

Program Area: Wildlife Management

Subject: Chronic Wasting Disease Responding to New Foci

Length of Public Input Period: 21 days

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These policies and procedures are intended as standard operating protocols when CWD is detected in a new area and to guide CWD surveillance, sample collection and management. They are being developed for the guidance of Citizen Deer Advisory Councils (CDACs) members, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (the department) staff, and the public to allow orderly and transparent transaction of business and to ensure that citizens of Wisconsin have an opportunity to be heard on deer herd health management issues.

This draft guidance was developed by department staff and we will solicit comments on it for 21 days. All comments will be considered, revisions will be made to the guidance documents as needed, and final guidance will be made available to internal and external stakeholders.

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Chronic Wasting Disease Responding to New Foci

On-going surveillance, responding to positive detections and managing chronic wasting disease (CWD) in general remains a priority of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR). When CWD is detected in a new area, the next step is to collect tissue samples from deer to determine the distribution of the disease in the local area, also referred to as disease **assessment surveillance**. Surveillance efforts are not intended to significantly reduce local deer populations, but rather to collect tissue samples from dead deer in the area using a variety of methods (car-killed deer, reported sick deer, etc.)

If additional CWD positive deer are found through these **assessment** efforts, then disease **management** actions may be applied to seek to contain the spread and the number of CWD-infected deer in the area. As a recommendation of the CWD Response Plan Review Committee, the purpose of this document is to describe the steps that will be taken to identify disease surveillance plans, CWD sample collection efforts, and the citizen engagement process that will be used to develop localized disease management actions when a CWD spark is detected. A CWD spark is defined as a new detection in a county or a positive detection outside of a 10-mile surveillance area within a county with a known CWD positive detection.

Initial CWD Detection

Effective immediately

- Rules regarding rehabilitation of deer from CWD-affected counties will be implemented.
- Rules concerning the movement of deer carcasses will be applied to the counties affected by the new positive detection.

Within the first week:

- The local DNR wildlife biologist and conservation warden will work with the hunter to confirm the kill location of the deer that tested positive for CWD.
- A local Response Team of DNR staff, co-led by the Area Wildlife Supervisor and Area Warden Supervisor for the immediate area of the deer harvested, will be formed for each discovery of a new CWD positive location.
- The WDNR Area Wildlife Supervisor will contact the CDAC members, local government officials, tribal representatives if within or in close proximity to the ceded territory, DATCP and select local conservation groups/constituents to make them aware of the discovery and answer questions.
- The DNR Wildlife Management program will issue a statewide news release when the first CWD positive detection occurs within a county.

Within the first month:

- The Area Wildlife Supervisor in conjunction with the County biologist/CDAC liaison and the CDAC Chair will schedule a meeting with CDAC members to review information and discuss local management options.
- In consultation/collaboration with DATCP, the DNR Response Team will review any applicable information relative to captive cervid facilities and wild deer surveillance efforts in the area.
- The DNR Wildlife Management program will disseminate up-to-date information statewide as efficiently and effectively as possible however the focus of primary communications will occur with individuals that live and hunt in the focus area.

As determined by the DNR Secretary

- Per state statute 29.336 (2) a baiting and feeding ban of deer will be enacted by Secretary order in the county and in adjoining counties within 10 miles of a CWD positive deer.

CWD Surveillance

Within the first month:

- When a new focus of CWD is initially discovered, a ten-mile intensive surveillance area will be identified. The exact boundary of this area may vary, depending on local deer populations, habitat, & terrain. This area will be the focus of surveillance and potential management efforts.
- The local Wildlife Management staff will use field and aerial survey techniques to identify deer concentration areas and estimate the deer population in the surveillance area as soon as feasible.
- The Area Wildlife Supervisor, in consultation with the Office of Applied Science Statistician and Wildlife Health Section Chief will determine a surveillance sample goal for the surveillance area to seek to assess the intensity and distribution of CWD based on the estimated deer population in the area in the area.
- Existing surveillance data for the identified ten-mile surveillance area will be evaluated to determine how to proceed with additional surveillance. If adequate samples do not exist, the Department will issue permits to landowners to collect additional CWD samples with initial focus within a two-mile radius however samples will also be collected within the ten-mile surveillance area dependent on deer population dynamics and landowner interest.
- Surveillance will be conducted for up to 5 years following the initial detection, provided no additional CWD positive results are found. At that time, surveillance will be reassessed in collaboration with the CDAC and local area citizens.

CWD Sample Collection

Samples for CWD analysis will be collected in the following ways:

During Fall Hunting Season:

- The local wildlife biologist will work with the local hunting community to encourage voluntary submission of samples for CWD analysis from hunter harvested deer. Samples may be submitted in the following ways:
 - Self-service kiosks
 - Participating cooperators (meat processors, taxidermists)
 - Self-service sample collection
 - DNR sample collection stations
 - By appointment with DNR county biologist

During Winter Following Fall Hunting Season:

- Property-specific surveillance permits for antlerless and/or antlered deer issued for public and private land to landowners, local hunters or other means identified by the CDAC.

Year-round:

- Authorize landowner removal of deer exhibiting signs consistent with CWD and collection of deer for sampling.
- Require CWD samples be submitted for all vehicle-killed deer, deer harvest via agricultural damage and nuisance deer harvest permits where feasible.

If the above listed sources are insufficient to meet sample goals, the following options are available and may be recommended by the County Deer Advisory Council. As recommended by the CWD Response Committee, the following options could be applied:

- Trapping with subsequent euthanasia (post-deer season).
- Mandatory in-person deer registration and sample submission.
- Other options would be considered as presented by the local CDAC.

CWD Management

If additional positives are detected during the preliminary disease surveillance efforts, a more intensive disease **management** course of action will be considered for a minimum of 5 years. CWD samples will continue to be collected using the techniques described above. The management actions below were recommended by the CWD Response Committee and will be considered in conjunction with the County Deer Advisory Council to reduce the spread and number of CWD infected deer in the area.

During Fall Hunting Season:

- Additional days of hunting opportunity
- Additional harvest tags for the area
- Financial incentives provided to hunters and landowners for harvesting deer that test positive for CWD

During Winter Following Fall Hunting Season:

- Localized culling on public and/or private land through landowner involvement or contracting.
- Trapping with subsequent euthanasia

These CWD management actions will be reassessed when there have been 5 successive years of no CWD positive results found in wild cervids in the area. Other options would be considered as presented by the local CDAC.

