



NEWS RELEASE

Texas Animal Health Commission

"Serving Texas Animal Agriculture Since 1893"

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 26, 2015

Chronic Wasting Disease Detected in the Hueco Mountain Area

AUSTIN – A tissue sample collected from a mule deer harvested in far West Texas tested positive for Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD). This was the only confirmed case of CWD in Texas during the 2014-15 hunting season. This was part of CWD surveillance efforts between several cooperative agencies.

With the assistance of cooperating landowners, the Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC) and Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) biologists and veterinarians have collected 222 samples from mule deer and elk in the Trans Pecos ecoregion as part of a CWD surveillance plan. Results of this testing effort help determine the geographic extent of this disease, and are used in setting zones aimed at preventing the transport of CWD to susceptible species in other parts of the state.

Also included in the sampling effort last season, 143 deer and elk brought to check stations were tested for bovine tuberculosis as part of a cooperative effort between the TAHC and TPWD to monitor that disease. No positives were found.

CWD is a member of the group of diseases called transmissible spongiform encephalopathies (TSEs). Other diseases in this group include scrapie in sheep, bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE or mad cow disease) in cattle, and Cruetzfeld-Jakob disease in humans. CWD among cervids is a progressive, fatal disease that commonly results in altered behavior as a result of microscopic changes made to the brain of affected animals. An animal may carry the disease for years without outward indication, but in the latter stages, signs may include listlessness, lowering of the head, weight loss, repetitive walking in set patterns, and a lack of responsiveness. CWD is not known to affect humans.

There is no vaccine or cure for CWD, but steps have been taken to minimize the risk of the disease spreading from beyond the area where it currently exists. The TAHC and TPWD adopted rules to restrict movement of deer, elk, and other susceptible species within or from the CWD Zones as well increase surveillance efforts. To learn more about CWD visit:

http://www.tahc.texas.gov/animal_health/cwd/cwd.html To view a map of the TAHC CWD Containment Zone visit: http://www.tahc.texas.gov/animal_health/cwd/TAHC_CWD_Zones.pdf

The TAHC is one of the oldest state regulatory agencies, founded in 1893 with a mission to combat the fever ticks that plagued the Texas cattle industry. Today, the agency works to protect the health of all Texas livestock including: cattle, equine, sheep, goats, swine, poultry, exotic livestock and fowl.

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