | 124                             | 86,283         | 220,772          |
| Technology-Deer Web App            | -                | 616                              | -                               | -              | 616              |
| Other                              | 8,475            | 12,077                           | -                               | 95             | 20,647           |
| <b>Total</b>                       | <b>1,462,661</b> | <b>254,182</b>                   | <b>38,038</b>                   | <b>352,827</b> | <b>2,107,709</b> |
| <b>Remaining Funds</b>             | <b>132,339</b>   | <b>870,818</b>                   | <b>11,962</b>                   |                |                  |
| <b>% of FY20 Budget Spent</b>      | <b>91.7%</b>     | <b>22.6%</b>                     | <b>76.1%</b>                    |                |                  |
| <b>% of FY20 Budget Encumbered</b> | <b>7.0%</b>      | <b>42.1%</b>                     | <b>15.0%</b>                    |                |                  |
| <b>% of FY20 Budget Spent/Enc</b>  | <b>98.7%</b>     | <b>64.7%</b>                     | <b>91.0%</b>                    |                |                  |

\*\* Other includes Game and Fish Operating Account, Deer Management Account, Deer/Bear Account, Cervid Health Account, and Heritage Fund.

Figure 2. Locations of deer (n=463) removed by agency culling and tested for chronic wasting disease from January-March, 2020 in southeast MN.

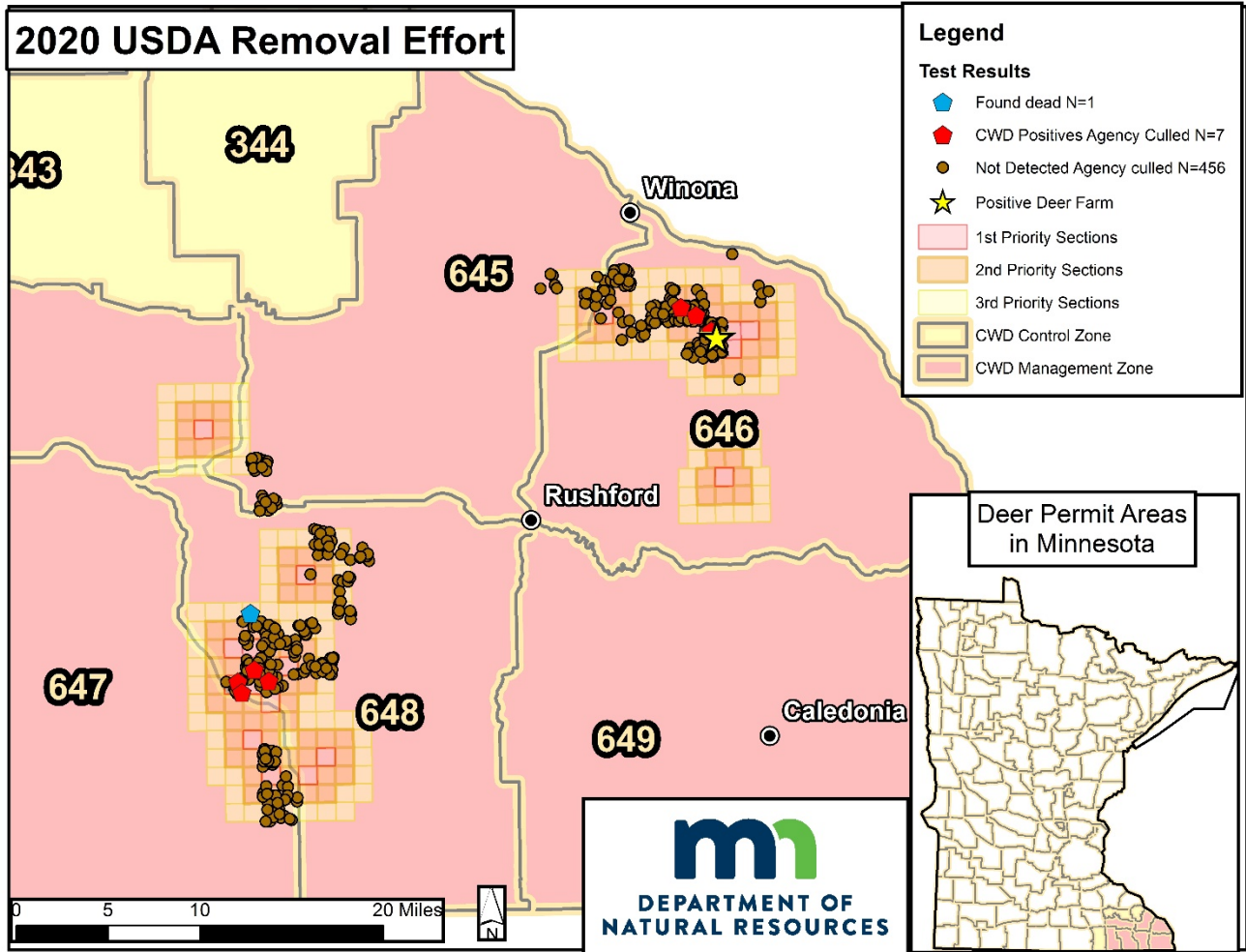


Figure 3. Location of wild deer found positive for chronic wasting disease in March 2020.

