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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
November 13, 2018

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Hunters Reminded of 'Do Not Eat' Deer Advisory for five miles around Clark's Marsh

LANSING, Mich. – With firearm hunting season kicking off on Nov. 15, the Michigan departments of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) and Natural Resources (DNR) are reminding hunters of the 'Do Not Eat' advisory for deer taken within approximately five miles of Clark's Marsh in Oscoda Township. The advisory is due to high levels of PFOS (perfluorooctane sulfonic acid) found in a single deer taken about two miles from Clark's Marsh, which borders the former Wurtsmith Air Force Base (WAFB). PFOS is one type of PFAS (per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances) chemical.

The State of Michigan took samples from 128 deer across Michigan to test for PFAS. One of those deer, taken near Clark's Marsh, came back with elevated levels of PFOS which resulted in the 'Do Not Eat' deer advisory. The advisory encircles the five-mile radius around the Wurtsmith base property and covers what the DNR has estimated to be the expected travel range of deer living in or near the Marsh. The area covered by the deer consumption advisory issued can be described as:

From Lake Huron west along Aster Street, west on Davison Road, north on Brooks Road, east on Esmond Road, north on Old US 23, north on Wells Road, west on River Road, north on Federal Forest Road 2240, north on Lenard Road, north on Indian Road, and East on E. Kings Corner Road (along the county line) toward Lake to Lake Road, to Lake Huron (map attached).

Michigan residents should not eat any deer that came from within five miles of Clark's Marsh. In addition to the Clark's Marsh deer advisory, MDHHS continues to recommend not eating kidneys or liver from any deer because many chemicals including PFAS can accumulate in their organs. The advisory does not apply to cattle, chickens, or other livestock raised in the area. It is not expected livestock are drinking water from Clark's Marsh.

While PFAS testing is not possible locally, the State of Michigan did confirm three labs that will analyze PFAS samples from deer tissue at the individual's expense. The State does not endorse or recommend any lab. Contact the following labs for information on the cost and how to send deer tissue:

- [Vista Analytical Laboratory](http://www.vista-analytical.com), 916-673-1520, www.vista-analytical.com
- [Battelle](http://www.battelle.org), 781-681-5565, www.battelle.org
- [GEL Laboratories, LLC](http://www.gel.com), 843-556-8171, www.gel.com

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On Oct. 19, the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) issued the U.S. Air Force with a violation notice for PFAS contamination in the waters of Clark's Marsh near Oscoda, the second violation notice issued to the U.S. Air Force this year for this site.

The DEQ has found the Air Force to be in violation of Part 31 under the water resources protection section of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act. Under the violation notice, the DEQ is requiring the Air Force to increase pumping and treatment of contaminated groundwater at the base and to increase the size of the capture zone of the PFAS plume coming from from the WAFB. In January, the DEQ issued the Air Force with a violation notice for failing to meet a 2017 deadline to start-up a second granular activated carbon filtration system at the WAFB to address discharges of PFAS-containing groundwater to the Au Sable River and Van Etten Creek.

PFAS are chemicals that are in Class B fire-fighting foam that was used at the Air Force base near Wurtsmith and other sites in Michigan. These chemicals are also found in stain and water repellants, personal care products, and many other consumer goods. Some health studies have linked PFAS to health issues such as thyroid disease, increased cholesterol levels, impaired immune system function, reproductive issues, high blood pressure in pregnant women, and increased chance of kidney and testicular cancers.

A deer that has been exposed to PFAS may not show any signs or symptoms of being sick. If you see a deer that appears to be sick, contact the DNR hotline at 800-292-7800. If you have health related questions contact MDHHS at 1-800-648-6942.

In Michigan, to date, only fish and deer have been sampled for PFAS. The State of Michigan is creating a plan to sample more deer for PFAS, as well as further exploring contamination in other wildlife such as turkey and waterfowl.

For more information about PFAS in wild game and fish, visit [Michigan.gov/pfasresponse](https://www.michigan.gov/pfasresponse) and go to the Fish and Wildlife button. For more information about wild game consumption, visit [Michigan.gov/eatsafegame](https://www.michigan.gov/eatsafegame) and go to the Eat Safe Wild Game button.

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