



NEWS RELEASE

Texas Animal Health Commission
"Serving Texas Animal Agriculture Since 1893"
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 6, 2012

TAHC Now Accepting Comments on Chronic Wasting Disease Rule Proposal

AUSTIN – The Texas Animal Health Commission (Commission) is currently accepting public comments on a rule proposed at its June 5 meeting to amend **Chapter 40, entitled "Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD)"**. The proposed rule will affect certain cervid species and delineates movement restriction zones and other necessary disease management practices related to the control of CWD in far west Texas.

CWD has been discovered in mule deer in the Hueco Mountains of southern New Mexico, very near the Texas state line. The potential risk of animals moving back and forth between Texas and New Mexico has raised significant concern among wildlife and animal health officials that the disease is also present in deer living in the Texas portion of the same mountain range. Currently CWD is not known to exist anywhere in Texas, but has been found in 16 other states in free ranging and/or captive cervid herds.

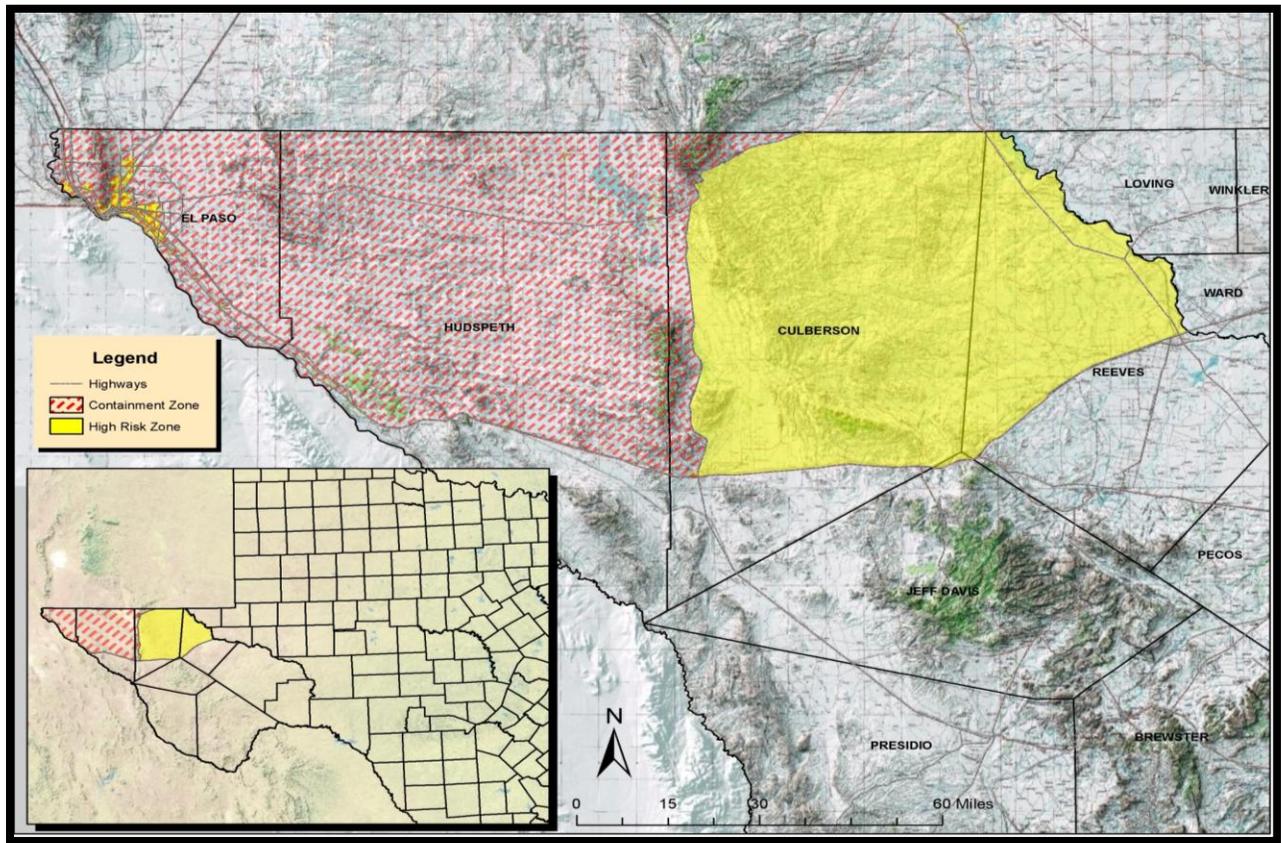
CWD is not known to affect people, but a number of cervid species are susceptible. Besides mule deer, other susceptible species include white-tailed deer, elk, red deer, sika deer and moose. The progressively fatal disease is most commonly exhibited by chronic weight loss, and abnormal behavior such as disorientation. Prions are the infectious agent of CWD, and can be found throughout the body of an infected animal. The prions are present in the body fluids of infected animals, and can be shed onto the soil where they may remain viable and able to infect other susceptible animals for many years. For this reason the proposed TAHC rules apply to land as well as animals within the proposed zones.

The proposed rules are intended to define susceptible species, establish boundaries for a High Risk Zone (HRZ) and Containment Zone (CZ), restrict movement within the zones, establish surveillance systems within the zones, and also address requirements for new or existing herds ability to gain CWD monitored status designations by TAHC. Counties affected by the proposed rules include El Paso, and portions of Hudspeth, Culberson and Reeves.

The proposed TAHC rules apply to the non-indigenous species of cervid species of Texas under its jurisdiction including moose, red deer, elk and Sika. The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) is also proposing similar rules for the cervid species it regulates (indigenous to Texas), including white-tailed deer and mule deer.

The TAHC rule proposals have a comment period of 30 days. They may be commented on until 5 p.m. on Monday, August 6, 2012.

Map of the Proposed Containment Zones and High Risk Zones



The Commission is also proposing amendments to the following:

- **Chapter 43, entitled "Tuberculosis"**
- **Chapter 45, entitled "Reportable Diseases"**
- **Chapter 49, entitled "Equine, Piroplasmosis"**

A detailed explanation of each rule proposal, including the CWD rule can be found on the TAHC web site at <http://www.tahc.state.tx.us/regs/proposals.html> .

Comments on the TAHC's proposed regulations must be submitted in writing to Carol Pivonka, Texas Animal Health Commission, 2105 Kramer Lane, Austin, Texas 78758, by fax at (512) 719-0721 or by e-mail to comments@tahc.state.tx.us .

Founded in 1893, the Texas Animal Health Commission works to protect the health of all Texas livestock, including: cattle, swine, poultry, sheep, goats, equine animals, and exotic livestock.

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