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TO: Grant County Media

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West Nile Virus Returns to Grant County

MOSES LAKE, WA – Grant County Mosquito Control District #1 (GCMCD#1) reported this week that a mosquito sample collected from a trap west of Moses Lake near the intersection of Dodson Road and I-90 has tested positive for West Nile virus (WNV). This is the first detection of the virus in Grant County this season and the 11th positive mosquito sample statewide in 2017.

During the 2016 season, 51 mosquito samples and one horse were reported with WNV in Grant County. Statewide in 2016, there were WNV infections reported in nine people, 27 horses and 95 mosquito samples.

There have not been any human or other animal cases reported in Grant County this year, however, detection of WNV in the mosquito population means there is a potential for the spread of the virus to humans and other vulnerable species. “The presence of WNV in local mosquitoes means that our residents and guests can become infected in Grant County, therefore it is very important that everyone takes steps to prevent mosquito bites and reduce mosquito-breeding habitats around their homes,” said Amber McCoy, lead Environmental Health Specialist at Grant County Health District.

Most people infected with West Nile virus do not get sick. About one in five will develop a fever or other symptoms that go away without medical treatment. For a small number of people, West Nile virus disease can lead to permanent neurologic effects or death. People over age 60 and those with certain medical conditions are most at risk of severe disease. Contact your healthcare provider if you have symptoms of a possible West Nile virus infection, especially if you recently had mosquito bites.

It is important to protect yourself by avoiding mosquitoes.

Take these steps to prevent mosquito bites and reduce the places where mosquitoes breed around your home:

- Stay indoors at dawn and dusk when mosquitoes are the most active.
- Wear a long sleeve shirt, long pants, and a hat when going into mosquito-infested areas, such as wetlands and other areas with shallow, stagnant water.
- Use mosquito repellent. Read the label and carefully follow instructions. Take special care when using repellent on children. Mosquito repellents that contain the active ingredients DEET, Picaridin, or oil of lemon eucalyptus work best.
- Make sure windows and doors are “bug tight” and repair or replace screens as needed.
- Eliminate mosquito-breeding areas around your home by emptying or discarding anything that holds standing water—bottles, cans, old tires, buckets, plastic covers, and toys. Change water in birdbaths, fountains, kiddie pools, and animal troughs at least twice a week. Make sure roof gutters



drain properly; and clean clogged gutters in the spring and fall and fix leaky outdoor faucets and sprinklers.

Horses are also vulnerable to WNV disease and many of those infected die, or must be euthanized. Horse owners are urged to vaccinate their horses and keep those vaccinations up to date. There is no human vaccine to protect against WNV.

For more information about West Nile Virus in Washington State visit:

www.doh.wa.gov/YouandYourFamily/IllnessandDisease/WestNileVirus

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