

OFFICE OF FISH AND WILDLIFE HEALTH AND FORENSICS

MONTHLY REPORT

December 2024

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

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

Preparation of histological slides and subsequent histopathological examination of freshwater American eels continued in December.

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

Preparation of histological slides and subsequent histopathological examination of juvenile striped bass from the Delaware River and various species from the Hackensack River continued in December.

Non-Project Activities

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

Chronic Wasting Disease Surveillance

OFWHF and NJ Deer Project continue conducting annual chronic wasting disease surveillance, collecting samples from nearly 1,000 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 1 in Hamilton (Atlantic Co.) and 1 in Lincroft (Monmouth Co.). Both deer tested negative for epizootic hemorrhagic disease virus and bluetongue virus.

Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza Surveillance

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

Miscellaneous Activities

- Dr. Connelly assisted with investigation of a mass bird strike in Hunterdon County in early December. Pesticide testing by NJDEP and avian influenza testing are pending.
- Dr. Connelly attended the Monthly Animal Health Meeting on December 12th.
- Dr. Connelly attended the biweekly NJ Interagency Call on H5N1 on December 12th.
- Dr. Groff met with Dr. James Vasslides of NOAA Fisheries concerning collaborative research to determine the microplastic load in anadromous fish including American eels.