Addressing conservation challenges, such as CWD, requires active involvement of those with a passion for our rich natural resources. A primary goal of CWD response and management efforts is to determine the geographic extent and prevalence of the disease. MDWFP asks hunters to aid in this effort by submitting deer for testing during the 2023-2024 white-tailed deer hunting season. The test used to determine the presence of CWD requires a portion of the deer’s brainstem or lymph nodes. Harvested animals should remain cool or be frozen until testing to reduce decomposition and provide accurate results.

Further, hunters and landowners can help monitor for CWD by actively looking for and reporting potential diseased or sick deer. For more information, visit MDWFP.com/cwd.
CWD Best Management Practices

The following Best Management Practices (BMP) are recommended for minimizing potential environmental and human exposure to Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) while handling carcasses and processing the meat from white-tailed deer. These BMPs are established on a foundation of abundant caution given the many unknowns regarding CWD. For more information about CWD, please visit mdwfp.com/cwd.

Supplemental Feeding and Carcass Transportation Ban

- **Supplemental feeding is banned in any CWD Management Zone (salt licks, mineral licks, and feeders).**
  Direct contact with prions is the most effective means of transmitting CWD. Research indicates saliva may have the highest concentration of prions. Thus, to minimize concentration of deer and potential spread of CWD, supplemental feeding is banned within any CWD Management Zone.

- **Carcasses may not be transported outside of any CWD Management Zone.**
  Research has shown that decomposed carcasses of infected animals can also contribute to transmission when prions bind to soil and plant material. Thus, movement of carcasses may introduce CWD into previously uninfected areas. Only the below products may leave the CWD Management Zone:
  - Cut/wrapped meat (commercially or privately)
  - Deboned meat
  - Hides with no head attached
  - Bone-in leg quarters
  - Finished taxidermy
  - Antlers with no tissue attached
  - Cleaned skulls or skull plates (no brain tissue)
  - Hunters may transport a deer head to a permitted taxidermist participating in the CWD collection program. A CWD sample number must be obtained from the participating taxidermist prior to transporting the deer head outside of the MDWFP-defined CWD Management Zone. mdwfp.com/cwd

General Precautions

- Inspect body condition of each deer at the time of harvest. Do not consume any part of animals exhibiting clinical symptoms of CWD, including extreme weight loss, excessive salivation, or erratic behavior.
- Please report any deer that appears to be diseased by completing a diseased deer report on the MDWFP app, at mdwfp.com/cwd or call 1-800-BE-SMART.
- Avoid using natural deer urine attractants, as they may carry prions from infected deer. Hunters who prefer to use lures or attractants may wish to select an artificial or food based scent.
- To minimize direct contact with infectious prions, it is recommended to not establish feeders, bait sites, mineral sites, or otherwise cause unnatural concentration of deer.

Cleaning and Processing a Harvested Deer

**Field Dressing:**
- Wear rubber or latex gloves when handling carcasses.
- When field dressing an animal, leave internal organs and inedible parts at the site of harvest.
- Avoid sawing through bone, spinal cord, brain, lymph nodes, or spleen.
- Store all portions of the animal to be transported in a container such as a cooler, bin, or bag that will not leak bodily fluids into the environment.

**Meat Processing:**
- Do not process a deer that appears to be diseased.
- Process all deer individually, package separately, and label uniquely.
- Debone meat from deer and remove all fat, connective tissue, and lymph nodes.
- Avoid sawing through bone, spinal cord, brain, lymph nodes, or spleen.
- Avoid eating/handling the eyes, brain, spinal cord, spleen, and lymph nodes.
- Limit the amount of bodily fluids going to an area, such as a floor drain, that cannot be properly sanitized after use.

**Disposal:**
- Deer parts should not be rendered for use in feed for other animals, or used as compost.
- Recommended disposal methods for unwanted portions of carcasses (bones, organs, etc.) are:
  - Leave at the harvest site;
  - Double-bag and send to an approved, lined landfill; or
  - Deep burial (8 feet or deeper).

**Equipment Cleaning:**
- Clean processing equipment between each deer.
- Thoroughly sanitize all equipment and workstations with a 50:50 solution of bleach and water.
- Soak tools for one hour in the bleach solution, and then rinse thoroughly with hot water.
CWD-Positive Deer by County, Since 2018

- **ALCORN COUNTY**: 4 positives
- **BENTON COUNTY**: 127 positives
- **ISSAQUENA COUNTY**: 2 positives
- **MARSHALL COUNTY**: 63 positives
- **PANOLA COUNTY**: 1 positive
- **PONTOTOC COUNTY**: 1 positive
- **TALLAHATCHEE COUNTY**: 1 positive
- **TIPPAH COUNTY**: 3 positives
- **TUNICA COUNTY**: 1 positive
- **WARREN COUNTY**: 4 positives
CHRONIC WASTING DISEASE MANAGEMENT

Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) was first detected in Mississippi in February 2018 and is recognized as the primary threat to wildlife in the state. The CWD Management Plan establishes a framework for the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks to implement management strategies to prevent and mitigate the spread and transmission of CWD in Mississippi. Current management strategies are based on the best available science and with input from a variety of subject matter experts. The nature of CWD mandates a long-term, adaptable approach to management. To that end, below are changes for the 2023-2024 hunting season:

CWD MANAGEMENT PLAN UPDATE

The Mississippi Chronic Wasting Disease Management Plan was approved by the Commission on Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks during April 2021. Important changes include:

Following a confirmed CWD positive within an existing positive county or a new county, a CWD-MZ will be created. It will include land within 10 miles of the positive and be in place for a minimum of 3 years.

CWD-POSITIVE DETECTION

Management Zone (CWD-MZ)

- Delineated using county lines and public roads.
- Ban supplemental feeding of wildlife.
- Only bone-in leg quarters, deboned meat, antlers, cleaned skull or skull plates, finished taxidermy, cleaned teeth, hides and tanned products may leave the CWD-MZs.

Please refer to the carcass transportation ban section on page 2 for transporting to a permitted cooperating taxidermist.

2023-2024 WHITE-TAILED DEER HUNTING SEASON

VELVET SEASON

September 15-17, 2023

Mandatory Reporting by 10 p.m.
Mandatory CWD Sampling by Sept. 22
One State-Legal Buck Bag Limit
Archery Only
Statewide

PRIVATE LANDS

within North Central DMU

- Increased buck bag limit from 3 to 4.
- No antler criteria for 4-buck bag limit.
- Increased antlerless bag limit from 5 to 10.

NORTH CENTRAL DMU

Establish the “North Central Deer Management Unit”

DeSoto, Tate, Marshall, Benton, Tippah, and Alcorn counties.

HOLLY SPRINGS NATIONAL FOREST

within North Central DMU

- 3-buck bag limit with no antler criteria.
MDWFP has established collection sites across the state for the general public to deposit deer heads for testing. All season long, freezers will be at each site for depositing deer heads.

Hunters should preserve the head with at least 6 inches of neck attached. Antlers and skull plate may be removed without affecting long, freezers will be at each site for depositing deer heads.

**2023–2024 Statewide Sample Drop-Off Sites**

1. **Love VFD**
   - 7345 Hwy 51 S
   - Hernando, MS 38632
   - 34.7526, -88.9913

2. **Mt. Pleasant VFD**
   - 194 Mt. Pleasant Rd
   - Red Banks, MS 38661
   - 34.9561, -88.5226

3. **Wall Doxey State Park**
   - 3946 MS Hwy 7
   - Holly Springs, MS 38635
   - 34.6630, -89.4647

4. **Benton County 911 Dispatch**
   - 368 Ripley Ave
   - Benton, MS 38846
   - 34.5396, -90.0627

5. **Walnut VFD**
   - 660 Main Street
   - Corinth, MS 38839
   - 34.2997, -89.8624

6. **MSU Extension Office**
   - 2200 Old Hwy 45 S
   - Holly Springs, MS 38635
   - 34.7001, -89.4463

7. **Panola County EMS**
   - 3946 MS Hwy 7
   - Holly Springs, MS 38635
   - 34.7001, -89.4463

8. **Choctaw WMA**
   - 2785 Highway 49
   - Mendenhall, MS 39114
   - 33.9210, -89.8112

9. **O’Keefe WMA**
   - O’Keefe Rd
   - Lambert, MS 38643
   - 34.1665, -90.2735

10. **North Region Office**
    - 457 CR 36
    - Enid, MS 38927
    - 34.1565, -89.9127

11. **MDOT Maintenance HQ**
    - 32950 Hwy 32
    - Tillatobie, MS 38863
    - 34.0057, -89.9066

12. **Chickasaw WMA**
    - 770 Hwy 32 Ext
    - Houston, MS 38861
    - 33.9861, -89.9356

13. **Dahomey NWR**
    - 831 MS 446
    - Indianola, MS 38751
    - 32.4974, -88.8475

14. **Fire Station #4**
    - 412 MS 7
    - Greenwood, MS 38930
    - 33.5209, -90.1514

15. **New Albany Fairgrounds**
    - 112 Fairgrounds Circle
    - New Albany, MS 38652
    - 34.5127, -89.0329

16. **Trim Cane WMA**
    - 2025 North Jackson St.
    - Starkville, MS 39759
    - 33.5248, -88.8462

17. **Black Prairie WMA**
    - 744 Fire Tower Rd
    - Crawford, MS 39743
    - 33.3596, -88.5618

18. **USDA Service Center**
    - 48 Millers Chapel Church Rd
    - Maroon, MS 39341
    - 33.1346, -88.5513

19. **Choctaw WMA**
    - 2121 Webster Rd
    - Ackerman, MS 39735
    - 33.2737, -89.1267

20. **Yockanookany WMA**
    - 28329 MS Hwy 12
    - McCool, MS 39108
    - 33.2737, -89.1268

21. **Fire Station 3**
    - 257 Gum Street
    - Philadelphia, MS 39350
    - 32.7744, -89.1215

22. **Holmes County State Park**
    - 5369 State Park Rd
    - Durant, MS 39063
    - 33.0271, -89.9206

23. **District 3 VFD**
    - 171 Old Benton Rd.
    - Yazoo City, MS 35914
    - 32.8411, -89.3840

24. **Valley Park Community Center**
    - 64 Kelso Rd
    - Valley Park, MS 39177
    - 32.6335, -89.8709

25. **Mahannah WMA**
    - 1370 Anderson-Tully Rd
    - Redwood, MS 39156
    - 32.5490, -89.8708

26. **Phil Bryant WMA**
    - 11641 Hwy 465
    - Vicksburg, MS 39183
    - 32.4556, -89.9733

27. **Communication Specialist**
    - 760 Hwy 61 North
    - Vicksburg, MS 39183
    - 32.3552, -89.8283

28. **LeFleur’s Bluff State Park**
    - 3315 Lakeland Terrace
    - Jackson, MS 32317
    - 31.2308, -89.4517

29. **Marion County WMA**
    - 652 Game Reserve Rd
    - Columbus, MS 39742
    - 31.1741, -89.7327

30. **Purvis VFD**
    - 805 Main St
    - Purvis, MS 39475
    - 31.1517, -89.4122

31. **Purvis VFD**
    - 805 Main St
    - Purvis, MS 39475
    - 31.1517, -89.4122

32. **Pine County Co-Op**
    - 124 Rodeo St
    - Poplarville, MS 39470
    - 30.8329, -89.5474

33. **Leaf River WMA**
    - Forest Service Rd 353
    - McComb, MS 38648
    - 31.2308, -89.4517

34. **Bay St. Louis FD Station 2**
    - 9999 MS-603
    - Bay St. Louis, MS 35920
    - 30.3124, -89.3920

35. **Fire Station 8**
    - 23560 Old Still Rd
    - Saucier, MS 35974
    - 30.6325, -89.1384

36. **Lower Pascagoula WMA**
    - 1600 Ward Bayou Rd
    - Vancleave, MS 35965
    - 30.5668, -88.6307

*Drop-off hours #14 only:

**Monday - Friday**

8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

All other locations are 24 hrs/day & 7 days/week
CWD is one of many conservation challenges that has arisen over the last century. Hunters are vital to successfully managing CWD and ensuring healthy white-tailed deer herds for future generations. MDWFP thanks all hunters for continuing to stay actively engaged in this conservation effort!

DEER HEALTH OBSERVATION

If you observe a deer you suspect may be diseased or sick, report it to the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks at:

1-800-BE-SMART
or
www.MDWFP.com/diseased

SYMPTOMS
- Malnourished / Frail
- Not afraid of Humans
- Excessive Salivation
- Erratic Behavior

MDWFP’s Private Lands Program is ready to assist you in managing wildlife and habitat on your land. To learn more go to: MDWFP.com/privatelands

Front cover photography: Joe Mac Hudspeth Jr.