

PROGRAM ACTIVITY REPORT (PAR)



BOVINE TUBERCULOSIS STUDY IN DEER

The National Wildlife Disease Program has been assisting the Management of Ungulate Disease and Damage team at the National Wildlife Research Center (NWRC) with a bovine tuberculosis research project in Michigan. The objectives of the project are 1) to monitor white-tailed deer and other wildlife use of resources that are shared with cattle, including feed and water sources; and 2) to assess the potential for transmission of *Mycobacterium bovis*, among species.

Researchers from the NWRC selected six farms with adjacent deer habitat in Michigan's Wildlife Risk Mitigation Project area. NWDP biologists assisted with trapping deer using netted-cage traps on the farms. Traps were baited with corn, molasses, and/or

apples, and were checked daily to reduce capture time and minimize disturbance of regular deer activity. Only adult does were incorporated into the study because they exhibit greater site fidelity than bucks, potentially increasing their interactions with livestock on or near farms in which they were captured.

GPS collars equipped with proximity loggers and two ear tags were placed on each adult doe captured. A blood sample for genetics was collected and animal specific information including gender, age, site and trap location, body condition, and weather was recorded for each animal. Large ear tags were used to facilitate identification on motion activated cameras situated on farms.

Proximity loggers at cattle related resources also were placed on farms to assist in identifying areas of common use. Trapping will continue until four adult does have been trapped on each of the six farms.

The results of the project will be used to evaluate the effects of wildlife risk mitigation strat-



egies developed and implemented in Michigan to reduce transmission of *M. bovis* between deer and cattle.

For more information contact Michael Lavelle:

Michael.J.Lavelle@aphis.usda.gov.

or Kerri Pedersen:

Kerri.Pedersen@aphis.usda.gov.



The original artwork on this page was created by the National Wildlife Disease Program's Erika Kampe and Sarah Goff