



Idaho Department of Fish and Game NEWS RELEASE

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Avian Influenza Puts Falcons at Risk – January 21, 2015

The Idaho Department of Agriculture has initiated a statewide avian influenza investigation, and Fish and Game encourages falconers to take extra precautions to protect their birds.

The H5N2 strain of avian influenza virus was confirmed in three captive falcons which died after consuming portions of a wild duck killed along the Boise River near Middleton. The remaining birds are currently under quarantine and additional viral testing is being conducted. Additionally, chickens from a small backyard poultry flock in Canyon County tested positive for H5N2. That flock was immediately put under quarantine and the birds were depopulated. The H5N8 strain of avian influenza was also confirmed in Gooding County, where several cases were confirmed in wild ducks.

The ISDA is working closely with Fish and Game and other agencies to monitor avian influenza statewide. Because the influenza strain is highly lethal to raptors, Fish and Game recommends falconers refrain from hunting wild avian species, particularly waterfowl, during this avian influenza outbreak. Falconers should also ensure their captive raptors do not eat any wild waterfowl harvested during fall of 2014 or winter of 2015.

There have been no human illnesses associated with the H5N8 or H5N2 viral strains of avian influenza anywhere in the world, to date. The virus has not been found in commercial poultry anywhere in the United States.

Additional information about avian influenza and updates in the Idaho bird cases can be found at www.agri.idaho.gov under "Quick References - Avian Influenza Information".

Information on Hunter Health can be found at

<http://www.healthandwelfare.idaho.gov/Health/HunterHealth/tabid/1280/Default.aspx>

Additional information on seasonal and avian influenza in humans can be found at

<http://flu.idaho.gov>.