



IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Iowa DNR News

Conservation and Recreation

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 11, 2019

Results pending on two suspect samples

Chronic wasting disease confirmed in 14 Iowa deer including first positive in Dubuque County

DES MOINES - Fourteen tissue samples from wild Iowa deer tested positive for chronic wasting disease, bringing the total deer testing positive to chronic wasting disease in Iowa to 44. The Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is waiting for results on follow up tests for two suspect samples that could raise the total positives for the year to 16. The deer tissue was collected primarily during the fall from hunter harvested and road killed deer.

“The way that this disease moves, these results were not unexpected,” said Todd Bishop, chief of the Iowa Department of Natural Resources Wildlife Bureau.

Eight positive deer were confirmed in Allamakee County, four in Clayton County, one (plus two suspects) in Wayne County and, for the first time, one in Dubuque County. The Dubuque County deer was a roadkill, 2-1/2 miles southeast of the city limits.

“Hunters are doing an excellent job harvesting deer and providing samples in our priority areas, areas where the disease had been confirmed before. We want to slow this down as best we can while still having high quality deer hunting, hoping science can provide some solutions down the road,” Bishop said.

More than 6,800 tissue samples have been collected during the 2018 deer season. The DNR contacted each hunter whose deer tested positive and offered to collect the meat and any remaining bones and tissue. Hunters turned over the meat in every case. The collected material was bagged, sealed, then disposed in a local landfill.

Chronic wasting disease was first confirmed in the Midwest in Wisconsin in 2001 about 75 miles from the Iowa state line, and has since been confirmed in every other state bordering Iowa. The Iowa DNR began monitoring for the disease in 2002 with an emphasis on counties nearest where it was confirmed in the wild and has tested more than 74,000 deer since. The disease was first confirmed in Iowa near Harpers Ferry in Allamakee County in 2013.

CWD is a neurological disease belonging to the family of diseases known as transmissible spongiform encephalopathies (TSEs) or prion diseases. It attacks the brain of infected deer causing the animal to lose weight, display abnormal behavior, lose body functions and die. It is always fatal to the infected animal.

The Iowa DNR has more information about CWD and other infectious disease online at www.iowadnr.gov/cwd.

Media Contact: Terry Haindfield, Wildlife Biologist, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, 563-380-3422 (cell) or 563-546-7960 (office).

Public meeting on fatal deer disease set for January 17 in Peosta

Peosta, Iowa - Deer hunters who hunt in Dubuque County take note— chronic wasting disease (CWD) has shown up in your area. A tissue sample collected from a road killed deer 2-1/2 miles southeast of Dubuque has tested positive for the always fatal disease.

The Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has scheduled a meeting on Jan. 17, at 6:30 p.m., at the Peosta Community Center, 7896 Burds Road, in Peosta, to discuss the status of CWD in Iowa and how deer hunters can help stop or slow the spread of disease.

Terry Haindfield, wildlife biologist for the Iowa DNR who is leading the effort to combat CWD, will coordinate the meeting.

“We want people to come to this meeting, ask their questions, hear the concerns from other hunters,” Haindfield said. “Deer hunting is an important tradition and, for some, a large part of their identity. It is also important to us and we need to work together to combat this disease. Our goal is to provide quality deer hunting today, tomorrow, and for future generations.”

Any person attending the public meeting and has special requirements such as those related to mobility or hearing impairments should contact the DNR or ADA Coordinator at 515-725-8200, Relay Iowa TTY Service 800-735-7942, or Webmaster@dnr.iowa.gov, and advise of specific needs.

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