

B.C. CHRONIC WASTING DISEASE PROGRAM 2022/2023 ANNUAL UPDATE

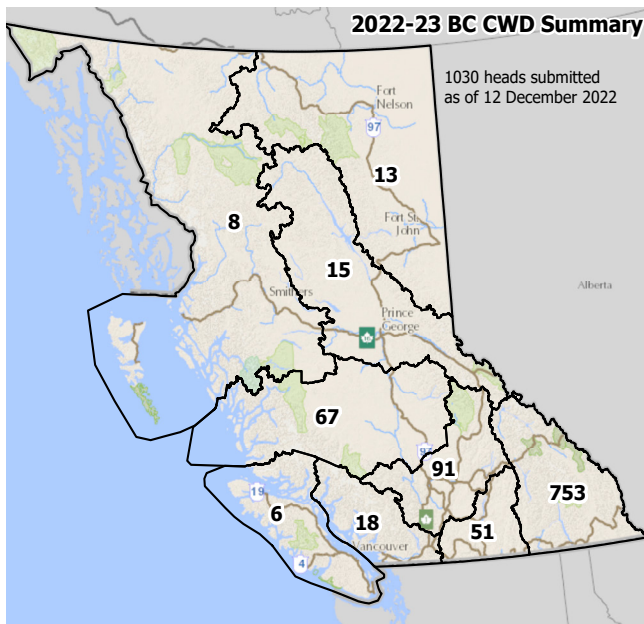


Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) is an infectious disease that affects species of the deer family (cervids). CWD is fatal in all cases and there is no vaccine or treatment. Wildlife managers worldwide consider CWD a high priority because of its impact on cervid populations and hunting. The B.C. CWD Program follows the framework, outlined in the *Surveillance and Response Plan for Chronic Wasting Disease in British Columbia* (2023), which is based on three principles: **Prevention, Surveillance and Response**. A CWD team that includes staff, other ministries, First Nations, stakeholders, researchers, and local businesses continues to support B.C. CWD Program activities and planning through the Provincial CWD Advisory Committee and Regional CWD Working Groups.

BY THE NUMBERS:

1030
heads submitted
for CWD testing

0
CWD-positive
results



PREVENTION

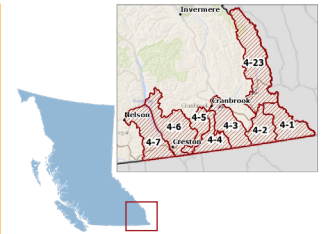
CWD could be introduced to B.C. by human importation of a CWD-infected cervid carcass or CWD contaminated materials. *Wildlife Act* regulations are in place to reduce risk and include prohibition on the import of live cervids, use of scents made of cervid materials such as urine, and import of all cervid parts harvested from outside of B.C., with the exception of edible meat and cleaned hide, antlers, and skull plates.

Check the Hunting and Trapping website for updated regulations:
www.gov.bc.ca/hunting



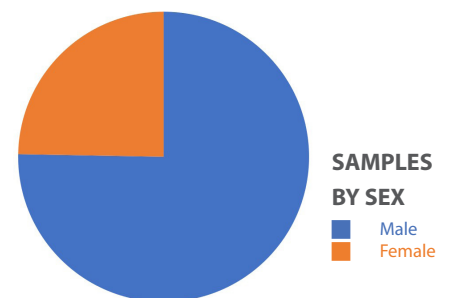
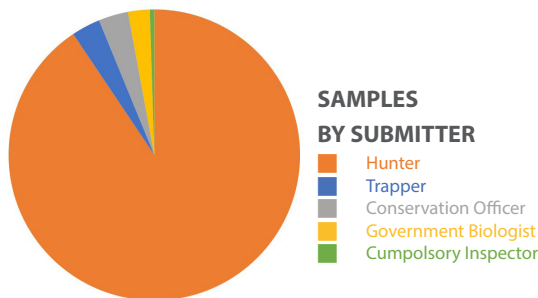
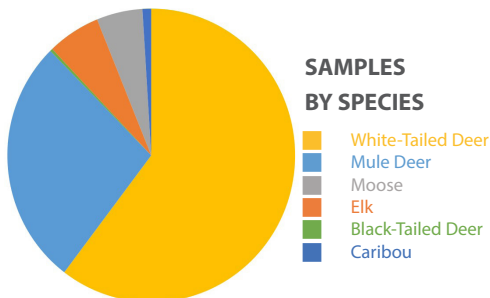
SURVEILLANCE

The B.C. CWD Program tests cervids across B.C. to confirm B.C.'s CWD status and ensure early detection. Surveillance is focused in higher risk areas and is adjusted according to CWD spread in neighbouring jurisdictions. Samples are critical to understanding the health of B.C.'s cervid populations. Submission is voluntary in most areas, but is mandatory in specific management units (MUs: 4-1, 4-2, 4-3, 4-4, 4-5, 4-6, 4-7, and 4-23).



RESPONSE

If CWD is confirmed in B.C., our response will require a rapid and coordinated team effort. Response will be managed through an Incident Command System led by the Provincial Wildlife Veterinarian and supported by established partnerships. Early response activities and management actions will be based on scientific evidence, the guidance of CWD experts and the collective objectives of the B.C. CWD Team.



LOOKING FORWARD:

CWD has not been detected in B.C., but the risk of disease introduction is increasing. This disease has been very costly and difficult, if not impossible, to manage in other jurisdictions. It is critical that B.C. continues its proactive actions to remain CWD-free. Support and participation from hunters and communities is excellent, but there is much more that can be done. The B.C. CWD Program will continue to work with partners towards strengthening B.C.'s preventative measures and preparedness to protect B.C. cervid populations from the threat of CWD.