



## The Alberta Fish & Game Association

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## AFGA questions deer cull

(Edmonton, March 14, 2005) Alberta's largest Conservation organization, the Alberta Fish & Game Association (AFGA), questions the effectiveness of the recently announced deer cull to be conducted in the Chauvin area during March-April by the Government of Alberta.

"It is encouraging to see that the Alberta Government is committed to preventing CWD in the wild, however, the method chosen is open to question, said Randy Collins, AFGA President. "If all the deer on the Alberta side of the border were killed it is highly likely that other deer would move into the area and these would obviously come from the Saskatchewan side where CWD is present," he added. "Ironically, the net effect may very well be that the efforts to minimize the spread of CWD will in fact increase its spread!"

Further, the cull depends on the compliance of local landholders, some of whom may not agree with the idea of a cull. In this instance many of the targeted deer would escape the cull and thus prove it a useless exercise.

If a cull is the answer then it should take place in high density deer/elk areas, the highest of which are game farms. These should be shut down first as CWD has a strong connection to them. Indeed, the Government has indicated in their communications of February 24, 2005 that state "***There is a short timeframe in which to remove deer while they are still gathered in wintering areas, and while they pose the greatest risk for transmitting the disease to new individuals.***" Nowhere are deer densities higher than on game farms.

The Alberta Fish & Game is generally not in favor of these types of culls but would have liked to see the hunt in the fall during hunting season which would create more opportunities for residents to participate realizing, of course, that timing may be a factor.

The Alberta Fish and Game Association is a not-for-profit volunteer organization that has been active in habitat conservation since 1908 and has a province-wide membership of well over 14,000 individuals keen on maintaining Alberta's natural heritage. You can see the AFGA position paper on our website [www.afga.org](http://www.afga.org)

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