

IDAHO SPORTSMEN'S CAUCUS ADVISORY COUNCIL

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Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) Fact Sheet

There is no evidence that CWD has made it into the Idaho's wild cervid population, and the Idaho Departments of Fish & Game and Agriculture need to do everything possible to keep this disease out of Idaho. There are two documented cases of CWD infected deer and elk that were brought into Idaho.

What is it?

CWD is a fatal neurological disease found in deer, elk and moose that is in the family of diseases known as transmissible spongiform encephalopathy. It is caused by prions, a type of abnormal protein. It is not a bacteria or virus. CWD is a part of a group of diseases that includes Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (mad cow) in cattle, Scrapie in domestic sheep and goats, and Creutzfeldt-Jacob (CJD) in humans. CWD is always fatal. No vaccine or treatment or test of live animals has yet been developed. Additionally, with regard to livestock, it as been found that cattle are susceptible to CWD via direct injection of the disease.

Where is it?

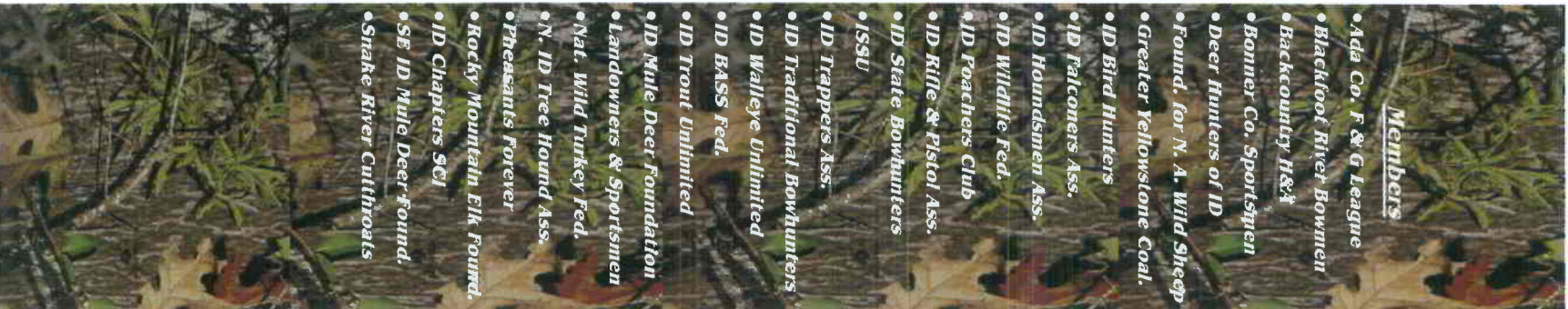
CWD has been found in deer, elk or moose in 15 States and 2 Canadian Provinces. CWD has been found next door in Utah, Wyoming and Montana.

How is it transmitted?

Generally, CWD is transmitted by animal to animal contact in cervids (elk, deer, moose, etc.). Exact routes are believed to be one or more of the following: through saliva, mucus, or contact with feces from an infected animal. The greatest risk of introduction is movement of infect animals that have not yet exhibited symptoms. CWD has a long incubation period, which may exceed 5 years.

Can people get it?

At this time disease experts do not believe that CWD presents a risk to people. However, the theoretical possibility must be acknowledged. Therefore most states have cautioned hunters about proper methods of handling their game to avoid potential exposure.



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How do we keep CWD out of Idaho?

Strategies that are being used by other states include:

- Halt importation of all deer, elk and moose species into the state.
- Prohibit “canned” hunting operations in the state.
- Continue to prohibit baiting of deer, elk and moose in Idaho.
- Discourage management practices that result in high concentrations of deer, elk and moose over small areas, such as supplemental feeding.

More than 30 states now prohibit the transport of any cervidae, including elk, deer, moose and red deer, into or out of the state. Many states also have regulations that prohibit the meat and carcasses from deer, elk or moose to enter their boundaries unless it is boned out. Idaho has no rules for the transport of any cervidae or for regulating entry of meat from deer, elk or moose into the state.

What happens if CWD gets into a deer herd?

The abnormal protein that causes CWD is quite stable and may remain a threat in the soil for years. Even cooking or ordinary burning will not destroy the protein. A management method that has been used is complete depopulation of deer, elk and moose within an affected area. This step is underway in parts of Colorado, Nebraska, and Wisconsin, and its effectiveness is not yet known. By-out and removal of elk ranches has also been used in the US and Canada as a means to reduce the spread of CWD.

What are the economic impacts if CWD gets into Idaho?

Reduction in both resident and non-resident hunters due to fear of CWD could reduce available revenue to the Idaho Fish and Game Department, and local businesses in rural Idaho that depend on hunters for a major source of their annual income. Examples of costs in other states to depopulate infected areas or eliminated game farms include: \$33 million in Saskatchewan; \$5 million in Colorado, and \$12 million in Wisconsin.

Contact [ISCAAC](http://www.idahoscac.org) for more information.