



Bob Wise
Governor

STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN RESOURCES

ORAL RABIES VACCINATION PROGRAM MEMORANDUM



Paul L. Nusbaum
Secretary

To: West Virginia Local Health Departments and Interested Parties
From: Jane Rooney, DVM, West Virginia Oral Rabies Vaccination Program
Date: October 15, 2001
Re: August and September 2001 Active Rabies Surveillance Project Update

Project Updates

Aerial Baiting Completed - West Virginia and Ohio's joint aerial baiting was scheduled to begin September 10 and be completed by September 21. Some baits were dropped the morning of September 11, but the events in New York and Washington and subsequent grounding of airplanes delayed aerial baiting until September 15. Flights were conducted during the following days with frequent communications with the FAA, and aerial baiting was finally completed on September 25. A total of 72 flights and 195 hours of flight time were required to drop 1,339,806 baits over West Virginia and Ohio. West Virginia received 896,634 air-dropped baits. Twenty-two West Virginia counties fell in the bait drop area and included 11,649 square kilometers (4,582 square miles) of territory. The baits were dropped at a density of 75 baits per square kilometer. Dr. Rooney logged approximately 35 hours of flight time during this operation. John Houben, John Forbes, Andy Moore, and Clint McFee of the USDA Wildlife Services in West Virginia also assisted with the operation and logged as many or more hours of flight time as Dr. Rooney. Ohio has been conducting aerial baiting since 1997 and noted that this operation was two and a half times larger than ever previously attempted and involved staff from multiple agencies and authorities. West Virginia is very appreciative of the assistance provided by Ohio during this project and looks forward to working with Ohio Department of Health staff in future baiting efforts.

Ground Baiting Underway in West Virginia - At the onset of the active surveillance project, we were uncertain whether or not baits would be available to conduct ground baiting operations. It turns out that 60,840 baits are available to conduct ground baiting throughout

the aerial baiting drop zone. During aerial baiting, baits cannot be dropped over urban or populated areas. However, these areas must still be baited to ensure that good raccoon habitat is not omitted from the baiting efforts. Ground baiting is currently being conducted, or has already been completed, by 14 of the 22 counties in the bait drop area. Counties conducting ground baiting activities include Braxton, Brooke, Doddridge, Fayette, Gilmer, Hancock, Harrison, Marshall, Nicholas, Ohio, Raleigh, Ritchie, Tyler, and Wetzel. Local health department staff and other agencies in these counties are pitching in to complete ground baiting as soon as possible. As previously mentioned, no contingencies were made for ground baiting activities, and these local health departments are certainly going above and beyond the call of duty to ensure that the baiting is a success. Some of these counties were not in the active surveillance area but nevertheless had to be baited, and these counties are also stepping up to the plate to complete ground baiting activities. It is exactly this type of cooperation between state and local health department staff, as well as many other agencies operating within the counties, that makes public health work in West Virginia. It is this type of cooperation that will make the oral rabies vaccination project work in West Virginia as well.

Active Surveillance to Continue, Area to be Expanded - In order to ensure that there are no breakthrough rabies cases in the established barrier, active surveillance must be continued throughout the state. Active surveillance will also be necessary to monitor the western edge of the rabies front to determine the location of future baiting efforts. The original 20 active surveillance counties have been or will soon be contacted regarding continued active surveillance, and nine additional counties will be added to the active surveillance area.



USDA Wildlife Services Conducting Post-Baiting Surveillance

Personnel from the USDA Wildlife Services have begun post-baiting surveillance to determine the effectiveness of the bait drop. For approximately two months, Wildlife Services will be live-trapping and sedating raccoons throughout the baited areas. Blood samples will be drawn and checked for serum antibody titers, indicating consumption of vaccine. A tooth will also be removed to check for a tetracycline biomarker in the vaccine that will reveal whether or not the raccoon consumed a bait, even though antibody titers may not be present. These tests, along with continued active surveillance, will be used to determine the efficacy of the ORV program in West Virginia. Animals will be tagged for identification purposes and hand-vaccinated before release to ensure that they are immunized. Results from these trapping efforts will be shared as soon as they are completed and provided to the Oral Rabies Vaccination Program.

August and September Data and Data Completeness

The number of active surveillance specimens declined from 71 in July to 58 in August. July's completeness rate was 93%, while August's rate was 88%. September data reflects a decline to 16 submissions and a completeness rate of 81%. Some counties fulfilled their contract goal of submitting 80 specimens, which contributed to this two-month decline. A total of 374 submissions have been tested during the February to September active surveillance period.

WEST VIRGINIA ACTIVE RABIES SURVEILLANCE - AUGUST 2001								
Number of Satisfactory Specimens Submitted and Completeness of Data								
County	Raccoons Tested	Skunks Tested	Foxes Tested	Coyotes Tested	Total Tested	Total With Complete Data	Percent Completeness	Total Pos.*
BOONE	0	0	0	0	0	-	-	0
BRAXTON	3	0	0	1	4	4	100%	0
CALHOUN	0	0	1	0	1	1	100%	0
CLAY	2	0	0	0	2	1	50%	0
DODDRIDGE	0	0	0	0	0	-	-	0
FAYETTE	0	0	0	0	0	-	-	0
GILMER	5	0	0	0	5	5	100%	0
KANAWHA	1	1	3	0	5	0	0%	0
LOGAN	1	0	0	0	1	1	100%	0
MINGO	0	0	0	0	0	-	-	0
NICHOLAS	5	1	2	0	8	8	100%	0
PLEASANTS	0	0	0	0	0	-	-	0
RALEIGH	2	0	0	0	2	2	100%	1
RITCHIE	1	0	0	0	1	1	100%	0
ROANE	1	0	0	0	1	0	0%	0
TYLER	4	0	0	0	4	4	100%	0
WEBSTER	16	0	3	0	19	19	100%	0
WIRT	0	0	0	0	0	-	-	0
WOOD	1	0	1	0	2	2	100%	0
WYOMING	2	0	1	0	3	3	100%	0
TOTAL	44	2	11	1	58	51	88%	1

*Raleigh County raccoon tested positive

SPRING/SUMMER 2001 ACTIVE SURVEILLANCE COUNTIES: The Spring/Summer 2001 active surveillance contract period ended on September 30. Please submit your final active surveillance invoice to the Oral Rabies Vaccination Program immediately. Please include the words "FINAL INVOICE" on this statement so the accounts can be closed out. Any funding remaining from the Spring/Summer 2001 active surveillance period will be redistributed for use during continued active surveillance.

WEST VIRGINIA ACTIVE RABIES SURVEILLANCE - SEPTEMBER 2001								
Number of Satisfactory Specimens Submitted and Completeness of Data								
County	Raccoons Tested	Skunks Tested	Foxes Tested	Coyotes Tested	Total Tested	Total With Complete Data	Percent Completeness	Total Pos.
BOONE	0	0	0	0	0	-	-	0
BRAXTON	1	0	1	0	2	2	100%	0
CALHOUN	0	0	0	0	0	-	-	0
CLAY	0	0	1	0	1	1	100%	0
DODDRIDGE	0	0	0	0	0	-	-	0
FAYETTE	0	0	1	0	1	1	100%	0
GILMER	1	0	0	0	1	1	100%	0
KANAWHA	3	0	0	0	3	2	67%	0
LOGAN	0	0	0	0	0	-	-	0
MINGO	1	0	0	0	1	1	100%	0
NICHOLAS	5	0	0	0	5	5	100%	0
PLEASANTS	0	0	0	0	0	-	-	0
RALEIGH	0	1	0	0	1	0	0%	0
RITCHIE	0	0	0	0	0	-	-	0
ROANE	0	0	0	0	0	-	-	0
TYLER	0	0	0	0	0	-	-	0
WEBSTER	1	0	0	0	1	0	0%	0
WIRT	0	0	0	0	0	-	-	0
WOOD	0	0	0	0	0	-	-	0
WYOMING	0	0	0	0	0	-	-	0
TOTAL	12	1	3	0	16	13	81%	0