



United States
Department of
Agriculture

September 15, 2008

Animal and
Plant Health
Inspection
Service

Wildlife Services

P.O. Box 130
Moseley, VA 23120

(804) 739-7739
(804) 739-7738 fax

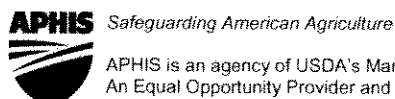
Rufus Hood
Scott County Administrator
336 Water Street
Gate City, VA 24251

Dear Mr. Hood:

The United States Department of Agriculture, Wildlife Services program (USDA) will distribute oral rabies vaccine in southwestern Virginia beginning on or about October 8, 2008 to vaccinate raccoons against the rabies virus. Bait distribution in Virginia is part of a nationwide, cooperative effort by USDA to prevent the westward spread of raccoon rabies in the eastern United States. The baiting program is being conducted in part to abate an emergency human health and safety rabies issue affecting the eastern United States. Implementation of this program in Virginia is a cooperative effort between USDA, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Virginia Department of Health, and other state agencies. The 2008 bait distribution is the seventh annual baiting in southwestern Virginia.

Beginning on or about October 8, 2008, approximately 310,000 coated sachet baits containing the oral rabies vaccine will be distributed across a 1,916 square-mile bait zone in southwestern Virginia. These baits will be distributed by low-flying aircraft throughout a vaccination area that includes parts of eight counties: Buchanan, Dickenson, Scott, Smyth, Russell, Washington, Wise and Tazewell. The aerial bait drop is expected to last for about 1 week. As the oral rabies vaccination baits are aurally distributed, a navigator controls the bait machine and turns off the machine as necessary to avoid dropping baits on roadways, structures, large bodies of water, etc. In late October 2008, USDA personnel will distribute approximately 10,800 oral rabies vaccine baits by hand baiting or by baiting from vehicles in suburban and developed areas within the bait zone.

The oral rabies vaccine baits used for hand baiting the urban/suburban areas are square blocks made of fishmeal and fish oil. The vaccine is contained inside of a plastic packet in the hollow center of the block. Each bait is imprinted with a toll-free number (1-877-722-6725) for people to call for assistance or information if they find or come in contact with a bait. The oral rabies vaccination baits which will be aurally distributed over the majority of the bait zone are plastic packets of vaccine which are coated with a sticky, scented substance to attract raccoons.



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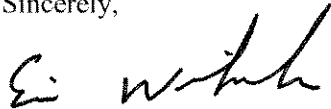
Federal Relay Service
(Voice/TTY/ASCII/Spanish)
1-800-877-8339

We are conducting an intensive public notification effort, including; television and newspaper notification, notices to all medical and veterinary facilities, and communication with law enforcement, cooperative extension agents, and state and federal agencies. To assist with this notification, we request that you address the Oral Rabies Vaccination Program at your next meeting of the Board of Supervisors. We would like people to know that the baiting program will begin on about October 8, 2008 and that baits will be dropped from low-flying aircraft. If people find an ORV bait, they should leave it alone, or if it is intact and out in the open, they could toss it deeper into the woods or brush. To handle a bait they should wear gloves and wash their hands immediately afterwards. Anyone who comes in contact with the liquid vaccine contained within the bait should contact their local health department. General information about the program and the baits is available from the USDA, Wildlife Services office at 804-739-7739.

Please contact me at 804-739-7739 if you have any questions about the USDA, Wildlife Services Oral Rabies Vaccination Program. I have enclosed a map of the 2008 bait distribution zone. Additional information is also available from the website <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/ws/rabies/index.html>.

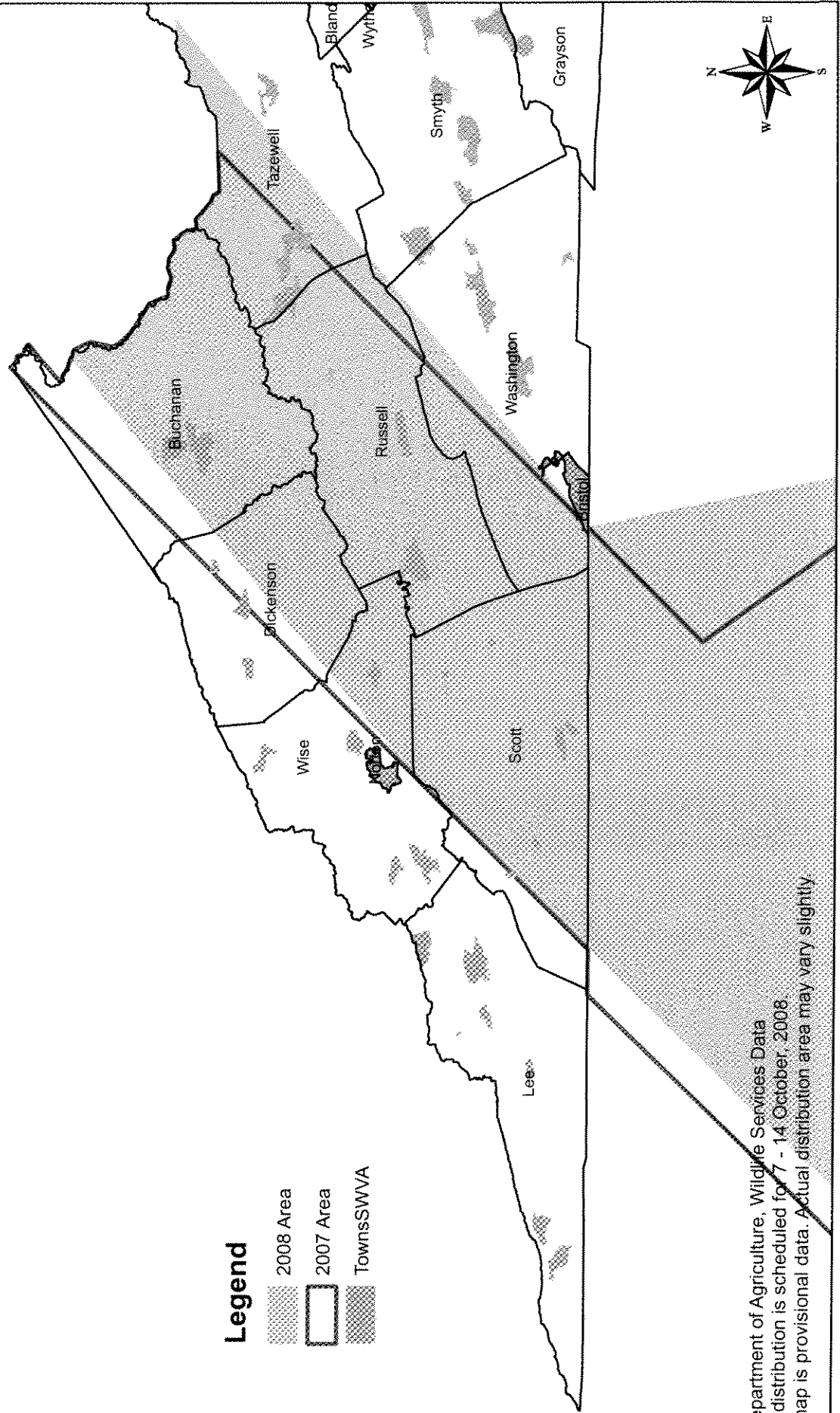
Thank you in advance for your attention to this important public health effort.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Eric Wilhelm". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Eric" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Wilhelm".

Eric Wilhelm
Rabies Biologist, Virginia
USDA-Wildlife Services

Rabies ORV Bait Distribution Zone 2008



US Department of Agriculture, Wildlife Services Data
Aerial distribution is scheduled for 7 - 14 October, 2008.
This map is provisional data. Actual distribution area may vary slightly.