

October 14, 2004

Support from hunters requested for annual deer/elk disease survey

Edmonton... The annual survey of wild deer and elk for chronic wasting disease continues for the 2004 hunting season in three target areas: central, eastern and southeastern Alberta.

The Province is continuing a regular survey to check for the disease in elk, mule deer and white-tailed deer. Alberta hunters can provide significant help by supplying the heads of these animals for analysis to Fish and Wildlife offices or to 24-hour freezers set up in and near the target areas.

Chronic wasting disease affects only mule deer, white-tailed deer and elk, and causes changes to proteins in their brain tissue. The presence of the disease in a significant number of game-farmed elk and wild deer in Saskatchewan, as well as one positive farmed elk and two positive farmed white-tailed deer from two game farms in central Alberta, has focused survey efforts to three target areas in Alberta.

Hunters are asked to submit the heads of mature elk, mule deer and white-tailed deer from central Alberta (north and west of Edmonton), and from two areas of eastern Alberta along the Alberta/Saskatchewan border: from the North Saskatchewan River to Provost, and from Acadia Valley to Irvine (see attached map). The Wildlife Management Units (WMUs) being surveyed include the following: for central Alberta-WMUs 248 (areas north of Hwy 16), 250, 349 (area east of Hwy 32), 507 and 508; for eastern Alberta-WMUs 234, 236, 256 and 500; and for southeastern Alberta-WMUs 148, 150 and 151.

Heads should be frozen as soon as possible and kept frozen when delivered to any Fish and Wildlife office in Alberta. Alternatively, 24-hour freezers are set up at several locations in and around the three target areas to make it easier for hunters to drop off the deer/elk heads after their hunt. Bags and tags are provided at the freezers. Hunters should include information with their sample identifying the kill date, location (wildlife management unit), species, sex and approximate age (adult or yearlings only), and provide their hunter WIN number as well. Hunters should also indicate the heads are for the chronic wasting disease survey.

For further information, contact:

Dave Ealey
Communications
Alberta Sustainable Resource Development
Edmonton (780) 427-8636

Dr. Margo Pybus
Fish and Wildlife Division
Alberta Sustainable Resource Development
Edmonton (780) 427-3462

Dial 310-0000 for toll-freeconnection.