



The Alberta Fish & Game Association

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

(Edmonton October 12, 2005)... Alberta's largest conservation group, **the Alberta Fish & Game Association (AFGA)**, with the recent discovery of a 2nd and 3rd positive case of chronic **wasting disease (CWD)** by Oyen, calls for the Alberta Government to immediately put into place a strategy for the elimination of the spread of this horrific disease in the province. Chronic Wasting Disease slowly destroys the animal's brain until death occurs. This destruction can take place over several years before clinical signs of the disease's presence are exhibited.

The current method of culling animals in an area where CWD has been identified after the fact is unsatisfactory and will do nothing to stop its spread.

At present, by the time a deer has been positively diagnosed as having CWD a period of time has elapsed. During this time other infected animals can travel great distances thereby spreading the disease to new locations.

"The manner in which the Government is currently going about trying to manage CWD is a bit like closing the barn door after the horse is gone," said Randy Collins, AFGA President. "The proof lies in the fact that when the first case of CWD was discovered near Oyen earlier this year, a cull was undertaken to try and rid the area of the disease which as we see by these latest findings did not work."

It appears as though diseased deer are migrating from Saskatchewan as that province has had CWD in the wild and on game farms for several years now. Closing down game farms and creating a buffer of some type between the provinces must be given serious consideration.

The Alberta Fish and Game Association is a not-for-profit volunteer organization proud to serve Albertans in the promotion of the wise use of our fish and wildlife resources and the conservation of their habitats. Celebrating its 97th anniversary the AFGA has been active since 1908 in working towards these goals. It has a province-wide membership of more than 15,000 individuals spread among 100+ Clubs.

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