



December 26, 2019

Senator Bill Ingebrigtsen, Chair  
Senator David Tomassoni, Ranking Minority Member  
*Senate Environment and Natural Resources Finance Committee*

Senator Carrie Ruud, Chair  
Senator Chris A. Eaton, Ranking Minority Member  
*Senate Environment and Natural Resources Policy and Legacy Finance Committee*

Senator Torrey N. Westrom, Chair  
Senator Kari Dziedzic, Ranking Minority Member  
*Senate Agriculture, Rural Development, and Housing Finance Committee*

Senator Bill Weber, Chair  
Senator Fong Hawj, Ranking Minority Member  
*Senate Agriculture, Rural Development, and Housing Policy Committee*

Representative John Persell, Chair  
Representative Dale Lueck, Republican Lead  
*House Environment and Natural Resources Policy Committee*

Representative Rick Hansen, Chair  
Representative Dan Fabian, Republican Lead  
*House Environment and Natural Resources Finance Division*

Representative Jeanne Poppe, Chair  
Representative Rod Hamilton, Republican Lead  
*House Agriculture and Food Finance and Policy Division*

Dear Senators and Representatives:

Enclosed you will find the quarterly report Emergency Response to Disease Outbreaks in Wildlife. This report covers the period July 1 to September 30, 2019, and fulfills the requirements of 2019 Minnesota Session Laws, First Special Session, Chapter 4, Article 1, Section 3, Subdivision 6(b), which states:

*\$1,595,000 the first year and \$275,000 the second year are from the general fund, and \$1,125,000 the first year and \$1,675,000 the second year are from the game and fish fund for planning for and emergency response to disease outbreaks in wildlife. The commissioner and board must each submit quarterly reports on the activities funded under this paragraph to the chairs and ranking minority members of the legislative committees and divisions with jurisdiction over environment and natural resources and agriculture.*

Please let me know if you have any questions or comments.

Sincerely,



Sarah Strommen  
Commissioner

- c Bob Meier, Assistant Commissioner, Department of Natural Resources
- David Olfelt, Director, Division of Fish and Wildlife
- Pat Rivers, Deputy Director, Division of Fish and Wildlife
- Dr. Beth S. Thompson, Executive Director, MN Board of Animal Health
- Legislative Reference Library
- Committee Administrators



# **Report: Emergency Response to Disease Outbreaks in Wildlife**

Covering the Period July 1 – September 30, 2019

As required by Minnesota Session Law 2019, 1<sup>st</sup> Special Session, Chapter 4

11/14/2019

## Report to the Minnesota Legislature

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources  
500 Lafayette Road  
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155  
651-259-5024  
[bob.meier@state.mn.us](mailto:bob.meier@state.mn.us) [mndnr.gov](http://mndnr.gov)

Pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, Section 3.197, the cost of producing this report was approximately \$336. This includes staff time for drafting and reviewing the report.

*Upon request, this material will be made available in an alternative format such as large print, Braille or audio recording. Printed on recycled paper.*

## DNR CWD Spending Legislative Report

This report fulfills the quarterly reporting requirement of Minnesota Session Law 2019, 1st Special Session, Chapter 4, Article 1, Section 3, Subdivision 6(b) “\$1,595,000 the first year and \$275,000 the second year are from the general fund, and \$1,125,000 the first year and \$1,675,000 the second year are from the game and fish fund for planning for and emergency response to disease outbreaks in wildlife. The commissioner and board must each submit quarterly reports on the activities funded under this paragraph to the chairs and ranking minority members of the legislative committees and divisions with jurisdiction over environment and natural resources and agriculture.”

### CWD Activities, July-September 2019

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) spent approximately \$145,000 during the first quarter on Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD)-related activities (Table 1). These activities were centered primarily on the planning phase for fall CWD surveillance activities and implementation of sample collection at the start of the archery deer season in mandatory testing zones (Table 2). A detailed list of activities includes:

- Designation of CWD sampling stations throughout surveillance areas for fall 2019 season.
  - Identified 31 sampling sites and gained permission for DNR to establish both self-sampling CWD stations for archery and muzzleloader seasons and staffed-sampling stations for the firearm season.
- Inventory of existing CWD sampling supplies and ordering additional materials needed to collect CWD samples through the fall hunting seasons.
  - Materials were purchased to construct 31 self-sampling stations, which included a large framed map, barrel for deer heads, tools for hunters to use to remove heads, and tags.
  - Supplies were purchased to collect samples from up to 20,000 deer.
- Contracts were established with seven universities and colleges in Minnesota to recruit student labor for the fall CWD sampling work. These universities and colleges included Bemidji State, St. Cloud State, Central Lakes College, Winona State, and University of Minnesota’s Twin Cities, Crookston, and Duluth campuses.
- A taxidermist network was established in all CWD surveillance zones
  - 46 taxidermists were interested in participating in CWD sampling, which includes the collection of lymph nodes, muscle samples, and front incisor; cost paid per sample is \$15.
  - Taxidermists were provided training on sample collection and materials for tracking data, storing sampling, and shipping samples back to DNR.
- Contacted all commercial meat processors in all CWD surveillance zones to inform them of upcoming surveillance work, boundary changes, and the carcass movement restrictions. Gained permission from 20 processors to advertise their business to hunters through the DNR website and handouts at sampling stations.
- Secured sites for dumpster locations for the Adopt-A-Dumpster Program. Worked with local hunting groups to encourage participation and partnership in promoting proper deer carcass disposal through use of designated dumpsters.

- Two new full-time staff were hired into the Wildlife Health Program to work specifically on CWD activities, with one based in Forest Lake and the other in Rochester.
- Schedules were created for DNR staff to implement CWD collections. During archery season, the schedule called for staff to collect deer heads from all self-sampling stations 3-4x per week, with additional staff assisting with sample collection at a centralized site. During firearm season, the schedule included staffing at all 31 sampling locations for 10 hours per day, every day of the season to interact with hunters and collect samples on-site.
- A lease was negotiated with a facility in Rushford to serve as the southeast CWD field station, providing a centralized hub for all CWD-related activities for DNR staff in this part of the state. The Preston Forestry office had served as the previous hub, but the scale of CWD surveillance had outgrown the capacity of that facility.

Developing CWD-related communication materials was a high priority during this reporting period. DNR outreach staff worked directly with the Wildlife Health Program to completely overhaul the CWD page on the DNR website. Developing content and clear messaging was the focus of this work. Content for the Hunting Regulations Handbook related to CWD surveillance and management was also drafted during this time. Staff created informational videos for posting on the website, flyers for general distribution, and State Fair/County Fair materials for the general public. Staff also participated at Deer Open House meetings to discuss CWD and the upcoming hunting season structure related to disease management.

A total of 463 deer were tested for CWD during this reporting period, including 373 collected from self-service sampling stations from archery hunters, 53 samples submitted by taxidermists, and 37 opportunistic samples (e.g., vehicle-killed deer, sick deer, and depredation permits). None of these deer were positive for CWD.

Table 1. Chronic Wasting Disease Quarterly Spending, as of 30-September, 2019.

<b>Fund</b>	<b>FY20 Appropriated</b>	<b>FY21 Appropriated</b>	<b>Total App FY20-21</b>
General Fund	1,595,000	275,000	1,870,000
Game and Fish-Emergency Response	1,125,000	1,675,000	2,800,000
Cervid Health – Adopt a Dumpster	50,000	-	50,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,770,000</b>	<b>1,950,000</b>	<b>4,720,000</b>

Table 2. Detailed spending by expense type for CWD funding, July 1 through September 30, 2019.

<b>Expense Type</b>	<b>General Fund</b>	<b>Game and Fish- Emergency Response</b>	<b>Cervid Health - Adopt a Dumpster</b>	<b>Total App</b>
Salary	80,689	-	-	80,689
CSU CWD Sample Testing	234	-	-	234
USDA-Culling Contract	-	-	-	-
Contracts: CWD Tissue Sampling	-	-	-	-
CWD Attitude Survey	-	-	-	-
Dumpsters	-	-	-	-
Supplies	44,106	-	-	44,106
Printing & Advertising	19,475	-	-	19,475
CWD Office Lease - Rushford	-	-	-	-
Equipment	-	-	-	-
UMN CWD Testing (elk/moose)	215	-	-	215
Travel/Fleet	27	119	-	146
<b>Total</b>	<b>144,747</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>144,866</b>