

October 10, 2023

Representative Rick Hansen
407 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Representative Hansen,

Thank you for reaching out regarding our current and future work assessing PFAS and neonicotinoids in wildlife throughout the state.

Concerning the 2020-2021 PFAS study on deer in Lake Elmo, Duluth, and Camp Ripley, we are currently in the process of preparing our final report. We anticipate having this completed within the next month and will provide you with a copy. The initial results indicate that for 116 samples collected, PFAS levels for livers are generally low (0.92-96 ng/g). We assessed muscle samples from 17 deer that had PFOS liver levels >20ng/g, but all corresponding muscle PFOS levels were <2 ng/g, showing accumulation in liver but not muscle tissue. We are working closely with the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) on interpretation of these results. Currently, MDH has not issued any venison (or deer liver) consumption advisories.

In 2022, we started a pilot project to test waterfowl exposure to PFAS in Lake Elmo using funds provided by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA). This study extended into 2023 and results are anticipated later this fall. We are coordinating closely with MPCA and MDH on this study.

Regarding the funding provided this past session to assess neonicotinoids, we are pursuing a multiple-pronged approach to examining exposure effects in wildlife across the state. We intend to continue our current study on neonicotinoids in white-tailed deer aiming to look at temporal trends and antemortem (live animal) testing options. We recently completed an internal review of three study proposals focusing on expanding our current work on prairie chickens and sharp-tailed grouse to include reproductive and survival effects, assessing exposure in spruce grouse, and assessing exposure in ring-necked pheasants. The latter study will include arthropod sampling on WMAs in southwestern Minnesota. We are finalizing those proposals and are obtaining input from the Minnesota Department of Agriculture. I would be happy to share our study plans with you once we have them finalized.

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We appreciate your support of this work, with its potential implications to the health of humans and wildlife populations. We think the neonicotinoid studies will begin to tease apart exposure pathways and help understand population impacts. Wildlife Section manager Kelly Straka (651-259-5237) would be happy to arrange a briefing if you would like more details.

Sincerely,



Sarah Strommen
Commissioner