



# WISCONSIN WILDLIFE FEDERATION

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## Federation Applauds Governor's Initiative on CWD

**Columbus:** The Wisconsin Wildlife Federation, the largest conservation organization in Wisconsin, applauds Governor Walker's recent call for undertaking additional items to contain the spread of Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) in Wisconsin. Recent DNR monitoring indicates a significant increase in the numbers of deer infected with CWD in the Southern Wisconsin CWD Zone and the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection has reported several outbreaks of CWD in recent years in captive cervid farms Central and Northern Wisconsin. These recent events support the Governor's initiative to review DNR and improve DATCP CWD management programs.

The Wisconsin deer herd is critically important to Wisconsin's 600,000 gun deer hunters and 225,000 archery and crossbow hunters in the state and is the basis for an estimated \$1 billion annual economic impact for Wisconsin. In addition through efforts of the DNR and sports groups there has been a major effort to import elk into the state of Wisconsin. Elk are also susceptible to being infected with CWD.

The Governor has called for public recommendations to update the DNR and DATCP CWD management efforts. The Wisconsin Wildlife Federation today has submitted a letter to Governor Walker with the following recommendations to limit the spread of Chronic Waste Disease in Wisconsin's wild deer and elk herds:

1. That the captive cervid farm fencing requirements be modified to require exterior double fencing for all captive cervid farms in the state.
2. That DNR or an independent inspection organization be required to conduct an annual inspection of all captive cervid farm exterior fences in the state.

3. That captive cervid farms be required to inspect their exterior fences at least monthly and immediately after any major wind storms in their locality
4. That all captive cervid farms be required to install warning devices to detect open captive cervid exterior fence gates
5. That Wisconsin conduct and independent third party scientific review of the adequacy and effectiveness of the current Wisconsin chronic wasting disease regulations administered by the Department of Natural Resources and the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection and recommend improvements to the current regulations.
6. That if a captive cervid farm in Wisconsin becomes infected by CWD that, unless double fenced, the entire cervid population on the property be depopulated within 30 days.
7. That if a captive cervid farm in Wisconsin becomes infected by CWD, that the exterior fences on that property be required to be maintained in a sound condition until such time as the property on the farm is scientifically found to be CWD prion free.
8. That captive cervid farms in the state be required to maintain liability insurance to cover any costs and damages to the state of Wisconsin including the wild deer herd resulting from any escape of cervids from the farm.
9. That the DNR be required to take whatever steps are necessary to substantially increase the CWD sampling in the state to increase the accuracy of the spread and intensity of occurrence of CWD throughout.
10. That the Legislature be requested to increase funding for the DNR and DATCP to adequately regulate chronic wasting disease in the state including increased inspection of captive cervid farms and the monitoring of CWD in the wild deer herd.
11. That the DNR and the DATCP substantially increase their transparency and distribution of information on chronic wasting disease including its spread in intensity in the wild deer herd, incidents of escapes from captive cervid farms, discovery of CWD in captive cervid farms and updated information on CWD research findings from across the country.

**The Wisconsin Wildlife Federation is Wisconsin's largest conservation organization comprised of 195 hunting, fishing and trapping clubs. A member of the National Wildlife Federation, the WWF's Mission is supporting conservation education and the advancement of scientifically based professional management of natural resources.**