



THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY

TENNESSEE CHAPTER

Position Statement on the Invasion of Chronic Wasting Disease into Tennessee

Chronic wasting disease (CWD) is a transmissible spongiform encephalopathy of some members of Cervidae, including white-tailed deer, mule deer, elk, moose, and others. As of 1 March 2019, positive CWD cervids have been detected in 26 U.S. states and three Canadian provinces since the late 1960s, and the disease continues to emerge and spread in North America. Substantial population declines of cervids and economic loss can occur following the invasion of CWD into previously disease-free locations. In addition, some evidence suggests that CWD may be transmissible to primates, and captive cervid facilities may contribute to the invasion of CWD.

Positive CWD white-tailed deer were detected in Fayette and Hardeman counties, Tennessee, on 14 December 2018. The Tennessee Chapter of The Wildlife Society (TN-TWS) hereby declares the invasion of CWD into Tennessee as a threat to the wildlife, economy, and potentially the public health of the State of Tennessee. The TN-TWS supports swift and coordinated response by state natural resource, agriculture, and public health agencies in cooperation with the Tennessee General Assembly and other identified partners. The TN-TWS recommends that response includes at a minimum: (1) rapid identification of CWD distribution in Tennessee, (2) assessment of potential CWD impacts on Tennessee economics, (3) identification of factors that may contribute to the spread of CWD in Tennessee, (4) identification and implementation of strategies to reduce the impact of CWD on the citizens of Tennessee, and (5) inclusion of science in decision making.

Vote: 41 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions (03/01/2019)