

RESOLUTION #2011-__

DETRIMENTAL CONSEQUENCES OF THE GROWING PRACTICE
OF BAITING AND FEEDING DEER AND WILD TURKEYS

WHEREAS: Wildlife belongs to all citizens equally; method of take is entrusted to the state or province in consideration of the resource for the benefit of the public; and

WHEREAS: Effective communication, education and enforcement are enhanced when rules and regulations are consistent across state and provincial boundaries; and

WHEREAS: Baiting is not necessary to successfully harvest deer or wild turkey; and

WHEREAS: Feeding is not necessary to sustain healthy deer and wild turkey populations; and

WHEREAS: It is not possible to bait or feed deer and wild turkey without increasing the likelihood for the spread of diseases and parasites; and

WHEREAS: Concentrating deer by baiting and feeding can facilitate the transmission, establishment, and spread of diseases such as chronic wasting disease, bovine tuberculosis, brucellosis and Johne's disease and parasites such as ticks, mites and nematodes; and

WHEREAS: Concentrating wild turkey by baiting and feeding can facilitate the transmission, establishment, and spread of diseases such as blackhead, avian pox and parasites such as ticks, lice, tape worms and round worms; and

WHEREAS: Deer and wild turkey pathogens often remain viable at bait or feed sites long after the feed or bait no longer exists; and

WHEREAS: Increased transmission and spread of diseases and parasites in deer and wild turkey may potentially put other wildlife and domestic livestock and public health at risk; and

WHEREAS: Once certain diseases such as bovine tuberculosis become established in a deer population the cost of management dramatically increases thereby diverting limited public funds from traditional wildlife management activities; and

WHEREAS: Feeding deer and wild turkey acclimates these animals to people which creates nuisance animals. Once the general public perceives a species as a nuisance, tolerance for and value of the species to society diminishes; and

WHEREAS: The National Wild Turkey Federation technical committee resolution (1982) discourages the artificial feeding of turkeys, and The Wildlife Society position paper, Baiting and Supplemental Feeding of Game Wildlife Species (2007) discourages supplemental feeding and baiting of all wild game species; and

WHEREAS: We acknowledge that feeding of wild ungulates has been a long tradition with some state, federal and provincial agencies dating back to the early 1900s; and

WHEREAS: We acknowledge that banning baiting and feeding will not totally eliminate the possibility of disease transmission, establishment, and spread in free-ranging deer and wild turkey populations, but it is a positive, proactive step.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies hereby advocates that member states and provinces:

1. Collectively work to educate deer and wild turkey hunters, conservation organizations, the agricultural community and the general public as to the dangers and potential impacts resulting from the intentional baiting and feeding of deer and wild turkey; and
2. Remain resolute in prohibiting the practice of the intentional baiting and feeding of deer and wild turkey in those states and provinces where baiting and feeding bans currently exist; and
3. Prohibit the intentional baiting and feeding of deer and wild turkey in those states and provinces where those practices are currently allowed; and
4. Communicate these concerns to the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies.