



Wisconsin Conservation Congress
CWD Committee
Notes recorded by Secretary- Tony Grabski, Iowa County Delegate
From the meeting at
Mead Wildlife Area Visitor Center
Milladore, WI
Saturday, September 19, 2009, 9:30 AM

The CWD Committee of the Wisconsin Conservation Congress convened at 9:30 AM on Saturday September 19, 2009, at the Mead Wildlife Area Visitor Center in Milladore, Wisconsin. The CWD Committee reviewed and acted on assigned resolutions and matters concerning CWD and CWD law enforcement agenda items.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

1. Organizational Matters

9:30 AM

- A. Call to Order- Meeting was called to order by Chairman Mike Riggle
- B. Roll Call- Committee members present were Chairman Mike Riggle, Taylor County; Secretary Tony Grabski, Iowa County; and delegates David Breunig, Lafayette County; Allan Brown, Chippewa County; Larry Gohlke, Marquette County; Brad Hasheider, Sauk County; John Obernberger, Marathon County; Dave Poff, Waukesha County; Richard Schreiber, Columbia County; Randy Voegeli, Green County; Pat Werner, Richland County; and DNR liaisons Danin Lopez and Pete Dunn.

Excused was delegate Gerald Stadler, Sauk County.

Absent was delegate James Krakofsky, Walworth County.

Rob Bohmann of the Executive and Big Game Committees was also in attendance.

All committee members present gave brief introductions, outlined experience with CWD, and mentioned where they hunted in WI.

- C. Review and affirmation of the CWD Committee Mission Statement- The CWD ad-hoc Study Committee mission statement below was drafted by Rob Bohmann, Tony Grabski, and Kurt Thiede. The statement was read by Chair Mike Riggle. A motion to affirm the mission statement was made by John Obernberger, seconded by Richard Schreiber, and unanimously approved:

The Mission of the Wisconsin Conservation Congress' Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) Ad-hoc Study Committee is to review current CWD control policies and practices, and to facilitate the development of programs and policies that work toward management of CWD to minimize the impact of the disease on Wisconsin's free ranging deer population. To effectively accomplish this mission, the committee will take into consideration all of the biological and sociological systems critical to CWD management strategy, including the environment, deer ecology, the economy, hunters, landowners, and everyone that benefits from a healthy deer herd.

2. Department Informational Items & Updates

9:45 AM

- A. 2008-09 Deer Management Review Process- Davin Lopez gave an update on the process to review all DMUs in the state. He listed all organizations and groups involved. There were numerous stakeholders on the review panel with Al Phelan as the representative for the WCC. The goal of the process was to evaluate and establish new DMUs and herd quotas by 2010. Davin said that the review was comprehensive including all DMUs and those in the CWD-MZ. The process was coordinated by Keith Warnke. The outcome of the review had no impact on the CWD-MZ boundaries as they will remain the same for 5 years as described by the 5-year CWD Plan of item 2.F below.
- B. CWD-MZ 2008 Season and Testing Updates- Davin Lopez provided a summary of CWD test results and kill numbers. He also provided hand outs with CWD speaking points including CWD basics, surveillance summary, management plan, and management effects. The CWD test results are summarized as follows:

1. Test Results Since 2002

DNR Zone	#Sampled	#Analyzed	Positive for CWD
CWD-MZ	105316	104375	1178
Remainder of WI	47484	47454	0
Unknown Zone	330	327	0
Total Sampled	153130		
Total Analyzed		152156	
Total Positive			1178

2. 2008 Test Results

DNR Zone	#Sampled	#Analyzed	Positive for CWD
CWD-MZ	6184	6184	181
Remainder of WI	6068	6066	0
Unknown Zone	34	34	0
Total Sampled	12286		
Total Analyzed		12284	
Total Positive			181

Out state testing was scaled back in 2008 due to budget cuts. CWD prevalence in the 120 square mile core area averaged 3% overall with 7% for adult does and 15% for adult bucks. Overall prevalence rate had not increased between 2002 and 2007 in the core area. However, between 2007 and 2008 there was a 2% increase in prevalence for adult does and a 5% increase in prevalence for adult bucks. Several more years of data are required to determine the significance of this increase.

Surveillance in 2009-2010 will require testing in the Southeast, Southwest, and Baraboo areas of the CWD-MZ. Solicited focused samples will be collected from the Northwest periphery and around two recent CWD-positive captive herds. Voluntary testing in the remainder of the CWD-MZ, and no regional outstate surveillance. Car killed deer will be collected and sampled from CWD-MZ when possible.

Current analysis suggests the overall deer population in the CWD-MZ has been reduced by 20% over the past 7 years. Sharpshooting has been effective at removing infected deer, but will need to be locally intensive and prolonged to reduce disease prevalence. Hunter and landowner incentives have had only limited impact on increasing deer harvest. It is unclear if there are other incentives that might promote an increase in harvest, but the topic needs further examination.

Davin stated that the agency needs to improve its marketing of the CWD program and said they are exploring the possibility of a hiring a professional marketing firm to assist. There was some

discussion of higher bounties of several thousand dollars for a positive deer. Pat Werner said higher bounties would result in trespassing and poaching problems.

General discussion ensued about limited land access and ways to gain hunter access to private property. Tony Grabski suggested a landowner tax break similar to the MFL for landowners to open lands to public hunting. Since CWD is a considered a statewide issue, landowners should not be asked to sacrifice their equal hunting rights and deer herd because of CWD without some kind of compensation. Mike Riggle agreed, and John Obernberger suggested special buck permits be issued to landowners that they could use themselves or sell to anyone they wanted as an extra landowner incentive. Brad Hashheider emphasized that landowners had paid \$250,000 to \$1,000,000 for their small parcels and most will never agree to reduce the deer herd too far.

Some discussion on the negatives and positives of sharpshooting. Tony Grabski said that the term sharpshooting should never be used and that sharpshooting in general was despised by the majority of landowners in the CWD-MZ. Sharpshooting has also been overwhelmingly voted down and opposed by the CWD-Stakeholder Advisory Group and by a substantial margin in the statewide Conservation Congress Spring Hearings. Dave Breunig said baiting by sharpshooters is hypocritical. If members of local rod and gun and archery clubs were given access to the private sharpshooting properties, the DNR would have all the sharpshooters it needed. Tony Grabski said that a hunter-landowner partnership program could be created. Private citizens that pass a training program could be partnered with landowners that want deer harvested, but do not want general public hunting access. These certified hunters would replace sharpshooters, but would be required to follow all general hunting regulations. Mike Riggle suggested that the program could be funded by a registration fee of \$200-\$300 per person that entered the program.

3. 2008 CWD Deer Season Summary- The total kill in the CWD-MZ was 66,674 and 5,434 during the holiday hunt. The holiday hunt generally received a positive review, but snowmobilers and some landowners voiced displeasure.
- C. 2009 CWD Deer Season Preview- The season structure will be the same as that in 2008. The main difference is that the transport of intact deer carcass' outside the CWD-MZ has been restricted. The deer must be processed with a minimum of the spinal column and head removed. Complete guidelines are on the WDNR web site. The 2009 CWD zone season structure was determined through the public dialog process with input from the CWD Stakeholder group, WDNR, and Natural Resources Board in 2007. The season structure was changed to more closely match the seasons in the non-CWD areas including the youth hunt, October and December antlerless only hunts, regular 9 day rifle season, and 10 day muzzle loader season. An additional holiday period hunt was added. EAB rules are in effect to harvest antlered bucks. There is no limit on the harvest number as long as EAB rules are followed. Detailed season structure can be found in the rule book and on the WDNR web site: <http://dnr.wi.gov/org/land/wildlife/regs/index.htm>
- D. Captive Cervid and Law Enforcement Update- Warden Pete Dunn has been working with DATCAP and the captive deer and elk farmers on licensing, regulations and certification. He gave an overview of regulatory, registration, and monitoring issues concerning the agency and DATCAP. An internal audit was conducted in February to verify escapes and escape prevalence. The audit was also needed to clean up fence certifications. Fence inspections will be done within the next 6 months. Fence certificates are good for 10 years so if violations are found, a process is being determined and time limit defined to allow owners to bring fencing into compliance. There have been enforcement issues and there is no mechanism to prevent a facility that has their fence certificate revoked from reapplying and getting a new certificate after requirements are satisfied. There were 16 reported escape incidents in 2009, this amounted to 31 total deer that were not recovered. A common reason for escapes is gates that are left open. The committee passed a resolution (see 3.B.1 below) to address this problem.

- E. DNR's Revised 5-Year CWD Plan Update- The revised 5-year CWD Management Plan was tabled by the Natural Resources Board (NRB) until December. The NRB has requested that the plan be reviewed by an external panel of experts. The 6 panel members include Dale Garner of Iowa; Sharon Dunwoody, Communications Expert; Damien Joly, CWD Researcher; Dan O'Brien, MI Veterinarian; Marcus Peterson, of Texas A&M; and Margo Pybus, Alberta.

Tony Grabski raised a concern that the 5-year plan did not address the use of urine based scents. Mike Riggle explained how these scents are collected with the doe in estrus urinating over a grate where the urine runs down a trough and is collected. The possibility for prion contamination exists if prions are indeed speed through urine and feces. The 5-year plan and appointed review committee should address the possibility of CWD spread though urine based attractants that might be collected from a CWD positive animal or contaminated facility.

3. Discussion and Action Items

12:30 PM

A. Citizen Resolutions- None submitted.

B. Committee Resolutions- submitted by Rob Bohmann

1. The Committee discussed and debated a resolution to require secondary gates on cervid farms in order to prevent escapes. Larry Gohlke made a motion to accept. The motion was seconded by Dave Poff, and passed unanimously by the Committee.
2. The Committee discussed and debated a resolution to require game farm owners to pay restitution for deer and elk taken after fencing an enclosure. Richard Schreiber made a motion to accept. The motion was seconded by John Obernberger, and discussion ensued. Questions were raised about ownership of the wild deer and the effort of the game farmer to remove the wild deer from the fenced area. If the deer are a public resource, and the owner makes every effort to drive the deer from the property prior to closing the fence, how can the owner be charged a restitution fee for the State's deer? The owner could argue that the state should be required to remove the deer from their property as they are now a nuisance to the owner similar to a crop damage situation. The vote was called and the motion failed by a vote of 4 in favor 6 opposed.

3.

4. Member Matters-

1:30 PM

Rob Bohmann gave an update on the alternatives to EAB committee proceedings. He said we should listen and pay attention to what our constituents are saying about the EAB alternatives offered during the public review process. Rob said there would be a meeting with Robert Rolly October 2nd on the SAK population estimation methods. Finally, Rob mentioned the possibility for a 25 cent ear mark added to deer hunting licenses specifically for deer related research. General discussion on EAB alternatives positives and negatives of 16 day season and especially opposition to opening the season a week earlier than the Saturday prior to Thanksgiving.

Pat Werner commented that food plots were just as bad as baiting and should be restricted.

Randy Voegeli raised addition questions on the accuracy of the deer counts in the CWD-MZ

5. Adjourn

2:15 PM

Dave Poff made a motion to adjourn; the motion was seconded by Randy Voegeli, and approved unanimously.