



## Midwest Fish and Wildlife Health Committee Meeting

March 18-19, 2013  
Lexington, Kentucky

Hosted by:

Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources



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## Meeting Time and Place

March 18-19, 2013  
Lexington, KY

**Agenda:** see Appendix II

## Attendance

Attending this year's Midwest Fish and Wildlife Health Committee Meeting were representatives from 11 state fish and wildlife agencies: Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Virginia; and representatives from two federal agencies:

- the United States Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Wildlife Services (USDA-APHIS-WS),
- and the United States Geological Survey, National Wildlife Health Center (USGS-NWHC),

A total of 14 individuals were in attendance (Appendix I). In addition, 4 individuals participated in the meeting via WebEx, including two state fish and wildlife agencies (Wisconsin and Indiana), a representative from the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, and the USGS-NWHC. Ohio and the Canadian provinces of Manitoba and Saskatchewan were not represented.

## Executive Summary

### Disease Reports

Each state represented and the National Wildlife Health Center provided an update on the wildlife disease issues within their jurisdiction. For your convenience, an index of disease reports is included in Appendix III.

### DEA Regulation Issues Discussion, Dan Grove, North Dakota Game and Fish

A brief discussion was held with regards to issues surrounding state wildlife agencies handling of controlled substances. The DEA has not been uniformly enforcing particular aspects of their regulations which led to several agencies having to change their policies and handling procedures following inspections by regional agents. Many states have one person who receives and distributes controlled substances to field staff, which under current DEA regulations is considered diversion. Some states require each person using controlled substances in the field to obtain their own DEA permit to avoid these issues. The AVMA and AFWA are working towards changing/clarifying the laws with regards to these issues. The recommendation was made for each state to determine if they wished to provide comment to AFWA or the AVMA directly.

### Tom DeLiberto, USDA-WS Update

Sequestration at the federal level will be in place through the end of the fiscal year. At the time of the meeting, it was at 5% and there was the potential to add another 2.5%. In short, there was little to no federal money available for wildlife disease related activities this year. There may be additional money available for feral swine control. Feral swine continue to be an issue with focus on the potential for disease transmission; however, the damage caused by these animals to wildlife habitat is extensive. Currently, the US is pseudorabies-free in commercial swine, but the disease still exists because of wildlife reservoirs. Wildlife Services is actively collecting *Culicoides sp.* for bluetongue and epizootic

hemorrhagic disease testing. The surveillance will be conducted in 10 states this year. Currently, the laboratory is still processing the 2012 samples. Efforts are being made to develop a primer for DNA identification to identify specific *Culicoides* species.

### **CWD Federal Rule Change Discussion, Dale Garner, Iowa Department of Natural Resources**

Dale led a discussion about the changes to the federal CWD rule and impact to states. The rule change applies to captive/farmed cervids only. Federal rule will not be opened up for comment or change anytime in the foreseeable future. USDA-VS goals for CWD have changed from eradication to management of the disease. The federal regulations only apply to CWD-free facilities. Once CWD is found in a facility it becomes a state-level issue. A brief poll was taken and every state has varying regulations for cervid facilities. In some states, CWD management is changing based on public perception and not biology. Most states reported some level of perceived “CWD” fatigue amongst the public and their own staff. There is a new human dimensions study being developed in WI. The general consensus amongst wildlife agencies is that there needs to be continued emphasis on CWD monitoring and research. Even with the funding constraints, states need to continue with CWD surveillance.

### **Update on Botulism E, LeAnn White, USGS-NWHC**

LeAnn began with a review of the cycle of botulism production in the environment and led into a brief overview of the current direction of Botulism E research. Currently research is underway into the drivers of how toxins get into larger vertebrate species. Samples are being collected from sediment, mollusks, and other invertebrates in areas where Botulism E outbreaks have been seen. A FRET-assay has been developed for detection of the toxin in samples versus the older mouse assay that has been historically used. There has also been enhanced monitoring of carcasses to figure out the cycle of Botulism E in the wild. Common loons (COLO) are being used as sentinel species. There have been 2 major outbreaks in recent years that have been looked at on Lake Michigan (2010 and 2012). Future monitoring sites have been established at Sleeping Bear Dunes and the Common Coast area of upper Lake Michigan. Wildlife agencies can always check out the NWHC website for updates on mortality events, [www.nwhc.usgs.gov](http://www.nwhc.usgs.gov)

### **Newcastle Disease Virus, LeAnn White, USGS-NWHC**

LeAnn gave a brief overview of Newcastle Disease Virus (NDV) and the Avianparamyxovirus-1 (APMV-1) group of viruses. Ten serotypes exist in this family of viruses and NDV is considered the single most important disease of poultry in the United States. The primary method of control is to depopulate the affected flocks which can lead to extensive production losses. Historically NDV was first identified in the US in 1926 in poultry. In 1951, it was found in wild double-crested cormorants (DCCO) and shag. From 2000-2009 there were multiple outbreaks across Europe. There have been several NDV outbreaks in the last 2 decades in the US. In 2002-2003 there were outbreaks in CA, NV, AZ and TX which led to over \$56 million in production losses. Double-crested cormorants are particularly susceptible to NDV. Currently research is geared towards identifying the mechanisms of how the virus is maintained in the wild and transmitted to and between DCCO. There does not appear to be site fidelity for the disease. Some studies have shown greater than 50% of overwintering birds are seropositive for the disease, but herd immunity does not appear to develop. Another question that is being looked at is does maternal antibody drive the periodicity of the disease? Viral prevalence is being determined by taking cloacal swabs from various life stages of birds throughout the spring, summer and fall. The samples are being analyzed using ELISA and hemagglutination. Better screening tools are being developed, utilizing 2 different PCR techniques. Wildlife agencies can always check out the NWHC website for updates on mortality events, [www.nwhc.usgs.gov](http://www.nwhc.usgs.gov)

## **Elk Relocation Project, Megan Kirchgessner, Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries**

Megan presented an overview of the elk relocation project where Kentucky elk have been moved into Virginia. From 1997 to 2002, approximately 1,550 elk were gathered from 6 states to create a viable population in Kentucky. Originally, Virginia Department of Game and Fish opposed the creation of this herd and allowed an open season on elk that moved across into VA from KY. However, in 2009, a new Passive Restoration Plan was adopted by VA to stop shooting of elk and to establish its own population of about 1,200 animals. Agricultural officials objected to this plan due to lack of disease controls and instead an Active Restoration plan was enacted, costing an estimated \$2.8 million over a 12-year period. Elk are now being moved from Kentucky into holding pens for 90 days. Animals are screened for a multitude of diseases, including bovine tuberculosis, bovine viral diarrhea, chronic wasting disease, among others. Once cleared, elk are then moved into acclimation pens in VA for 3-4 days, radio-collared, and released. Only 12 of 27 calves survived; deaths were associated with emaciation, *P. Tenuis*, septicemia, pneumonia, predation, and others. Adult mortality was highest in 2012, where 55% died. Release site has limited forage and the agency is currently reassessing the population goal (original goal was 150) or seeking additional release sites. Missouri has also begun an elk relocation project with Kentucky animals.

### **ACTION ITEM**

#### **AFWA Federal Appropriations Recommendations for 2014 Federal Budget**

We recommend the following funding is needed to support state and tribal monitoring, research and management of these diseases in free-ranging wildlife:

- Ranking #1, Chronic Wasting Disease for \$20M
- Ranking #2, Bovine Tuberculosis for \$5M
- Ranking #3, Aquaculture/VHS for \$18M
- Ranking #4, Invasive Species for \$30M
- Ranking #5, White Nose Syndrome for \$10M
- Ranking #6, Avian Health for \$10M
- Ranking #7, Brucellosis for \$13M
- Ranking #8, Amphibians and Reptile Health for \$1M

We recommend funding is continued \$250,000 for Southeast Cooperative Wildlife Disease Study. We also recommend funding for USDA-APHIS-WS for the Wildlife Disease Monitoring and Surveillance program for \$8M. This program funds wildlife disease assistance to states at no cost, such as CWD and bovine TB surveillance, and participation of wildlife disease biologists in state agency wildlife disease management activities.

### **Time and Place of Next Meeting**

During the wrap-up, the committee decided the location for the 2014 meeting would be in Missouri, either in late March or early April.

This year's meeting was a success and we want to thank the Directors who sent representatives to this meeting and encourage those who did not to consider sending one to next year's meeting. Also, we thank Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources for hosting this year's meeting.

Submitted by: Michelle Carstensen, Chair and Dan Grove, Vice-Chair

## APPENDIX I. ATTENDEE NAMES AND CONTACT INFORMATION

Name	Email	Office Phone		
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Richard, Bryan	<a href="mailto:brichard@usgs.gov">brichard@usgs.gov</a>	608-270-2485		
Name	Organization	Address	City, State	Zip
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Carstensen, Michelle	Minnesota Department of Natural Resources	5463-C West Broadway	Forest Lake, MN	55025
DeLiberto, Thomas	USDA-APHIS Wildlife Services	4101 LaPorte Ave	Fort Collin, CO	80521
Garner, Dale	Iowa Department of Natural Resources	502 E. 9 <sup>th</sup> St	Des Moines, IA	50319
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## **APPENDIX II . AGENDA**

### **Monday, March 18**

12:00-12:15	Arrival and welcome	Aaron Hecht
12:15	Opening remarks and introductions	Michelle Carstensen
12:30	Greetings from our Director Liaison to MAWFA	Ed Boggess
12:40	State disease reports	State Representatives
2:00	Break	
2:30	State disease reports (continued)	State Representatives
5:00	Break for dinner	

### **Tuesday, March 19**

8:00	Kentucky Wildlife Management	Aaron Hecht
9:00	Invited presentations	
	Suggested topics: Wildlife health databases	Dan Grove
	Drug handling protocols	
10:00	Break	
10:30	Invited presentations	
	Suggested topic: Chronic Wasting Disease	Dale Garner
	• Risk analysis approach in CWD-positive vs. CWD-negative states	
	• Relationship with State Departments of Agriculture on CWD monitoring	
	• Managing surveillance in light of now-limited federal funding	
	• Effects of CWD on wild populations	
	• Effects of CWD on the captive cervid industry	
12:00	Lunch	
1:15	Invited presentations	
	Suggested topic: NewCastle Disease Virus	LeAnn White
2:00	Break	
2:30	Invited presentations	
	Suggested topic: Elk relocation, Virginia & Missouri	Megan Kirchgessner
4:00	AFWA Federal Appropriations Recommendations	All
4:20	Action Items	All
4:30	Wrap up and next year's host	