



Wildlife Health Program Gap Analysis (One Health Initiative)

***Indiana Department of Natural Resources:
Division of Fish & Wildlife***

OVERVIEW

This project supports a USDA-funded initiative to strengthen Indiana's Fish & Wildlife Health Program using a One Health approach, which integrates wildlife, human, and environmental health. The focus is to improve program structure, coordination, and long-term sustainability.

This summer, I will conduct a gap analysis by evaluating survey data from national and international wildlife health programs to identify effective policies, practices, and operational models.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- Analyze and synthesize wildlife health program survey data.
- Identify best practices in program structure, policy, and communication.
- Compare findings to current IDNR program operations.
- Identify gaps and areas for improvement.
- Develop evidence-based recommendations to strengthen program resilience.

GOALS & EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- Support development of a sustainable and standardized wildlife health program.
- Improve preparedness for wildlife disease events and zoonotic threats.
- Strengthen coordination and communication under a One Health framework.
- Generate actionable recommendations for IDNR program development.
- Contribute to formal guidelines and long-term planning efforts.

IMPACT

Strengthen Indiana's ability to detect, respond to, and manage wildlife diseases, supporting public health, wildlife conservation, and interagency collaboration. Additionally, this work highlights how scientific research informs real-world policy and program development, helping foster interest in science policy, public service, and One Health-oriented careers among emerging professionals.

MEET THE FELLOW

Meredith Shand is a 3rd year PhD Candidate in the Anatomy, Cell Biology, and Physiology Department at the IU School of Medicine in Indianapolis. Her dissertation explores how the kidneys and brain communicate during inflammation, aiming to prevent the devastating health outcomes of chronic kidney disease.