

**Midwest Deer and Wild Turkey Study Group Meeting  
Conception, MO  
August 19-20, 2002**

Terry Dougherty a warden with Missouri DOC offered some insights on the captive cervid trade. Much was based on the testimony of a former deer hauler who has turned states evidence. He had hauled numerous loads of illegal deer and elk that were shipped to many states by Michigan brokers. Untested deer bring premium prices on shooting preserves because they can be laundered for entry into Boone and Crockett, TB-tested deer with ear-tags and shaved necks show evidence of being from game farms and cannot be entered in B&C. Gate hunts are going for \$40-50,000, no record of these hunts on the books. Most of the deer he moved were wild caught deer from Ontario. Twenty-nine were shipped into Wisconsin without testing. Major destination states were Texas, Pennsylvania, Missouri, and Mississippi. Deer were brought into US at a friendly border crossing in Montana; driver carried 2 sets of papers, one for the authorities and 1 for the ranch owner. Untested loads are hauled at night to minimize stress on the animal, and less inspections at the border. In Texas, wardens can stop cattle haulers on the interstate for inspection. Ontario deer farmers baited wild deer into pens; veterinarians supplied false health certificates for wild deer. 5000 prosecutable violations documented, many from discrepancies between age of deer and age on tags. Illegal market is dependent on veterinarians supplying false papers for a cut of the profit. Illegal shipments will continue until there is no market for trophy deer on shooting preserves. Brokers prefer deer from Canada, good exchange rate and lax border enforcement. Estimated that 25,000 deer/month are being moved throughout the US.

**State plans for CWD testing in 2002, captive regulations, etc.**

**Indiana:** 3000 samples, distributed across state in proportion to harvest. 1,000 will be tested and 2,000 will be stored unless a positive is detected. Board of Animal Health will do collection. Temporary ban on imports extended until May 2003. Mandatory testing of any deer that dies in captivity. Permanent rule proposed for after May is fairly weak, will allow import from states without CWD without testing, little regulation of intrastate movements.

**Illinois:** 3000 samples, based on Wisconsin border and captive herds, 35 of 102 counties will be sampled. DNR and Ag have joint and overlapping authority over captive cervids. Dept of Ag presented its proposed permanent rule to Board of Livestock Commissioners who reduced monitoring requirement for imports from 5 to 3 years. On same day DNR filed its permanent rule that called for 5 years of monitoring, DNR rule is more stringent and takes precedence. Will ban baiting and feeding and import of whole carcasses. Farms must enroll in voluntary surveillance program to sale or move animals, no authority for mandatory surveillance of all farms.

**Iowa:** continuing with targeted surveillance. Will sample 475 from each of 4 counties in NE that border Wisconsin.

**Kansas:** 1,200 sampled in 2002 with some from each DMU. 300 from the northwest nearest Colorado. Dept of Ag's regulations have little affect on movements, very limited enforcement/monitoring capabilities. State has good relationship with USDA-APHIS.

**Michigan:** 2000 samples, 50/county from 40 counties, selecting counties based on 10+ captive cervid herds, deer research facilities, and counties bordering of near Wisconsin. Complete statewide sampling in 3 years. Will sample 50 hunter-harvested elk. Import is banned from counties or adjacent counties with CWD. Captive farms must maintain records of transport, surveillance testing of deaths, imports from Wisconsin have been traced and quarantined.

**Minnesota:** Sample 5000 heads, targeting border with Wisconsin and near captive facilities. Continuing targeted surveillance. Cervid owners can register trough Board of Animal Health. 1-year ban on imports from selected states and counties. Import from other areas require 3 or more years of monitoring, proposing to make import restrictions permanent and to increase years of monitoring. 10-15% of deer farms enrolled in voluntary surveillance program. DNR does not have access to BAH records. Proposing to ban public feeding and increase deer license by \$1 for disease management. Proposing to update game farm laws to require notification of escapes, 8' fences, to eliminate petting zoos and rehab of orphaned fawns.

**Missouri:** 6000 samples, 200/county, 3 years for sample entire state, 30 counties this year, 10 ctys in northern part of state, nearest Wisconsin and Nebraska, 10 ctys w/ 3+ cervid farms, and 10 ctys randomly selected. Import of deer and elk controlled by Dept. of Ag. Requiring that imported cervids come from herds monitored for 3 years, cervid farms must be in monitoring program for sale but shooting preserves do not have to be in the program. Breeders must test all animals that die in captivity.

**Nebraska:** 100 samples/DMU for next 3 years from entire state + all heads voluntarily offered at checkstations in the Panhandle. Hunters can ship samples at own expense to state lab. Department policy: priority is disease control not recreation, goal is prevention of spread and eventual eradication, agency has authority to use employees to depopulation, research will receive priority funding, no wild cervid will be transplanted in Nebraska, full and complete disclosure of all information and data. Agency actions: sample collections from all DMU's, passage of captive regulations (5-yr monitoring required for import), restricting baiting, no authority to regulate feeding, training staff to recognize clinical cases, funding cooperative research, developing management plans for DMUs, and participating in the national planning effort.

**North Dakota:** Will sample 2 areas with ~400/area, 1 near South Dakota and 1 near Minnesota (closest to Wisconsin). Relying primarily on meat processors. Poor relationship between Board of Animal Health (has control of captives) and Game and Fish. BAH has little enforcement and there is poor compliance. Wardens have little authority.

**Ohio:** Dept of Ag will do CWD sampling, primarily targeted surveillance, considering random hunter surveillance ~500 heads in high deer density counties. Import of deer from Wisconsin is banned.

**Ontario:** will start looking, less worry, lower deer densities, will collect ~200 from each of several military bases. Elk restoration project using elk from Elk Island National Park is on hold pending a risk assessment, likely will not import additional elk. All deaths have been tested for CWD and have been negative. Proposing to ban whole carcass import and considering restricting scents and lures.

**South Dakota:** Increasing tags in area near the 1 positive and near captive herds. Not sampling statewide. Sampled 500-600 in 2001, using hunter drop-off barrels and meat processors. Focusing on border with Wyoming and Nebraska. Having problems with sample quality, commented that in Saskatchewan 40% of samples could not be tested. Announced new positive captive elk, 3.5-yr. old bull, adjacent to herd that was depopulated 4.5 years ago.

**Tennessee:** ~1000 animals sampled this fall, primarily targeted surveillance, some random sampling near 75 captive facilities.

The Missouri health specialist presented a lab demonstration on the technique for pulling brain stems, retropharyngeal lymph nodes, and tonsils. Bruce Morrison demonstrated the 'water-pik' technique for extracting brain stems. There were several heads available for interested biologists to practice the procedure.

#### **Other issues:**

University of Missouri is developing noninvasive techniques for measuring stress in deer and elk using fecal glucocorticoids. Seasonal cycle of stress index in elk from Custer State Park correlates with air temperature and human use of park, low in winter, highest in summer.

**Missouri** is starting an evaluation of telecheck for deer/turkey registration. A sample of hunters is assigned to a treatment group (telecheck or control [regular checkstations]) at the time they purchase their permit. Will test hypotheses is % of males in harvest equal, is % of adults in harvest equal, are hunter success rates equal.

**Missouri** has been evaluating fate of rehabbed fawns. High mortality of released fawns, 19 of 21 fawns died in year 1. Somewhat better survival in year 2 due to landowner feeding several fawns. Fawns habituated for people, generally in poor health, not selecting nutritionally high quality foods. Most deaths due to coyote predation. Other causes include shot, disease, bobcat predation, malnutrition, broken legs, and drowned.

**Missouri** has geographic trends in antler size, larger in North than in South, correlated to amount of harvested cropland. Recent decline in antler size in northwestern portion of state.

**Indiana:** added 410 to list of legal weapons, added 2 antlerless deer to statewide archery limit if taken in urban deer zone, urban season opens Sept 15<sup>th</sup>.

**Illinois** is considering limitations on archery permits, firearms harvest has stabilized but archery harvest continues to increase.

**Kansas** has prepared a manual for urban leaders on deer management. Landowners can obtain 1/2 of nonresident permits and resale for any amount (\$800 archery permits on e-Bay), seeing an increase in nonresident outfitters, more leasing, \$2000-5000 hunts with lodging and food, pressure from legislature to increase number of nonresident permits, permits good for anywhere in DMU.

**Michigan** feels that spread of TB has been stopped and prevalence is stable. A reduction in prevalence will require further population reduction or better enforcement of baiting/feeding regulations. Using a 3-part tag for TB sample collections. Stub is given to hunter with ID # and hunter can check results on Internet. Part stays on head, part has data on name and address etc. that is torn off and data is entered. Tags out of waxy, waterproof paper, use extra fine Sharpie markers, can soak blood off. Tags are bar coded and have Palm Pilots with bar code readers. Used Palm Pilots for checkstation data collection, 4 of 200 units failed due to drops or battery failure. \$200/unit \$20,000 for software development.

**Missouri** has a surcharge on nonresidents from Kansas, Illinois, and Iowa. Most nonresidents are family members and former residents. Commissioner, who hunts in Kansas, wanted reciprocal prices, agreed to \$25 surcharge.

**North Dakota** has had 2 mild winters in a row, deer population and harvest is increasing, number of roadkills is increasing.

**Ohio** has opened Sunday hunting. Shannon Woods PZP study ongoing for 6-7 years, no significant population reduction, culled 90 deer this past year. Cleveland is interested in nonlethal control. White Buffalo is doing research. 81 does vaccinated with 1 shot PZP, all yearlings and adult does were pregnant and gave birth, proposing a 6 year study with \$600K budget, now considering sterilization of 25-30 does and culling rest of population.

**Ontario** has had mild winters and an increasing nuisance deer problem.

**South Dakota** is trying to kill as many deer as they can, is extending the muzzleloader and archery seasons through January. Using the Internet to sale tags, apply over net and mail out tags, now 25% of sales.