

# Project Abstract Summary

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**Funding Opportunity Number**

WSFR2023017800

**CFDA(s)**

15.628

**Applicant Name**

WILdlife Management Institute

**Descriptive Title of Applicant's Project**

MSCG 2024 CWD Information Tools: Giving Agencies What They Need

**Project Abstract**

Since its discovery in North America, Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) has created unprecedented challenges to state and provincial agencies in battling both the management of the disease itself as well as conflicts in public expectation, discourse, and cooperation related to that management. Prior to 2022, all attempts to address the latter by better and more accurate communication with the public at a national scale had largely failed due to inconsistencies in agency data collection, inaccurate/out-of-date content on agency websites, and a reticence by leadership to organize and share their agency's CWD-related information on a common platform. Fortunately, a powerful partnership between NGOs, state fish and wildlife agencies, and industry overcame these barriers by creating a consensus-driven, ArcGIS Esri CWD Information Sharing Community Hub in 2022. For the first time, state and provincial agencies have access to a platform that easily collects, organizes, shares, and publishes their complex suite of CWD-related regulatory and surveillance data in a standardized format while allowing the agency full control and ownership of the data itself.

The success of this initiative stemmed from an exhaustive assessment process that was implemented to discover the breadth and depth of needs, opinions, concerns, and wishes of the North American CWD management community. This assessment resulted in the creation of a very clear set of CWD data and information priorities, the most critical of which were encapsulated in the current public-facing products of the CWD information community hub. However, many more of the agency identified priorities remain uncompleted due to the fiscal and time constraints imposed by the project funding sources.

This proposal seeks to complete the remaining CWD information priorities outlined by CWD managers who guided the formation of the initial information community hub. These priorities can be address by the completion of the following three objectives: 1) Development of best practices for CWD data capture, use, and communications that support applications capable of contextualizing county/GMU-level prevalence and surveillance data, import/export regulations, and tribal CWD data integration; 2) Establish an agency-to-agency (capable by password-protected ArcGIS Esri HUB accounts) CWD data resource repository that aggregates existing geospatial tools that other agencies use to relay CWD-related information and provide a community learning/collaboration forum that helps agencies expand their CWD data communication capacity; 3) Development of a CWD response package that provides an agency with a "shovel ready" package of data applications (embeddable CWD presence map, sample and disposal site application, hunting regulations application, etc.) that can be mobilized when CWD is found in a new area, state, or province.