



MEDIA RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

Fox tests positive for rabies in Fannin

Blue Ridge (GA) May 14, 2008 ~ A fox that fought with a dog last week on Colwell Road in Fannin County has now been confirmed as positive for rabies, according to county environmental health officials.

The dog's owner shot the fox four times, once in the head, last Wednesday, May 7 as it fought with his dog. The owner then reported the incident the next day to county environmental health officials and took the fox to the Ocoee Animal Clinic so that the head could be removed for rabies testing. There had been some concern that the shot to the head might have impeded testing, however, it was ultimately determined that the damage was minimal enough for testing to be effective. Monday, May 12 was the earliest the environmental health staff could send the fox head to the state lab, and the positive test result was returned late Tuesday evening, May 13.

The owner said the dog was not vaccinated for rabies; therefore, it was to be euthanized today with a follow-up inspection by a local environmental health official this afternoon.

Health officials continue appeals to residents to have their pets and livestock vaccinated against rabies. For humans, the main barrier from rabies in wildlife is domestic animals; that is why it is so vitally important that they have their animals vaccinated against this dangerously deadly disease and maintain those vaccinations.

It is also imperative that individuals prevent exposure to rabies by avoiding unfamiliar, strange behaving or sickly animals.

If a person, pet or livestock is directly exposed to a possibly rabid animal, immediately call the Fannin County Environmental Health office at (706) 632-3024.

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