

NDG&F December 13th Newsletter

Another Deer from 3F2 Tests Positive for CWD

A mule deer taken in November during the deer gun season from unit 3F2 is the second deer in North Dakota to test positive for chronic wasting disease. The first was a mule deer taken during the hunting season in 2009, also from unit 3F2.

Dr. Dan Grove, North Dakota Game and Fish Department wildlife veterinarian, said a hunter shot a doe in western Grant County and submitted the head for testing as part of the hunter-harvested surveillance program.

“As a collaborative effort with South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks, and the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe Game and Fish Department, a total of 633 samples were collected from unit 3F2 this fall, and all but one tested negative for CWD,” Grove said. “Although we hoped the one positive from 2009 was an isolated incident, it was not unexpected that another one surfaced.”

The two deer testing positive for CWD were taken 10 miles from each other, which Grove said is not surprising because of the same general area.

“Hunter cooperation was tremendous,” Grove said. “We can’t thank them enough, and we look forward to their continued support with this important issue in the future.”

The hunter-harvested surveillance program annually collects samples taken from hunter-harvested deer in specific regions of the state. In addition to unit 3F2, samples during the 2010 deer gun season were collected from units in the eastern third of the state. The entire state has already been sampled twice.

“Michigan State University will be testing approximately 3,600 samples over the next several weeks from deer taken in the eastern third of the state,” Grove said. “Those results should be available by spring.”

In addition to hunter-harvested deer, the Game and Fish Department has a targeted surveillance program that is an ongoing, year-round effort that tests animals found dead or sick.

Since the department’s sampling efforts began in 2002, more than 16,000 deer, elk and moose have tested negative for CWD.

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.

Hunter Education Class Schedule Online

Individuals interested in taking a hunter education class in 2011 should access the North Dakota Game and Fish Department website for class schedules.

Jon Hanson, hunter education coordinator for the North Dakota Game and Fish Department, said a majority of classes are taught through May. "Most of the classes are added over the next several weeks, so students should watch the website so they can choose the class that fits their schedule," Hanson said. "Other classes will be added throughout the year as they are finalized."

Classes held early in the year fill up quickly because of the deer application deadline. "There is a major demand for classes held before June because they will qualify students for submitting a deer application," Hanson said.

Hunters with an apprentice hunting license in 2010 are reminded they will need to take a hunter education class to continue hunting in 2011. The apprentice license provides individuals age 16 and older with a one-year hunter education exemption for small game and deer.

"In addition to enrolling for classes, the website also provides a free hunter education study guide and a tree stand safety course," Hanson said. "We encourage new students to use these resources to study course material and all hunters to use them as a refresher."

To register for a class, or to view the study guide or tree stand safety course, access gf.nd.gov and click on the education/outreach link and "[hunter education](#)." Classes are listed by city, and can also be sorted by start date. Click on "enroll" next to the specific class, and follow the simple instructions. Personal information is required.

Those who do not have access to the Internet and want to sign up for a class can call the hunter education program in Bismarck at (701) 328-6615.

State law requires anyone born after December 31, 1961 to pass a certified hunter education course to hunt in the state. Hunter education is mandatory for youth who are turning 12 years old, and children can take the class at age 11.

Antlerless Elk in January for E3, E4 Hunters

Elk hunters with unfilled any-elk licenses in units E3 and E4 are reminded that their license is restricted to antlerless elk only from Jan. 1-21.

The North Dakota Game and Fish Department amended the 2010 bighorn sheep, elk and moose proclamation by extending the elk season to Jan. 21 for units immediately adjacent to Theodore Roosevelt National Park. The closing date coincides with the National Park Service's management action for reducing the park's elk population.

Extending the season outside the park enhances the opportunity for an increased harvest, and diminishes the likelihood of elk moving from the park to forage supplies of adjacent landowners.