



IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Iowa DNR News

Conservation and Recreation

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Jan. 18, 2022

- [Annual surveillance effort finds 36 Iowa deer with chronic wasting disease](#)
- [New lifetime trout fishing license now available](#)
- [Missouri and Big Sioux rivers paddlefish fishing season opens Feb. 1](#)

Annual surveillance effort finds 36 Iowa deer with chronic wasting disease

Samples from nearly 5,000 deer have been tested as part of the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) effort to monitor for chronic wasting disease, resulting in 36 confirmed positives from the 2021-2022 hunting season.

The samples were collected over the past 10 months from willing hunters and taxidermists, as well as from deer killed along Iowa's roads. Hunters have been a willing and important partner. They voluntarily provide the samples for testing, and execute the slow the spread plan should one of those deer turn out to be positive.

"Hunters are key to our monitoring effort and we are grateful for their assistance. We hit our quotas in almost every area of the state, which is good," said Tyler Harms, wildlife biologist coordinating the disease surveillance for the Iowa DNR.

The DNR uses a weighted surveillance strategy focusing on high priority samples – older bucks – to increase the likelihood of finding the disease if it is present in the area. In areas where CWD is detected, the DNR increases the number of samples collected in order to monitor the spread of the disease. As additional positives are detected, the DNR will engage hunters to help to manage the herd toward the lower end of the population goal.

Hunters can still participate in select deer management zones hunts through Jan. 23, while licenses are available.

Chronic wasting disease 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 and elk causing the animals to lose weight, display abnormal behavior, lose body functions and die. It is always fatal to the infected animal.

Most of the 36 positives came from existing deer management zones except for three – a road-killed deer five miles south of Jefferson in Greene County, a deer taken in northwest Fremont County, and one from just outside the zone in Jackson County. The DNR will be scheduling meetings in these counties to discuss chronic wasting disease

and how hunters can help to slow the spread. With the addition of Greene and Fremont, Iowa now has 12 counties where chronic wasting disease has been confirmed.

“We will be updating our surveillance plan to include these new positives and will consider increasing the overall number of samples collected in the state. Early detection is key,” Harms said. “Increasing harvest to catch any other positives will help us to manage for it more effectively. In these areas, we want to manage the herd on the lower end of our population goal to help slow disease transmission while still maintaining a quality recreational opportunity for our hunters.”

The Iowa DNR contacted all hunters with a positive deer and offered the opportunity to come collect the deer meat, hide and other animal parts or were provided other options for disposal.

This is the 20th year the Iowa DNR has tested deer across the state. The first deer tested positive in 2013. To date, 148 deer have tested positive for chronic wasting disease in Iowa. More information is available online at

<https://www.iowadnr.gov/Hunting/Deer-Hunting/Deer-Health/Chronic-Wasting-Disease>.

County: Number of Positive Deer (Year Detected)

- Allamakee: 72 (2013)
- Appanoose: 3 (2020)
- Clayton: 29 (2016)
- Decatur: 1 (2019)
- Dubuque: 3 (2018)
- Fayette: 2 (2019)
- Fremont: 1 (2021)
- Greene: 1 (2021)
- Jackson: 2 (2020)
- Wayne: 22 (2017)
- Winneshiek: 10 (2019)
- Woodbury: 2 (2019)

Media Contact: Tyler Harms, Biometrician, Wildlife Bureau, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, 515-777-5378.

New lifetime trout fishing license now available

DES MOINES - Iowa anglers who are at least 65 years old can now purchase a lifetime trout fishing license.

The cost of the new lifetime privilege is \$65. Revenues from this fee are used exclusively to stock state trout streams and community trout ponds.

Licenses are available at 700 locations across the state, and online at www.gooutdoorsiowa.com. Upgrade your paper license to a durable hard card with

custom art from Iowa artists for only \$5.

Missouri and Big Sioux rivers paddlefish fishing season opens Feb. 1

The paddlefish snagging season on the Missouri and Big Sioux rivers opens Feb. 1 and goes through April 30 (sunrise to sunset).

Anglers fishing for paddlefish must have a valid Iowa fishing license, along with a special paddlefish license and unused transportation tag(s).

Please keep track of your catch and effort and complete the electronic survey after the paddlefish season whether you harvested a fish or not. The information collected will help the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) evaluate the success of the season and determine what potential changes/modifications may be needed.

If you catch a jaw-tagged fish (numbered band in the lower jaw), call the phone number on the tag and report the tag number, date of capture, capture location and eye-to-fork length. The Iowa DNR and other state fisheries agencies tag paddlefish to better understand and manage populations. Tagging provides valuable information to estimate population size, fish movement and growth.

For more information about Iowa's special paddlefish season regulations, visit the DNR website at www.iowadnr.gov/paddlefish.

Media Contact: Chris Larson, Western Iowa and Missouri River Regional Fisheries Supervisor, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, 712-769-2587.