

Chronic Wasting Disease Response Plan Review 2010-2015
Executive Summary
August 2016

Introduction:

The Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) Response Plan approved in 2010 designed for a 15 year timespan has six key objectives and 24 associated action items to reach the goal of minimizing the area of Wisconsin where CWD occurs and the number of infected deer in the state. As stated in the Plan, the Department of Natural Resources (Department/DNR) will conduct management program reviews after the conclusions of the 2015, 2020, and 2025 deer seasons to assess progress towards meeting the Plan's established goals and objectives. This internal review was completed in July 2016.

Key Successes Identified:

- The Response Plan is a comprehensive plan that contains relevant goals, objectives, and actions for responding to CWD in Wisconsin.
- During the 2010-2015 timeframe the Department acted upon 22 of 24 action items contained in the Response Plan to varying degrees of achievement.
- The Department has excelled in addressing the needs of our customers:
 - Lead the nation in number of deer sampled annually and in turnaround time on providing sample results to hunters
 - Consistently offered testing free of charge to hunters
- The Department has implemented and developed cost-effective statewide surveillance strategies to detect new positives
 - Prioritized detection of and assessment of disease intensity around newly discovered positives
- The Department has annually monitored and provided information on intensity and distribution of CWD

Overall Key Challenges Identified:

- The CWD Response Plan goal is to “*Minimize the area of Wisconsin where CWD occurs and number of infected deer in the State*” however, the number of CWD positive detections, and distribution of disease detections, has increased over the 5-year timeframe.
- Funding limitations and social/political factors influenced the ability for the Department to fully implement the plan and effectively respond to CWD.



Key Findings by CWD Response Plan Objective:

Prevent New Introductions (6 action items)

Key Findings:

- Carcass transportation restrictions were upheld however these became convoluted with change to CWD affected counties
- Baiting and feeding was banned in 41 counties, however, a statewide ban has not been pursued
- In recent years, disease control was not a primary objective in setting deer quotas
- Need to continue to collaborate with DATCP on issues of cervid health

Monitor For and Respond to New Disease Foci (3 action items)

Key Findings:

- Implemented efficiency in disease detection surveillance (e.g. weighted surveillance) with funding limitations
- Established and implemented sick deer response policy
- Ten mile radii disease assessment surveillance areas were established around 5 new wild positives and 3 captive positives
 - E-registration made collecting large numbers of samples challenging
- Deer rehabilitation ban was lifted in CWD affected counties
- No intensive localized herd reduction has taken place in areas with new CWD positives

Control Distribution and Intensity of CWD (7 action items)

Key Findings:

- Major deer season structure changes occurred in the past 5 years
 - Elimination of CWD-MZ
 - Restructuring of units
 - Elimination of earn-a-buck, bonus buck, October hunt
 - Modifications to holiday hunt
- Formation and influence of CDACs on deer management
- Landowner permits were only issued for 2 of the 5 years
- Sharpshooting was not conducted
- Monitored disease distribution, prevalence and deer populations despite funding constraints

Increase Public Recognition and Understanding of CWD Risks and Public Participation in Disease Control Effort (2 action items)

Key Findings:

- Professional marketing campaign was implemented for 2 years
 - Showed promising results
 - Discontinued due to funding
- Department social science program was unable to conduct human dimensions work on CWD due to funding constraints



Addressing the Needs of Our Customers (5 action items)

Key Findings:

- Offered sampling free of charge to hunters
- Continued to sample more deer than any other state
- Turnaround times for sample results improved
- Funded the food pantry program and associated testing for hunter-harvested deer
- Continued to advocate for disposal of deer in landfills
 - Disposal challenges continued for southcentral wisconsin
- Worked on potential human health risks in conjunction with DHS
 - Published safe handling recommendations
 - Collaborated on testing guidelines for pantry program
 - Kept registry of consumption of CWD positive deer up-to-date

Enhance the Scientific Information about CWD (1 action item)

Key Findings:

- Reductions in federal and state funds for CWD research limited accomplishments during this time frame
- Contributed significantly to CWD research on two scientific publications which enhanced knowledge in disease spread across the landscape
- Maintained a large and comprehensive tissue bank and locational database useful to researchers

