

OFFICE OF FISH AND WILDLIFE HEALTH AND FORENSICS

MONTHLY REPORT

August 2024

Joseph M. Groff, VMD, PhD, Research Scientist 1

Patrick J. Connelly, DVM, Research Scientist 2

FISH AND WILDLIFE HEALTH PROJECT (FW-69-R21)

Diagnosis of Diseases in Freshwater Fish (Job F-1)

Pequest Trout Hatchery

Surveillance of trout at the Pequest Hatchery continued in November.

Pequest River Eels

Thirty freshwater eels were collected from the Pequest River on November 12 by the Bureau of Freshwater Fisheries and submitted to OFWHF for examination. Eight eels had nematode parasites of the coelomic cavity and swim bladder. Microscopic examination of the various organs is pending.

Diagnosis and Research of Diseases in Marine Fish (Job F-2)

Striped Bass

Histological examination of Striped Bass from the Marine Fisheries Striped Bass Delaware River Survey was initiated in October and continued in November. Histological findings will be reported when completed.

Wildlife Disease Surveillance and Investigations (Job W-1) and Wildlife Toxicology (Job W-2)

Chronic Wasting Disease Surveillance

OFWHF continues conducting annual chronic wasting disease surveillance, collecting samples from several hundred hunter-harvested deer so far this season.

Hemorrhagic Disease Surveillance

In late October and early November, OFWHF was alerted to several instances of dead/dying white-tailed deer in water including 5 in Plainsboro (Middlesex Co.), 1 in Hamilton (Atlantic Co.) and 1 in Lincroft (Monmouth Co.). Testing for epizootic hemorrhagic disease virus and bluetongue virus is pending.

Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza Surveillance

No additional detections have been identified in New Jersey since April 2024.

Miscellaneous Activities

- Dr. Connelly attended the Monthly Animal Health Meeting on November 14th.

- Dr. Connelly attended the biweekly NJ Interagency Call on H5N1 on November 14th.
- Dr. Connelly gave a presentation on chronic wasting disease to the New Jersey Chapter of The Wildlife Society on November 19th.
- Dr. Connelly attended the monthly HPAI Working Group on November 25th.
- Dr. Groff met with Dr. Vasslides - Head of the Habitat Ecology Branch at NOAA Fisheries – on November 29 concerning potential collaborative future research.