



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

Covering the Period July 1, 2023 –June 30, 2024

As required by Minnesota Session Law 2023, Chapter 60

01/13/2025

## Report to the Minnesota Legislature

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Pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, Section 3.197, we estimate that it cost approximately \$320 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 reporting requirement of Minnesota Session Law 2023, Chapter 60, Article 1, Section 3, Subdivision 6. Specifically:

(b) \$982,000 the first year and \$982,000 the second year are from the general fund and \$1,675,000 the first year and \$1,675,000 the second year are from the game and fish fund for statewide response and management of chronic wasting disease (Table 1). The commissioner and the Board of Animal Health must each submit annual reports on chronic wasting disease activities funded in this biennium to the chairs and ranking minority members of the legislative committees and divisions with jurisdiction over environment and natural resources and agriculture.

(c) \$5,150,000 the first year and \$3,250,000 the second year are for inspections, investigations, and enforcement activities taken for the white-tailed deer farm program and for statewide response and management of chronic wasting disease. This appropriation is available until June 30, 2029.

(d) \$8,546,000 the first year and \$8,546,000 the second year are from the deer management account for the purposes identified in Minnesota Statutes, section 97A.075, subdivision 1.

## CWD Activities, July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) spent approximately \$3,194,000 during FY24 on Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD)-related activities (Figure 1, Table 2). This spending includes staff salary for CWD management work, invoices for agency culling activities (including dumpsters, diagnostic testing, fleet, contracts, and meat processing), partner sampling program payments to taxidermists, and CWD-related research projects. Additional activities that occurred focused on compiling data for surveillance planning for fall 2024, development of the hunting regulation book and deer rule, and planning outreach strategies to engage hunters. A detailed list of activities include:

- From July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024, a total of 14,221 samples were collected and submitted for CWD testing:
  - Opportunistic sampling: 193 samples collected statewide; two of these were CWD-positive (a found dead deer in DPA 605 and a harvested deer under a shooting permit in DPA 661).
  - Voluntary Submissions from hunters: 2,040 samples collected from either hunter mail-in kits, partner sampling program, or walk-in appointments at area office; none were detected for CWD.
  - Agency culled: 411 samples collected from 4 areas of the state; 17 were CWD positive.
  - Hunter Harvested: 11,577 samples collected during all active deer hunting seasons throughout the state from within both our CWD management and surveillance zones; 44 tested positive for CWD.
- DNR contracted with USDA-Wildlife Services for \$597,912 to conduct targeted culling in CWD management zones in southeast MN, the south metro, Grand Rapids, and near Merrifield, MN. Culling efforts took place from January-March, 2024; 411 deer were removed, 17 tested CWD-positive.

Numerous advancements occurred within the project this year, including items like expanding the cellular trail camera fleet and implementing clover traps in the southeast and Grand Rapids areas proved to be an effective tactic that likely contributed to the exceptional numbers. We also improved on the data collection side of the project with the implementation of field maps application for mapping and recording bait sites, and additional data proofing tools created by our DNR MNIT GIS team. We continue to make big strides in our efficiency and effectiveness each year and we hope to continue that trend into the future.

- A total of 14,221 deer were tested for CWD between July 1, 2023 and June 30, 2024 with 63 new detections of the disease. Nearly all positives were found in areas with persisting infections (south metro and southeast), except 1 new case near Wabasha in DPA 342 (Figure 2; Table 4).
- We held a meeting with tribal biologists to discuss plans for fall 2024 surveillance efforts across the state. Federal funding was again available to support collection and testing efforts for tribal hunters and these efforts were coordinated through University of Minnesota staff. Approximately 300 samples were collected by tribes in the northwest during fall 2023; all were not detected for CWD.

Plans for fall 2024 CWD surveillance were presented to DNR leadership for approval so wildlife and outreach staff could begin implementation efforts. The footprint of CWD has expanded in Minnesota, with the discovery of one infected deer in DPA 342, which will create a new CWD management zone (DPA 642) for fall 2024. A total of 8 zones (6 management, 2 surveillance) were included in the fall 2024 CWD surveillance efforts (Figure 3). The majority of CWD samples will be collected through mandatory sampling during firearms opener. Voluntary sampling opportunities will also be available across the state and provided free-of-charge for interested hunters.

Table 1. Chronic Wasting Disease Appropriation Allocation FY24.

Fund	FY24 Appropriated
General Fund	982,000
Game and Fish-Emergency Response	1,675,000
General Fund – Farmed Deer and CWD Management	5,150,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,807,000</b>

Figure 1. Quarterly spending activity of the Chronic Wasting Disease Appropriation Allocation FY24.

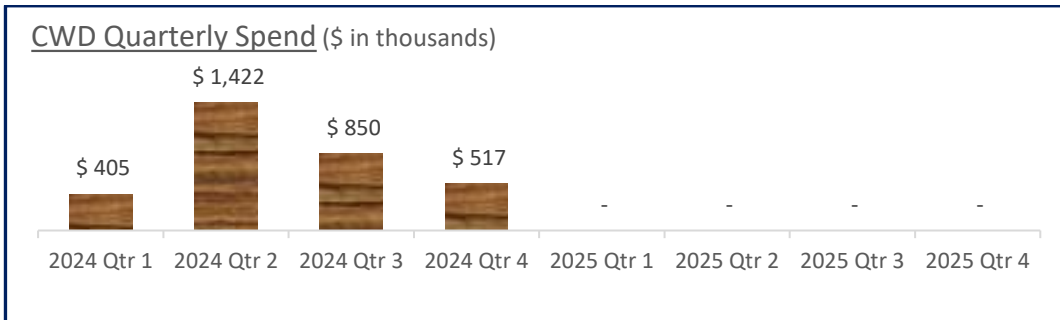


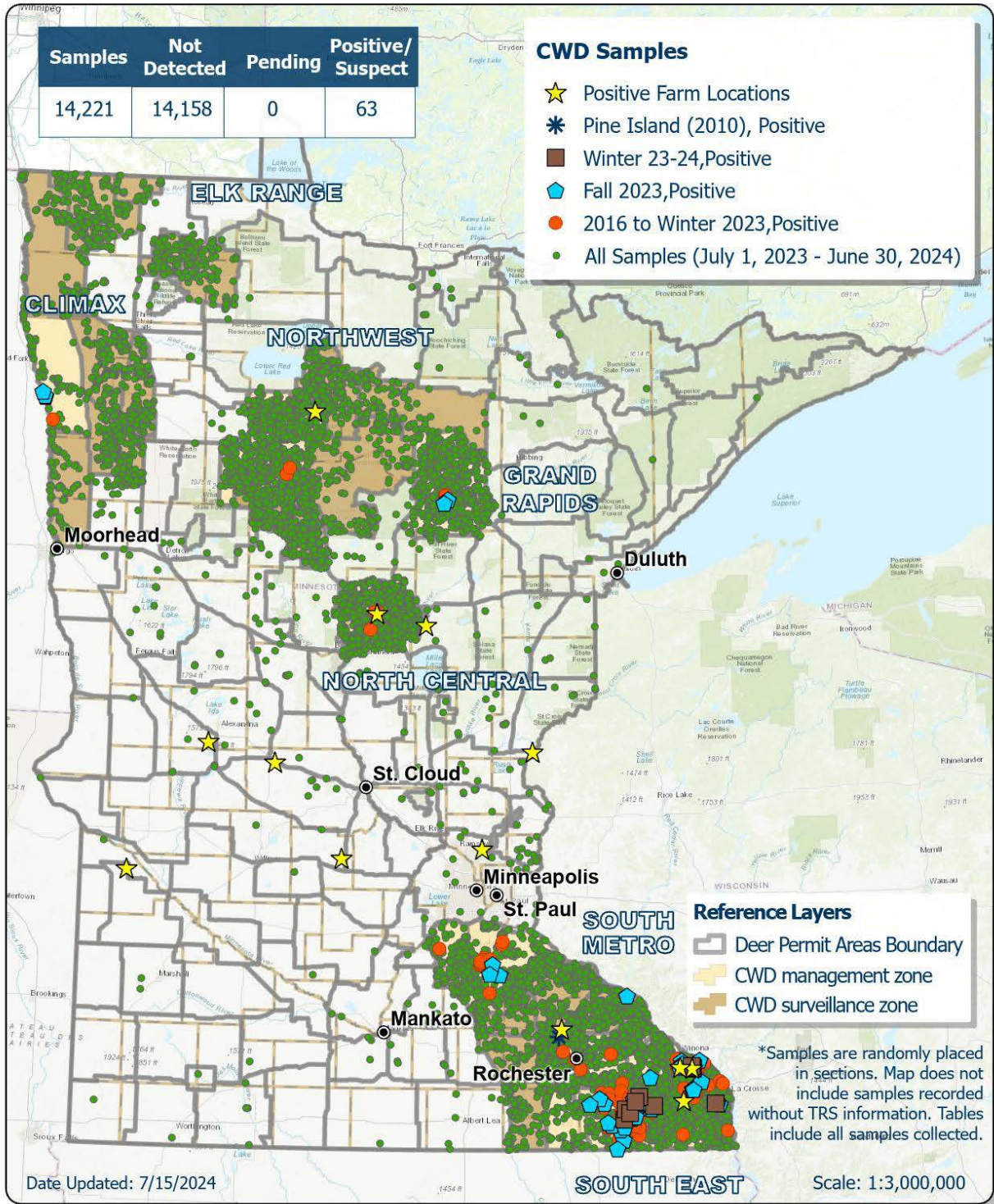
Table 2. Detailed spending by expense type for Chronic Wasting Disease Appropriation, July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024.

Expense Type	Gen'l Fund - CWD	Game and Fish- Emergency Response	Gen'l Fund - Farms & CWD	Other**	Total Spend
Salary	81,104	907,943	-	24,230	1,013,277
CWD Sample Testing	220,958	-	8,114	-	229,073
Contracts: CWD Tissue Sampling	-	79,271	-	-	79,271
USDA-Culling Contract	-	-	527,867	-	527,867
CWD Office - Rushford	33,149	450	-	-	33,599
Dumpsters	223,809	259,719	-	81,568	565,097
Supplies	32,759	22,501	-	608	55,869
Travel/Fleet	116,206	118,351	-	837	235,394
Printing & Advertising	172,343	98,668	-	22	271,033
Equipment	18,762	-	-	-	18,762
Other	74,083	11,759	23,084	55,784	164,710
<b>Total</b>	<b>973,174</b>	<b>1,498,663</b>	<b>559,065</b>	<b>163,049</b>	<b>3,193,951</b>
<b>\$ Encumbered</b>	-	-	-	-	
<b>% of FY24 Budget Spent</b>	<b>99.1%</b>	<b>89.5%</b>	<b>10.9%</b>		
<b>% of FY24 Budget Encumbered</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>		
<b>% of FY24 Budget Spent/Enc</b>	<b>99.1%</b>	<b>89.5%</b>	<b>10.9%</b>		

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

Figure 2. Total samples (n=14,221) collected for chronic wasting disease (CWD) testing in Minnesota from July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024.

## Minnesota Wild Deer CWD Surveillance & Management 2023-24



0 10 20 30 40 50 Miles

Credits: MnDNR, Division of Fish and Wildlife, Section of Wildlife, Wildlife Health Program, MNIT at MNDNR

Table 4. Chronic wasting disease (CWD) samples collected in Minnesota from July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024.

Designation	Deer Permit Areas	Sample Acquisition	Total samples	Positive
Surveillance Zone	110, 169, 197, 259, 287	Hunter Harvested	1,016	0
Surveillance Zone	255, 233, 293, 341, 342	Hunter Harvested	1,150	1
Surveillance Zone	101, 201, 260, 263, 268	Hunter Harvested	621	0
Surveillance Zone	256, 257, 262, 265	Hunter Harvested	822	0
Management Zone	679	Hunter Harvested	689	2
		Agency Culled	78	0
Management Zone	684	Hunter Harvested	1,004	0
Management Zone	604	Hunter Harvested	981	0
		Agency Culled	18	0
Management Zone	661	Hunter Harvested	187	2
Management Zone	605	Hunter Harvested	854	2
		Agency Culled	19	0
Management Zone	643, 644, 645, 646, 647, 648, 649, 655	Hunter Harvested	4,253	37
		Agency Culled	296	17
Opportunistic	Statewide	Voluntary Submission	2,040	0
Opportunistic/Other	Statewide	Multiple <sup>(1)</sup>	193	2 <sup>(2)</sup>
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>14,221</b>	<b>63</b>

<sup>1</sup>Samples collected from reported sick, found dead, shooting permit, vehicle-killed deer

<sup>2</sup>One found dead in DPA 605, one harvested under a shooting permit in DPA 661



Figure 3. Locations of chronic wasting disease management and surveillance zones across Minnesota, fall 2024.

