



WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AND RESEARCH NOTES

No.  996	<b>AUTHOR:</b> Chad M. Stewart, Deer Research Biologist	<b>DATE</b> 4/8/10
	<b>TITLE:</b> 2009 Bovine Tuberculosis Surveillance & Monitoring Summary	

**Abstract:** *Bovine Tuberculosis (TB) is a chronic bacterial infection that can affect most mammals. In 2009, three captive cervid farms had animals that tested positive for TB, with all animals originating from one location. To ensure that the disease did not escape into the wild deer population, the Division of Fish and Wildlife and their collaborators, implemented a surveillance program to test hunter harvested deer in the locations near the three captive cervid farms. Results from 434 deer sampled in Franklin, Harrison, and Wayne counties failed to detect the presence of TB.*

Bovine Tuberculosis (TB) is a chronic bacterial disease caused by the bacterium *Mycobacterium bovis*, and can affect nearly any mammal. *M. bovis* is most commonly transmitted by inhalation of aerosols or by ingestion. TB is most commonly maintained in cattle, but several species can propagate the disease, and are classified as reservoir hosts. These species makes eradication of the disease difficult. In Michigan, white-tailed deer appear to be reservoir hosts, and significantly complicate eradication efforts.

In 2009, deer in a captive cervid farm in Franklin County tested positive for TB. Investigations conducted by the Indiana Board of Animal Health determined that two additional farms obtained cervids from the Franklin County farm, one each in Harrison and Wayne Counties. Further testing within these herds and subsequent depopulation found that the disease had not spread to other captive animals. Still, the Division of Fish and Wildlife (DFW), the Indiana Board of Animal Health (BOAH), and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) proceeded forward with efforts to collect heads from free ranging deer in these counties to monitor if the disease had spread to wild deer.

DFW staff manned 5 check stations in the affected counties during the opening day of firearms season to voluntarily collect deer heads from hunters. Heads were prepared for submission to the National Veterinary Services Laboratory (NVSL) in Ames, Iowa by BOAH and USDA personnel. A total of 434 deer heads were collected, with 217 coming from the Franklin county vicinity, 170 coming from the Harrison county vicinity, and 47 coming from the Wayne county vicinity. An additional 30 deer were taken from Franklin county in August 2009 by Division of Law Enforcement personnel.




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All samples have been returned by the NVSL and TB has not been detected in any of the collected deer. Hunters in these regions are still encouraged to report any harvested deer that exhibit symptoms of TB (white lesions on the internal organs or ribcage of harvested deer) to their local district wildlife biologist or the Indiana Board of Animal Health.