



2007 Annual Report

Introduction

The Chronic Wasting Disease Alliance (CWDA) was formed in January 2002 as a collaborative partnership between the Boone and Crockett Club, Mule Deer Foundation, and Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation to address management and communication needs regarding chronic wasting disease (CWD). Since then, many additional partners and sponsors have joined the effort to implement the mission of CWDA *to promote responsible and accurate communications regarding CWD, and to support strategies that effectively control CWD to minimize its impact on wild, free-ranging cervids including deer, elk, and moose.*

CWD Alliance Partners

- American Wildlife Conservation Fund
- Boone and Crockett Club
- Bio-Rad Corporation
- Cabela's
- Camp Fire Conservation Fund
- Dallas Safari Club
- IDEXX Corporation
- Izaak Walton League of America
- Mule Deer Foundation
- National Fish and Wildlife Foundation
- National Shooting Sports Foundation
- National Taxidermy Association
- Pope and Young Club
- Quality Deer Management Association
- Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation
- Safari Club International
- United States Geological Survey (NBII)
- Whitetails Unlimited
- Wildlife Management Institute

Alliance partners pool resources, share information and cooperate on projects and activities to positively impact the CWD issue. CWDA recognizes that appropriate public information and education are vital to the resolution of the CWD dilemma. The activities of 2007 were no exception to this endeavor.

Administration

In October 2007, CWDA Project Coordinator, Matt Dunfee relocated to Fort Collins, Colorado. His new location allows better access to and coordination with CWD field and lab research teams in Colorado and Wyoming. Wildlife Management Institute (WMI) President Steve Williams will continue to represent CWDA in Washington, DC. This new arrangement will provide better CWDA representation at both a regional and national scale.

In response to CWD surveillance results showing that free-ranging moose (*Alces alces*) have contracted CWD in certain locals, the CWDA altered its mission statement to, "Promote responsible and accurate communications regarding CWD, and to support strategies that effectively control CWD to minimize its impact on wild, free-ranging cervids including deer, elk, and moose."

Website

The CWDA's flagship project is a website (www.cwd-info.org) that was designed to be a clearinghouse for responsible, accurate and timely information about CWD.

It was launched in July 2002, and has proven to be an invaluable resource to wildlife professionals, hunters, media contacts, and the general public.

During 2007, the CWDA website received a daily average of 146 visits (Appendix B, Table 1), and a peak daily usage of 480 visits indicating continual interest in and concern over CWD and continual need for timely and accurate information about it. Peak monthly website usage occurred in November (Appendix B, Figure 1). Although website visits in 2007 were lower than the historical average (181 visits per day), users viewed more pages per session in 2007 than they did in any other year since the website's operation.

Email inquiries through the website remained consistent in 2007, averaging 5-10 questions per week. Historically, the quantity of these emails increases during hunting seasons or when new CWD foci have been identified. Due to the fact that CWD was not detected in a new state or province in 2007, public inquiries focused more on research-related information requests rather than CWD transmission concerns. See Appendix C for a sample of emails submitted to the website.

During 2007, the website underwent major restructuring in the way it organizes and presents information while retaining the concise, clear, and directed interface that the site is recognized for. See Appendix D for a list of pages that have been updated and reorganized. The following is one example of the positive comments that the website has received in response to its updated style:

“Thank you very much for compiling so much CWD info into a site in such an organized and easy to use manner. I am currently writing a paper for school on the subject of controlling CWD with hunting. This site is the best out there and has really helped me gain knowledge both as a student and a hunter. Thank you.”

-Preston of Colorado-

Outreach

CWD Information Display:

In 2007, the CWDA information display traveled to various sports shows and professional conferences. This display outlines the role and activities of CWDA and provides information about CWD, its distribution and management concerns. The 2007 travels included:

January - Dallas Safari Club Annual Convention, Dallas, TX

February – Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies Meeting, Baltimore, MD

May – Quality Deer Management Association Annual Convention, Chattanooga, TN

July – Annual National Taxidermist Association Convention, Louisville, KY

CWD Brochures

During 2007, the CWDA disseminated approximately 45,000 tri-fold brochures to CWD Alliance partners and sponsors, Bass Pro Shop conventions, several outdoor sports shows and professional conferences, and numerous state wildlife agencies. Approximately 40,000 brochures are available for outreach efforts in 2008.

Q & A on CWD for Hunters

In order to provide accurate and complete answers to the most commonly asked questions about CWD from hunters, the CWDA developed an updated and improved version of a “Questions and Answers on Chronic Wasting Disease for Hunters” brochure. This brochure underwent dozens of revisions from managers, administrators, biologists and veterinarians who have professional expertise in all aspects of CWD. The final document was edited by the Wildlife Management Institute and published by the National Shooting Sports Foundation. It is available on the CWD Alliance website, and has been sent to every state wildlife agency in North America, many of whom have made it available on their CWD information sites. Copies of the brochure have also been sent with the CWD information display, and copies have been available at Bass Pro Shop conventions and numerous other outdoor and professional conferences. In 2007, CWDA regularly sent copies of the brochure to local state wildlife agency offices and state hunter education programs as requested. In November of 2007, the brochure was translated into Spanish, and will be available on the CWD Alliance website in 2008.

Professional Committees

In 2007, Matt Dunfee, represented CWDA at:

Dallas Safari Club Annual Convention – January 2007, Dallas, TX

Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies Meeting – February 2007, Baltimore, MD

Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies’ Fish and Wildlife Health Committee

- March 2007, Portland, OR

- September 2007, Louisville, KY

Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies’ Law Enforcement Committee

- September 2007, Louisville, KY

In November 2007, Matt was appointed as advisor and steering committee member for the 3rd International Chronic Wasting Disease Symposium. He will represent CWDA in this position through July of 2009.

Media Outreach

The CWD Alliance responded to dozens of media inquiries in 2007 via email and phone conversations. Matt Dunfee provided four official media interviews on behalf of CWDA. Those interviews are summarized below:

January, 2007 – Telephone interview with Sho Ishida, director for Japanese public broadcast station NHK, for a news story on CWD in America.

June, 2007 – Telephone interview with Heather Sofran, freelance writer, for an article on the pros and cons of hunting as a management tool for CWD.

July, 2007 – Telephone interview with Richard Cockle, Oregonian Newspaper, on CWD management concerns with captive cervid farms.

December, 2007 – Telephone interview with Patrick Durkin, freelance writer, for a three-part story in the Quality Deer Management Association's "Quality Whitetails" magazine on the impacts of CWD and cervid farms in wildlife management.

Project Investment Highlights

“Shedding Light On CWD”

In May 2007, CWDA purchased full rights of the "Shedding Light on Chronic Wasting Disease" video from American Outdoor Productions (AOP). As part of the purchase agreement, AOP produced updates and edits to the video under the guidance of CWDA. The video provides current information on CWD facts, regulations, management, and sample collection for CWD testing procedures. In addition, the video depicts recommended field processing techniques for harvested cervids in CWD-positive areas. The video is available online free of charge through AOP's website (www.welcometohunting.com/video/CWD/cable/cwd.html) and MyOutdoorTV.com (<http://www.myoutdoortv.com/new/cwd-alliance-3.html>). Both of these high-speed video hosting services are free to CWDA.

CWD Bibliography

CWDA and the National Biological Information Infrastructure (NBII) Wildlife Disease Information Node launched an exhaustive on-line bibliography of CWD-related research literature, citations and full-text articles in May 2007. Formatted into a fully searchable database, the bibliography contains more than 230 documents, including full-text, peer-reviewed literature and abstracts, CWD management plans, illustrations, maps, news updates, and much more. These can be accessed using either a guided search that lists items under 56 search categories or a basic search that lists items by specific topics and key words submitted by the user. Results from both search options are listed alphabetically and can be sorted by various reference filters (e.g., Headline, Publisher, Publication Date, etc.). In June 2007, the CWDA partnered with Dr. Kurt VerCauteren of the USDA's National Wildlife Research Center to expand and update the bibliography with archived and current CWD articles.

Interactive International CWD Regulations Map

In cooperation with the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agency's (AFWA) Law Enforcement Committee, CWDA produced an interactive, on-line “regulations” map that allows users to check CWD-related information by simply clicking on the state or province they wish to research. The regulations-mapping information project was an outgrowth of concern on the part of the AFWA committee about the lack of consistency among and general accessibility of CWD regulations. At the 72nd North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference in Portland, Oregon, the committee recommended that a list of the most-restrictive cervid carcass-transportation regulations be posted on the internet along with an interactive map of the United States allowing hunters to view appropriate CWD regulations state by state. In June 2007, CWDA developed and produced the map, using regulations data from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources' biannually updated “CWD and Cervidae Regulations in North America” summary table. These data allowed CWDA to broaden the scope of the project to all of North America. Numerous states have since published links to the map in their big-game hunting regulations and website hunting pages.

Budget Summary

Between April 1, 2007 and March 31, 2008, CWD Alliance partner and sponsor contributions totaled \$45,000. Administration and project expenses totaled \$55,787.31. The remaining funds available for 2008 total \$71,180.81 (Appendix A).

Appendix A

2007 Budget and Financial Summary

CWD Alliance Balance Sheet Summary

STARTING 4/1/07	\$84,942.68
Sum of Amount	
Expense Category	Total
Income	\$ 45,094.93
Personnel	\$(29,458.47)
Printing	\$ (9,719.46)
Travel	\$ (94.93)
Video	\$ (8,400.00)
Web Hosting	\$ (4,633.33)
Web Site	\$ (3,481.11)
Grand Total	\$(10,692.37)
ENDING 3/18/08	\$74,250.31

<u>Submitted 3/19/08</u>	
Personnel	\$ (2,257.50)
Web Hosting	\$ (812.00)
ENDING 3/19/08	\$71,180.81

<u>Revenue</u>	
UT Mule Deer Inv	\$5,000.00
WI Whitetails Un	\$5,000.00
NE Cabala's CWD	\$5,000.00
CT NSSF	\$5,000.00
GA Quality Deer Management	\$2,500.00
TX Dallas Safari Club	\$5,000.00
recl Matt D expenses	\$94.93
NY Campfire Cons	\$5,000.00
GA Quality Deer Management	\$2,500.00
Deposit credited to CWD Alliance	\$5,000.00
Transfer of RMEF 2006 Dues	<u>\$5,000.00</u>
ENDING 3/19/08	
Total	\$45,094.93

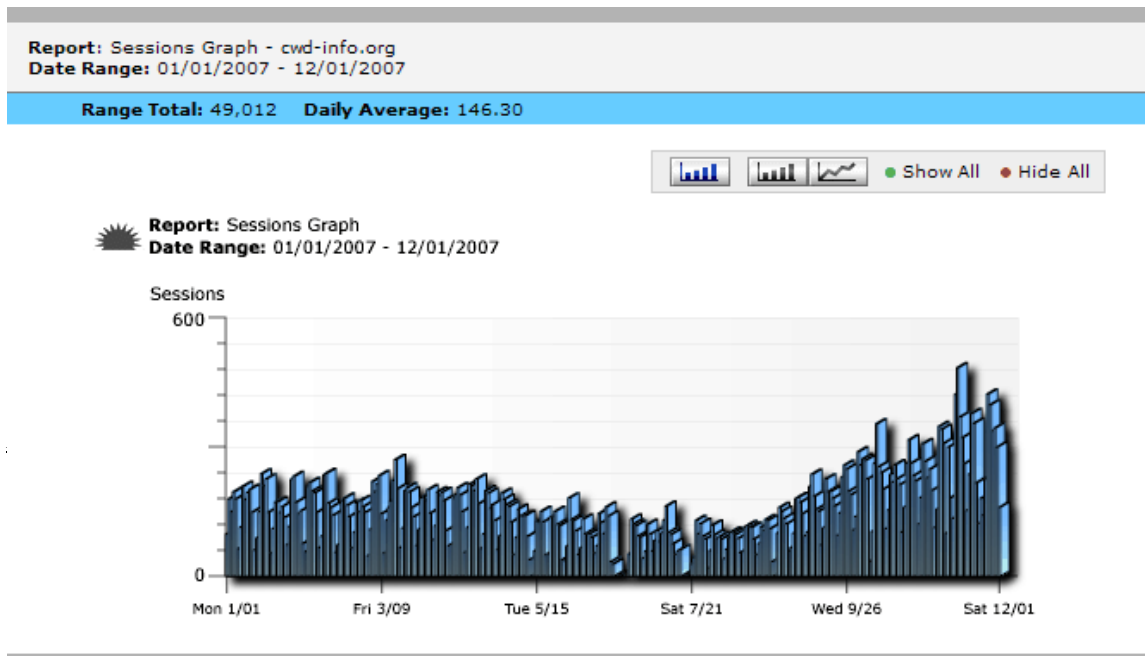
Appendix B

Website Statistics for www.cwd-info.org

Table 1. Summary of www.cwd-info.org usage statistics for 2007.

Report: Summary - cwd-info.org Date Range: 01/01/2007 - 12/01/2007	
Total Sessions	49,012.00
Total Pageviews	181,220.00
Total Hits	2,492,807.00
Total Bytes Transferred	56.18 GB
Average Sessions Per Day	146.30
Average Pageviews Per Day	540.96
Average Hits Per Day	7,441.21
Average Bytes Transferred Per Day	171.74 MB
Average Pageviews Per Session	3.70
Average Hits Per Session	50.86
Average Bytes Per Session	1.17 MB
Average Length of Session	00:04:28

Figure 1. Graph of www.cwd-info.org daily usage summaries for 2007.



Appendix C

Sample of Emails Submitted to www.cwd-info.org

(Names and email addresses have been removed for privacy)

Message:

I just wanted to write and compliment on your site. I am writing a research paper for my college Communication Skills class about the affects of CWD. And your site by far gave me the greatest amount of useful information. It was really interesting to read. Keep up the good work, and if you have a mailing list I would like to get subscribed to keep myself up to date with it all. I am a hunter, and this is something I am deffinitely interested in. Thanks!

Message:

thankyou for all the great information on this superior website. it was extremely useful in the essay i composed for a wildlife awareness class.

Message:

hi i live between marietta and belpre ohio in washington county and have heard rumors of several dead deer being found close to where i live,they were found arround co rd 10 (blueknod roar) and i wandered if you had heard any thing about this according to what the game wardens are saying it is because we have had little rain and the deer are drinking stagnet water and that is what is killing them, the were suposed to have been found on the mitchem farm on brush road,the wezt's property and on the hanna farm on hanna road off co rd 10(blue knob road) caN YOU SHEAD SOME LIGHT IN THIS THANKS CVHARLIE WILFONG

Message:

Our veterinary clinic currently uses National Veterinary Service Laboratory for CWD testing. This particular lab has been very slow in getting results to us. Do all of the laboratories you have listed do surveillance testing at no cost to our veterinary clinic? I am interested in possible using another laboratory for our clients. Thank you.

Message:

I recently came across the CWD Brochure under the Resources tab on your website. I thought it is very well put together and was wondering if you had any printed versions you could send me for distribution within our agency. I would ultimately be looking at around 100 or so. Thank you for your help.

Message:

Field dressed carcass. I bought my husband and a friend of his an elk hunt in Michigan. At a private preserve that advertises that all their trophy animals are CWD free and TB tested. The first day of the hunt they both bagged an elk. They inquired with the outfitter on bringing the animal back to our home state of New York as we had a butcher here, and a taxidermist we could use. He asked what documentation they needed, to bring it back home. The owner/outfitter gave them shipping tags issued by the DNR of Michigan. For 1 dressed elk carcass. Now my husband is a retired disabled police officer, He read over the tags and they were legitimate documents from The state of Michigan DNR. Upon arrival into our hometown of Oxford New York. My husband and his friend go to the local gas station, to get gas and a bite, before going to the butcher and taxidermist. Of course they draw a crowd. They drop their animal at the butcher, the next day the butcher called for them to pick up their capes for the taxidermist. This is when the problems start, the game warden call the house, I call my husband and tell him they go back to the butcher, to try and straighten this out, only to find them loading the elk meat in clear plastic bags onto the back of an open muddy trailer. They tried to explain to the game warden that they had tags for them, He didn't want to hear it. The game warden then threatens them with jail if they didn't tell them where the heads were. Long story short they confiscated everything with no hopes of getting anything back. We offered to pay for a CWD test, They said no they were going to do that anyway and even if it comes back negative we still can't have anything back, Not even the head to mount. That they were going to incinerate everything. They took great joy in telling us that. Now we are out approx. 10k and have to hire a lawyer to get them out of trouble. They are being charged with unlawful import of prohibited elk parts into NYS. The DNR of Michigan said they should have honored the tag that was with the elk. But NY won't comply. I don't know if you can help or if you can direct me to someone that can that would be great.

Message:

I live in the province of Nova Scotia, and our Natural Resources department has recently implemented a ban on the use of deer scents in an effort to curb the spread of CWD. Although the limited evidence suggests that CWD is not transmitted in a deer's urine, the question has arisen, "what about the hemo excretions when a doe comes into heat?". Do you know of any samplings or other information that would substantiate or disprove these secretions as possible transmissives?

Message:

Why are fallow deer listed as just another cervid along with Wild Deer and elk after years of testing by A.R.S. which has proven them to be C.W.D. free. Has there ever been a documented case in these animals?

Message:

I just wanted to inform you that there IS a case of human infection of CWD. The only man to ever have this is a resident of Traverse City, MI and I am working to raise money so he can receive a neonatal blood core stem cell transplant. I just wanted to inform you that there is a human-infected case, contrary to what your article says. Thank you.

Message:

We just started a skulling cleaning business, and I have the following questions that I need answered:

1. When receiving skulls from out of state, should we require certifications that say the animal was tested for CWD?
2. Could we as owners get the disease from handling brain matter, or could my pet Lab be infected from a CWD infected animal if we should obtain a skull that we didn't have a clue about?
3. Does direct contact with the brains subject you to exposure to the disease?
4. And is there an incubation period when the disease dies after a period of time so that you cannot contract the disease from an infected skull, etc.?
5. Could CWD affect our colony of dermestid beetles?

Even though I have read alot of CWD, I would appreciate your prompt attention to my questions.

Message:

I was driving around the Gypsum plant in Gypsum (Port Clinton) an I noticed a white tail deer that was standing inside the fenced in area of the plant.

It seemed like an older deer as I drove past and looked at it from behind it looked like the deer did not eat all winter, looked like it was starving.

You may want to check it out

Appendix D

Updates, Changes and Additions to www.cwd-info.org

Pages Updated or Changed

Home Page

- “What’s New” section added
- New links to “Scale-Dependent Approaches to Modeling Spatial Epidemiology of Chronic Wasting Disease” document, interactive CWD Regulations Map, and “Shedding Light on CWD” video
- Mission statement revised to include moose

Links and Navigation Bar

- Repetitive links removed and necessary links or navigation tabs reorganized to enhance interface usability

CWD Experts

- Updated contact information and approval of all listed experts to remain available as contacts

Policy and Legislative

- Updated with current information and links reorganized to enhance interface usability

Other updated pages previously outdated by two years

- FAQ
- CWD Overview
- Simple Precautions
- USDA Guidelines
- Other Questions
- CWD Brochure
- CWD Detection

New Website Additions

"Shedding Light on CWD" available online as a free video:

<http://www.welcometohunting.com/video/CWD/cable/cwd.html>

“CWD Regulations in North America” offered as an interactive, clickable map:

<http://www.cwd-info.org/index.php/fuseaction/policy.regulationsMap>

“Scale-Dependent Approaches to Modeling Spatial Epidemiology of Chronic Wasting Disease - Special Report 2007” offered online:

<http://www.cwd-info.org/index.php/fuseaction/resources.newresearch>

“Questions and Answers on Chronic Wasting Disease for Hunters” brochure:

<http://www.cwd-info.org/pdf/CWD%20Brochure.pdf>

“Chronic Wasting Disease Literature References” searchable CWD bibliography:

<http://www.cwd-info.org/index.php/fuseaction/resources.bibliography>