

October 18, 2011

Remaining FCFS Deer Licenses Suspended on Friday, Hunters May Seek Refunds

Based on continuing reports of white-tailed deer mortality in western North Dakota caused by epizootic hemorrhagic disease, the state Game and Fish Department is suspending the sale of remaining first-come, first-served deer licenses in units 3F1, 3F2 and 4F, effective Friday, Oct. 21 at 5 p.m. Central Time.

In addition, hunters with white-tailed deer licenses in units 3B1, 3D1, 3E1, 3F1, 3F2, 4A, 4B, 4C, 4D, 4E and 4F have the option of turning in those licenses for refunds. See [Deer Refund Units Map](#).

Randy Kreil, department chief of wildlife, said the decision is based on evidence of moderate to significant white-tailed deer losses in some areas that might affect hunting success in those locations.

“While we first received reports of isolated deer deaths in August, loss of deer to this disease appears to have extended through September and into October, and covers a large area of western North Dakota,” Kreil said.

More than 13,000 white-tailed deer license holders are eligible for license refunds. Individuals who return their license will have their preference points restored.

EHD, a naturally occurring virus that is spread by a biting midge, is almost always fatal to infected white-tailed deer, while mule deer do not usually die from the disease. Hunters do not have to worry about handling or consuming meat from infected deer because the virus that causes EHD is not known to cause disease in humans. In addition, the first hard freeze typically kills the midge that carries and transfers the EHD virus which will slow or halt the spread of the disease.

Before deciding to turn in a license, Kreil urges whitetail license holders to make local contacts to find out the extent of mortality in their hunting area. Large portions of affected units had no reports of whitetail deaths. "The whitetail population has not been decimated and in many areas a good harvest is still needed," he added.

The last time Game and Fish made license refunds an option for hunters because of an EHD outbreak was in 2000.

White-tailed deer license holders who want a refund must return their license, along with a note requesting a refund due to EHD, to the Game and Fish Department's Bismarck office no later than Nov. 3. Envelopes postmarked Nov. 3 will be accepted.