

The Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) will hold five virtual listening sessions to receive public input on topics related to updates and improvements to the Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) Herd Certification Program Standards. Section 603 of the Fiscal Year 2023 Omnibus Appropriations Bill enacted the Chronic Wasting Disease Research and Management Act (H.R. 5608, the CWD Research and Management Act). Under the terms of the CWD Research and Management Act, APHIS must “solicit public feedback on potential updates and improvements” to the Chronic Wasting Disease Herd Certification Program Standards. Pursuant to the CWD Research and Management Act, APHIS is publishing this notice soliciting public feedback on potential updates and improvements to the CWD Program Standards. Specifically, we are scheduling a series of virtual listening sessions to gather information that will help us in evaluating and potentially amending the program standards consistent with the CWD Research and Management Act. The deadline to register to speak at the fourth listening session is August 17, 2023, and one week prior to subsequent listening sessions. You may provide written comments at the meetings by using the meeting chat function or file written comments before, during, or after the meetings by emailing CWD@usda.gov or mailing to Dr. Hillary A. McManama, Veterinary Medical Officer, Cervid Health Staff, Strategy and Policy, Veterinary Services, APHIS; c/o Ms. Melanie Rouse, 4700 River Road Unit 43, Riverdale, MD 20737. Written comments by attendees or other interested stakeholders will be welcomed for the public record up to close of business on Monday, November 13, 2023. Please refer to Docket No. APHIS-2023-0042 when submitting your comments.

Topics for input will include:

- disease response including use of predictive genetics to manage CWD positive, suspect, and exposed herds

Specific questions we are seeking input on:

- Should test and remove herd plans be allowed? If so, should they only be allowed in combination with selection for less susceptible animals?
- Should we move away from whole herd depopulation and focus primarily on selective breeding based on predictive genetics?

Instructions and expectations for speakers during the call:

- The listening session will be recorded.
- You must have indicated on the registration form that you wish to speak during the listening session. A predetermined order will be followed for those that indicated they wish to speak during the session. The facilitator will call on you when it is your turn to speak.
- Please introduce yourself by name and affiliation at the start of your comments.
- Comments will be limited to a maximum of 3 to 5 minutes depending on the number of requests to speak. The facilitator will let you know before the call how long the comments can be and let you know when you have 30 seconds left.
- Keep the discussion focused on the meeting topics and respectful.
- Focus on interests, not on positions.
- Be specific—Use examples.
- Refrain from using profanity or distracting the group.