

NDF&G October 26th Newsletter

Visibility of Deer Blinds Can be an Issue of Concern

North Dakota deer gun and bow hunters who use ground blinds or elevated stands should consider marking them so they are visible to other hunters from all directions. In the last few years, and reaching a peak during last year's deer gun season, some hunters have expressed safety concerns with the North Dakota Game and Fish Department when it comes to the use of ground blinds and elevated stands during the deer gun season. The concern – from those who use them and others who don't – is that many of the stands elevated or not, often blend into the surroundings. Because they are hard to see, the stands often go unnoticed by other hunters who unknowingly might shoot in that direction. While North Dakota law requires deer gun hunters to wear blaze or fluorescent orange so they can be easily seen in the field, there is no such rule for marking blinds occupied by hunters. The Game and Fish Department plans to address this issue at the fall advisory board meetings, which will be announced in November.

Hunter-Harvested Deer Samples Needed

The state Game and Fish Department will continue its Hunter-Harvested Surveillance program during the 2009 hunting season by sampling deer for chronic wasting disease and bovine tuberculosis from 17 units in western North Dakota and two in the northeast. In addition, all moose and elk harvested in the state are eligible for testing.

Samples from hunter-harvested deer taken in the west will be tested from units 3A1, 3A2, 3A3, 3B1, 3B2, 3D1, 3D2, 3E1, 3E2, 3F1, 3F2, 4A, 4B, 4C, 4D, 4E and 4F. Dr. Dan Grove, wildlife veterinarian, said animals in northeastern North Dakota from units 2C and 2D will continue to be tested for TB until it has been eradicated from the adjacent Minnesota herd. "Even then we will test the northeast for a few more years," he said.

Every head sampled must have either the deer tag attached, or a new tag can be filled out with the license number, deer hunting unit and date harvested. Skull caps and antlers can be removed.

Participating hunters whose deer have been sampled will have their names entered in a drawing for five muzzleloaders and 100 Sagen Saws. Winners will be randomly selected and notified by the end of December. Game and Fish personnel will operate a head collection site Nov. 7-8 at the Dairy Queen in Belfield. Hunters are encouraged to drop off deer heads at the following locations:

- Alexander – Old School Meat Processing
- Belfield – Tesoro
- Bismarck – Game and Fish Department office, Call of the Wild Taxidermy and M&M Sausage and Meats
- Carson – Double R Meats
- Dickinson – Dickinson Game and Fish district office and Dean's Meat Market
- Dunn Center – Lake Ilo National Wildlife Refuge office
- Foxholm – Upper Souris National Wildlife Refuge office
- Garrison – Garrison Custom Meats
- Glen Ullin – Kuntz Butcher Shop

- Hazen – Hazen Meats
- Hettinger – Dakota Packing
- Kenmare – Kenmare Locker (Jack-n-Jill) and Des Lacs National Wildlife Refuge office
- Marmarth – Past Time Club and Steakhouse
- Mandan – Butcher Block Meats
- Medora – Buffalo Gap Guest Ranch
- Minot – Hensen’s Fur and Leather and S&K Processing
- Mohall – Engebretson Processing
- Parshall – Myers Meats
- Scranton – Wolf’s Processing
- Williston – Williston Game and Fish district office and Scenic Sports

Drop off locations for deer taken from units 2C and 2D:

- Edinburg – Ellingson Meats
- Fordville – Dakota Prairie Wildlife Club
- Langdon – Hickory Hut
- Larimore – Glenn’s EZ Stop
- Park River – Randy’s Backyard Smokehouse
- Reynolds – Webster’s Meats
- Walhalla – Walhalla Co-op

Grove said moose and elk heads should be taken to a Game and Fish office. This is the final year of a three-year plan to sample the entire state. Animals in eastern North Dakota were tested in 2007, while the central portion of the state was sampled last year. “A new cycle will begin next year in the eastern third of the state,” Grove said.

CWD affects the nervous system of members of the deer family and is always fatal. Scientists have found no evidence that CWD can be transmitted naturally to humans or livestock. To date, CWD and TB have not been diagnosed in wild or farmed cervids in North Dakota, although these diseases have been found in surrounding states and provinces.