

B. NEVADA WILDLIFE HEALTH PROGRAM

In 2007, following recruitment of a wildlife veterinarian (Wildlife Health Specialist), the Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW) began development and implementation of a comprehensive health plan focused on the state's wildlife resources. The plan approaches health management in both game and non-game species of importance in Nevada specifically, and the Great Basin Ecosystem (GBE) in general.

Emerging infectious diseases (EID) are recognized as a significant manifestation of diminishing ecological health and NDOW believes that habitat loss, climate change, inappropriate land use and chemical pollution in the GBE all contribute to disease outbreaks. The degree to which environmental changes over the past several decades have affected the health of terrestrial animals in the GBE is largely unknown because information is lacking on diseases present prior to these changes.

NDOW recognizes the importance of paying close attention to the risks of disease (both infectious and noninfectious) and the need to factor these risks into fish and wildlife management models. Baseline data on diseases of animal populations are considered crucial for NDOW to accurately predict changes in today's changing climate.

Consistent with the proposed National Fish and Wildlife Health Initiative, the state plan therefore emphasizes the following:

- A. Development of long-term, consistent disease monitoring programs in key wildlife species in Nevada and the GBE
- B. Detection, elucidation and reporting of the causes of morbidity and mortality in wildlife species in Nevada and the GBE
- C. Evaluation of the impact of infectious and non-infectious diseases and parasites upon wild animal populations in Nevada and the GBE
- D. Investigation of disease interrelationships between wildlife and domestic livestock
- E. Evaluation of the role of wildlife in zoonotic disease in Nevada and the GBE

The wildlife health plan emphasizes identification and development of productive working relationships with state, federal, tribal and other partners. Recent adoption of a Memorandum of Agreement between the Nevada Departments of Wildlife and Agriculture and the University of Nevada, Reno regarding disease interactions between domestic sheep and goats and wild bighorn sheep and close collaboration with Tribal entities in Nevada in disease surveillance in wildlife (chronic wasting disease, avian influenza, West Nile virus) illustrate the early success of this approach.

The Nevada Department of Wildlife's mission is to protect, preserve, manage and restore wildlife and its habitat for its aesthetic, scientific, educational, recreational, and economic benefits to citizens of Nevada and the United States. Financial support from the Nevada Wildlife Heritage Fund, federal agencies (USDA, USGS, USFWS, USFS, BLM, NPS), sportsmen's groups and NGOs and the development of strong working relationships within NDOW and with these partners have allowed the Department to build capacity, increase the level of

professionalism within its staff and implement the wildlife health plan, thereby positioning NDOW to effectively fulfill its mission. In order for NDOW to achieve the long-term goals set forth in this plan and sustain long-term data collection, a strategic 5-year plan, business design and sound financial strategy are currently being developed to ensure adequate program support into the future.

Consistent with the goals of the National Fish and Wildlife Health Initiative, the Department is now committed to conducting proactive, coordinated and sustained surveillance for pathogens in wildlife species of importance in Nevada, and responding appropriately; developing policy and protocols for early detection and rapid response; developing integrated disease management strategies and contingency plans for emergency disease events; identifying appropriate technologies relevant to wildlife health management; initiating and conducting research relevant to wildlife health in Nevada and communicating and disseminating relevant health-related information to NDOW staff, agency partners, the public of Nevada and other interested parties through participation of Wildlife Health Specialist and staff in meetings and workshops, and through presentations, regular discussion, email and website updates.

C. OREGON WILDLIFE HEALTH PROGRAM

The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife's (ODFW) Wildlife Health Program is based out of Oregon State University (OSU) which consists of several offices, a necropsy room and a biosecurity level 2 laboratory. The program is lead by a supervisor level senior wildlife veterinarian with a staff veterinarian and a laboratory biologist who supports the veterinary staff and conducts statewide aging and reproductive management-based studies. Annually, the program also supports up to 10 volunteers and temporary personnel working on management and research projects including fisheries and wildlife undergraduate and graduate students and veterinary students conducting externships and wildlife health research projects. The Wildlife Health Laboratory (WHL) works closely with the Oregon State University Veterinary Diagnostic Lab (OSU VDL) and the Oregon Department of Agriculture Animal Health Lab. The WHL is located adjacent to the ODFW Fish Pathology Lab, with both labs in close proximity to the OSU VDL.

The veterinary staff coordinates and directs the statewide program for wildlife animal health and animal disease management and control. The program principally supports both the Game and Wildlife Diversity Programs and also provides prescription assistance in the fisheries hatchery program. The program is directly supervised by a regional supervisor with Division Administrators directing many of the veterinary staff activities.

Specifically, veterinarians within Oregon's program conduct state level, federally-funded surveillance programs (e.g. avian influenza and chronic wasting disease). During morbidity and mortality events, the veterinary staff provides the expertise for epidemiological investigations and proper handling of pathological samples for diagnosis. Within the Wildlife Health Lab, Oregon's veterinarians conduct necropsies, prepare tissues for further diagnostic workup, and provide final diagnosis to field staff and administration. Veterinarians answer disease questions and calls from the field staff, administrators and the public on a daily basis and directly monitor a toll-free phone line that also provides 24/7 access to the supervisory veterinarian in the event of