

Impacts of CWD Response

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Question: What is not being accomplished due to CWD surveillance?

Answer: Since expenditures for the majority of the 2018-2019 response are incomplete, data were used from 2017 efforts for staff time calculations. Also, since some staff work the entire year on wildlife health, data were used from October-December for all staff to focus on the fall surveillance work.

Total Staff Hours = 11,047 = 6.5 FTEs (calculated based on ~1,700 hours of work time per year)

(Regular Hours = 9,358; Paid Overtime Hours = 243 hrs; Compensatory Hours Earned = 1,446 hrs)

Regular hours (5.5 FTEs) spent on CWD surveillance during a given pay period would have been spent on other activities, such as:

- Habitat work, including wetland/water management and fall prescribed burns on WMAs
- Maintenance of accesses, parking facilities, and boundary management on WMAs
- Forest and Department coordination efforts
- Hunting season and general public information
- Season and registration station management

Compensatory time (0.9 FTEs) represents hours worked on CWD and later taken as time-off from work at the supervisor's discretion. These hours are similar to vacation and could be taken at any time during the year. Therefore, an assessment of what did not get done because of CWD for those hours is impossible to credit to certain activities.

Additional costs for CWD surveillance are primarily for supplies, sample testing, and travel expenses. Of the total anticipated cost for surveillance this year (~\$1.1 million), roughly half is salary and paid from the Game & Fish Fund Operations Account (GFF). Of the remaining \$550,000, an additional \$250,000 will be paid from the GFF and the remaining \$300,000 from the Cervid Health Account (funds not available for other uses). In addition, a sharpshooting contract with USDA Wildlife Services will be necessary (~\$200,000 from the GFF). The resulting \$450,000 total burden on the GFF in excess of salaries and the Cervid Health Account comes at the expense of discretionary projects that were not funded in FY19. Some of those are:

- Habitat enhancement projects - \$400,000
- User Facility Projects on WMAs - \$240,000
- Internship Program Expansion - \$70,000
- Conservation Easement Monitoring - \$40,000
- Hunter Walking Trail Development - \$36,500
- Urban Deer Disposition Trial - \$20,000

The entire fall CWD effort represents approximately 2.5 percent of the Section of Wildlife FTEs. Two factors that should be considered, however, are 1) given the societal issues related to CWD and the interactions of the disease between cervid farms and wild deer populations, what is the appropriate funding source to surveil and manage the disease, and 2) if CWD becomes established and potentially expands in the state, current funding sources will not be able to sustain surveillance and management efforts without severely impacting other important work.

DNR is already seeing declines in hunter numbers in and around the disease management zone. While statewide license sales have declined 4.6% over the last 2 years, there has been a 10% in the entire southeast, and an 11.5% decline in and around the CWD management zone. Hunters contribute significant revenue to local and statewide economies and reductions in hunter numbers are realized at local levels.

Estimated costs related to FY 2019 CWD surveillance

Category	Game & Fish Fund (GFF)	Cervid Health Account	Total
Salaries	\$550,000	\$0	\$550,000
Supplies & Expenses	\$250,000	\$300,000	\$550,000
USDA Culling Contract	\$200,000	\$0	\$200,000
Total	\$1,000,000	\$300,000	\$1,300,000