



CWD MANAGEMENT

Hunters are key to tracking chronic wasting disease (CWD) in Montana. Every deer, elk, or moose you bring in for sampling tells us more about how to manage CWD and help stop CWD in its tracks.

Is CWD a concern?

YES. CWD is a fatal disease that affects deer, elk, and moose. It spreads through direct contact and contaminated environments, and once it is established, it is very difficult to remove from the landscape.

Where do we need help most this year?

FWP has identified [CWD Priority Sampling Areas](#) in northwestern and central Montana, in addition to HDs 213 and 215. If you're hunting HDs 100, 103, or 104 near Libby, CWD sampling requirements apply to certain tags. Check the [2026 hunting regulations](#) before you head out.

What happens to our sample?

Samples are tested to determine whether CWD is present. Results are shared with the hunter and help FWP monitor disease distribution and respond where the disease is detected.

- Testing is free. Results are fast. Finding your results is easy at fwp.mt.gov/cwd

Two ways to get it done

- During **general hunting season**, hunters can visit our [website](#) to find sampling stations and hours. At the station, hunters can bring the animal or just the head, with 3–4 inches of neck, for sampling. If you'd like to have your animal sampled **outside general hunting season**, call ahead; not every office can sample.
- Do it yourself. Collect the sample, fill out the online hunter submission form, and mail it to our Wildlife Health Program in Bozeman. Step-by-step instructions are on our [website](#).

Then finish the job: dispose properly

Leave carcass parts at the kill site or take them to an approved Class II landfill. Moving infected carcasses can spread CWD to new areas. A map of landfill locations is available on our [website](#).

Donating to a food bank or getting your harvest processed at a meat processor?

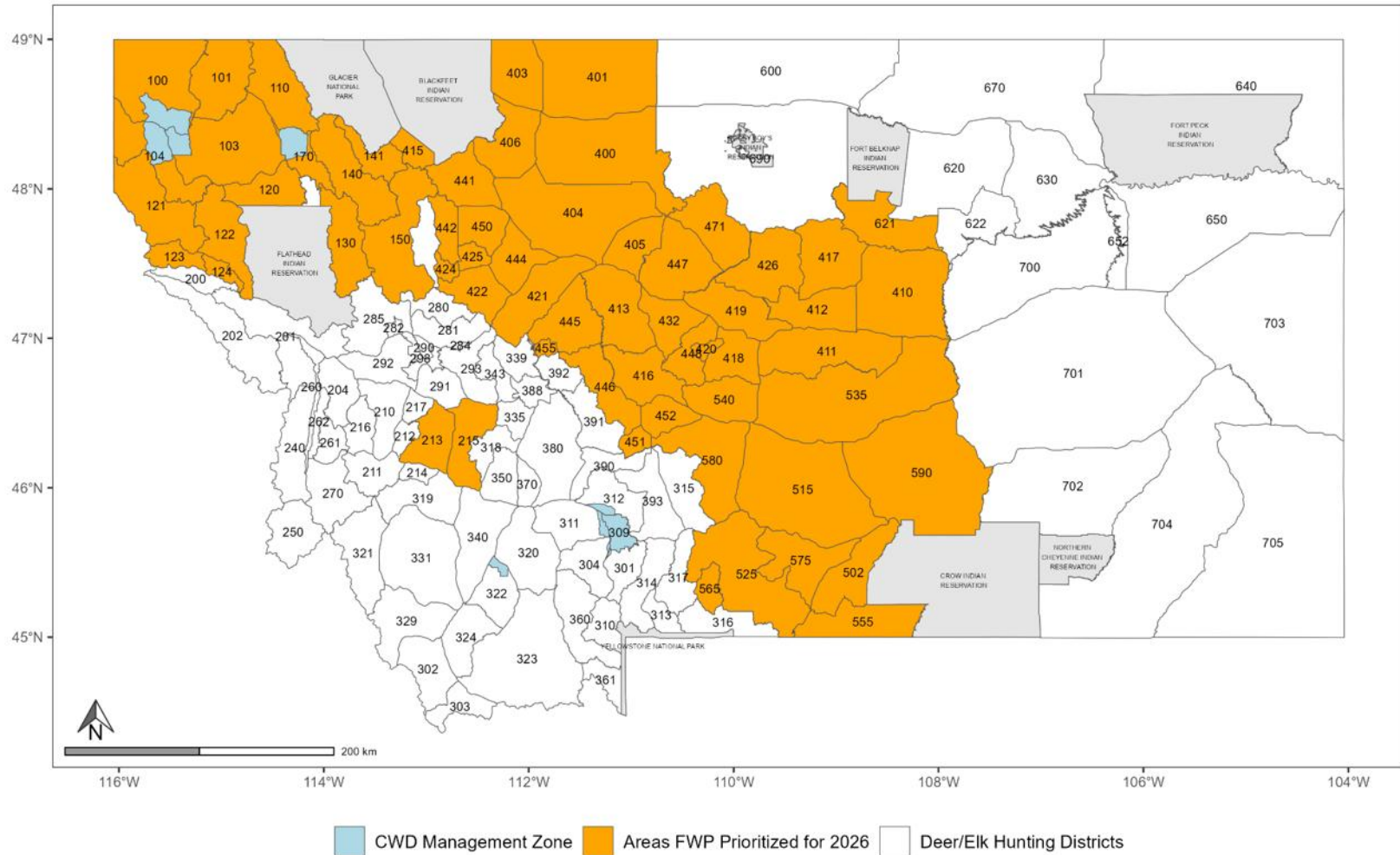
We strongly recommend having a "Not Detected" result in hand before your animal is donated to a food bank or dropped off at a meat processor. If an animal tests positive, dispose of it properly.

One more ask

Be a trusted voice. When CWD comes up at camp, at the processor, or at a public meeting, share what you know and ask questions. Montana's herds and the hunting your grandkids inherit are better off when hunters share in this conversation.

Test your animal. Dispose properly. That's it. Two simple actions that protect herd health and, in turn, protect the hunt.

CWD Priority Surveillance Areas for 2026



*If you are hunting in a CWD Management Zone, please review the 2026 hunting regulations to determine any CWD testing requirements for your area.