

Chronic wasting disease found in 13 elk

April 10 2008

The U.S. National Park Service said 13 female elk captured in Rocky Mountain National Park this winter tested positive for chronic wasting disease.

It was the the first time free ranging elk have been tested for CWD using a live procedure, the Park Service said Thursday in a statement. Out of 136 female elk captured, there were 117 usable biopsies. Thirteen of the elk tested CWD positive and were removed from the population.

The Park Service said CWD, first reported in free-ranging wildlife in 1981, falls within the transmissible spongiform encephalopathy disease family that includes bovine spongiform encephalopathy in cattle and scrapie in domestic sheep and goats.

Northeastern Colorado, southeastern Wyoming and western Nebraska are considered the endemic area for the disease, the report said.

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