



Update: West Nile Virus in the U.S. *Advisory, Agenda and Biographies*

April 19, 2000
CDC, Division of Media Relations
(404) 639-3286

Media Advisory

What: Scientific briefing on the national plan for West Nile virus prevention and control. Media may direct questions to the panel during the briefing. There will be a media availability immediately following the briefing (no cameras during the briefing itself).

When: Tuesday, April 25, 2000 at 1 p.m., EST

Where: NIH Campus, Natcher Conference Center, Natcher Building No. 45
Toll-free audio conference number and beta b-roll of laboratory work available. (To attend the briefing via audio conference with the ability to ask questions call **1-888-273-9886**). Conference name is "CDC West Nile." Host is Barbara Reynolds)

Who: The panel of experts invited to present include:

- **Stephen M. Ostroff, M.D.**, HHS West Nile virus coordinator, and the Associate Director for Epidemiologic Sciences, National Center for Infectious Diseases, CDC
- **Randall L. Crom, D.V.M.**, the West Nile virus coordinator for U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS)/Veterinary Services
- **Steve Johnson**, Office of the Administrator, EPA
- **Robert G. McLean, Ph.D.**, Director of the United States Geological Survey (USGS)/National Wildlife Health Center (Madison, Wisconsin) CDC, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the United States Geological Survey.

Summary: In February, CDC detected live West Nile virus in hibernating adult mosquitoes in New York. During the outbreak last summer, West Nile virus was isolated from birds, mosquitoes, horses and humans. What this means for public health, birds and other animals will be discussed. This winter, federal agencies worked with state and local public health, animal health and environmental professionals to prepare for the possibility of West Nile appearing again this spring.

- Is West Nile virus here to stay?
- What are reasonable expectations for the control of this emerging virus in this hemisphere?

- Is the viral strain of West Nile identified in last summer's outbreak behaving differently compared with Old World strains of West Nile virus?
- What does genetic analysis tell us?
- What have disease detectives learned about how this virus made its way to New York?
- What are the best ways for the public to prevent West Nile virus infection?

Toll-free audio conference line for media: 1-888-273-9886

Symposium Agenda

April 25, 2000 1 p.m., EST

NIH Campus, Natcher Bldg. #45, Rooms E-1 and E-2

- 12:30 – 1:00 p.m. Registration
- 1:00 p.m. Welcome and Agenda: Barbara Reynolds
- 1:05 p.m. Stephen Ostroff, M.D., HHS West Nile coordinator introduced:
Barbara Reynolds
- 1:10 Remainder of panel introduced: Stephen Ostroff, M.D., CDC West
Nile coordinator
- 1:10 HHS/CDC update: Stephen Ostroff, M.D.
- 1:20 USDA update: Randy Crom, M.D., USDA West Nile Coordinator
- 1:25 EPA update: Steve Johnson, Office of the Administrator, EPA
- 1:30 USGS update: Robert McLean, PhD, Director National Wildlife
Center
- Following the panel presentations:
Question/Answer Session
- 2:00 to 2:30 Media availability

Panel Biographies

Stephen M. Ostroff, M.D. is the Associate Director for Epidemiologic Sciences, CDC/National Center for Infectious Diseases (NCID). Dr. Ostroff completed CDC's Epidemic Intelligence Service ("Disease Detectives") training in 1988, and has served in his current position since 1993. He is responsible for the quality of NCID's epidemiologic science and coordinates the Center's outbreak investigations. Dr. Ostroff co-chairs the surveillance and response subcommittee of the Emerging Infections Working Group of the Council on International Science, Engineering, and Technology. He has authored/co-authored more than 50 scientific publications and is a fellow of the Infectious Disease Society of America.

Randall L. Crom, D.V.M. is the West Nile virus coordinator for USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS)/Veterinary Services. A USDA staff veterinarian, Dr. Crom completed a 2-year assignment (1997-1999) in Geneva, Switzerland with the Cluster for Communicable Diseases, World Health Organization. While there, he addressed zoonotic disease issues ranging from antimicrobial resistance in food-producing animals to the outbreak of avian flu in Hong Kong. Since joining APHIS, Dr. Crom has worked in field programs to eradicate brucellosis, tuberculosis and ticks from cattle in Puerto Rico. Dr. Crom completed CDC's Epidemic Intelligence Service ("Disease Detective") training in 1988.

Robert G. McLean, Ph.D. is Director of the United States Geological Survey (USGS)/National Wildlife Health Center (Madison, Wisconsin). Dr. McLean has conducted numerous field investigations of bird populations associated with arbovirus epidemics, including: the invasion of Venezuelan Equine Encephalitis into Texas; Western Equine Encephalitis in North Dakota following flooding; St. Louis Encephalitis in Chicago, South Florida, Los Angeles, and Pine Bluff, Arkansas; and Eastern Equine Encephalitis in Michigan. Prior to joining the USGS in 1998, Dr. McLean worked as a program manager for bird research for the USDA, and had a 28-year career with CDC investigating wildlife rabies and the emergence of new diseases.

Steve Johnson is the Deputy Assistant Administrator, Office of Prevention Pesticide and Toxic Substances/EPA.