



**Report on surveillance  
and control operations  
for chronic wasting disease  
in cervids - 2019**

# Chronic wasting disease of cervids

CWD is a contagious disease of cervids that provokes the fatal degeneration of the central nervous system.

No treatment or vaccine is currently available to fight this disease.

When well-established in wild cervid populations, CWD is impossible to eliminate.

Following the detection of chronic wasting disease (CWD) cases on a red deer farm in the Laurentides region in 2018, the Ministère des Forêts, de la Faune et des Parcs (MFFP) has implemented measures to protect wild cervid herds and continues to intervene to minimize the risk of establishment of this disease in wildlife.

The implemented measures are designed to:

- Increase surveillance of the disease to detect outbreaks in the natural environment and intervene quickly;
- Maintain a low-density deer population in the area where the disease has been detected to reduce contact between wild animals and thus limit the transmission of the disease if an infected animal is in the natural environment;
- Avoid the spread of the disease in other areas of the province.

Analyses results from 2018 and 2019 show that if the disease is present in wildlife, very few animals are affected, and the disease can still be eliminated. While no cases of CWD have been detected in wild cervids, it is impossible to exclude beyond any doubt the presence of the disease in the wild since: 1) it is very difficult to detect CWD when few deer are infected, and 2) tests are not usually effective for detecting the disease in animals that have been infected for less than 12 months.

## Surveillance results in 2019

Sampling from animals taken in sport hunting:

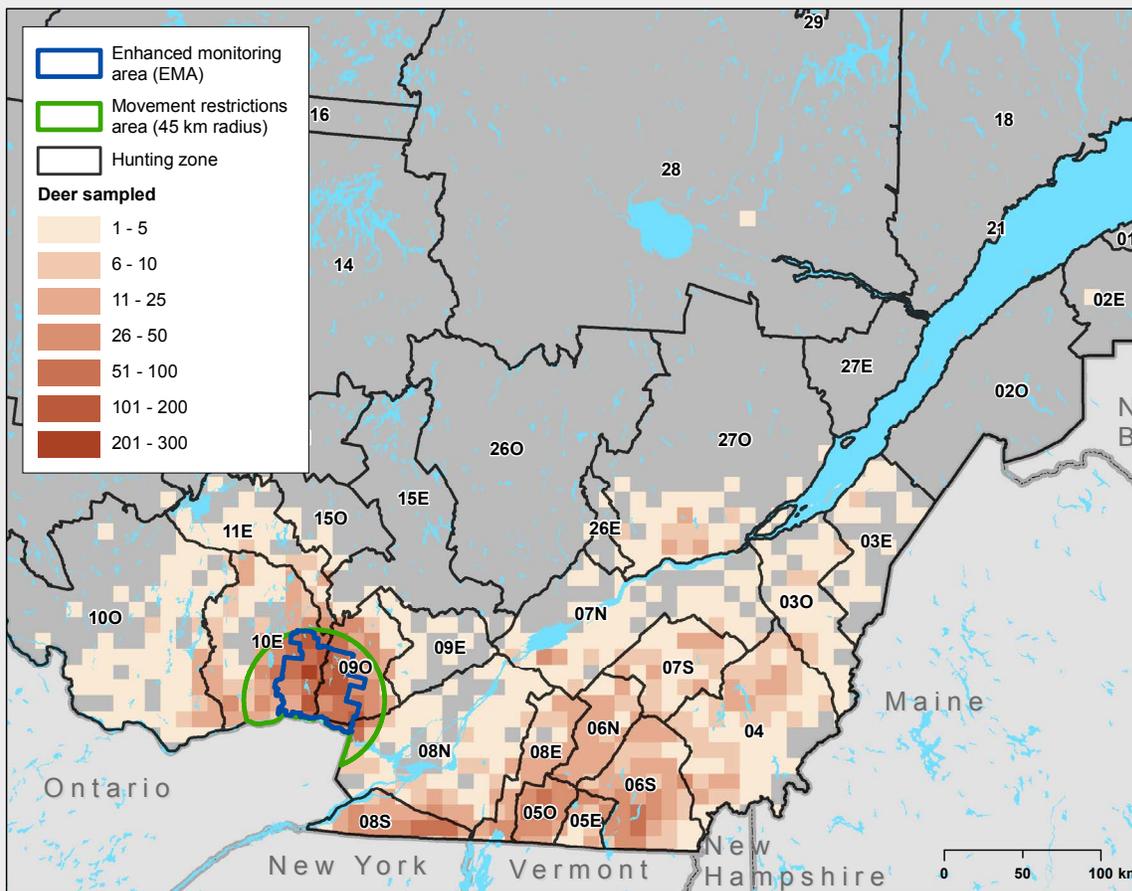
- 4,819 wild cervids analyzed, no positive cases
- 1,368 deer and 17 moose in the enhanced monitoring area
- 3,411 deer and 23 moose elsewhere in Québec





## Highlights

- In fall 2018, 11 cases of chronic wasting disease were found on a red deer farm in the Laurentides.
- During the same year, all animals at the infected farm were slaughtered by order of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency.
- As soon as the CWD cases were found, the MFFP applied the regulations in effect to avoid the spread of the disease in other regions of Québec:
  - restrictions on the possession of whole carcasses and certain anatomical parts of cervids killed within a 45 km radius of the affected farm;
  - prohibition on the transportation of any cervid kept in captivity within a 100 km radius of the affected farm.
- These restrictions will be effective at least until 2023.
- For the 2019 hunting season, the MFFP has implemented specific measures in the enhanced monitoring area (EMA). These measures were adopted to keep reducing the deer density in this area, as was done in 2018, thus minimizing the risks of spreading CWD. In the EMA, hunting of all segments of the deer population (males, females and fawns) was permitted from September 21 to November 17, 2019. All gear was allowed (rifle, muzzle-loading firearm, shotgun, bow and crossbow).
- Enhanced CWD surveillance was maintained around the affected farm to detect an infected animal quickly. Department staff were on location in the five registration stations in the 45 km movement restriction area to collect samples from white-tailed deer and wild moose that were killed during sport hunting. All white-tailed deer aged over 12 months in the EMA had to be submitted for sample collecting. Analysis results were available in the weeks following the sampling on the Department's website.
- In hunting zones 9 West and 10 East, antlerless deer hunting licences were issued to temporarily decrease deer populations in these zones and enhance CWD surveillance.
- Over 60 butcher shops in nine administrative regions have participated in making sample collecting possible for deer killed in hunting elsewhere in the province.
- Since the disease was detected on a farm in September 2018, the Department has analyzed close to 8,500 wild cervids in the province, including almost 2,400 in the EMA. To this day, no sample from a wild cervid was declared positive.



Number of white-tailed deer analyzed for chronic wasting disease in Québec in 2018 and 2019

## MFFP actions

Specific measures were deployed rapidly and massively by the MFFP once the first case was confirmed to ensure that the disease was truly absent from wild animals and avoid the transmission of the disease to the rest of the province, should cervids currently carrying the disease were present in the natural environment. Once established in wild populations, CWD is impossible to eliminate. That is why it is important to take all necessary measures to avoid such a situation. In provinces and states where the disease is established, major, irreversible reductions in cervid populations have been observed, causing impacts on hunting activities and associated economic benefits.

In the coming years, the MFFP will continue its actions to: 1) maintain low deer density in the area where the disease was detected in order to reduce contact among wild animals so as to limit the transmission of CWD if it is present in the natural environment; 2) maintain enhanced surveillance of the disease to detect any outbreak in the natural environment and intervene rapidly and 3) improve measures to prevent new cases of the disease or its spread.

Learn about procedures and restrictions implemented to your hunting area.

For all the details:

[Quebec.ca/cervidsdisease](http://Quebec.ca/cervidsdisease)

Photos: Pierre Parent, photographer.

Forêts, Faune  
et Parcs

Québec

