

emergencies. When requested, veterinary staff provides animal health and disease opinions and technical information to Commissioners and Legislators.

During high profile or sensitive field operations (media-covered wildlife confiscations, shipment of orphaned wildlife to zoos) veterinarians are utilized to ensure efficient and effective immobilizations, provide health evaluations and write certificates of veterinary inspection for interstate movement of animals. They also provide training and veterinary services related to agency wildlife relocation efforts including capture and immobilization, disease sampling, necropsy, humane euthanasia, and treatment of wildlife. The use of personal protective equipment and proper sanitation procedures when handling wildlife are included in annual training exercises for field staff. An important duty of the program's veterinarians is to provide agency acquisition, record keeping and compliance of prescription and scheduled drugs used for handling and capture of wildlife.

On a broader scale, Oregon's veterinary staff assists administration with input on policies and procedures related to wildlife health issues and provide advice during development of administrative rules concerning control of intrastate movement of wildlife species to prevent the introduction of disease to Oregon wildlife. The wildlife health program veterinarians maintain surveillance of the general welfare of Oregon wildlife as influenced by national and international activities and coordinate with the Oregon Department of Agriculture on issues of animal quarantine involving captive wildlife premises as may be necessary for the control or eradication of program diseases that could occur in wildlife.

Wildlife Health Program veterinarians consult with many intra- and inter- state and federal agencies in disease control activities affecting or involving wildlife and consult with wildlife health specialists and veterinarians, non-governmental organizations, public interest groups at both state and national levels to discuss problems and devise plans for the control of contagious and infectious diseases involving wildlife. Veterinary staff present at several professional venues annually to provide updates on Oregon wildlife health issues and to relay information back to administration and staff on current national wildlife health issues and initiatives.

The Wildlife Health Program provides the state with wildlife disease surveillance capability to efficaciously and expediently identify threats and react with defined management protocols. The program provides administrators with the ability to formulate policy and rules to institute proactive measures to protect the state's wildlife resource from infectious diseases, contaminants, and negative influences of internal and external actions and policies affecting the health of Oregon's wildlife populations.

D. SOUTHEASTERN COOPERATIVE WILDLIFE DISEASE STUDY

The Southeastern Cooperative Wildlife Disease Study (SCWDS) is the first regional research and diagnostic laboratory established specifically for wildlife diseases. Formed in 1957 by the Southeastern Association of Game and Fish Commissioners in response to several dramatic mortality events in white-tailed deer, SCWDS quickly became a partnership involving the University of Georgia's (UGA) College of Veterinary Medicine and 11 southeastern state fish and wildlife management agencies. Today, SCWDS membership includes the wildlife

management agencies of 13 Southeastern states and Puerto Rico, two Midwestern states, and one Northeastern state.

Since 1963, SCWDS has received support from entities in addition to the original member states and the University of Georgia. Federal support for SCWDS began in 1963 with annual appropriations through the U.S. Department of the Interior and, since 1979, through annual cooperative agreements with USDA-APHIS-Veterinary Services. Recently, annual cooperative agreements were initiated with USDA-APHIS-Wildlife Services. Additionally, SCWDS personnel currently include seven UGA faculty members who successfully obtain competitive research and service grants. Using this cooperative approach, SCWDS leverages contributions of each member state with the funds of other state and federal supporters to provide benefits far beyond what could be accomplished by any individual state or other entity.

SCWDS has worked for the benefit of wildlife resources, animal health, and public health by pursuing the same four objectives for five decades:

- Detect the cause of morbidity and mortality in free-ranging wildlife
- Define impacts of disease and parasites on wildlife populations
- Delineate disease interrelationships among wildlife and domestic animals
- Determine the role of wildlife in the epidemiology of human diseases.

SCWDS objectives are accomplished through a combination of research, service, and instruction. Research achievements of SCWDS are recognized nationally and internationally and focus on the population implications of diseases in wild animals, as well as the role of wildlife in the epidemiology of livestock, poultry, and human diseases. Diseases and parasites that first appeared in mortality investigations have become the topics of deeper investigation. Examples include hemorrhagic disease, mycoplasmal conjunctivitis of finches, and avian vacuolar myelinopathy. The dramatically growing importance and increased funding availability surrounding emerging zoonotic diseases involving wildlife have expanded SCWDS research opportunities in avian influenza, West Nile virus, ehrlichioses, and other disease of concern. SCWDS currently is conducting avian influenza virus research in wild birds that is directed at refining surveillance strategies, as well as determining the likelihood that native waterfowl and gulls can carry highly pathogenic flu viruses over long distances and/or serve as long-term reservoirs of the viruses if they reach North America.

Service activity is a prominent feature of the SCWDS mission: SCWDS provides wildlife mortality investigations, including complete diagnostic work-ups, and conducts surveillance for diseases of special concern to wildlife managers, animal health officials, public health authorities, and others. In addition, SCWDS provides consultation about many facets of wildlife diseases on a daily basis to wildlife management personnel, policy-makers, regulatory veterinarians, public health officials, academicians, private practitioners, journalists and private citizens. Wildlife disease workshops are provided for wildlife biologists and state and federal veterinarians to increase recognition and understanding of wildlife diseases. Informational brochures, a quarterly newsletters, and a comprehensive field manual on wildlife diseases have been produced and revised to inform biologists, managers, administrators, veterinarians, and others of wildlife health issues.

SCWDS is one of the leading organizations in training wildlife veterinarians and wildlife health specialists. SCWDS faculty members participate in the education of veterinary students at UGA and provide advanced training in wildlife diseases to graduate students in the College of Forestry and Natural Resources and the College of Veterinary Medicine. The research projects and assistantship duties of all graduate students associated with SCWDS are entirely directed toward wildlife health issues, including those that may impact the health of humans and domestic animals.

SCWDS personnel currently number around 35 faculty, technical and administrative staff, and students. SCWDS is a multi-disciplinary scientific organization with field and laboratory expertise in wildlife biology and management, veterinary medicine, epidemiology, parasitology, microbiology, pathology, diagnostic testing, and public health. Now in its sixth decade, SCWDS serves as a prominent example of how the philosophy of state-federal cooperation and leveraging the funds of individual sponsors can yield benefits far beyond what any of them could have obtained individually.