

Wyoming Livestock Board
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*****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE*****

Significant West Nile Virus activity reported in Wyoming

Significant West Nile Virus (WNV) activity in the state was reported to the Wyoming State Veterinary Laboratory (WSVL), Wyoming Department of Health (WDH), and Wyoming Livestock Board (WLSB) over the past two weeks.

One human case of the disease has been reported in Fremont County. Seven horse cases have been reported from Park, Fremont, Goshen, Sheridan, and Campbell counties. One infected golden eagle, one crow, and one hawk have been diagnosed, and positive mosquito pools have been found on routine disease surveillance in Fremont, Hot Springs, Goshen, and Natrona counties.

WNV is a virus that can infect humans, horses, birds and other species, causing symptoms that range from mild, flu-like signs to severe neurologic signs and death. The virus is carried and transmitted by certain species of mosquitoes with the host reservoir being mainly corvid species of birds. Mosquitos spread West Nile virus (WNV) when they feed on infected birds and then bite people, animals or other birds.

The agencies want to remind people to take precautions to protect themselves and their animals from West Nile Virus by avoiding exposure to mosquito bites from dusk to dawn when the vector insects are feeding, and also by using insect repellent. Additionally, owners should vaccinate their horses annually in the spring. Seek medical care for human and animals if the disease is suspected.

West Nile is a preventable disease in horses. Vaccination works and is inexpensive, especially compared to the cost of treatment and/or loss of an animal. Once a horse has clinical signs of WNV infection, treatment is not 100 percent effective in many cases, and permanent disability or death may occur even with aggressive treatment.

For more information on WNV, please contact Katie Bryan (WDH) at 307-777-5522; WSVL Director Dr. Will Laegreid at 307-766-9929; or State Veterinarian Dr. Jim Logan (WLSB) at 307-857-4140.