



Wisconsin Conservation Congress

**CWD Committee**

Notes recorded by Secretary- Tony Grabski, Iowa County Delegate

From the meeting at

The MacKenzie Environmental Center

Poynette, WI

**Saturday, September 6, 2008**

The CWD Ad Hoc Committee of the Wisconsin Conservation Congress convened at 10:00 AM on Saturday, September 6, 2008, at the MacKenzie Environmental Center, Poynette, Wisconsin. The CWD Committee reviewed and acted on assigned resolutions and matters concerning chronic wasting disease.

**ORDER OF BUSINESS**

1. Organizational Matters

10:00 AM

- A. Call to Order- Meeting was called to order by Chairman Rob Bohmann
- B. Roll Call- Committee members present were Chairman Rob Bohmann, Racine County; Secretary Tony Grabski, Iowa County; and delegates David Breunig, Lafayette County; Allan Brown, Chippewa County; Larry Gohlke, Marquette County; Brad Hasheider, Sauk County; John Obernberger, Marathon County; Mike Riggle, Taylor County; Tom Roskopf, Washington County; Pat Werner, Richland County; and DNR liaisons Alan Crossley and Pete Dunn.

Excused were delegates Dave Poff, Waukesha County; and Gerald Stadler, Sauk County.

Absent were delegates James Krakofsky, Walworth County; and Randy Voegeli, Green, County.

Kurt Thiede, Bill Delanis, and Tom Hauge of the DNR were also in attendance.

Adam Layne represented the Community Action Coalition for South Central Wisconsin, Inc. to provide an update on the venison donation program agenda item 2.F.

- C. Approval of Committee Mission Statement- The CWD ad-hoc Study Committee mission statement below was drafted by Rob Bohmann, Tony Grabski, and Kurt Thiede. A motion to approve the mission statement was made by Larry Gohlke, seconded by Mike Riggle, and unanimously approved:

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

2. Department Informational Items & Updates

10:10 AM

- A. 2008-09 Deer Management Review Process- Alan Crossley gave an update on the process to review all DMUs in the state. He listed all organizations and groups involved. There will be approximately

17-20 stakeholders on the review panel with Al Phelan as the representative for the WCC. Panel members will be recruited by December 2008. The goal of the process is to evaluate and establish new DMUs and herd quotas by 2010. Kurt Thiede said that the review would be comprehensive including all DMUs including those in the CWD-MZ. The process will be coordinated by Keith Warnke, but it has been delayed because his top priority at this time is working toward banning baiting and feeding.

- B. Chronic Wasting Disease Update- Alan Crossly provided a handout of the two tables below of CWD test results:

Test Results Since 2002

<b>DNR Zone</b>	<b>#Sampled</b>	<b>#Analyzed</b>	<b>Positive for CWD</b>
CWD-MZ	98055	98033	990
Remainder of WI	40440	40420	0
Unknown Zone	298	295	0
Total Sampled	138793		
Total Analyzed		138748	
Total Positive			990

2007 Test Results

<b>DNR Zone</b>	<b>#Sampled</b>	<b>#Analyzed</b>	<b>Positive for CWD</b>
CWD-MZ	7166	7165	134
Remainder of WI	1167	1167	0
Unknown Zone	9	9	0
Total Sampled	8342		
Total Analyzed		8341	
Total Positive			134

Out state testing was scaled back in 2007 due to budget cuts. Last year the harvest ratio of does to bucks improved under EAB from 1.6 in 2005 and 1.2 in 2006 to 2.5. The average harvest was 19 deer/square mile in the zone. The population estimate in the zone was basically unchanged from 2006. CWD prevalence in the 120 square mile core area averaged 5% for adult does and 10% for adult bucks over the past 6 years. Prevalence of CWD has not increased over this time period. Population estimates based on aerial surveys were completed prior to the heavy snows late in the winter. Some reports of winter killed deer were made, but the overall winter severity index in the region was not high.

Surveillance is planned for the Northern region this fall and fresh road kills will also be tested as research from WY indicates road killed deer in CWD zones are more likely to test positive than random sampled hunter killed deer. Testing will continue in the core areas in order to maintain data set collected to date for research purposes. A scoring system is being established to even out testing statistics and targeted surveillance. Budget allocation allows for testing 14,000 deer state-wide in the 2008 season. Some Federal funding is available to assist in the Northern Region surveillance. Bill Delanis explained how the Federal funding would be divided between the DNR and DATCP.

Game farms will be tested through DATCP with federal funding. Testing will continue around the Stan Hall farm to insure no CWD positives are present as a result of the escaped animals. However, there is low cooperation from hunters in the area since they do not want to be incorporated into the CWD zone if positives are found.

- C. 2008 CWD Deer Season Preview- The 2008 CWD zone season structure was determined through the public dialog process with input from the CWD Stakeholder group, WDNR, and Natural Resources Board. Major changes include combining the eradication zones (EZ) and herd reduction zones (HRZ) into the CWD management zone (CWD-MZ), no free landowner permits or landowner buck tags will be issued, toll-free CWD number will be replaced with the regular toll-free customer service number, and the January through March landowner season is suspended. The season

structure has also been changed to more closely match the seasons in the non-CWD areas including the youth hunt, October and December antlerless only hunts, regular 9 day rifle season, and 10 day muzzle loader season. An additional holiday period hunt has been added. EAB rules are in effect to harvest antlered bucks. There is no limit on the harvest number as long as EAB rules are followed. Detailed season structure can be found in the rule book and on the WDNR web site: <http://dnr.wi.gov/org/land/wildlife/regs/index.htm>

- D. Captive Cervid Update- Warden Pete Dunn has been working with DATCAP and the captive deer and elk farmers on licensing, regulations and certification. He gave an overview of regulatory, registration, and monitoring issues concerning the agency and DATCAP. The herd harvest requirements are that 10% must be tested and reported to the WDNR. Pete also talked about tracking and removal of escaped animals. This work has been taking place since 2003. During 2007 there were 20-25 reported escapes of approximately 70 animals. The DNR has increased efforts to follow up with the deer farmers in order to recover the escaped animals. Follow up after an escape includes required fence repair inspections, fences are certified for 10 years, but this is too long. However, reducing the inspection certification time frame would require a statutory change. Single versus double fence requirements are complex. Not all farmers report escapes and not all farmers accurately tag animals. Many farmers tag and record all animal efficiently. There is a \$200 fine for failure to report an escape.

The first CWD positive cervid farm was detected in WI during 2002 and 6 new farms have been determined to be CWD positive since then. Three years after detecting a CWD positive, the Christianson farm in Crawford County depopulated and buried the entire the remaining 23 animals prior to testing. These carcasses were examined months later and tests will not be possible.

Mike Riggle and Larry Gohlke started discussion on how the Committee could go on record to speed DATCP's response to CWD positive farms similar to that for other diseases like TB or Pseudo rabies. Kurt Thiede instructed that the Committee could draft a letter to DATCP recommending a more timely response to CWD positive farms and submit it for approval by the Executive Committee. Larry made a motion to draft such a letter, John Obernberger seconded the motion, and the Committee unanimously approved. It was also suggested that Dr. Bourey from DATCP be invited to the Executive Committee meeting when the letter is discussed. Additional issues to be included in the letter to DATCP were related to permanent fencing requirements or State acquisition of CWD contaminated properties that are made available for sale as is the case with the Stan Hall farm. Larry made a motion to include these points in the letter, Mike Riggle seconded the motion, and the Committee unanimously approved. The letter drafted to DATCP is included separately from these notes.

- E. CWD Related Law Enforcement Updates- Pete Dunn gave an update of the Roger Hadimer deer trapping case from Chippewa County. The defendant was trapping deer from the wild with a pulley system and garage door opener. Criminal charges are pending. All trapped animals were killed and tested as CWD negative.
- F. Venison Donation Program Update- Adam Layne gave an update on the program to allow hunters to donate harvested deer to food pantries. This program's goals are to collect \$140,000 and 2,000 deer donations to provide food to needy families at no cost to the hunters donating their deer. All donating individuals and organizations will be recognized for their support. The Committee and the Congress was asked to work toward the financial and deer donation goals by recruiting as many organizations, individuals and hunters to donate to the program. This program is being organized for deer donation in the CWD zones since processing donated deer in these zones is not funded by the agricultural damage program used to support deer donations in areas outside CWD zones. A running total of donations are available by contacting the South West CAP. The first major cash donations have been received from the Uplands Branch of QDMA and White Tails Unlimited.

### 3. Discussion and Action Items

12:30 PM

- A. Resolutions-

1. The Committee discussed and debated resolution 390108 to eliminate DMU 70E submitted in Marquette County by Todd Mascaretti. Alan Crossley asked how the new boundary would be defined? Tony Grabski made a motion to have the boundary evaluated during the state wide DMU review process. The motion was seconded by Al Brown, and passed unanimously by the Committee.
  2. The Committee discussed and debated resolution 520308 to expand DMU 77M in Racine County submitted in Racine County by Ron Seeley. Larry Gohlke made a motion to have the boundary evaluated during the state wide DMU review process. The motion was seconded by Tom Roskopf, and passed unanimously by the Committee.
  3. The Committee discussed and debated resolution 520408 on how Counties are Designated as CWD Counties submitted in Racine County by Mark Seeley. Tony Grabski said the boundary definition in the resolution was too vague and that the CWD Stakeholder Advisory Group (SAG) had already reached agreement on the new CWD-MZ designation. Dave Breunig questioned why a 10 mile buffer zone was needed since deer have been shown to live in fairly small home ranges? Alan reiterated that the SAG and Science Team believed a buffer zone of at least 10 miles was necessary. Mike Riggle argued against shrinking the containment zone and Pat Werner also agreed. Mike Riggle made a motion to reject. The motion was seconded by John Obernberger, and unanimously rejected by the Committee vote.
- B. Recommendations from the 2008 Citizen Stakeholder Group on CWD Management- Alan Crossley presented three main issues to the committee that the CWD SAG recommended be addressed to increase the deer harvest in the CWD-MZ:
1. Allow the use of crossbows- Discussion ensued that various groups were working on language to “shop” legislation on allowing the use crossbows. Dave Breunig suggested that they be allowed in the CWD-MZ as a test zone for the rest of the state and that many retailers want crossbows allowed to increase sales of this additional deer hunting tool. Pat Werner suggested crossbows be allowed under a lesser weapon rule that would make their use legal during rifle season only. Pete Dunn pointed out that the use of bow locks for standard compounds could also come into play with these proposed changes. Mike Riggle worried that legalized crossbow hunting could increase poaching and night hunting because they are silent. Pat Werner motioned to reject increasing legalized crossbow hunting, but there was no second so the proposal died.
  2. Allow the use of magnifying scopes on muzzle loaders- Rob Bohmann pointed out that this resolution has been proposed at least 7 times in the Big Game Committee and 1 time in Law Enforcement and Endangered Resources Committees, but it has died due to not even being discussed or not having any motions made. Arguments were made by Mike Riggle, Tony Grabski, and Al Brown in support to advance a question on the state wide ballot letting the public vote on the issue. Important points made included increased safety for shot placement, more humane kills; sight technology should match advances in muzzle loader ballistics, and greater efficiency for herd reduction. Larry Gohlke motioned to advance a question on allowing magnifying scopes on muzzle loaders to the Executive Council. The motion was seconded by Mike Riggle, and the Committee unanimously agreed to allow Rob and Kurt to draft a question (question attached) on the issue to be advanced to the Executive Council for possible inclusion on the state wide ballot.
  3. Expand the youth deer hunt from 12-15 year olds to 12-17 year olds- Al Brown pointed out a similar resolution (440308) was already pending with the Outdoor Heritage Committee. He made a motion to recommend that the Outdoor Heritage Committee pass resolution 440308. Larry Gohlke seconded the motion, and it was unanimously passed by the Committee.

#### 4. Member Matters-

1:20 PM

Discussion was initiated by Rob Bohmann on the Committees opinion about Friday versus Saturday committee meetings. The consensus was that Saturday meetings were favorable for those traveling a great

distance, Conservation Congress cost reduction, and camaraderie. Al Brown favored a Friday evening meeting, but would like the meeting location to be farther north to equalize the travel requirements for everyone on the Committee. Rob Bohmann said that with the input received, future CWD Committee meetings would continue to be held on Saturdays.

Mike Riggle commented on the importance of deer herd reduction throughout the state, and he commended hunters in the CWD-MZ for their extra effort and sacrifice toward herd reduction and CWD control.

Pat Werner commented on the discontent of many hunters and landowners in the CWD-MZ that had been switched under the new CWD-MZ rules from shotgun only into allowing rifle hunting throughout their areas.

Tony Grabski commented on the loss of the buck tags for landowners in the CWD-MZ. He said that many landowners complained that they are asked to harvest more deer than they want to eat and to allow more hunters on their properties, but they are now given nothing in return. He suggested landowners be given a buck tag, but that they still be required to purchase a license. This arrangement avoids the lost revenue from giving free landowner tags, but continues to give landowners some benefit for their efforts.

Rob Bohmann thanked the Committee for attendance and discussions at the meeting. He recommended that we share our ideas and input with the new Stakeholder Group for DMU boundary and herd quota review.

5. Adjourn

1:55 PM

Tony Grabski made a motion to adjourn; the motion was seconded by Al Brown, and approved unanimously.