

**Chronic Wasting Disease Report
2025**



September 15, 2025

September 15, 2025

Senator Brent Jackson
16 West Jones Street, Rm. 2022
Raleigh, NC 27601

Representative Jimmy Dixon
16 West Jones Street, Rm. 2226
Raleigh, NC 27601

Members:

The 2021 General Assembly directed the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission (WRC) to report to the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Agriculture and Natural and Economic Resources and the Fiscal Research Division no later than September 15th of each year in which WRC receives State funds to combat, monitor, or contain an outbreak of Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD).

I am submitting this report in accordance with Section 15.1 of [S.L. 2022-74](#). If members have questions or need additional information, please contact me by phone at (919) 707-0016 or via email at kyle.briggs@ncwildlife.gov.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "K. Briggs", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Session Law Requirements

Section 15.1 of S.L. 2022-74 directs the Wildlife Resources Commission (WRC) to report to the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Agriculture and Natural and Economic Resources and the Fiscal Research Division no later than September 15th of each year in which WRC receives State funds to combat, monitor, or contain an outbreak of Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) or any initiative or activity funded during the previous fiscal year:

- (1) Identification of the source of the funds used for the initiative or activity.
- (2) The goals and outcomes for the initiative or activity.
- (3) A description of the measures used, or data collected to evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of the initiative or activity in reaching its desired goals and outcomes.
- (4) The performance of each initiative or activity with respect to the identified goals and outcomes.

Background

Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) was detected in a white-tailed deer harvested in December of 2021 in Yadkin County. This detection activated WRC's Chronic Wasting Disease Response Plan (Response Plan). The WRC established a surveillance area in the northwestern part of the state. The area consisted of primary and secondary areas and encompassed all or parts of 8 counties. Within the surveillance area, rules were established to assist in determining the prevalence and distribution of the disease. These rules included mandatory testing, carcass transport restrictions, and baiting/feeding restrictions.

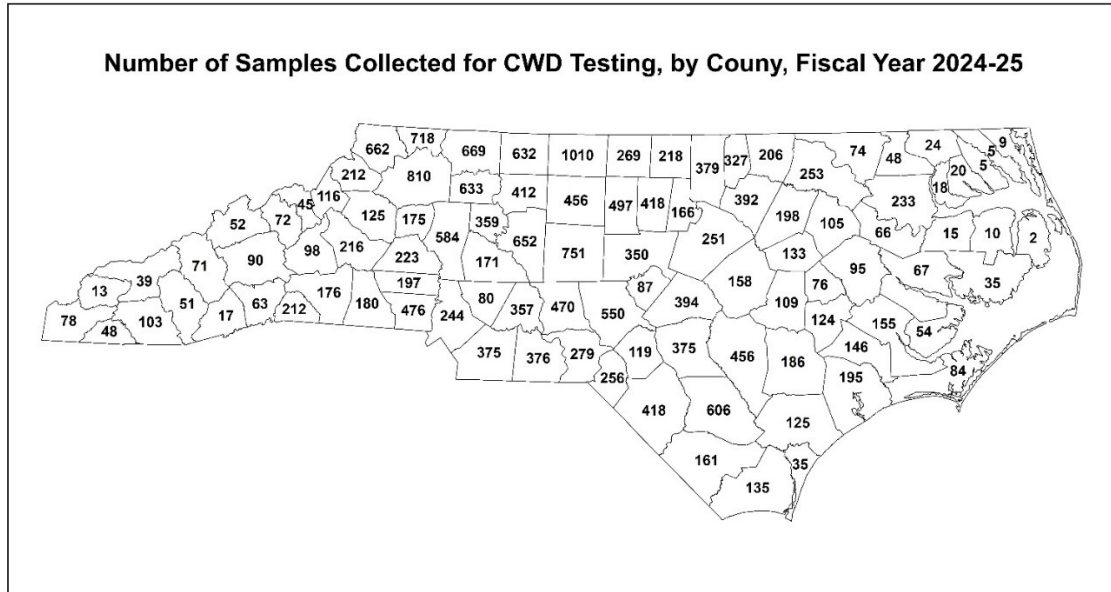
In FY 2021-22, the North Carolina General Assembly appropriated \$201,232 recurring and \$750,000 non-recurring to help the WRC support field sampling and minimize the spread of CWD in the state. These funds helped to significantly increase sampling during the 2022 and 2023 deer seasons. During the 2022 deer season, a new positive detection occurred in Cumberland County activating the response plan in a new portion of the state. Surveillance during the 2023 and 2024 deer seasons identified additional CWD-positive deer, but none were from new counties. To date, a total of 34 samples have tested positive for CWD from either hunter harvested deer or road kills. Counties with confirmed positives include Cumberland, Stokes, Surry, Wilkes, and Yadkin. The county of origin for one CWD-positive deer was not able to be determined.

Agency Operations

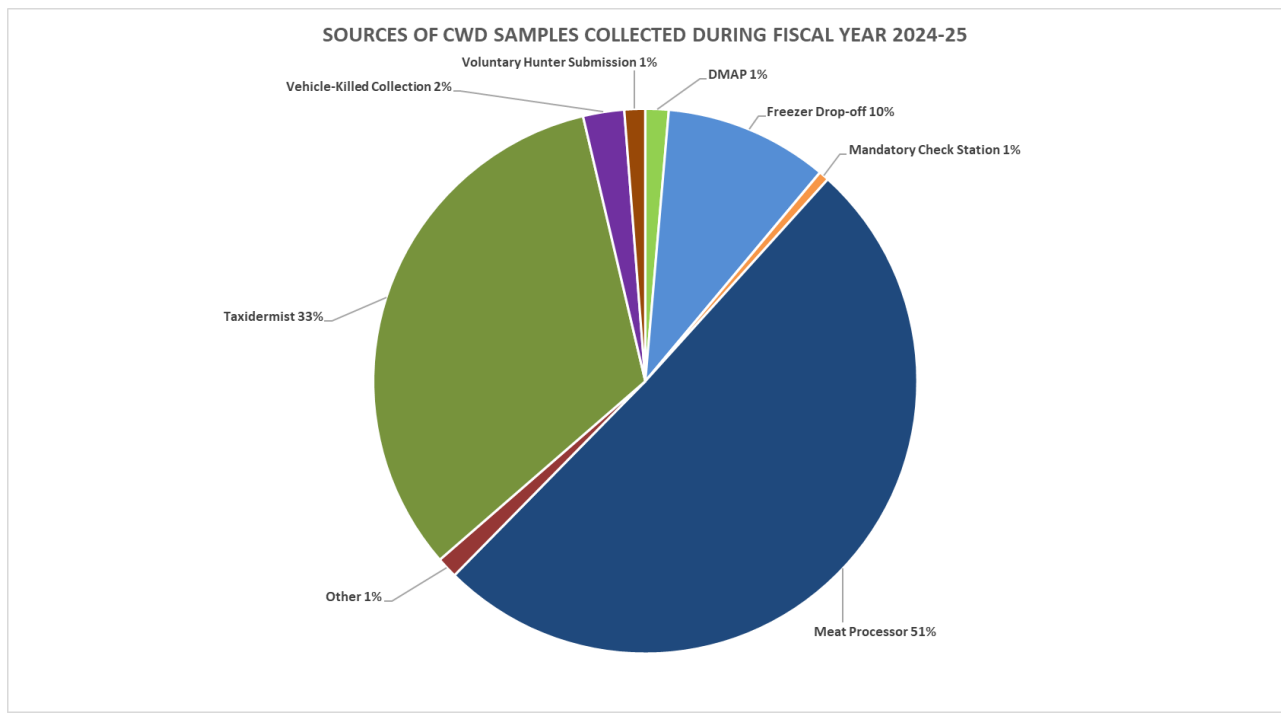
Actions by the WRC to implement and continue its Response Plan in FY 2024-25 included:

- Maintained Primary and Secondary CWD Surveillance Areas in parts or all of eighteen counties: Alexander, Alleghany, Ashe, Bladen, Cumberland, Davie, Forsyth, Guilford, Harnett, Hoke, Iredell, Robeson, Rockingham, Sampson, Stokes, Surry, Wilkes, and Yadkin.
- Continued public information efforts to inform hunters and the public about CWD; and
- By proclamation authority, required mandatory sampling of hunter-harvested deer during certain dates in Surveillance Areas during the 2024 deer hunting seasons.

To meet its surveillance goals, WRC staff collected a total of 23,740 samples from cervids (deer and elk) across the state. The counties with the highest sample collections were Rockingham (1,010), Wilkes (810), Randolph (751), Alleghany (718), and Surry (669).



Samples were collected from a variety of sources, most of which were voluntary. Approximately 96% of samples across the state came from deer meat processors (12,029), taxidermists (7,762), and freezer drop-off (2,307).



Purchases and other Expenditures

WRC staff again placed freezers around the state for hunters to drop off voluntary samples, and purchased consumable supplies, e.g., gloves, knives, trash bags, for sample collection. Taxidermist and deer meat processors provided the majority of samples with 19,791 samples coming from 213 facilities that were trained and certified as Cervid Health Cooperators. These Cooperators were compensated \$10 for each deer head they collected (from which NCWRC collected lymph nodes) or \$20 per pair of medial retropharyngeal lymph nodes, for the first 300 heads or pairs of lymph nodes they collected. The total effort by NCWRC personnel for CWD surveillance during FY 2024-25 was 21,698 hours worked and 276,057 miles traveled.

Chronic Wasting Disease Surveillance Costs for FY 2024-25		
Expenditure Type	Cost	Source of Funds
Personnel	\$590,263	Appropriations, Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration, License Fees
CWD Testing Fees	\$529,553	Appropriations, Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration, License Fees
Consumable Equipment and Supplies	\$39,688	Appropriations, Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration, License Fees
Payments to Cervid Health Cooperators (taxidermists and deer meat processors)	\$390,900	Appropriations, Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration, License Fees
Other (travel, dumpster rental, printing, postage, etc.)	\$92,456	Appropriations, Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration, License Fees
Total:	\$1,642,860	

Next Steps

The WRC will continue to sample statewide and in the surveillance areas during the 2025 deer hunting season; however, there will be no dates when mandatory sampling is required for successful hunters. The sampling is meant to continue efforts to determine the geographical extent of the CWD outbreak and the prevalence of CWD in white-tailed deer in the surveillance areas.

To assist constituents with sample collection, WRC will continue to staff several check stations in the surveillance areas, either at county locations or in conjunction with taxidermists and meat processors and will maintain numerous freezer locations across the area where hunters can drop their deer head for CWD testing. WRC enforcement will also conduct patrols to ensure potentially contaminated materials are not leaving the surveillance areas.