CWD MANAGEMENT

October, 2020

Dear Montana Hunter,

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks needs your help in managing and monitoring Chronic Wasting Disease. CWD is a fatal disease of deer, elk, and moose that was first found in wild deer in Montana in 2017.

This year FWP will continue CWD surveillance in specific areas known as Priority Surveillance Areas in northwest, southwest and eastern Montana. Hunters who harvest a deer, elk or moose in these areas are asked to voluntarily submit their animal for sampling to help gather additional data for that area. This information will be used to help inform the best management strategies for the affected hunting districts.

FWP is paying for the testing of samples and can help hunters get their deer, elk, or moose tested. Hunters can take the samples themselves, fill out the online hunter submission form available on our website and mail them to our Wildlife Health Lab in Bozeman. Hunters also can bring the animal (or head) to a CWD Sampling Station or to most FWP offices. If you intend to donate your deer, elk, or moose to a food bank, FWP strongly recommends that it be sampled for CWD testing beforehand. Due to the COVID pandemic, staff presence in FWP offices can vary as many continue to work remotely. Not all FWP offices can offer help with sampling, so please call ahead to check on availability and to ensure your visit is timely, quick and smooth. Also, please come prepared to wear a mask, as required by Gov. Steve Bullock's directives, should social distancing be difficult to achieve. FWP staff will be wearing a mask as well.

Also new this year is a requirement for proper disposal of all carcasses and parts in a Class II landfill. This required disposal replaces in-state transport restrictions that were previously in place. A carcass may be moved anywhere in the state regardless of where it was harvested as long as the carcass parts are disposed of in a Class II landfill after butchering/processing. Carcass parts, such as brain, eyes, spleen, lymph glands, and spinal cord material, must be bagged and disposed of in a Class II landfill or may be left at the kill site. Dumping carcasses in other places is illegal, unethical and can spread diseases, including CWD. We now know the disease is present across much of the state. This new disposal requirement applies to all deer, elk, and moose carcasses wherever in the state they are harvested by hunters or as vehicle-killed salvage.

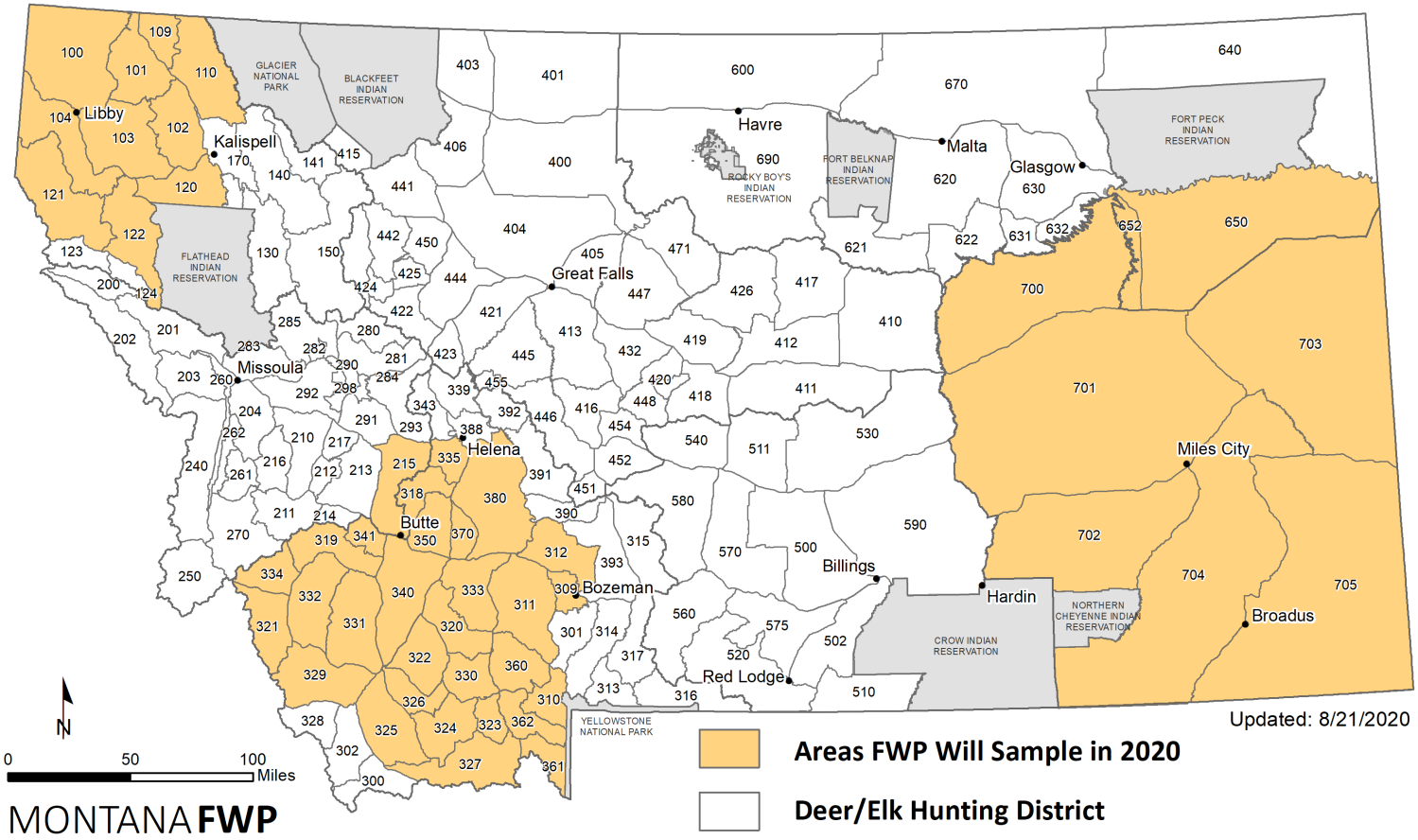
If left unmanaged, CWD will spread. As infection rates increase, it can have a significant impact on our wildlife and those, like yourself, who hunt them. Thank you for your help as we fight CWD together.

For more information, please contact your local FWP office or visit **fwp.mt.gov/cwd**, where you can find a wealth of information, including how to take your own samples, FWP sample collection locations and hours of operation, maps of our Priority Surveillance Areas and Class II landfills.

Sincerely,

Martha Williams, Director
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

FWP Priority Surveillance Areas for 2020



MONTANA **FWP**

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