

CWD - IT'S TIME TO HALT ALL TRANSPORTATION OF LIVE DEER AND ELK



The Boone and Crockett Club announced that it has released a new position statement on Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD). The position affirms the best way to prevent CWD introduction and establishment is to prohibit all human-assisted live cervid movements.

“The Club has been closely involved with ongoing research about CWD,” said Dr. Josh Millspaugh, Boone and Crockett Professor of Wildlife Conservation at the University of Montana. “With what we know today about how this deadly disease is transmitted

and the potential for introduction to new areas, we urge states to adopt the conclusions, recommendations and Best Management Practices of the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AFWA).”

Most deer and elk are transported for the purpose of establishing or re-stocking commercial shooting preserves and game farms. State wildlife officials also transport live animals to replenish areas with reduced populations or establish new populations. Sometimes these transports are done in cooperation with local and

national conservation organizations. All transportation of live cervid movements are covered by AFWA’s recommendations.

CWD is now found in 25 states, three Canadian provinces, Norway, and South Korea. CWD is not caused by a virus or bacteria that can be treated and cured. It is a protein that is picked up through contact with infected animals or their surroundings. CWD is always fatal. It attacks an animal’s nervous system, taking as long as two years before the animal begins to show outward signs of the disease.

Currently there is no vaccine or practical way to test live animals for the disease.

“Without a practical and reliable test to determine if live animals have CWD, this is an action that should be taken,” explained Millspaugh. “Unknowingly transporting infected animals leads to accelerating the unnatural spread of this disease. We applaud the several states that have already adopted this policy and we’re encouraging others to do the same.”

BOONE AND CROCKETT CLUB POSITION STATEMENT ON CHRONIC WASTING DISEASE AND THE TRANSPORTATION OF LIVE CERVIDS

EFFECTIVE DATE: DECEMBER 7, 2018

SITUATIONAL OVERVIEW

The Boone and Crockett Club, the nation’s oldest hunter-conservationist organization, previously released a position statement regarding its concerns with Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD). The Club maintains that CWD poses a significant wildlife health problem that will prevent many populations of wild deer, elk and other cervids from thriving in the long-term. One particular aspect of the disease merits a further statement by the Club, which is how to address human-assisted transportation of live cervids that is now regarded as the greatest risk for CWD introduction.

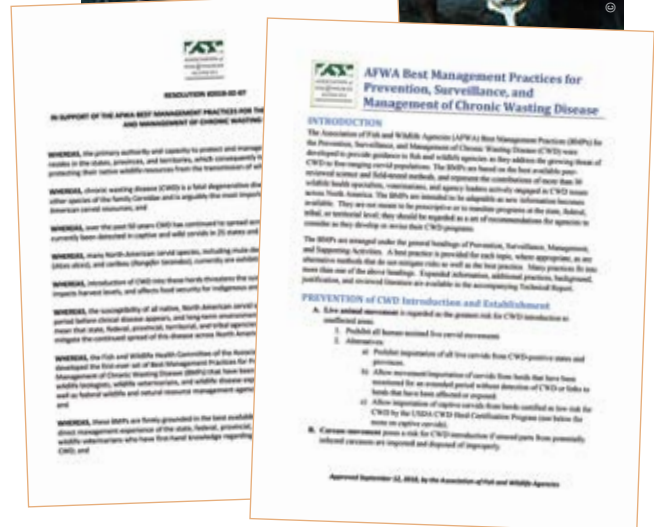
POSITION

The Boone and Crockett Club supports the conclusions and recommendations of the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies in Resolution #2018-02-07 and an associated document outlining Best Management Practices for Prevention, Surveillance, and Management of Chronic Wasting Disease (BMP). The Club joins AFWA in concluding the most effective way to prevent CWD introduction and establishment is to prohibit all human-assisted live cervid movements.

The Boone and Crockett Club encourages states to adopt AFWA’s Resolution in a manner that is appropriate for their own jurisdictions, and to support the Fish and Wildlife Health Committee in developing further science-based recommendations regarding the implementation of the practices described in the BMP document.



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Find the links to AFWA’s Resolution #2018-02-07 and Best Management Practices for Prevention, Surveillance, and Management of Chronic Wasting Disease approved September 12, 2018 at www.Boone-Crockett.org.

Chronic Wasting Disease FACT SHEET



Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) is an always-fatal nervous system disease found in cervids (deer, elk, moose, reindeer). It can be transmitted through direct animal-to-animal contact, contact with saliva, feces, carcass parts of an infected animal, and can even spread through soil that has been contaminated with any of the above tissues or fluids. Once in the environment, CWD is capable of infecting healthy animals for several years. Below are facts that every sportsman should know about CWD and information on how you can help prevent the spread of the disease in your area.

COMBATING CWD

Attempts to eradicate the disease have failed, and efforts to control its spread through herd reduction, hunter surveillance, and other methods have had limited success.

The best way to manage CWD is to prevent its introduction into new areas and limit its spread where it is established. To date, CWD has persisted, spread, and increased in prevalence in nearly every area where it has been introduced. The most effective strategies, by far, are those that eliminate ways CWD can travel to new areas. This includes unknowingly transporting infected live animals, or infected animal parts. In places where CWD is present, cervid populations should be managed to reduce their potential to congregate in unnaturally high numbers, or for their population to increase to unnaturally high totals.

Hunters! Learn what you can do to help combat CWD.

- To date, CWD has been found in wild or captive cervids in 26 states, 3 Canadian Provinces, Norway, and South Korea.
- CWD is the result of a naturally occurring protein, called a prion, that becomes misfolded and resists being broken down by the body's very normal proteins. The disease damages an animal's nervous system and it always fatal because CWD is not caused by a virus or bacteria that can be treated with known vaccines.
- Infected animals are difficult to identify because it may take as long as two years before the animal begins to show outward signs of the disease. It is also rare to see animals exhibiting symptoms of CWD. Animals in the late stages of CWD are often emaciated, show erratic behavior and exhibit neurological irregularities. Due to the long, slow advancement of the disease, predators, vehicles, and hunters are more likely to kill infected animals well before symptoms of CWD get bad enough to be recognizable.
- There is currently no practical test to determine if a live animal has CWD.
- Besides individual animals, CWD can have negative effects on entire herds of elk, mule deer, and white-tailed deer.
- CWD has not been shown to be infective to humans. Current research indicates that there is a robust species barrier that keeps CWD from being readily transmitted to humans but scientists recommend that humans not consume meat from infected animals.

WHAT SPORTSMEN CAN DO

1. **Keep hunting!** Hunting is critical to the management of CWD, and without the support and participation of hunters, there is little available to wildlife managers to stop the advance of CWD into new herds and new areas. Cervid populations, state wildlife agencies, and all those who care about wildlife depend upon what hunters contribute in the battle to manage CWD. By following various disposal guidelines, helping to reduce deer numbers in surveillance areas, and submitting harvested deer for testing, hunters help manage the spread of CWD and inform the science needed to develop more effective CWD management practices.
2. **CWD is a joke.** It is not a contained threat that is being overblown. Be aware that much of the information about CWD readily available on the internet and in popular media is incomplete, heavily biased, or utterly false. Fortunately, there are numerous sources of reliable, science-based information available. Nearly every state fish and wildlife agency currently managing CWD has an information website where you can learn about what is happening with the disease in your area. These pages can be found by clicking on a state to the interactive map found at the CWD Alliance website. Additionally, both the U.S. Geological Survey National Wildlife Health Center and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service have information websites that host valuable CWD information.
3. **Get educated and involved.** CWD is an incredibly difficult disease to manage due to its tenacious persistence in the environment, its ease of transmission, its long incubation period, and its difficulty to detect in infected animals. Therefore, the management of this disease demands significant resources and often requires disease and long-term measures including increased hunter harvest rates, etc. Your voice is needed to support the agencies and biologists tasked with fighting this disease by advocating for funding and science-based tactics for CWD control.
4. **Think about your actions.** Remember, CWD can be spread by (1) animal to animal contact, (2) feces, urine, and perhaps urine-soiled contaminated habitats. Any seasonal factor that causes animals to congregate and interact with each other at a higher frequency, a higher density and a prolonged period of time increases the probability that CWD will be transmitted. So eat feed, bait, or attract cereals to your or your neighbor's property, and if you live in a state or area where such practices are prohibited by law, report any of this behavior to your local wildlife official. How infectious urine can be in transmitting the disease, and to what amount is unknown. To mitigate the risk, several states have banned the use of commercially sold urine-based cover scents and attractants, and others may as well. You should check the laws in your state.
5. **Help wildlife managers.** Although rare, there have been several cases where concerned wildlife advocates and sportsmen have identified CWD positive animals. If you observe an animal showing emaciation, drooping, or staggering movement, call your state fish and wildlife agency.
6. **Know the status of CWD regulations** where you hunt, as well as the states you will travel back through with your harvested animal and follow them carefully. Transportation of live animals, infected harvested animals or parts of infected animals is an easy way for CWD to arrive in your neighborhood. Please check with your state fish and wildlife agency on what parts of your harvested animal you are allowed to bring back to your home and how to dispose of those properly. If the state you're hunting in is testing for CWD in cervids, help wildlife managers fight the disease by submitting your harvested animals for testing. Contact the local state fish and wildlife agency for instructions on how to submit a sample.
7. **Don't use animal attractants** such as grain, other animal feed, or mineral attractants. These and other wildlife feeding practices reduce the risk of spreading CWD. Some herbivores plow up the soil and can even be taken up by plants animals feed on, contributing to concentrate animals in one spot only increases the risk of spreading CWD. This may change the way you hunt, but CWD is indifferent to humans.
8. **Follow the guidelines for field-dressing and processing harvested animals** in CWD-positive areas. These can be found at <http://cwd-info.org/recommendations-for-hunters-single-procedure/>.

CWD Fact Sheet
Provided by




Visit cwd-info.org
for the most up-to-date
and accurate information

BELOW: The Boone and Crockett Club released the first position statement in March 2018, officially acknowledging CWD as wildlife health problem and identifying management tools and priorities.

Read more about CWD in our four part series in *Fair Chase*, issues Winter 2016 - Fall 2017 and visit www.cwd-info.org.

BOONE AND CROCKETT CLUB POSITION STATEMENT

CHRONIC WASTING DISEASE

EFFECTIVE DATE: MARCH 29, 2018 REVISED: APRIL 16, 2018

POSITION

The Boone and Crockett Club maintains CWD is a significant wildlife health problem. CWD has the potential to prevent many populations of wild deer, elk and other cervids from thriving in the long-term. The Club strongly encourages surveillance and management programs to find isolated cases of CWD and remove them from the landscape while few deer are infected. In situations where the disease is widespread, we believe efforts should focus on containment and control strategies.

The scientific community has solved many of the mysteries about CWD biology and ecology, but the knowledge needed to develop effective management and control strategies remains incomplete. How we address diseases among species like cervids that have large, continent-wide distributions is challenging, yet vitally important to the long-term sustainability of these populations. CWD containment is also complicated by the fact it is found in both captive and wild populations that interact and infect one another. The transportation of captive cervids will continue to pose increasing risks to both wild and captive animals in the absence of strict regulations governing such practices.

States, provinces, and tribal lands that are currently CWD-free should consider all available options to prevent it from entering their borders and to detect it if it is present. Another priority should be to obtain more certainty about human exposure risks. Efficacy of various management techniques intended to contain and control the disease should be rigorously evaluated and field-tested.

The Boone and Crockett Club strongly encourages governmental authorities as well as scientists, wildlife management specialists, and stakeholders, to collectively foster and develop sustainable approaches and initiatives to prevent, detect, monitor, control, and contain CWD. The Club will contribute to research, outreach/education, and legislative efforts to reduce infection and transmission rates, fill in knowledge gaps to most effectively manage CWD, stabilize wild cervid populations, and protect people through three primary avenues: The Chronic Wasting Disease Alliance, of which the Club is a founding member, the Club's William I. Spencer Conservation Grants Program, and the Club's network of Boone and Crockett Wildlife Conservation Programs located at prestigious universities across the nation.