

5-Year CWD Management Goal

Minimize the area of Wisconsin where CWD occurs and the number of infected deer in the state.

The 5-year goal for managing CWD will drive the DNR's management approaches, which will focus on minimizing the area affected by the disease and reducing the number of deer infected. This goal means accepting a CWD endemic area in southern Wisconsin and focusing CWD control efforts on limiting CWD to southern Wisconsin.

Even with active management some growth in the size of the affected area and the intensity of disease may occur during the next 5 years. However, significant progress in CWD control will have been achieved during this period if the growth of the affected area and disease intensity within the affected area is substantially lower than would have occurred in the absence of active management.

But because we cannot know with certainty how quickly the distribution and severity of CWD would change in the absence of management, it will be difficult to directly measure effectiveness of control actions. Such an evaluation will have to be based not only on data from Wisconsin but will also have to consider results of control efforts in other states and provinces that are attempting to manage CWD.

Ultimately, assessment of the effectiveness of control actions for CWD must be based primarily on documentation of changes in the prevalence and geographic distribution of the disease. Because CWD is a slowly progressive disease, significant changes in distribution and prevalence in free-ranging deer populations will likely occur over a protracted time scale.

Advances in understanding about the ecology and epidemiology of CWD in Wisconsin have contributed significantly to informing our management actions, yet there is no clear prescription for managing CWD. The DNR will need to continue intensive monitoring of CWD prevalence and distribution in order to make decisions on CWD management using an adaptive management approach. We believe that the results of our ongoing monitoring of CWD in the state's wild deer along with advances from research into the epidemiology of the disease will allow the state to better evaluate the effectiveness of management actions on controlling CWD.

