



A

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June 3, 2002

Prince Memo

As I'm sure you have heard, the Wisconsin Legislature has decided against imposing a deer feeding ban at this time but has granted broad authority to the DNR to do what it feels necessary to stop the spread of Chronic Wasting Disease. This broad authority goes beyond deer to include wildlife. Under the definition of "wildlife" the DNR has essentially been given control and authority over all types of wildlife activities, including feeding of wild birds, turkeys and ducks and geese.

Deer, as you know, are herd animals. Attempting to prevent Chronic Wasting Disease by banning deer feeding and potentially all wildlife feeding will not stop the spread of the disease. Deer naturally feed together and will continue to in the ditches and in the fields and woods of Wisconsin. Deer will also continue to migrate to and from various areas. In fact, banning deer feeding may encourage more migration as deer move naturally for food and water sources. It seems that spending millions of dollars on killing deer might be better spent on attempting to find a more long-term solution, such as an antibiotic that could be incorporated into feed and blocks.

It is not known if any deer outside of the counties currently identified have Chronic Wasting Disease. My guess is that some do and that it has been around for some time. The problem of Chronic Wasting Disease needs to be addressed. However, I feel our legislatures quickly passed the buck to the DNR and gave the DNR the authority to govern the recreational and supplemental feeding of all wild animals in the state was not prudent and well beyond the scope of Chronic Wasting Disease.

I encourage you to call and write your legislatures in Madison with your input regarding this matter. It is far too important and has far reaching implications that I believe have not been fully considered. Again, in my opinion, our legislatures have taken an easy way out and delegated broad authority to the DNR instead of addressing the issue themselves. Wisconsin businesses, hunters and residents should have input. Those with knowledge regarding the disease should have input. The DNR should not have the final say and certainly should not be granted such broad control and authority as to include all wildlife.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Dennis Wessel".

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June 7, 2002

To: DNR Advisory Board Members

I am writing to express my concern over the recent bill granting the DNR broad authority over the feeding of deer and wildlife. While I am concerned over Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) and feel something should be done, I do not feel banning deer and wildlife feeding is the answer. I encourage the DNR to work towards solutions that address the causes of CWD and look for long-term remedies. I do not believe feeding of deer and wildlife fit into either of these categories.

Deer, as you know, are herd animals. They naturally feed together in the ditches and in the fields and woods of Wisconsin. Banning deer feeding will not stop deer from feeding together. Also, deer naturally migrate and move around. Banning of feeding deer may actually encourage and increase the migration to and from various areas as deer move naturally to find food and water sources. Banning deer feeding and killing thousands of deer are easy targets, results can be seen immediately and it is something the DNR can implement now. However, neither solution can guarantee success and may actually do nothing to stop the spread of CWD in Wisconsin. If CWD exist outside of the current identified control area, as I believe it most likely does, then banning deer feeding and killing thousands of deer in the control area really accomplishes nothing.

CWD has existed in western states for years and deer and wildlife feeding is not such an issue. From what I have heard, people out west don't seem to spend the time and money feeding deer and wildlife. Also, it has been brought to my attention that there is a correlation between deer that contract diseases such as CWD, EHD and Blue Tongue and deer that have deficiencies of certain trace minerals. It seems money and time would be better spent looking for long-term solutions, such as an antibiotic or minerals that could be added to feed and blocks that would actually prevent the spread of CWD. I encourage the DNR and our legislatures to pause and think about this issue and not rush to implement practices that may actually do nothing to solve the problem.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Dennis Wessel".

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June 26, 2002

To: Sen. Russell Decker, Sen. Kevin Shibilski, Sen. David Zein, Rep. MaryAnn Lippert, Rep. Scott Suder, Rep. Marlin Schneider, Rep. Jerry Petrowski, DNR Board Members

Fr: Dennis Wessel

Re: June 25th DNR board meeting in Racine

Yesterday I drove approximately 500 miles (roundtrip) to attend the DNR board meeting held in Racine, Wisconsin. I was unpleasantly surprised to learn one purpose of the meeting was to adopt an emergency order in relation to Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD). The meeting really wasn't to receive input, but to formally adopt what had obviously been previously decided upon. The emergency order was passed by the DNR board on a vote of six to one.

Yesterday's meeting was upsetting to say the very least. I traveled almost 500 miles to the far southeastern corner of the state for a meeting that was wrought with misinformation, misleading data and what appeared to be a predetermined result. The team of individuals (Tom Hauge, Julie Langenberg, Bill Vander) that spoke for nearly two hours from a well-prepared script aided by computer generated slides tossed-out, mixed-up and inter-related so much stuff under the guise of "science" that it sickened me. The DNR board should be honest and forthright, they chose to ban deer feeding because they wanted to, not because of any scientific information or data that was presented. Then, because this group of individuals took almost two hours, those of us that had signed-up to speak were reduced to three minutes of speaking time. As I watched speaker after speaker struggle to get their message in within the newly imposed three minute limit and viewed their frustration in trying to adapt to a new time limit I became angered at the farce of a process this was.

In a nutshell, the legislature delegated to the DNR broad authority to address Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) and the DNR has taken full advantage of that authority to implement policies and procedures as they see fit. The emergency rule that has been approved does absolutely nothing to prevent CWD now or in the future. Banning baiting and feeding where people are attempting to lure large numbers of deer is one thing, but banning feeding for the hobbyist that feeds in small amounts corn or a deer feed enhanced with vitamins and minerals is not only unnecessary but absurd. Also, any notion that 25,000 deer can be eradicated in an area as large as has been proposed is virtually impossible. Millions of dollars will be spent on these efforts and millions of

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dollars of lost revenue with absolutely no long-term results. Just as I feared would occur has happened. People looking for quick results and some perhaps with other agendas have rushed to implement policies and procedures that have not been properly discussed, researched or thought-out. As one member of the team said yesterday "throwing out everything they can to support what they want to do". I believe this said it all.

I was disgusted and ashamed by the process and the misleading information and figures given. To have state employees present such erroneous information is utterly wrong. Here's a sample of some of what was said.

- 1) One team member, Julie Lanhenberg, stated that even feeding small amounts of feed was a problem, as small as a five gallon pail. She stated that an individual had observed 35 deer feeding at one time at a spot where five gallons of feed had been put out. She showed a picture of many deer feeding, however, the picture had been taken in upper Michigan in the middle of winter and much more feed had been spread-out than a five gallon pail. She concluded that even small amounts needed to be banned based upon this one observation by an unnamed source, coupled with a picture that was unrelated. This is not a scientific study or even a good observation. I know many, many people that feed from small feeders and they have never seen that many deer at once except grazing in a field.
- 2) The team stated that there was broad statewide support for banning the baiting and feeding of deer and presented staggering percents of people that support a ban. Upon looking at their data, approximately 3000 responded to the question of if they favored a ban of baiting and feeding deer in the CWD management zone. This was not a "scientific" study as they wanted everyone to believe. Only 3000 people responded, we don't know the total sample size, the make-up of the sample, etc. In addition, the question had to do with banning baiting and feeding in the CWD management zone, not statewide as we were led to believe.
- 3) We were led to believe that the large deer population was because of the unnatural feeding of deer, not because of the mild winters we have had, already abundant food sources throughout the state and past practices and policies by the DNR that limited hunting of antlerless deer. Hobbyist feeders are not responsible for the large deer numbers.
- 4) We were led to believe that CWD is passed by nose touching and that there is considerable nose touching between deer when feeding at places where people have put feed out. The fact that deer congregate together naturally and that it is not known how the disease is passed was glossed over. The focus was large number of deer congregating and touching each other over small piles of feed. This is something I have never had the opportunity to witness. However, I did see several groups of deer eating in the fields as I drove almost 250 miles home.
- 5) It was mentioned that there are many deer and elk farms in the state that have gone unregulated and may impose a much higher threat to the spread of CWD, however this was not addressed in the emergency action.

- 6) Problems of deer in parks and around urban areas was mentioned, but again not addressed in the emergency action. Deer feeding hobbyist have little to nothing to do with problems of deer in parks and around urban areas. The fact that the deer are protected from hunting and have abundant natural food sources are the reasons. Fresh gardens, clippings, bushes, etc are great deer attractants.
- 7) It was also stated that if the hobbyist would stop feeding deer they would actually see more. I'm still not clear on that comment as one of the reasons hobbyist feed is to view deer.

As I have mentioned, the presentation lasted nearly two hours and was clearly slanted towards eliminating baiting and deer feeding. Little factual or scientific information was given. Nothing in the emergency order addresses long-term solutions to CWD. In fact, the only short-term solutions they have proposed and now passed are to attempt to kill thousands of deer in the CWD management zone, a task that someone said at best would be 50% attainable, and banning baiting and feeding of deer. To this they have attached a price tag of millions of dollars and said they will need more resources (people). Millions of dollars, more people, no real solutions. That was the extent of the meeting.

If the intent is to ban feeding of deer, let them do it without misleading the public into believing they are doing so because feeding deer has greatly increased the deer numbers, not the mild winters and past policies of the DNR. If they are to ban deer feeding let them do it without misleading the public into believing it is a solution to CWD. They have wanted to ban deer feeding for years and now they have under the demise of CWD.

Now the question, what happens next? Will there be a fund set-up for companies such as ours to compensate us for our losses. We estimate to lose several million dollars of sales over the next three years. Will we be compensated for the packaging materials that we can no longer use and will sit in our warehouse? There seem to be funds set-up to compensate for all types of disasters, accidents and government imposed hardships. For us this certainly qualifies as a government imposed hardship. We now must regroup as a company and determine where we go from here. The potential loss of millions of dollars in sales and now useless inventory of packaging materials is a tremendous burden, a burden that I know others now share as well. We could go along with most of the DNR proposed actions, but not eliminating feeding altogether.

Thank you for your time.

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July 1, 2002

To: Members of the legislature

Fr: Dennis Wessel

Re: Deer Feeding Ban

Since the recent action by the DNR board I have received numerous phone calls from our customers throughout northern Wisconsin. They are as shocked as we are as how quickly and deceitfully the DNR board acted in imposing a total ban on deer feeding. I have not had one call in support of a total ban on feeding. As I have written before, a total ban on deer feeding is unnecessary and given the supporting evidence, irrelevant.

It is a sorry day for the residents of this state when tax supported agencies and employees use scare tactics and misleading data and information to enhance their position and justify their actions. Recent newspaper articles, editorials and radio call-in shows are evidence of the misleading data and information that has been spread regarding Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD). It has been said and written that according to the DNR a majority of the state's residents favor a statewide ban. This is absolutely false. To my knowledge a statistically sound statewide survey has not been done. Also, it has been said that by banning deer feeding it will reduce the number of car-deer accidents, reduce the number of deer in the cities and suburbs and help eliminate CWD. All of these statements are false and have led uninformed people to believe that banning deer feeding will help reduce accidents, reduce deer damage in their yards and help eliminate CWD. In addition, the large deer herd has been blamed on individuals feeding deer. Granted, feeding deer may have helped some deer survive. However, the fact that there are abundant food sources available throughout the state, we have had recent mild winters and the past policies of not hunting antlerless deer have contributed far greater to the large deer numbers than individuals feeding.

In recent letters I have called for a compromise. We support a ban on baiting and feeding deer with the intent of attracting many deer. We do not support banning feeding where the hobbyist is involved. The individuals feeding deer in small quantities of corn or deer pellets are not a factor in the contraction or spread of CWD. There is no evidence or data to even suggest people feeding in this manner have any impact other than the enjoyment it brings them. The theory of the disease spreading through nose-to-nose contact has not been proven and the distance between the deer that have tested positive is no indication the disease is spread in this manner. Rather, if the disease was spread in this manner I

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would think there would be a much higher concentration of infected deer within a smaller area. Also, as we all know, deer touch in the wild. Hobbyist feeders are not increasing the amount of nose-to-nose contacts. Furthermore, people feeding deer pellets are actually feeding deer feed with real nutritional value and helping the deer to remain healthy and potentially less susceptible to diseases such as CWD.

If the ban is to continue will a fund be set-up for companies such as ours to help alleviate our losses? In time we would hope to recover the lost revenue due to the total ban on deer feeding and we would hope all of our customers can recover as well. However, it takes time to develop new products and get them to market and there are no guarantees. The losses we expect are not due to competition. The losses we expect are not due to consumer preference. The losses we expect result directly from the actions taken by the DNR board under the authority of our legislature.

Thank you for your time and I look forward to your response.

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July 10, 2002

To: Members of the legislature.

Fr: Dennis Wessel

Re: Deer Feeding Ban

I have written numerous letters in the past weeks regarding CWD and the banning of baiting and feeding deer in Wisconsin. I want to thank the Representatives and Senators that have responded, namely Rep. Lippert, Rep. Suder, Sen. Zien and Rep. Schneider.

Copies of the letters you have received are also sent to our customers throughout the state that have an interest and may be affected by any of the recent actions taken by the DNR. We have and will continue to encourage our customers to call and/or write their state representatives and senators to express their views and opinions. As I have received many, many phone calls these past weeks, we are encouraging our customers to participate in a silent protest this coming hunting season by asking all deer hunters they know if they would consider not buying a deer hunting license. As we do not wish to cause any other businesses that rely on hunters traffic and patronage any disruption or loss, we are encouraging hunters to continue with their traditions with one exception, not to purchase a hunting license. Of course this equates to no actual deer hunting as we are not advocating hunting without a license.

Also, I have enclosed copies of some articles that recently were sent to me. As you read them you will find a number of interesting points. Some points of interest include:

- 1) There is some evidence that links bacteria and copper deficiencies to CWD.
- 2) Deer may be infected for some time before any clinical signs appear.
- 3) Deer contract CWD where no feeding is done and without any touching.
- 4) Higher densities of deer and elk increases chances of CWD.
- 5) Game farms have higher rates of occurrence.
- 6) The root cause of CWD or how it is passed is not known.
- 7) No evidence to support banning hobbyist from feeding small amounts will have any impact, other than if what they feed contains minerals – it may help reduce chances of contracting CWD.

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As I have stated in previous communications, we support the banning of baiting and feeding where there is intent to attract large numbers of deer. There is evidence to support that where there is a higher concentration of animals the chances of CWD are increased. Again, people feeding deer in small quantities are not attracting more than a couple of deer, most people feeding in this manner report seeing a deer at their feeder. People feeding deer feed and minerals may actually be helping the situation. We strongly believe there is room for a compromise that does not hinder the efforts to address the problems and concerns associated with CWD. Why are some so willing to spend millions and millions of dollars on actions that we already know have absolutely no guarantees, are virtually impossible to accomplish (total eradication of 15,000-25,000 deer), and fail to address long-term solutions?

At this point what is our recourse? The legislature delegates authority to the DNR. The DNR quickly moves to enact a statewide ban effective with little notice. What are companies like ours and our customers to do? How do we respond? We have inventories that have virtually been made obsolete overnight. Customers that purchased product literally a few weeks ago want to return it and receive their money back. We have packaging materials that we are now unable to use. We have had no time to make adjustments, to run inventories of product and packaging down. Where do we and our customers go for answers? What happened to making decisions with responsibility? The decision, if a compromise cannot be reached, to totally ban deer feeding has been made and implemented. That decision, overnight, has potentially cost Wisconsin businesses millions of dollars. We believe there needs to be a fund that helps businesses by being compensated for short-term losses and gives some time to hopefully make plans and adjustments that replace the loss of revenue.

Again, thank you for your time and I look forward to your response.

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July 15, 2002

To: Members of the legislature, DNR Board Members

Fr: Dennis Wessel / Prince Corporation

Re: Deer Feeding Ban

In light of some of the information that has come across my desk and the people that have contacted me, I would like to ask the DNR board to seriously consider adopting a compromised version of the emergency rule recently put into effect. We feel a compromise is possible that will not hinder the efforts to control and eliminate CWD and will not create a terrible burden for businesses.

The compromise we propose is to allow feeding of deer feed and minerals in small quantities. Small quantities may be defined as no more than a five gallon pail. Deer feed could be defined as manufactured feed made for feeding wildlife that contains essential vitamins and minerals that have been proven to help improve deer health. This would essentially eliminate the feeding of large amounts of feed, as manufactured feed containing essential nutrients is considerably more expensive to purchase. Adopting such a compromise would eliminate the roadside selling of shell corn which is typically the product that is used in feeding large quantities. Feed manufactured through facilities like ours and many others throughout the state is regulated and subject to state inspection, proper tags and labeling, etc. Also, data can be much more accurately gathered as to how much of this type of product is manufactured and sold.

There would still be an economic impact on businesses such as ours and on individuals selling shell corn as deer feed. However, this would allow the true hobbyist to continue to feed, and in a manner that typically does not attract multiple numbers of deer at one time.

Please let me know your thoughts.

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August 2, 2002

To: Members of the legislature, DNR Board Members

Fr: Dennis Wessel / Prince Corporation

Re: Deer Feeding Ban

Since my last letter, dated July 15, 2002, I have heard from many of our customers encouraging our efforts to have the deer feeding ban repealed or a compromise reached. I have also heard from some legislatures, some that have said they do not agree with what the DNR board has done and some that have said it was the only thing to do given the present situation.

What is the present situation? Well, we know that CWD is found in deer and elk where there are large concentrations of these animals and there is evidence to suggest that deer and elk lacking in certain trace minerals are more susceptible to CWD. Given what we know, a total ban on deer feeding will not stop or prevent future cases of CWD. We have suggested a compromise that does not make criminals out of the hobbyist feeder and provides some relief and time for those businesses that derive a significant amount of revenue from selling deer related products. If at least a compromise cannot be reached, then again, where is the aid to help our own Wisconsin businesses, many of which are small family owned operations, get by in the short-term.

Being summer and plenty of food available to support the Wisconsin deer herd, the effects of the total ban have not yet been totally felt. The loss in revenue we and others expect to suffer will come this fall and winter. If a compromise cannot be reached, we need compensation for inventories and packaging materials rendered obsolete by the quick actions of the DNR board. We need some compensation for the loss of short-term revenue. I say short-term because we are doing our best to find replacement products and markets that potentially could make-up for the losses due to the imposed ban, but this takes time.

There are all sorts of support programs and aid made available to other groups. Given that our own government has imposed a ban on deer feeding without any real discussions or forethought, I would hope our legislatures would step to the plate and do the right thing, help those businesses affected by this ban. We and many others need time to make some changes. I realize it is summer vacation for our legislatures and I hope everyone is

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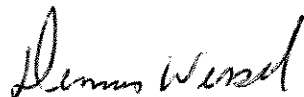
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enjoying their time off as we are sweating the details and attempting to pick-up the pieces.

I hope this is a lesson. Giving people broad authority, such as the DNR board, without proper guidelines, parameters, etc. does not work. Not once was any forethought given to the potential ramifications. The DNR board was and is ill-equipped to make a decision such as was made. They do not have the proper representation, resources and broad prospective that is needed for decisions of such magnitude. That is what our elected representatives are for. The job of the DNR board in this matter should have been one of advisory.

Again, please let me know your thoughts.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Dennis Wessel".

Dennis Wessel
Prince Corporation

September 6, 2002

Governor Scott McCallum
P.O. Box 7863
Madison WI 53707

Dear Governor McCallum:

Until recently I felt you were the best choice for Governor of Wisconsin. However, comments you have made in regards to the loss of revenue that small businesses are feeling due to the DNR's short-sighted and quick actions have changed my mind. In the Marshfield paper you mentioned that businesses that are reporting lost revenues due to smaller numbers of people registering for deer hunting should essentially deal with it and not look to the state for any help. That's all fine and dandy but let's look a bit closer at what has happened.

The DNR quickly, without any thought to what the potential ramifications would be to Wisconsin businesses, banned deer feeding and baiting statewide. To help make their case, the DNR led a strong offensive touting the dangers of CWD. Much of the information was speculative and misleading. The end result was and is that many people are afraid to eat venison and/or are so disgusted with the DNR's approach and actions that they will not hunt this year. That has and will continue to result in loss revenue for many, many Wisconsin businesses this year. Our representatives shunned their responsibility and delegated broad authority to an agency, the DNR, which does not have the broad perspective, representation, knowledge or input to have made such a decision. Now, businesses such as ours are supposed to deal with it. Fine, the state will eventually have to deal with the shrinking revenues as well and the tobacco funds are no longer available. Where should Wisconsin businesses turn when they are confronted with a hardship imposed by an agency of their own government?

This all could have been averted. The best defense against CWD is a smaller deer population. Extended hunts that encourage the taking of antlerless deer would have had better results with much less controversy and lost revenue. The DNR's actions thus far have been pretty much ineffectual in managing CWD and have hurt Wisconsin businesses. There were and are better ways to deal with CWD.

Your comments in the Marshfield paper last week showed me that you either don't understand what has occurred or you really don't care. Wisconsin needs small businesses and our government should be looking for ways to work with businesses rather than

throwing hurdles and obstacles in the way and then telling us to deal with it. We understand the problems and potential dangers associated with CWD and want to help eliminate the disease. Having short-sighted, ineffectual policies rammed down your throat and then told to deal with the ramifications of them is not the type of leadership we need in Wisconsin.


Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Dennis".

Dennis Wessel
Prince Corporation

ATTN:
DENNIS

Editor's note: Without a doubt, this is the most comprehensive article on chronic wasting disease D&DH has ever published. Dr. Dave Samuel, a retired wildlife professor from West Virginia University, has more than 30 years of professional experience covering such issues. With volumes of false information being disseminated in newspaper and television reports, Samuel spent several weeks in early April and May 2002 researching the facts on CWD in North America. Here's what he found.



Chronic Wasting Disease

IT'S NOT WASTING AWAY

■ By Dave Samuel

What a difference a few months makes. In January 2002, few whitetail hunters east of the Mississippi River had ever heard of chronic wasting disease. Today, it is a scary reality for nearly everyone who hunts whitetails in North America.

CWD is an insidious infective disease in deer and elk, first found in 1967 in a captive mule deer research facility run by the Colorado Division of Wildlife. Affected deer drank incessantly, urinated often, and spent much of their time standing listlessly, heads down, ears drooping and saliva dripping from their mouths. Within weeks, they all died.

When examining the deer's brains, Beth Williams, now with the Wyoming State Veterinary Laboratory, found tiny holes that resembled other "spongiform" diseases such as scrapie in sheep and bovine spongiform encephalitis — "mad cow disease" — in cattle.

Over the next 20 years, CWD turned up in wild elk, whitetails and mule deer in Colorado and Wyoming. There was no massive die-off, just a few animals dying at random. However, the disease was here, moving in ways no one understood. Since then, CWD has been found in wild deer and/or elk in Colorado, Wyoming, Nebraska, South Dakota, Saskatchewan and Wisconsin, and in captive elk in Colorado, Kansas, Nebraska, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Montana, Alberta and Saskatchewan.

CWD can remain latent in animals for up to five years before it manifests. Animals do not develop immunity. Once infected, they will die.

Each time CWD surfaces, wildlife officials usually prescribe mass culling in attempts to keep it from spreading. For many game farms, this means killing the whole herd. Although mass culling is expensive and cannot guarantee CWD won't reappear, it's the only method that has proven somewhat effective in reducing further outbreaks.

In Colorado, officials sterilized the facility where CWD was discovered, but when animals were reintroduced, they still contracted the disease. Through extensive and innovative study, researchers learned CWD is caused by infectious proteins called prions (pronounced "pree-ons"). In ways biologists cannot understand, naturally occurring prions occasionally go bad and corrupt healthy prions.

Researchers don't know how CWD originated. Some biologists believe the corrupt prions that cause scrapie in sheep

somehow mutated, jumped the so-called "species barrier" and infected deer and elk. One problem with this theory is CWD has not been found in captive or wild deer from areas in North America or the United Kingdom where scrapie is most prevalent.

Others believe proteins in healthy animals sometimes spontaneously become bad, causing brain and nervous-tissue damage. Some believe CWD is passed along in saliva and feces.

In short, we know where it was discovered, but we might never know how it got there. Furthermore, as I will discuss later,

whether CWD originated in the wild or in a pen is no longer the issue. It's much more important to focus on damage control.

Important Health Issues

Although researchers have not learned much about CWD over the past 10 years, they do know it can spread within a herd even without animal-to-animal contact.

It also seems that CWD can spread more rapidly in areas with high deer densities, hence the problems at game farms. CWD was originally found in the wild in Colorado and Wyoming, and it wasn't initially considered a major threat because deer and elk densities were relatively low. However, now that CWD has been found in southwestern Wisconsin — where wild deer densities exceed a mind-boggling 50 deer per square mile of habitat — researchers fear the disease could spread to surrounding states. Only time will tell.

Mad cow disease was first reported in 1985, and infected cows showed some of the same symptoms seen in CWD-infected deer. There are other similarities. Both diseases involve infected prions, and the brains of infected animals look the same.

However, there are differences. Mad cow was spread by ingesting contaminated food, whereas CWD probably was not. And mad cow spread to humans, whereas CWD has not. Some rumors state that CWD has killed three people who ate venison, but this is not true. Those rumors probably stem from the fact one woman and two men who regularly ate venison died of Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease, a rare spongiform disease among humans.

One of the cases involved a 30-year-old hunter from Kaysville, Utah, who died of CJD in 1999. According to a report in the *Wall Street Journal*, this case caught the attention of activist groups that were lobbying for stricter surveillance of mad cow disease in the United States.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention studied the Utah man's case and the two other cases, and ruled out mad cow disease. Epidemiologists quizzed family members about the victims' lifestyles and eating habits, and concluded there was "no strong evidence for a causal link" to CWD.

Still, similarities between CWD and other brain spongiform diseases make many people nervous, including farmers who worry CWD might infect their cattle. Researchers immediately responded to those concerns and conducted myriad tests to determine if and how CWD can infect cattle. They concluded CWD cannot infect a cow unless corrupt prions are injected directly into the cow's brain.

However, CWD is the only known brain spongiform disease that is not species specific. It has been shown to infect elk, mule deer and white-tailed deer, and researchers don't know why.

That's what makes it so puzzling.

Recent Outbreaks in Colorado
Major CWD outbreaks occurred in the 1990s on game farms in Saskatchewan

CWD Timeline

- 1967 — Mule deer at a Fort Collins, Colo., wildlife research facility become thin and listless, and then die. Biologists are uncertain of the cause.
- 1978 — Beth Williams, now with the Wyoming State Veterinary Laboratory, finds evidence that the disease affects the brain. She observes tiny holes in nerve cells that create a sponge-like appearance.
- 1980 — Chronic wasting disease is identified.
- 1981 — First wild elk with CWD detected in Colorado.
- 1983 — Surveillance for CWD in free-ranging deer begins in Colorado and Wyoming.
- 1985 — "Mad cow" disease, also a brain spongiform disease, is first reported.
- 1985 — Wyoming elk diagnosed with CWD. It's the first free-ranging case in the state.
- 1990 — Hunter-harvest surveillance for CWD begins in Colorado.
- 1997 — First captive elk herds test positive in South Dakota. Extensive surveillance of CWD in farmed elk begins nationwide.
- 1999 — Wisconsin begins precautionary testing for CWD in wild white-tailed deer.
- 1999 — Montana and Colorado begin depopulating wild herds.
- 2000 — In November, Nebraska records its first wild mule deer with CWD. In December, elk from a ranch test positive.
- April 2001 — CWD moves to Saskatchewan's wild deer. Two wild mule deer test positive.
- September 2001 — CWD is found on several Colorado game farms, which are quarantined.
- February 2002 — South Dakota reports its first wild case of CWD. Wisconsin reports CWD in its wild deer herd. It's the first time CWD has been found east of the Mississippi River.
- March 2002 — Illinois creates a task force to deal with CWD possibilities. Alberta reports its first case of CWD in a captive elk.
- April 2002 — CWD reported west of the Continental Divide. Wisconsin enforces an emergency ban on importing and exporting deer and elk. Other states pass similar laws.

— Jennifer A. Pilla

Nebraska. However, what's occurred since Fall 2001 is most concerning.

In September, CWD was found on several Colorado game farms, which were all subsequently quarantined. The Elk Echo farm alone had 29 elk that contracted the disease and died. The entire herd was slaughtered, and officials then traced elk that were shipped elsewhere. They found 11 more cases at other game farms.

With the exception of one elk in Kansas, Elk Echo elk transported to other states all tested negative.

In April 2002, CWD was found west of the Continental Divide. Reports allege the owner of a game farm near Craig, Colo., erected a fence and trapped wild animals inside. Because laws do not permit farm-raised deer and elk to mix with wild animals, state officials responded and killed 180 wild deer and 30 elk inside the pen. As of this writing, two of 164 tests indicated CWD infections.

It is not known how the farm's animals contracted CWD. Owner Wes Adams said he believes the deer were infected before the fence was erected. In a *Denver Post* article, Adams was quoted as saying he complied with all CWD regulations and that he is the victim, not the cause of the problem. Nevertheless, all 100 elk on his farm will be killed and tested. The farm is 30 miles west of where CWD was found in the wild.

On April 3, Colorado officials began sampling 329 animals within five miles of the farm. On April 9, they reported two deer outside the game farm's fence tested positive. Another deer tested positive a week later, prompting officials to increase their sample quotas.

In Summer 2002, Colorado officials hoped to test at least 300 more deer from areas farther from the CWD epicenter. If no cases are found in fringe areas, it's likely CWD originated in or immediately near the farm. In that case, the state would likely eradicate the farm's animals and nearby wild herds in attempts to slow the disease's spread.

Colorado officials also found CWD near Lyons in Boulder County, where 16 of 77 mule deer from the Rabbit Mountain area tested positive. This 21 percent positive rate is one of the highest ever found in the wild. The discovery caused Boulder County commissioners to approve massive cull hunts aimed at slowing a southerly movement of CWD.

The outbreak near Craig also triggered a reaction from Governor Bill Owens, who formed a CWD task force with a

charge to review and oversee proactive CWD action in Colorado.

It was also announced that 24 game farmers living near the CWD endemic area agreed to sell their herds to the Department of Agriculture. The USDA planned to slaughter all of the animals and dispose of the carcasses.

Bad News From Wisconsin

As troubling as the news from Colorado, the public has shown even more concern over recent happenings in Wisconsin. In February 2002, Wisconsin learned that three free-ranging deer shot during the state's November 2001 gun-hunt tested positive for CWD. Subsequent tests showed the disease now infects more than 2 percent of a densely populated whitetail herd in a 415-square-mile area.

(See Ryan Gilligan's article, "Fatal Deer Disease Makes Giant Leap Eastward" in the August 2002 issue of *D&DH*.)

Because this is the first time CWD has been found east of the Mississippi River, thousands of hunters from surrounding states worry if their state is next.

Wisconsin's problem is perhaps most severe, because the state harbors more than 1.6 million whitetails. The state is also home to 947 deer/elk game ranches, with a combined captive herd of nearly 35,000 animals.

In a move that shocked some residents, the DNR announced a plan to eradicate every deer in a 287-square-mile "hot zone" and another that would drastically reduce the herd in the region. In all, 15,000 whitetails are to be killed in hopes of stopping the disease from spreading farther. Although officials admit it might

take several years to complete the job, they believe quick action is necessary.

To further prevent CWD transmission, Wisconsin banned the transport of farm-raised deer and elk, and pushed for bans on baiting and recreational feeding.

On May 15 in Washington, a key House committee approved a \$29.4 billion spending bill that allocated \$10 million in emergency funds to states coping with chronic wasting disease.

That same day, the Wisconsin

Legislature met in special session and approved legislation that provided \$4 million in funding. Much of that money will be used to build a CWD testing facility. The legislation also granted wildlife officials authority to shoot deer from helicopters and roadways, and — as a last resort — to shoot deer on private land even if landowners do not want deer killed.

"The scientists are telling us — from other states who have dealt with this problem — that we've got one shot, one shot to try to eradicate this disease," state Senator Mark Meyer of Wisconsin told the *Milwaukee JournalSentinel*. "If we fail in our actions today, what it's going to mean in 15 to 20 years (is) the white-tailed deer population in this state will be decimated."

To say Wisconsinites are nervous is a gross understatement. In fact, the fear of the unknown has forced many hunters — even though no human has ever contracted CWD — to empty their freezers on the highly remote chance their venison is contaminated with CWD. Up to 250,000 others indicate they might skip this year's hunt.

On to Alberta

In Alberta, the game-farm industry suffered another setback with the discovery of CWD in a 2½-year-old elk. The animal came from a farm north of Edmonton and was one of 160 elk slaughtered at a packing plant in southern Alberta on March 7, 2002.

The 32 tons of resulting meat were destroyed, and veterinarians from the Canadian Food Inspection Agency imposed a three-week freeze on movements of elk within or out of Alberta. Alberta's captive elk herd is estimated at 43,000 head, and the province has no regulations for CWD testing. However, several farms voluntarily test their herds.

The infected elk was found via routine surveillance. Although biologists don't know how the infection entered Alberta, it's possible the disease came from a wild deer or was in the herd before the province's 1988 ban on importation. It is also possible an infected animal was brought into Alberta after the ban.

Nebraska and South Dakota

Nebraska is becoming a CWD hot zone. The state began testing wild deer from hunter-killed samples in Fall 1997, and the first wild case was a mule deer killed in November 2000.

The Game and Parks Commission responded by culling 104 deer in that

region, and one more mule deer tested positive. Then in December 2000, an elk from a game farm in northern Sioux County tested positive. By March 2001, officials killed and tested all of the farm's elk. From that sample, 11 had CWD.

Nebraska's situation grew worse when a whitetail from the same game farm contracted CWD in December 2001. This discovery led to the slaughter of the farm's other 174 whitetails. Alarmingly, 83 of 159 tested so far — 52 percent — had CWD.

Biologists then shot 113 wild deer in the area surrounding the game farm and found nine of them had the disease. Interestingly, CWD was not found in any deer collected more than 10 miles from the farm.

However, in late March 2002, a wild mule deer was seen acting abnormally near Scotsbluff, Neb. It was killed, and subsequently tested positive for CWD. Since then, 54 deer were killed near the Wyoming border. Those tests were not complete as of this writing.

Of 804 deer sampled during Nebraska's 2001 hunting season, two tested positive — once each in Kimball and Cheyenne counties.

With the exception of the mule deer killed in March, all of Nebraska's CWD-positive animals were found within 10 miles of the Sioux County game farm. This fact suggests the game farm did not get CWD from the wild. It got CWD from contaminated animals it received.

To slow CWD's spread, Nebraska is considering culling 50 percent of its southwestern deer herd over the next five years. It is also considering lengthening the season from the current 10-day schedule to nearly five months in Sioux and western Dawes counties.

South Dakota has tested for CWD since 1997. After three years of no positive tests, the state proclaimed its wild herd CWD-free. Sadly, that wasn't the case, because in February 2002, biologists discovered CWD in a wild whitetail. The deer was killed near a Fall River County game farm where CWD had been found previously.

How States React To CWD

Although many researchers believe CWD might have something to do with game-farmed animals, they can do nothing but formulate systematic plans for controlling the disease until more research is done.

Assume a state's wildlife officials sam-

ple hunter kills for CWD, and agriculture officials test all game-farmed deer and elk that are slaughtered or die (since the Wisconsin incident, more states are considering making testing mandatory).

When CWD appears, in the case of farmed animals, the first step is to kill all of them, conduct tests and quarantine the farm. This allows officials to trace the records for other animals that were imported/exported to or from the farm. If animals were exported, the next step is to locate the other farms and continue the eradication process.

When CWD is found in the wild, the first step is to shut down that area's borders to all imports and exports of deer and elk. Even states with no history of CWD — including Texas, Louisiana, Illinois, Indiana, Minnesota and even New York, Massachusetts and North Carolina — have adopted similar regulations.

Some states allow importing and exporting deer and elk from herds that have remained CWD-free for five or more years, but this is essentially a total ban because few farms have tested their herds that long.

The next step is to use hunter-killed animals to sample large wild herds. It's printed in the *Journal of Wildlife Management* in 2001.

Gross and Miller conclude that "selective culling may offer the greatest promise of reducing CWD incidence, particularly when infected populations are detected early in the course of an epidemic and tested aggressively for several decades."

Therefore, the best approach to CWD is to hit the herd hard and, most importantly, early in outbreak areas.

In northeastern Colorado, where CWD incidence in mule deer approaches 5 percent, an estimated 2,200 mule deer live in 1,250 square miles. Through hunting, officials expect to drastically reduce the herd over the next several years.

The CWD outbreaks in Colorado, Wisconsin and Nebraska have led many states to seek better control of importing, exporting and testing animals.

In Colorado alone, hunting and wildlife viewing is worth billions. Thus, the state is making changes to protect those valuable resources.

Wisconsin's Department of Natural Resources also fears a widespread outbreak might cripple the state's economy. In 2001, the state sold 952,942 deer hunting licenses, generating more than \$20 million in revenue for the DNR. Furthermore, deer hunting in Wisconsin generates \$1 billion in economic activity each year.

In neighboring Minnesota, retail sales from deer hunting generate \$270 million annually. Deer hunting has a similar economic impact in Iowa, Illinois and Michigan, making swift action in Wisconsin crucial.

How is CWD Spreading?

This is the main question everyone is asking. Is CWD originating on game farms, or is it occurring in the wild and being passed through the fences?

Unfortunately, we might never know. CWD infects captive and wild animals, and it might take years of surveillance until we know the problem's true scope.

Some biologists believe CWD originated in game farms because clinical signs — head drooping, salivating, emaciated bodies — were not reported in wild deer before the outbreaks. When such behavior was observed in Colorado in 1967, no one knew its cause because it did not match any known disease.

Furthermore, similar behaviors of sick deer were next observed at a facility in Wyoming that had imported deer from the Colorado facility. Also, CWD has been confirmed at 40 farms in Saskatchewan.

As of October 2001, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency found 159 CWD-positive elk on game farms, of which 52 were imported from a South Dakota facility. It was later learned the South Dakota facility had imported elk from a Colorado farm that had CWD-infected elk.

Of course, there's another side to this story — the game farmers who are suffering huge financial losses from CWD. The North American Elk Breeders Association believes CWD, "in all likelihood has existed in wild animals for hundreds of years," and blames the Colorado Division of Wildlife for "starting" the disease at its deer research facility.

The association cites the Nebraska case as proof CWD came from wild animals. Again, CWD was discovered on a game farm in Nebraska, but it was later learned the disease was prevalent in wild deer living within 10 miles of the farm.

"The ranch is only a few miles from the endemic area in Wyoming, so it's only logical some animals came across the border and brought CWD into Nebraska," said Eric Mohlman, president of the Nebraska Elk Breeders Association.

Others note that although Saskatchewan farms have had CWD, only two wild deer have been found from several thousand tests and, therefore, farmed animals are not spreading it to the wild. That's a stretch, however, because it is not known how easily CWD can be passed from elk to deer.

Of course, it's possible the disease goes both ways — sometimes starting on farms and other times in the wild. Regardless of where CWD originates, mandatory testing is on the horizon. Although some farmers have been compensated for their losses, many have quit the business.

Root Causes

When analyzing how CWD affects North American deer herds, I can't help but think of what my friend Steve Fausel said in 2000.

"When we allow deer and elk numbers to reach high densities, we are asking for trouble," Fausel said.

Although he was referring to habitat damage, his words ring true. Ironically, my brother Bill, a wildlife disease professor at the University of Alberta, expressed similar concerns in 1987 — when game farming started in Alberta.

In fact, he presented a paper on the subject at the annual conference of the Game Growers of Alberta. The paper, "Moving the Zoo, or the Potential for Introducing a Dangerous Parasite into Alberta with its Translocated Host," piqued the interest of several biologists, but it didn't trigger enough action. Within a short time, several game farms experienced a serious outbreak of bovine tuberculosis, and now they have CWD.

Conclusion

Based on what's been learned over the past six months, we cannot stand pat on CWD and hope it goes away. Time is of the essence, especially when dealing with wild deer. The longer it takes to implement a plan, the farther CWD will spread, making it even more difficult to control.

There are no quick fixes. All strategies take time and money. We haven't heard the last of new outbreaks and, unfortunately, CWD will more than likely appear in other Midwestern states — and possibly Southern and Eastern states, too.

What's most important is that all parties refrain from pointing fingers and work together to solve this mysterious and troublesome disease.



Study: Diseased Prions Can Infect Mule Deer Fawns

Although full-blown cases of chronic wasting disease have been limited to adult elk and deer, recent research indicates corrupt brain proteins can appear in young fawns. Researchers have also discovered that baiting and feeding practices can lead to the transmission of these proteins.

According to a report in the *Journal of General Virology*, researchers made the discoveries while studying mule deer fawns that were inoculated orally with a brain homogenate prepared from mule deer with naturally occurring chronic wasting disease. After being inoculated, fawns were killed at 10, 42, 53, 77, 78 and 80 days.

Necropsies were then performed to determine if any of the fawns had acquired PrP^{res}, a protein marker for CWD infection. The protein was found in some fawns as early as 42 days after inoculation. Even

more alarming, the protein was found in all of the fawns that lived 53 days or more after inoculation.

This research indicates mule deer can be infected with CWD for at least 16 months before clinical signs appear.

The study's results were published in an article authored by researchers from the University of Wyoming, Colorado State University and the Colorado Division of Wildlife.

Exactly how CWD is transmitted among ruminants is unknown, but the fawns in the study contracted diseased proteins through exposure to contaminated feed. This discovery has

caused some researchers to presume CWD can be spread at contaminated feeding and bedding areas, and in instances where deer congregate and engage in nose-to-nose contact.

— Daniel E. Schmidt



common for officials to sample a 5-mile radius around an area where CWD is found. In Wisconsin, however, officials tested an area encompassing more than 41.5 square miles.

After gauging the disease's prevalence, states usually conduct massive cull hunts to severely reduce — even eradicate — local herds. The idea for massive culling came from scientific research by John Gross of Colorado State University and

Michael Miller of the Colorado Division of Wildlife.

In their research paper, "Chronic Wasting Disease in Mule Deer: Disease Dynamics and Control," Gross and Miller present all the science known on CWD and offer a model to determine the best management strategies for wild herds. The model shows how culling infected areas can reduce CWD incidence by reducing deer dispersal. The paper was

Most Commonly Asked Questions About CWD

✓ Can I contract chronic wasting disease?

Probably not. However, because CWD, "mad cow" disease and Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease are all brain spongiform diseases, and because the latter two can infect humans, it is only logical that people fear CWD. Because two spongiform diseases have been transmitted to humans, no one can say with certainty that CWD will never infect humans. However, asking if you can get CWD from eating venison is like asking your doctor if you can get cancer from eating nitrate-laden hot dogs.

Another point to remember is the odds of contracting a spongiform disease like mad cow or CJD are nearly astronomical. It's true that about 100 people contracted mad cow disease in Great Britain, but it's estimated that 80 million people might have been exposed to it.

✓ Should I worry about eating venison?

That can be answered with a qualified "no." The World Health Organization has said there is no scientific evidence the disease can infect humans. However, the agency says no part of a deer or elk with evidence of the disease

should be eaten by people or other animals.

Bad prions congregate in nervous tissue and lymph nodes. Therefore, boning out meat — without cutting into the brain or spine — and discarding blood vessels and internal organs should protect you even if the animal is infected.

✓ How does a deer get CWD?

According to the Agricultural Research Service, "the natural route of transmission of these diseases (i.e., spongiforms, including CWD) in ruminant animals is unknown, but oral exposure to contaminated feeds, bedding or tissues is presumed to be a major source of infection."

✓ Can prions infect the ground?

Although this has not been proven, some studies indicate CWD-causing prions can remain active in soil for years.

✓ Will CWD invade my state?

CWD could pop up anywhere deer or elk live. However, it seems prevalent in high-density herds.

COLORADO ELK RANCHES CONQUERING CWD

By Linda Lindsey

Eradication Program Successful in Colorado

The Colorado Elk Breeders Association is happy to be able to report that the trace out process has been completed and elk put down at all ranches that had suspect animals. Over a year 3,000 elk killed, only 40 have tested positive for CWD, or 1.3%. Of the total 16,000 domestic elk in Colorado that is 0.25%. More than 200 animals were shipped to 15 states from affected Colorado elk ranches. These animals were also quickly identified, depopulated, and tested for CWD. Only one of 200 elk tested positive for the disease. The lone positive case was in a Kansas herd of 16 elk. The remaining elk in the herd were tested and found to be negative.

Colorado elk ranchers have voluntarily placed themselves under a surveillance program developed by the State Vet which will insure that CWD does not reappear in ranches. If it does, it will be swiftly eliminated. Since May 1998, every elk that dies in Colorado, whether by accident or slaughter for meat, must be tested by having a brain stem sample sent to a lab. *Therefore, it may soon be the case that only ranches are free of CWD and wildlife agencies will have to come to elk ranches to replenish the wild herds that they have allowed to be decimated by this disease.*

ROCKY MOUNTAIN NEWS Reveals DOW Ineptitude

The *Rocky Mountain News* published on June 1 a special section on CWD, the gist of which was to expose government ineptitude. According to *Rocky Mountain News* publisher, John Temple, RMN reporters had a difficult time getting any information about CWD from government officials:

Colorado is at the epicenter of the story. Yet, even today, aside from the governor's office, state institutions — such as the Division of Wildlife, the Department of Agriculture and the research laboratories at Colorado State University — put up barriers when asked to share their work with the public. They're concerned that exposure of what they're really doing would cause a public outcry.

Reporter Gary Gearhardt was one of the three lead writers on CWD for the *News* who was stonewalled. "There's a lot of fear that things will be said that will reflect poorly on the state," he said. "They didn't want people seeing the real inner part of their business."

Elk ranchers have been trying for years to get the media to print the true story about the responsibility for the creation of CWD and its spread, but it has been covered up by the scientists and agencies involved. According to the *Rocky Mountain News*, June 1, 2002, the disease was first identified in the DOW research facility at Fort Collins long before elk ranches existed in Colorado. Gene Schoonveld admits that the nutrition and comparative anatomy studies he did for his Master's Degree at CSU in the late '60s

using deer and scrapie-infected sheep and DOW deer may have been responsible for the spread of the disease to deer:

"They were in close proximity of the sheep for long periods of time and it was among those animals that the symptoms of CWD first showed up," said Schoonveld, now a Division of Wildlife biologist.

"Soon after they were together, adult deer started showing signs of CWD..." he added. "There were a number of deer projects going on at the time and deer were coming in from the wild that may have been infected, and were trading deer with Sybille (the Wyoming Game and Fish Department's Sybille Research Unit, Near Wheatland, Wyoming), and so it's impossible to say for sure how it got started," Schoonveld said. "But my guess as a biologist is those sheep had scrapie (the sheep version of TSE) and in close confinement — something that they wouldn't do out in the wild — it jumped to deer and infected them. The deer then spread it among themselves." This is because the deer were released back into the wild instead of being destroyed, because, despite what now seems like obvious evidence, "no one at the time understood that what was affecting the deer in the pens was a contagious disease." (Mike Miller, RMN, June 1, 2002, p. 4K.)

By 2001 the disease, spreading unchecked, had infected up to 14% of wild deer in the area surrounding the DOW research facility, and up to 1% of the wild elk. It is important to note that CWD has been spreading farther where there is no elk ranching. Wyoming does not allow game ranching, but it has more square miles of CWD endemic area than any other state. Wyoming's wildlife agency reckons CWD is spreading at the rate of 50 miles a year. *However, CWD is an exceedingly rare disease outside of this endemic area. So far only 98 domestic elk out of a total of approximately 135,000 domestic elk in the United States have tested positive for the disease. This is less than 0.1%!*

Wildlife Managers Fail To Take Action

It was not until 1977 that Beth Williams, now a professor of veterinary science, then a graduate student at CSU, realized that the mysterious deaths of the animals in the DOW pens were caused by a communicable disease that was indeed a TSE, or spongiform encephalopathy. Since then the Colorado DOW and Wyoming Game and Fish agencies have been monitoring the disease but, despite the fact that it has been slowly spreading and killing more of the state's wildlife each year, have done nothing to prevent its spread. In fact they have been releasing CWD-infected deer back into the wild some of that time as well as shipping them to zoos and to other states. In the past few months, however, the DOW has found the disease in a few deer on the Western Slope of the Rockies, where hunting is the basis of the local economy, and this has caused a public outcry forcing them to address the problem.

Studies Show CWD Does Not Jump Species Barrier

Of course, the wildlife agencies felt there was no need for great concern because CWD has never been shown to affect humans or other livestock, such as cattle. There is a species barrier that prevents the disease from jumping from one species to another except under very unusual circumstances. The advent of Mad Cow Disease in England is generally believed to have been brought on by the practice of feeding sheep remains to cattle. This practice has never existed in the U.S. In this country federal law now specifically prohibits the feeding of animal remains to mammals. The elk industry has made it clear to the makers of elk feeds that we must have uncontaminated feeds, and manufacturers have gone to great lengths to insure that no animal by-products are included in elk feed.

Whereas CWD apparently came to cervids from scrapie-infected sheep, attempts to get CWD to transfer to other species have all been unsuccessful. There has even been a recent study, conducted by Dr. Beth Williams at the Wyoming State Veterinary Lab, where 12 cows were orally fed CWD-infected feed, and all the cattle are CWD free after three years. And in research by Dr. Gould at CSU on the possibility of transmissibility of the disease from wild deer in the endemic area to cattle, all the tests were negative. Importantly, Dr. Richard Rubenstein at the Institute for Basic Research in Developmental Disabilities in New York tested antlers from CWD-positive and negative elk, and none of them had any detectable signs of CWD.

Wildlife managers in Colorado and Wyoming have thus been aware of this disease and have been studying it since the late 1960s but have consistently refused to take any positive steps to halt the spread of the disease, let alone to attempt to eradicate it, until public opinion forced them to. Not coincidentally, hunting license sales are the main source of income for these agencies and the policy of the Colorado DOW has been that: "If it doesn't affect hunting license sales, it's not a problem." This policy has been stated many times in Wildlife Commission meetings and elsewhere by DOW personnel. Hunters have, in the past couple of years, become aware of the existence of the disease and it is now affecting license sales. Hunters have become outraged and are petitioning the DOW to "do something."

Unfortunately, this has caused the DOW to try to point the finger at elk ranchers. It should be clear by now that this disease did not originate in elk ranches and is not being spread by elk ranches. In fact, elk ranches have swiftly eliminated diseased animals behind their fences. But it is a much more difficult problem to try to eliminate a disease in the wild than on a ranch with a confined perimeter and handling facilities, especially without a live animal test. DOW veterinarian Mike Miller has admitted that the DOW really doesn't know how to eliminate the disease in the wild but the agency is hiring sharpshooters to kill as many cervids in the "hot spots" as possible.

Wisconsin Fish and Game officials have recently found CWD in wild deer in that state and it is anticipated that when wildlife agencies in other states finally begin testing

for the disease more of it will be found. In fact, since scrapie is present in approximately 75% of sheep in the U.S., CWD may be found wherever sheep and deer are in close proximity.

It is only in the last year that the USDA has begun to institute a mandatory program to get rid of scrapie in sheep. It has become clear that if we want to get rid of TSEs in animals we have to deal with all mammalian species.

Elk Ranchers Act Swiftly To Eradicate CWD

Elk ranchers, however, have a history of stepping up to the plate and confronting disease issues swiftly and decisively. When TB first appeared in farmed elk the industry immediately developed a program for eradicating the disease. The TB certification program was instituted with the help of the U.S. Animal Health Association and has been a great success. Similarly, the industry has developed a surveillance program for CWD which is mandatory in Colorado and may soon become mandatory across the country. This program will insure the freedom of ranched elk from this terrible disease.

It is, of course, essential that every elk rancher participate in the program and follow the legal requirements. A person who tries to get around the rules is hurting not only himself but the entire industry. The Colorado elk industry has had almost 100% cooperation in the CWD eradication program, but the failure of one rancher to follow the rules has given us all a black eye that is proving hard to recover from.

Putting an indemnity program in place was essential to insure the cooperation of ranchers, and we can thank all of you who spoke to your legislators about this. Ranchers whose animals are put down as part of the CWD eradication program are indemnified at fair market value, up to a maximum of \$3000 per animal by the USDA. This does not mean that ranchers are getting \$3000 per animal, because market values are down, but it does mean that a rancher will be able to cut his losses.

Elk Research Council Supports Research on Live Animal Test

In addition, the Elk Research Council, an offspring of the North American Elk Breeders Association, has put a great deal of money to research into finding a live animal test for CWD, and it is getting closer. Such a test would be a great aid in more swiftly eliminating this disease, both from ranched and wild elk, without having to kill thousands of animals. The elk industry urges the government to give more financial support to this research, which is vital to the health of hunting and livestock industries in this country. We encourage you to send this article to your legislators along with a letter asking them to support research on a live animal test for CWD in order to avoid having to kill so many live animals in the effort to eradicate this disease.

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CHRONIC WASTING DISEASE

What we know about CWD in deer

In the past months, I have attended numerous meetings on CWD and other deer related issues. These meetings have been held in various cities throughout the U.S. The uncertainty of CWD's origin or transmission from animal to animal can certainly be frustrating. The following are facts concerning CWD.

- It is a Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathy (TSE) of deer and elk.
- other TSE related diseases are Scrapie (found in sheep), BSE (mad cow disease) found in cattle, and CJD (Creutzfeldt-Jacob) found in humans. Cats and mink also have their own types of TSE's.
- The disease is caused by a protein that goes awry and in basically all cases, eats holes in the brain of the specie and death is soon to come.
- CWD has been around for almost 40 years.
- CWD was first diagnosed in mule deer on a government owned research facility in Colorado.
- This disease has never been spread from CWD infected deer to humans or livestock.
- In fact other ruminant species, including wild ruminants and domestic cattle, sheep, and goats, have been housed in wildlife facilities in direct and indirect contact with CWD infected deer and elk with no evidence of disease transmission.
- People have consumed CWD infected deer with no ill side effects.
- A World Health Organization (WHO) panel of experts reviewed all the available information on CWD and concluded that there is NO SCIENTIFIC EVIDENCE THAT CWD CAN INFECT HUMANS.
- Signs of CWD infected deer include weight loss, drooping ears, excessive salivation, and loss of appetite. Many of these signs can also be associated with other diseases known in Wisconsin deer, such as Cranial Abscessation Syndrome (a bacterial disease of the brain) or malnutrition.
- Feeding deer or elk does not cause CWD.
- It has never been proven that feeding deer spreads this disease.
- It stands to reason that deer that are offered supplemental feed would certainly be healthier and much less susceptible to disease and sickness than their counterparts that are not offered feed and are stressed due to the post rut, cold temperatures, and deep snow.

In recent weeks, a State Representative and a state agency have both suggested that feeding deer blocks or deer minerals that contained animal byproducts may have caused the 3 deer to come down with CWD. I have been in the deer feed/seed business for the past 15 years and have also worked for the largest feed company in North America. We market products throughout the United States. In all of my travels throughout the U.S., I have never encountered a deer block or deer mineral that contained animal byproducts. Let's face it, animal byproducts are not very palatable. Furthermore, on August 4th, 1997, a federal law was enacted that outlaws the use of ruminant animal byproducts to be used in ruminant feeds! I would certainly like to see these folks show me a tag from a deer mineral or deer block containing animal byproducts!

I certainly do not mean to make light of the recent finding of CWD in our Wisconsin deer herd, but please look at the facts and bear in mind that some state legislators and state agencies may be trying to use this issue to further their agenda which is to outlaw feeding deer in the State of Wisconsin. Todd Stittleburg-Black River Falls, Wisconsin

Todd Stittleburg (715) 284-9547

Studies Link Bacteria, Copper to Brain Diseases

Chronic wasting disease is perhaps the most mysterious and least understood transmissible spongiform encephalopathy disease (sometimes called TSEs or "prion diseases") known to man.

The "spongiform" name comes from the fact these diseases give the brain a spongy appearance. The four BSEs we hear most about are scrapie in sheep, "mad cow" disease in cows, Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease in humans and CWD in deer and elk.

Much research has been done on the other spongiform diseases, and some decade-old studies might shed light on CWD. Recently, research and speculation led to two prion-based theories on a cause for CWD. Both theories have supporters and detractors in the scientific community.

One theory centers on spiroplasma bacteria. The key proponent and researcher of this theory is Frank Bastian, a research professor of pathology at Tulane University. Bastian has shown that injecting spiroplasma in rodents induces spongiform encephalopathy in the brain, similar to what is seen with CWD in deer. Bastian believes bad prions are a reaction to spiroplasma in the brain, whereby the "bacteria" may coat itself with this host protein (prions) to hide from the immune system.

Research also shows spiroplasmas can be transmitted by insects to mice. No one has speculated that insects might transmit spiroplasmas to deer and, therefore, cause CWD. If spiroplasmas can cause CWD, researchers must determine how to stop or slow that source.

The second theory states CWD is caused and/or spread when animals become copper deficient. Copper is a naturally occurring mineral vital to proper brain functions.

The basis for this theory is healthy prions contain copper but copper is stripped away when animals ingest organophosphate insecticides. Some researchers believe heavy use of insecticides played a role in the spread of mad cow disease in Great Britain.

An alternate theory suggests deer become copper deficient when they live on crowded range where copper sources — found mostly in natural browse — are depleted.

Dr. Michael McDonnell, a private consultant from Nebraska, believes low copper levels in soil causes low levels in the diets of deer and elk and, therefore, contribute to CWD. McDonnell said one study of game-farmed elk in Nebraska indicates a link between CWD and copper.

In the study, researchers examined the diets of pen-raised elk. Of the elk that did not receive supplemental copper in their diets, 25 percent to 55 percent contracted CWD. Of the elk receiving copper sulfate supplements, 5 percent to 7.5 percent tested positive for CWD. The third group of elk were given the recommended daily allowance of copper, and none of those animals contracted CWD.

"The concept that manganese in the environment could initiate the start of TSE is interesting," McDonnell wrote in a report highlighting several scientific studies. "The soils in Iceland, Slovakia and Colorado are low in copper and higher in manganese, which may explain the clusters of scrapie, CJD and CWD in these locations."

How could a copper imbalance cause a TSE? McDonnell offers this explanation:

"Imagine a prion is like a screen-door spring — long length with a curling structure like DNA. On each end of the prion are two hooks. These hooks carry copper to various body tissues. The prion then 'goes' to the liver to pick up more copper. When copper is low or manganese is high, manganese gets stuck on these hooks. Manganese has a different shape than copper, causing the screen door spring to bend with both ends coming together.

"Most human CJD is of this type," McDonnell continued. "After the first rogue prion is formed, it continues to bend. The prion becomes proteinase resistant (the proof of being a TSE rogue prion). As the prion bends, the intracellular bonds break and stick out of the prion. These 'fishhooks' stick into normal prions and knock off copper ions. Manganese replaces the copper, and the cycle starts again. The fishhooks latch onto each other and form chains. These chains with the fishhooks sticking out tear holes in the brain tissue. This is how the holes in the brain occur."

Finding cures for brain spongiform diseases has been challenging because the chemistry and pathology are so difficult to understand. The same is true for chronic wasting disease. Finding the cause will be extremely difficult. That's why culling huge numbers of deer in infected areas is the only choice at this time.

It's important to note that although spiroplasmas and copper deficiencies have been linked to other diseases, they have not been proven to cause CWD. The mere possibilities, however, will give researchers many other avenues to investigate while racing for more answers.

— Dave Samuel and Daniel E. Schmidt

Chronic Wasting Disease

Debate

Fueled by Panic and Politics

Interesting Article
Dennis Price cooperation

■ *Daniel E. Schmidt,*
with *Jerry Davis*

A lot has happened since chronic wasting disease was discovered in free-ranging Wisconsin deer in February 2002.

Scientists have scrambled for answers.

Deer managers have devised alternative herd-reduction measures.

And, unfortunately, many people have panicked about the future of deer and deer hunting.

Although new information is being learned daily, here's an update on perhaps three of the most noteworthy topics surrounding CWD.

1. Wisconsin's Outbreak

Although he just recently stepped down from his job, Bill Mytton, Wisconsin's chief deer ecologist, was not run out of the Badger State by CWD. He told his supervisors about 10 years ago that he wanted to head west after his sons finished high school. Therefore, he recently accepted a job with the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation in Montana.

Now that he's no longer a DNR official, Mytton revealed that politicians and special-interest groups — namely deer farmers — might have jeopardized the health of Wisconsin's wild deer herd.

Mytton said he and other DNR biologists have been saying for years that, "if we didn't address the captive wildlife question — and we have certain senators who have prevented us from doing that — something like this was going to happen. Not addressing baiting and feeding

was fatal, and we've said it the whole time we've been here. That's not to say CWD would never have happened, even without baiting and feeding, but we could have addressed some of the symptoms much better."

It is no surprise to Mytton that CWD has grabbed the attention of the nation when it was discovered in Wisconsin.

"When did CWD blow up with all this national attention?" Mytton asked. "When it hit this state, because we're No. 1 (in deer numbers and harvest). Everyone is watching what we do. What we do with CWD will impact every state east of Wisconsin."

Mytton said more facts about how CWD got to Wisconsin will eventually become public information. For now, he is keeping those facts to himself and the DNR investigation teams.

Mytton did, however, hint that an unpoliced captive deer industry might be a root cause of Wisconsin's CWD outbreak.

"If the public knew what we know, their eyes would be popping," he said. "There is no smoking gun. What is clearly coming out is there is a huge movement of captive animals in and out of Wisconsin and around Wisconsin that is undocumented."

"We know that there have been captive white-tailed deer in (the area infected with CWD) that were free-roaming. We have ear tags from them. Somebody let some animals go. We have evidence of that. Whether those animals were sick or not is unknown."

A source close to the situation told *D&DH* some of those captive deer were

breeder bucks from Colorado that were shipped to Wisconsin and let go on large tracts of private land. The idea, the source said, was to have the breeder bucks sire the area's does in an attempt to produce more bucks with superior genetics.

However, Mytton said the problem is so widespread that it would be a moot point to track down the guilty individuals and bring them to justice.

"If we found out who was responsible, I'd be the first to say give them immunity and keep their names secret so we can find out where those animals came from so a bunch of other states or other regions in Wisconsin don't get animals from that source."

2. A Disease Investigation

Although scientists say no research links CWD to human illness, the Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta is investigating the deaths of three Wisconsin men from the early 1990s.

The men, avid hunters and fishermen who gathered annually to feast on wild game, including venison, died of neurological diseases — two from Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease and one of Pick's disease. Two of the men were 66 when they died in 1993; the other was 55 when he died in 1999.

The fact the men knew each other caused many people to jump to the conclusion they must have ate CWD-tainted venison.

The CDC investigation will take months, if not years, to complete. Early reports indicate the CJD cases were isolated. According to published reports,

Wisconsin reported just 36 cases of CJD in the last decade. That's not unusual, as Wisconsin had previously reported three to six new cases annually.

Scientists warn hunters not to overact to what is probably a coincidence. When discussing CWD, many scientists explain the disease is no different than scrapie, a prion disease that researchers know has affected sheep for more than 300 years with no known effects on humans.

D&DH Southern Field Editor Bob Zaiglin was one of the many professional biologists who attended a national symposium on CWD in Colorado in August

2002. He, along with many of his cohorts, said CWD is one of many wildlife diseases that is very controllable.

"Too many people have used CWD to push other agendas, be it high fences, baiting and feeding and the like," he said. "The fact remains there is no science to prove it can affect humans."

Zaiglin further stated the "possible links" to CJD in humans is overblown, noting that CJD has historically infected one out of every 1 million people, regardless of where they live or what they eat.

"We have to put everything in perspective," Zaiglin said, adding that in Texas

alone, 20 people died from rabies in 1995.

"I don't want to belittle it (CWD), and I don't think we shouldn't be prudent," Zaiglin said. "We need to use preventative measures, but we shouldn't go overboard."

"The disease is real, but we have to look at it realistically. There are a lot of diseases out there, including tuberculosis, tick fever and rabies."

3. Testing Measures

Also making news is the fact Colorado will be using new methods to test deer and elk for CWD. Until now, CWD tests were expensive and slow to complete — many tests take months to find the results.

In Fall 2002, Colorado will have 40 CWD testing stations where hunters can have deer and elk tested. Most tests will be voluntary, and hunters will have to pay \$17 per animal tested. However, testing will be mandatory in the northeastern part of the state, where CWD has existed for decades in wild cervids.

Each testing station will be equipped with technology that lets technicians test up to 1,000 animals a day. Positive results will be screened further.

Unfortunately, such technology will not be available for Wisconsin hunters in 2002. However, several businessmen expect to sidestep government regulations and set up private labs to test for CWD. One northern Wisconsin business owner said he expects his lab to be fully operational by the start of the state's 9-day firearms season in late November. Those tests would cost about \$60 per deer. Test results would be available within one month, compared with up to six months for tests done at the state lab in Madison. The testing would not be overseen or approved by state or federal officials.

For more information on what states are doing to test for CWD, see Joe Shead's article in this issue's installment of "Deer Browse" on Page 136.

Additional Reading

Gilligan, Ryan. "Special Report: Fatal Deer Disease Makes Giant Leap Eastward." *Deer & Deer Hunting*, August 2002. Pp. 76-80.

Samuel, David and William. "Chronic Wasting Disease: A Deer is a Terrible Thing to Waste." *Deer & Deer Hunting*, December 2001. Pp. 51-58.

Samuel, David. "Chronic Wasting Disease: It's Not Wasting Away." *Deer & Deer Hunting*, September 2002. Pp. 16-35.

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Dennis
FUT

CWD-The DNR'S Crisis

Going into 2002, our state's budget was in bad shape. It was quite evident that government jobs and department budgets would have to be cut. The DNR'S budget was on the chopping block. It has been said that a reduction of 8-10 million dollars was destined to be cut from their budget. Then in February, 3 deer were discovered to have CWD. In order to keep their existing budget and jobs, and to grow their budget, they proceeded to make CWD a CRISIS. If they scared the public and the press and lawmakers they could keep and ultimately grow their department. They had their so called computer experts do models that predicted that if ignored, CWD would wipe out Wisconsin's deer herd in a mere 10 years. Now a computer simulation can show anything the individual running the computer wants it to show. (whether the individual wants to make it doom and gloom or a bed of roses) Instead of running this skewed model, they could have looked at actual results for the past 40 years in Colorado. The actual results in Colorado are that between 2-5 % of the deer are CWD positive where the disease has been discovered. It does not and has not ever even come close to wiping out a deer population. Incidentally in this past spring's DNR mandated slaughter of deer in Dane and Iowa county, about 3-4% of the deer tested positive for the disease. So What-we lose more deer each and every year to automobiles than that. It is very possible that CWD has been here forever and we have been losing a small percentage of our deer in certain areas for years! To put it in perspective, through hunting and automobiles, we annually lose between 30-40% of the deer herd each year. After studying CWD and other deer diseases for the past 15 years it appears that it is one of a number of deer diseases that mother nature has in her arsenal for controlling deer populations. Incidentally, 2 other deer diseases, EHD and Blue Tongue have killed far more deer than CWD ever has. Dr. David Osbourne at the U. of Georgia's deer research facility said each year they generally lose nearly 10% of their herd to EHD. In 1976, EHD killed thousands of whitetails in Nebraska, Wyoming, Kansas, and the Dakotas as well as 4000 antelope in Wyoming. That same year over 1000 deer died in New Jersey from EHD. The bottom line is that CWD has not proved to be a catastrophic disease, and there is no evidence that humans or livestock has ever contracted CWD.

What is the cost for making CWD a CRISIS-

-96% of the deer killed this past year during the DNR'S mandated slaughter in Southern Wisconsin were healthy and were eliminated for political purposes. The ones that were shot were probably the fortunate as they died instantly-it was the baby fawns that starved to death after their mother's were shot that suffered.

-For those of you who liked to feed deer in your backyard, if you continue to do so, you are now a criminal. Thanks again to the DNR the only thing you can legally feed in your backyard or on your property that you pay property taxes on are birds. Just make sure that the feeder is at least 6 feet off the ground and no feed spills onto the ground where other animals might eat. If you don't adhere you can be fined over several hundred dollars!

-If you are a motel owner, restaurant owner, run a gas station, a sporting goods store or butcher shop you can also thank the DNR. If the 30% decline in deer hunting licenses continue, there will be 150 million dollars that hunters will not be spending on hunting related purchases according to Richard Bishop of the University of Wisconsin's Applied Econ Dept.

CWD was first found in Colorado in the 1960's. It has had 40 years to devastate Colorado wildlife-but it never did.

If you feel the DNR is out of control it's time to call you state Senator or State Representative.
Todd Stittsburg/Black River Falls, WI

Stockman Farm Supply

454 S. Hwy. 128

Wilson, WI 54027

715-772-3128

FAX 715-772-3134

750 Spruce Road

Osseo, WI 54758

715-597-2805

FAX 715-597-2715

7-10-07

Mr Dennis Wessel
Dunce Corporation
8351 County Rd H
Marshfield, WI 54449

Dear Dennis

I have read your letters with much interest on the deer situation & I'm very glad to have you make a stand & show concern. The public is not aware of the seriousness of the situation. your concern leans toward the feeding part & the impact it will have on your business & feed store customers.

We are a couple of your biggest accounts my concern is deeper. I think of all the resorts, clothing suppliers & the whole tourist industry.

I have about 700 posted acres, I hire two deputies through hunting season to keep

Hunters out. We sell no hunting supplies
so my only motif is to save wild life.

We must think of the deer killing, if a
army of sharpshooters & helicopters invade
private property, how do they get the deer off?
or do they leave them lay? If there are sick
deer they wont find them, they will be bad.

To me there is only one way to handle the
Chronic wasting Disease, the one used
down through the centuries, let nature take
its course. I have seen abundance of man
animals & birds, then there are only a few

I have been urging people to call or write
their state representatives to put the heat on
the D.N.R. I have talked two many, many
people & only received two letters supporting
the bill, calling me many names not found
in the dictionary

Keep up the fight

Very truly yours
Ray Gork



DR. MICHAEL V. OSTROWSKI
CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGIST

1878 BIG BEND DRIVE
DES PLAINES, ILLINOIS 60016-3517
TELEPHONE: (847) 297-3838

July 9, 2002

Mr. Dennis Wessel
President, Prince Corp.
Marshfield, Wisconsin

Dear Mr. Wessel:

I wish to thank you and congratulate you on your letter that was reprinted in the Lakeland Times, July 5, 2002 issue.

I believe you are absolutely correct in your conclusion that the DNR has simply used the CWD issue as an excuse and rationalization to ban deer feeding, thus depriving property owners from their rightful and legitimate use of their land.

I would please ask you to write another article and explain to the Times readers why the DNR has wanted for years, to stop deer feeding for recreational viewing as well as hunting. What is the true reason the DNR has capitulated to legislative lobbyists to stop the deer feeding? We have neighbors in the North Woods in their 60's and 70's whose major enjoyment is recreational feeding of the deer and who derive enormous pleasure and satisfaction from this activity, having absolutely no intention of baiting them for hunting. Please let the readers know what is the true cause and pressures behind the DNR's decision.

Please be aware that you certainly do have the silent majority of Wisconsin residents on your side regarding the recreational feeding of deer.

Please continue to see if you can get this issue reversed.
Thank you again for writing your letter.

Sincerely,

Michael V. Ostrowski, Ed.D.
Clinical Psychologist

MVO:hn

P.S. Contrary to the DNR's argument against recreational feeding, these seniors place neatly, some 15- 20 piles 3 to 4 feet apart, corn so there is absolutely no nose to nose contact or the exchange of saliva in the eating process.

WILLIWM H. ASHWORTH
ASHWORTH FEED & IMPLEMENT
P.O. BOX 40
COLOMA, WI 54930-0040

DENNIS WESSEL
PRINCE CORPORATION
8351 COUNTY ROAD H EAST
MARSHFIELD, WI 54449

RE: DEER FEEDING BAN

I am enclosing a copy of the letter, which I sent to Governor McCallum in support of our position on the deer feeding ban. I sent the same message to Senators Welch and Shibilski and Representatives Olsen and Schneider.

I have received a letter from Representative Olsen in which he assured me he agrees with our position and he will make every effort to remedy the situation. Representative Shibilski's office telephoned to say that he was working on getting federal funds to relieve our financial losses, which is not at all the sort of help we had in mind! To date there has been no response to the other letters.

Sincerely,



William Ashworth

WILLIAM ASHWORTH
D/B/A/ ASHWORTH FEED & IMPLEMENT
P.O. BOX 40
COLOMA, WI 54930
JULY 23,2002

TO MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATURE

RE: DEER FEEDING BAN

You have recently received several letters from Mr. Dennis Wessel, President of the Prince Corporation, on the subject of this ban, in regard to the hobbyist feeding deer. I fully support his position. These people may actually be helping to prevent the spread of CDW by feeding small numbers of deer nutritious food.

The ban, while it cannot be proved to have any impact whatever on the spread of CWD, is having a **serious economic impact!** Not only on feed suppliers such as the Prince Corporation, but also on the feed stores they supply. For some it will make the difference between staying afloat in these troubled financial times, or going bankrupt! Putting themselves and their employees on the unemployment line! Which will also impact the State's finances along with the sales tax that would have been collected on sales of deer feed.

Therefore I hope you will reconsider this action, which granted the DNR virtual carte blanche, and was based on misinformation and panic.

Sincerely,

William H. Ashworth

My Feed Store

851 N. 4th. Street
Tomahawk, WI 54487
Phone (715) 453-7986
Fax (715) 453-4997

September 16, 2002

As you are probably well aware, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Board has implemented a statewide ban on feeding and baiting whitetail deer. This action is intended to stop the spread of CWD or Chronic Wasting Disease.

Science and politics aside, this action has already had some very negative effects. The fiscal aspects of this government mandated action are beginning to become painfully obvious to many in the business community. Not only are the stores that sell the various feeds and baits reeling in lost revenues, but the businesses that supply these materials to the retailer are taking a huge loss. In turn, many of these operations that were depending on these sales to carry them through the fall and winter months are now having to downsize their staffing or face closing their doors completely.

As an example, our store has reduced our fulltime staffing to two from our regular four people. These folks were depending on their wages to feed their families, pay for insurance and keep a roof over their heads. How do they now make ends meet? The Governor has reportedly stated that he won't offer any help in this matter.

This does not only affect those businesses that are directly involved. The mandate laid down by our State of Wisconsin government has deep reaching fingers. This issue has not been caused by any economic downturn or failure on the part of the businesses involved, but we are expected to weather the loss of income and revenue for the good of the deer herd. Explain that to the electric and telephone companies when I can't pay them. Maybe they will excuse us for the good of the herd!

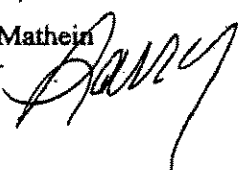
I suggest that the State of Wisconsin take a realistic look at the TOTAL effect of their actions. What will they say when businesses no longer are able to pay property taxes? Employers have to lay off employees due to decreased business? Reduced sales tax revenues?

We are not going to dispute the reasons for the actions by the State. We do dispute the method of implementation.

I find it interesting that when the Federal Government mandates something to the State, there is a loud cry from our legislators regarding un-funded mandates. Well, Mr. Governor, basically what you are telling us is "take the pipe and like it, Mr."

Sorry, I don't like it one bit.

Larry Mathein
Owner





Photograph # 1

Date: 09-20-02

Direction: South

Subject: Deer feeding site located East and adjacent to "buck Pen" on Hirschboeck's deer farm. Photo depicts two salt blocks and mineral block.

10-20-02

FOR BAITING

Dear Tom;

I'm bow hunter of 55 years. What do you need to rescind the baiting ban????

Paul Bixler
6522 Buena Park Road
Waterford, Wisconsin 53185
Bixlerp@tds.net

Senator Judith Robson
Room 15 South, State Capitol
P.O.Box 7882
Madison WI 53707-7882

October 22, 2002

Dear Senator Robson,

I understand that the Joint Committee for the Review of Administrative Rules will, at some point in the future, consider the extension of the deer feeding and baiting ban.

As a resident of Wisconsin and a deer hunter, I would like to urge you to extend the ban and hopefully the ban will be implemented as permanent.

Some of the reasons for the need for the ban are:

1. It is paramount to the State of Wisconsin's fight against the spread of Chronic Wasting Disease. Even if it is found in other parts of the State it is important that baiting and feeding be stopped so that there is less chance for spreading the disease to other deer in the area.
2. Deer feeding and baiting have led to a list of problems such as:
 - a. An artificially high deer population which results in an increase of car/deer collisions.
 - b. Extensive agricultural crop damage along with damage to gardens, shrubs, and ornamental plants.
 - c. In many areas high deer populations are endangering natural vegetative ecosystems in the forest.
 - d. It concentrates the deer into certain areas making it more difficult for the DNR to control the herd through hunting seasons. Many rich people with large land holdings bait and artificially feed heavily. In many cases year round and this holds the deer on their private lands where they may shoot a few trophy bucks but leave the does to breed and multiply. This increases the deer population but then provides a "sanctuary" for them so that the average person who has to hunt public land does not see any deer or get a chance to shoot one.
 - e. Baiting for deer leads to many illegal activities such as "cabin" hunting. Cabin hunting is placing bait behind a house or cabin and shooting deer out the back door, usually late at night with the aid of a yard light or lighted sighting apparatus on a gun or bow.
 - f. Baiting does not control the deer herd. Because it is easy to shoot deer over a bait pile, people who hunt over bait are not satisfied with shooting "just" a doe. They wait until a buck comes along and then shoot it. Shooting male deer does not control the deer herd.
 - g. Also because it is easy to shoot deer over bait many people do not settle for just one buck, using a license purchased for their wife, girlfriend, brother-in-law, or others they shoot and tag multiple bucks. Again shooting bucks does not control the deer herd.

- h. Baiting causes many turf wars on public land. This occurs when some one starts to place bait in an area and then feels that he/she has the exclusive right to hunt that spot. This has led to many innocent people being harassed and "chased" out of an area where they have every right to be.

I could go on but I don't want to discourage you from reading this letter by its lengthiness. In conclusion I would like to say is **Please continue the ban on feeding and baiting deer and do what ever you can to implement the ban as permanent.**

Richard Rollman



W915 Theis Rd
Rhineland WI
54501

**CONCERNED HUNTERS OF WISCONSIN
 C.H.O.W.
 11519 WEST NORTH AVENUE
 WAUWATOSA, WI 53226**

CONCERNEDHUNTERSOFWISCONSIN@MSN.COM

**THOMAS HALVERSON 414-257-1526
 GREGORY HEYRMAN 262-784-8837**

FAX COVER SHEET

TO: SENATOR ROBSON

FROM: GREG HEYRMAN

DATE: 10.25.02

NUMBER OF PAGES INCLUDING COVER: 2

MESSAGE: Refer to letter

We are dedicated to restoring baiting and deer feeding of deer to Wisconsin Sportsman.

We urge everyone in support of this cause to contact their State Legislators and call on them to restore baiting and feeding now.

TRANSMISSION VERIFICATION REPORT

TIME : 10/30/2002 13:31
 NAME : SEN. ROBSON
 FAX : 608-267-5171
 TEL : 608-266-2253

October 31, 2002

DATE TIME
 Senator Robert Jauch
 DURATION
 State Capitol
 Box 7882
 RESULT
 MODE
 Madison WI 53707-7882

10/30 13:30
 86083655314
 00:01:30
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 ERROR
 STANDARD

Dear Senator Jauch

I am writing this letter in concern of the vote regarding the ban on feeding and baiting deer. I live in Northern Bayfield County and there are several reasons why I am against the continuation of the ban.

1. The bow kill is down 80% from last year.
2. T Zone kill is down 70%.
3. License sales are down 38%.
4. If we cannot feed the deer in the winter up here, and we have severe weather, we will loose 70% of our herd. Is that good management? Also, the close contact will be worse if all the deer go into a deer yard. For example, if 3 people feed 30 deer each, there will be 3 groups of 30. If no one feeds them, there will be 90 deer in one deer yard. There is no Chronic Waste in the northern part of the state, so why can't you keep the no baiting and feeding ban to the southern half like you do with other laws?

The economic impact is also very important to this part of the state. Feed mills will have to close, the motels and hotels will loose a lot of money. So when you vote on this issue, please listen to the people.

I would be happy to talk to you about this and try to explain more. Please feel free to call me at 715 372 4101. Thank you for voting **NOT** to continue this ban.

Sincerely,

Keith Holly
 Big Bear Guide Service
 72060 Range Line Road
 Iron River, WI 54847

CC: Senator Judith Robson Senator Richard Grobschmidt
 Senator David Hansen Senator Robert Cowles
 Senator Robert Welch Rep. Glenn Grothman
 Rep Scott Gunderson Rep Lorraine Seratti
 Rep Tom Hebl Rep Robert Turner

Gregory James Heyrman
13625 Wrayburn Road
Elm Grove, Wisconsin 53122
262-784-8837

October 28, 2002

The Honorable Judy Robson
Wisconsin State Legislature
State Capitol
P.O. Box 7882
Madison, Wisconsin 53707-7882

Dear Senator Robson:

Recently, the Department of Natural Resources Board petitioned the Joint Committee for Review of Administrative Rules to extend the Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) Emergency Rule. A portion of this rule bans the use of bait by deer hunters statewide in the name of CWD prevention. I believe a hearing has been set on this issue for Thursday, November 7, 2002. I plan to attend that hearing and to address the Committee to explain why the baiting ban should not be extended in its present form.

I represent the Concerned Hunters of Wisconsin (CHOW), which was formed as a result of the baiting ban. While we support the baiting and feeding ban in the CWD intensive management zones, we oppose the statewide ban as overly restrictive and discouraging hunters from harvesting the most number of deer possible at a time when herd reduction is most critical. Furthermore, the ban is negatively impacting farmers through lost sales of corn, beets, potatoes, apples and pumpkins. Many of the farmers on this additional income to support their families and businesses. We are in the midst of a petition drive to collect as many signatures as possible from adult Wisconsin sportsmen who want to see baiting restored as a hunting tool. We started our drive six weeks ago and to date we have received over 600 signatures from voters across the state.

This baiting ban is controversial. Even the Department of Natural Resources Board is split on this issue as illustrated by 3 - 3 vote last week on returning baiting to Wisconsin sportsmen.

I ask you to consider the arguments in support of rescinding the baiting ban and to listen to your constituents. Please send this portion of the Emergency Rule extension request back to the DNR Board for modification.

I look forward to speaking before you next week on this issue.

Sincerely,



Gregory Heyrman
Concerned Hunters of Wisconsin

Flury, Kelley

From: WDHA [WDHA@BanDeerBaiting.org]
Sent: Tuesday, October 29, 2002 10:01 PM
To: Sen.Cowles@legis.state.wi.us; sen.welch@legis.state.wi.us; Sen.Hansen@legis.state.wi.us;
Sen.Grobschmidt@legis.state.wi.us; Sen.Robson@legis.state.wi.us;
Rep.Hebl@legis.state.wi.us; Rep.Turner@legis.state.wi.us;
Rep.Gunderson@legis.state.wi.us; Rep.Seratti@legis.state.wi.us;
rep.grothman@legis.state.wi.us
Subject: DNR Emergency Rules Extension

Dear JCRAR Committee members:

I represent the Wisconsin Deer Hunters Association and we would like to see the DNR's emergency rules on deer baiting and feeding extended at your committee meeting next week. I know you have been contacted by people who wish to eliminate these rules, but this would be the wrong thing to do at this time. There is overwhelming information that baiting and feeding deer spread diseases such as CWD and Bovine TB. The eyes of not only the nation, but the world are on Wisconsin right now with our CWD eradication effort. We would look foolish if we did not do everything possible to eradicate CWD while seeking federal funds to fight this disease. The baiting and feeding emergency rules also have support from every hunting organization in the state, including the Conservation Congress.

There is also evidence that widespread baiting and feeding reduces the success rate for deer hunters. I know most of you do not hunt, but let me put this into perspective. Deer primarily move during daylight hours to seek food. If, for example, 20% of the gun deer hunters only put out 5 gallons of bait (half the formerly legal limit) this would completely feed over 1.5 million deer, the entire population! If a deer can eat all it wants during the night in 5 minutes, they would be much less apt to move during the day, and thus be available for harvest. Many hunters this year are reporting more deer sightings and the thought is this is due to the baiting and feeding ban. Please at a minimum extend the emergency rules to allow at least a years worth of study to document if this is really the case. Common sense has it that there can be no argument that the emergency rules will reduce the deer harvest without actually experiencing a full season without baiting and feeding.

Our web site has a wealth of information on the biological effects of baiting and feeding deer and I encourage you to look into this issue for yourself. We did not sensationalize this information, we just presented the facts by the nations leading wildlife experts. This debate is not about ethics, or hunting styles. This is all about doing what is best for the deer herd. Ultimately we think this is best for the deer hunter too.

Our web site can be found at <http://www.bandeerbaiting.org>

Thank you.

Mark Toso
President
Wisconsin Deer Hunters Association

Flury, Kelley

From: Dean Elbe - Quality Title [delbe@title-pros.com]
Sent: Wednesday, October 30, 2002 8:20 AM
To: rep.grothman@legis.state.wi.us
Cc: rep.seratti@legis.state.wi.us; rep.gunderson@legis.state.wi.us; rep.turner@legis.state.wi.us;
rep.hebl@legis.state.wi.us; sen.robson@legis.state.wi.us; sen.grobschmidt@legis.state.wi.us;
Sen.hansen@legis.state.wi.us; Sen.cowles@legis.state.wi.us

Subject: Baiting and Feeding Ban

It has been brought to my attention that you are strongly considering revoking the feeding and baiting ban that the D.N.R has implemented in order to help combat CWD.

I urge you to keep the ban in place the Wisconsin D.N.R is doing a great job in trying to combat this disease. They need to be able to do what is best for our deer herd.

CWD is just a warning shot over our bow. If it is not CWD then it will be another disease like bovine TB. The unhealthy practice of baiting and feeding congregates animals and makes it much easier for one contaminated animal to contaminate many others that may have very different "core" areas and this will be the downfall of our herd long term.

These diseases can wipe out our deer herd as we know it. Those who want to repeal this ban only care about themselves I care about my son and unborn grandchildren. I want them to be able to continue the great Wisconsin tradition of deer hunting.

If you do not care about this tradition go ahead and repeal the ban.

If you do not think voters care about this issue ask Kevin Shibilski how he lost the Sportsmens vote he worked so hard for.

Every Wildlife biologist that I have spoken with and is employed by the Wisconsin DNR supports a complete ban on all baiting and feeding. These are the experts, I urge you to please listen to them.

The future of deer hunting in Wisconsin is in your hands.

Dean Elbe

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10/30/2002

Flury, Kelley

From: john.peterson@ki.com
Sent: Wednesday, October 30, 2002 8:28 AM
To: Sen.Robson@legis.state.wi.us
Subject: Ban Baiting NOW

Vote YES to extend the baiting ban. CWD will spread like wildfire if baiting is continued in this state.

John Peterson - Green Bay

KI is proud to introduce the new KI Europe website! Check out the European case histories section to get new ideas, view new and colorful product selections, and see the latest in files & storage, high-density storage, flexible furniture, and seating & tables.
Click here to visit <http://www.ki.com/europe>

Flury, Kelley

From: Sharon Schultz [sharon@parkmanorwi.com]
Sent: Wednesday, October 30, 2002 11:54 AM
To: Representative Tom Hebl; Representative Scott Gunderson; Representative Robert Turner; Representative Lorraine Seratti; Representative Glenn Grothman; Senator Robert Welch; Senator Robert Cowles; Senator Richard Grobschmidt; Senator Judith Robson; Senator David Hansen
Subject: Deer Feeding and Baiting Decision



Feeding & Baiting
Ban.doc

I am writing you today to request your support in reinstating baiting and feeding of white tail deer in Wisconsin. There are several reasons I believe this ban should be lifted, which I have presented in the attached document.

I believe it is imperative to the Northern Wisconsin economy that this ban be lifted. I do not believe that the "possible" presence of CWD is a valid reason to continue the ban. I also do not believe that CWD represents a threat to humans in any capacity, as has been intimated in much of the press regarding CWD, and therefore even the presence of CWD is not a valid reason to continue the ban.

If after reviewing the issues I have presented, you have any questions of me, please contact me. I would be happy to give you the view of a Northern Wisconsin resident.

Thank you for your consideration of this information.

Steven G. Schultz
W9205 Gustafson Road
Butternut, WI 54514
715-769-3146
pinecurv@pctcnet.net

Flury, Kelley

From: Dan Johnson [danj@midstal.com]
Sent: Wednesday, October 30, 2002 10:07 AM
To: 'Sen.Robson@legis.state.wi.us'
Subject: CWD

Hello Senator Robson,

With the gun hunting season fast approaching and the large concern about CWD in our deer herd in Wisconsin, I just want to express my concern about the potential expiration of the feeding and baiting ban now in effect. I am a deer hunter and also an environmentalist. A short term ban of two or three years is a small price for the long term benefit of these magnificent animals.

Banning these practicing long enough to gather scientific data on the effect on the deer herd and the possible spread of this disease far outweighs any short term economic impact. If the disease spreads, the impact both economically and environmentally is huge. The Elk herd being established in Northern Wisconsin could be exposed to this disease.

Please support the extension of the ban and the long term survival of whitetail deer and deer hunting in Wisconsin.

Thank you for your consideration,

Dan Johnson

Flury, Kelley

From: youngs@bfm.org

Sent: Wednesday, October 30, 2002 9:12

To: Sen.Robson@legis.state.wi.us

I don't hunt myself, but come from a hunting background which has continued on throughout my married life. 90% of my diet consists of venison and other game. I would hate to see the hunting tradition end because those who want to make short term money off the annual deer hunt can't think far enough ahead to realize that baiting may put an end to everything. Listen to the professionals. Give the no-baiting rule a chance. CWD is present in our state. Why take the chance of ruining our deer herd forever, because some have relied on baiting as a means to kill a deer instead of being a true hunter/predator.

Listening to those who want to bring back baiting will come back to haunt you in the future. Please side with what is good for our deer population and for Wisconsin, by keeping the baiting ban intact.

Sincerely,

Christine Young
Rhineland, WI

Flury, Kelley

From: Steve Bushnellman [bushnellman@hotmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, October 30, 2002 9:26 AM
To: Rep.Gunderson@legis.state.wi.us; Rep.Hebl@legis.state.wi.us;
Rep.Seratti@legis.state.wi.us; Rep.Turner@legis.state.wi.us; Sen.Cowles@legis.state.wi.us;
Sen.Grobschmidt@legis.state.wi.us; Sen.Hansen@legis.state.wi.us;
Sen.Robson@legis.state.wi.us; sen.welch@legis.state.wi.us
Subject: ban deer feeding

Dear Sir or Madam

I am writing in regard to express my sentiments on the deer feeding and baiting issues. I have been deer hunting for 34 years, the past 23 in the Eagle River, Wisconsin area. I have noticed over the past, oh lets say 8 years that the deer patterns in my area have changed drastically. With the influx of more and more people feeding deer as a recreation, and as in my opinion a way to "grow their own little herd". I have an 80 property on a little road that is about 3 miles in length, in the past few years there has been approximately 7 new homes/cottages built on this road, with 7 of the 8 feeding deer. I have watched as the deer herd migrated from the deep woods into an area that is concentrated along the the road. To get off track for a minute...if we are so concerned with the car/deer collisions why haven't we addressed the issue of feeding near a highway?? There was a new house built on HWY 17, the people started feeding the house has been there approximately 18 months and in that time span six deer have been hit coming to his feeder! Want to reduce car/deer accidents don't allow feeding within a certain distance from the main highways!!

Back to the main reason I'm writing. The deer in my area have made a distinct transition from being beautiful wild creatures that depended on mother nature to survive, to a herd of domesticated cattle that depend on humans to provide food. We have a herd of pets in my hunting area, which to my disappointment detracts from the way I like to hunt, the deer are no longer back in the woods the best place to put up a stand is in my back yard, and that is the reason that most of these people are feeding to promote their own little herd to pick out a nice deer months in advance and ambush it in the comforts of their back yards! Then they can brag about getting "the thirty pointer"

In areas that there might have been 1 or 2 deer there is now 6 to 8, does are have twin fawns from their 2nd year, the buck to doe ratio is all out of kilter. I could go on, but I know your time is a valuable commodity. My point is feeding has doubled the deer herd around me...unnaturally..it has concentrated the deer into a small area, therefore any communicable diseases are naturally going to spread faster. Why don't we attack the issues of overpopulation, deer/car accidents, and the spread of diseases in a logical manner, NAMELY BAN FEEDING OF DEER!

Thank you for your time.

Steve Raddatz

31213 Bushnell Road
Burlington, WI 53105
262-539-2802

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Flury, Kelley

From: Jeff Aulik [aulik@newnorth.net]
Sent: Wednesday, October 30, 2002 8:10
To: Sen.Robson@legis.state.wi.us
Subject: bait concern

Dear, Senator Robson,

I am writing this email in regards to the upcoming meeting on the DNR emergency ruling concerning the baiting ban. I feel it would be in the best interest of ALL sportsmen and women in Wis. to continue the ban on baiting and feeding deer.

I personally have seen more daytime deer movement this year than I have in many, many years. And I believe it is directly due to no "bait" in the woods. Its common sense if the deer don't have tons and tons of corn available to them, they will obviously move more to feed, thus hunter sightings of daytime deer activity will increase, which will also increase the deer harvest and the enjoyment of the hunt statewide. Sure some hunters will need to adjust their strategies but I feel as they do they will see how much more enjoyable deer hunting can be.

I have talked with many hunters who also feel the same way I do. They are experiencing their best season ever as far as deer movement.

I did some research on other states, and discovered that Pennsylvania does NOT allow baiting for deer. They have similar total square mileage, similar forested land area, similar numbers of hunters, and yet even without bait they harvest nearly the same number of deer every year as Wisconsin. This proves the fact that baiting is NOT necessary to control the deer numbers in our state.

I also am concerned we may lose the federal funding available to Wis. to fight CWD if the ban is reversed. I don't see how we would get federal money if the state is not willing to help with the reduction of transmission of the disease by keeping the ban on baiting and feeding.

10/30/2002

I believe the state should at least keep the ban in place through this gun season, to see the results of a "no bait" hunt. I think the success rate of hunters will increase because of more deer movement resulting from less food in the woods.

Thank You for your time,

Jeff Aulik