USDA Confirms First Detection of New World Screwworm in U.S. Wildlife

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) has confirmed the first detection of New World screwworm (NWS) in wildlife in the United States, in an elk in Pecos County, TX. The elk was located on a game ranch and was reported after being harvested by a hunter.

This detection highlights the critical role hunters, landowners, outdoor enthusiasts, and wildlife professionals play in helping detect and stop the spread of NWS. Early reporting is one of the most important tools we have to protect wildlife, livestock, and pets in the United States.

The Texas Animal Health Commission will modify a previously established infested zone, and USDA and the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department are conducting additional wildlife surveillance in the area.

Hunters Can Make a Difference

Hunters and others who spend time outdoors near infested areas are often among the first people to encounter affected wildlife, making their observations especially valuable to surveillance and response efforts.

As hunting seasons continue across Texas and other States, hunters are encouraged to stay alert for signs of NWS when observing, harvesting, or processing wildlife.

Watch for:

- Visible maggots (larvae) in wounds or body openings
- Open, draining, or enlarging wounds
- Foul-smelling injuries
- Animals that appear weak, lethargic, isolated, or in distress
- Signs of infestation around the nose, mouth, ears, eyes, or genital areas

If you see anything suspicious, report it immediately. Fast reporting helps animal health officials respond quickly and helps limit the pest's spread.

For information on identifying and reporting potential cases in wildlife, please see USDA's wildlife resources at **Screwworm.gov Wildlife Information**. The site includes signs to watch for, reporting guidance, and additional resources for hunters and outdoor enthusiasts.

Together, we can help protect America's wildlife, livestock, and natural resources from New World screwworm.

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