

COURTESY OF THE CWD ALLIANCE

CHRONIC WASTING



DISEASE

What Every Hunter Should Know

By Daniel Green, Weyerhaeuser wildlife scientist, and Donald Wood, senior lease manager

Over the last few years, chronic wasting disease (CWD) has received more and more press as the disease has been identified in new areas. Maybe it has been discovered in your state.

Read on to become more knowledgeable about this serious disease.

WHAT IS CWD?

CWD IS A 100 PERCENT
FATAL NEUROLOGIC
DISEASE OF DEER, ELK,
AND MOOSE.

CWD, which belongs to a group of diseases called transmissible spongiform encephalopathies (TSEs), is the result of infectious, self-propagating abnormal proteins called "prions." CWD attacks the central nervous system and causes animals to have extreme weight loss, behave abnormally, lose bodily functions, and die.

Remember the mad-cow scare of a decade ago? CWD is in the same family of diseases. The agricultural industry was able to clear cattle herds of the disease

through better animal husbandry practices and by landfilling carcasses of sick animals. Unfortunately, CWD has different transmission characteristics, so ridding deer herds of CWD will be nearly impossible unless new technology provides solutions.

The origin of CWD is unknown. It was first recognized in captive mule deer held in wildlife research facilities in Colorado in the late 1960s, but it was not identified as a TSE until the 1970s.

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CWD

COURTESY OF THE CWD ALLIANCE
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HOW CWD SPREADS

The exact mechanism is unclear, but it is likely that CWD prions spread through direct or indirect contact from infected animals. CWD can be passed among animals through body fluids (feces, saliva, urine, blood, and soft antler material) or from a contaminated environment (food, water, and soil).

It generally takes approximately 1 to 1.5 years

for infected deer to begin displaying symptoms, but they can be shedding the disease all along.

HOW AGENCIES ARE FIGHTING CWD

Individual state agencies have adopted different measures. Examples include:

- Most states ban the interstate transport of live deer; some also ban transport within the state.
- Banning the transport of intact deer carcasses from CWD-positive areas. Most states are now requiring hunters to bring back only finished taxidermy products or deboned meat from CWD-positive states.
- Banning supplemental feeding and baiting, which concentrates deer, potentially increasing the spread of CWD.
- Requiring body parts left over after processing deer from CWD zones to be properly landfilled.
- Banning urine-based lures. While most captive deer facilities which supply urine have been certified CWD-free, numerous CWD-free captive herds subsequently were found to be CWD positive.

Once shed, prions remain infectious in the environment for many years, binding to the soil and being taken up into plant tissues, and therefore serving as an indirect method of transmission.

What hunters can do about CWD

Given its fatality rate and prolonged viability in soil, CWD can significantly impact deer herds. Hunters must be diligent not to introduce infected material into an area or promote the spread of the disease. Here's how:

1. Stay informed with regular updates from the CWD alliance at www.cwd-info.org.
2. Support measures prohibiting the transport of live deer.
3. Determine whether your hunt location is in a CWD zone. If so, debone all meat before returning home and properly landfill all leftovers, particularly the brain and spinal cord, and don't transport deer carcasses.
4. Notify wildlife officials and your Weyerhaeuser lease manager of any deer that appear sick on your lease, particularly ones you've harvested.



Weyerhaeuser Company recognizes the importance of wild cervid (deer family) populations. Over the next several months, we will conduct a thorough review of the science and adjust our leasing program requirements as appropriate. Together, we must take every necessary action to safeguard deer populations, including decisions that reflect the best available science on prevention and control of CWD.

COURTESY OF THE CHRONIC WASTING DISEASE ALLIANCE,
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SAFETY AROUND FORESTRY OPERATIONS



What You Don't Recognize Can Hurt You

By Donald Wood, senior lease manager

Most people understand the risks they encounter in their daily lives, such as while driving or on the job. However, when people encounter something new or out of the ordinary, they often put themselves in jeopardy without realizing it. Safety around forestry operations is one such case.

There have been a few near-miss incidents involving hunters and forest management activities. These incidences involved the same risky behaviors:

Getting too close to equipment.

Recently, a contractor on a cutting machine was startled when a camouflaged hunter suddenly appeared about 50 feet from the machine. When the contractor shut down the machine and inquired with the club member, the reply was to the effect of, "I was just watching you work. That machine is powerful!" What the club member either did not realize or chose to disregard was that a cutting machine can throw chunks of wood a considerable distance at high velocities. The hunter was in danger standing so close.

Assuming other people will

see you and avoid you. Many accidents on logging ramps occur for this reason. I am aware of a tragic accident where a logger ran over his adult son, an employee, when the son walked behind a piece of equipment while the father was backing it up.

Similarly, people sometimes drive up onto a log deck while a log truck is being loaded, putting themselves in the line of fire. Did you know that a single large log being swung onto a log truck can nearly destroy a pickup truck that gets in the way? What would be the odds of survival for a hunter on an ATV?

Curiosity. Climbing onto equipment to look at the gauges

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GAME ON!



Mary Perry, Long County, GA

Her first buck, an 8-point, 140-pounder



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SAFETY

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and buttons and climbing onto a log pile to get a better vantage have resulted in sprains, strains, or even broken bones when club members fell.

Finally, safety around forestry operations includes actions that hunters can do to keep contractors safe. By practicing the 10 commandments of gun safety—particularly, knowing what is beyond your target—and not shooting when workers are downrange, you can help ensure the safety of contractors.

Weyerhaeuser wants every employee, every contractor, and every hunting lessee to make it back home safely at the end of the day. Occasionally, you will encounter

ongoing forestry operations on your lease. Please practice the safety recommendations below to ensure your safety and the safety of others.

Operational Safety Guidelines

HUNTERS AND CONTRACTORS

- While driving forest roads, always yield right-of-way (ROW) to all forestry machinery (such as large tractors, loaders, dozers, and tractor/trailer rigs) and to workers or other pedestrians. Never drive past trailers that are being loaded or tended in a roadway. Pull your vehicle onto the road shoulder and park; remain inside (with seat belts fastened) and wait for an operator to motion to you that it is safe to pass. Honk your vehicle horn before moving to acknowledge the proceed signal and to warn bystanders that you are advancing.
- When on the ground (outside vehicles), always stay at least 300 feet away from all operating machinery. If the entire operation is shut down, such as when operators have left for the day, this buffer distance may be reduced to 100 feet minimum. Never touch or climb onto any forestry equipment.
- Always stay at least 100 feet away from log piles and parked or loaded trailers, whether you are inside or outside of a vehicle.
- Generally, refrain from engaging forestry workers and instead direct any questions to your Weyerhaeuser Recreation contact. If you must speak with a machine operator, maintain the 300-foot safety buffer and wait until the operator stops, shuts off the equipment, and approaches you.
- While forest management operations are ongoing on the lease tract, all club members and guests must always wear high visibility clothing (for example, hunter orange) whenever outside an enclosed vehicle.
- Follow the 10 commandments of gun safety, especially knowing what lies down-range, to ensure the protection of forest contractors and employees who may be working nearby. (See your Weyerhaeuser lease contract for the 10 commandments.)

GAME ON!



Noah Richardson, Howard County, AR
A 10-pointer

DEER MANAGEMENT PLAN? *Factors to Consider*

By Donald Wood, senior lease manager

The Fall 2018 *Weyerhaeuser Outdoors* reviewed a history of deer restocking and management principles. Here are more details and recommendations that clubs should consider as they implement a program with deer management goals.



Decide what you want

There is a big difference between attracting individual deer and managing a population.

Anyone, on any property, can install a few food plots or fruit trees or fertilize native browse to successfully attract deer. It does not require a large lease to see a lot of deer during deer season, either. Just realize that, on small properties, how many deer you see can be significantly impacted by your neighbors' activity and harvests.

Furthermore, if you lease a small property, it can be hard to manage the deer population unless you work with neighbors in cooperative management efforts. Most deer managers use 2,500 acres or even 5,000 acres as a minimum territory for deer management. Since most clubs are not that large, cooperation among adjoining clubs toward common goals will be required.

If you want to change the adult sex ratio of the herd or increase the

percentage of mature bucks or fawn survival, you are moving beyond deer attraction into the realm of management. Get ready to roll up your sleeves, because it takes work and commitment from all involved.

Be realistic—but don't sell yourself short

Determine whether your goals are realistic. Some clubs mistakenly believe their lease can regularly produce 'booners, but even more clubs sell their property short in estimating what the land can produce. A professional wildlife biologist can be invaluable at this stage. Contact your state wildlife agency, a consulting biologist, or your Weyerhaeuser lease manager for assistance.

Several years ago, I developed

a number of deer management cooperatives. At first, club members lamented that the area would never produce good deer because there was no nearby agriculture and the deer did not have what they considered the "proper genetics." Five years later, many clubs in these cooperatives wanted to tighten the rules because they had harvested enough 130-inch, 3.5-year-old bucks and wanted more deer protected to the ages of 4.5 and 5.5 years old, where 140- to 160-inch deer were being produced. These cooperatives provided a great example of how population management, even without commercial agriculture and extensive feeding or food plots, can produce bucks that make it hard to sleep at night.

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Deer Management Plan

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How to Implement Deer Management

Once you have goals, deer management is often about a series of modest adjustments based on data. When data is lacking, management recommendations can only be general rules of thumb or educated guesses.

Start strong with data

All too often, clubs begin by immediately identifying harvest criteria. Whether the criteria are to restrict buck harvest only to a certain antler size or to harvest a given number of does, the management czar for the club zealously rides members to abide by these restrictions.

As energetically as some clubs manage deer harvest, most fail miserably in collecting data. As a biologist and deer manager, I am very concerned with fawn survival rates, because these are the deer that

will be available for future harvest. I also want to know whether body weights for a given sex or age class are increasing, stable, or decreasing. These kinds of data, and their trends, are critical to developing robust management recommendations.

Plan appropriate activities

Once you begin collecting data, you can better assess whether other activities such as habitat management or predator control might pay off. In the cooperatives I managed, the clubs with the highest rates of adult buck harvest had planted the most acres in food plots.

Additionally, studies in Georgia have shown that clubs with just 1 percent of their total area in high-quality food plots harvested significantly more bucks than clubs with no food plots.

MAKE HARD DECISIONS

Questions to answer during this stage include:

1. What quality of hunting do I desire, and can the lease land's quality and size realistically produce this? If not, you may need to find a larger or better property or join a club that already has these goals.
2. Is chronic wasting disease (CWD) an issue in your state? (See p. 1-3.) Today's hunters should consider and guard against it when developing an overall management program.
3. If my goals are realistic, do club leaders and the majority of fellow club members support this direction? If so, rally support and move forward. If a minority of members oppose the new direction, the club may need new members. If you are in the minority, however, you may want to move to a more like-minded club.
4. If the club supports your direction, can you convince adjoining clubs to manage similarly? Deer cooperatives composed of adjoining clubs managing towards the same goals have become very popular. Before assuming that your neighbors' philosophy is "if brown, it's down," talk to them. You may find they think similarly, and together you can manage deer across a larger area. Also realize that you may not get your neighbors to manage identically as your club, but you can search for common ground and build on successes.

Once you've got goals, you can begin implementing your plan (see above) to make real progress toward building deer herds you want for more hunting enjoyment.

GAME ON!



Barry Wallace, Claiborne Parish, LA

His biggest buck ever, weighing in at 200 pounds

Predator control is sometimes frowned on by biologists as expensive and not effective. Recent studies are not conclusive on whether predator control can improve fawn survival rates; some properties saw a tremendous increase in fawn survival after predator trapping, while others had little increase. However, I am personally aware of a majority of large properties that turned around their fawn survival rates when they

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Deer Management Plan

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began aggressively trapping coyotes and bobcats. Is this appropriate for most clubs? That question cannot be answered until you examine deer camera survey results and/or hunter observation data, and then also evaluate the habitat.

Deer populations can be managed for many outcomes. Some hunters want to see a lot of deer of either sex; some want to harvest a lot of deer.

Still others are interested in deer quality. Some hunters' goals may focus on harvesting while others may be more interested in changing the attributes of the deer herd toward a desired end. No goal is necessarily better, and natural resources can be managed toward multiple objectives that change by lease and by club.

COMMUNICATE!

Oftentimes, spring is when clubs make decisions about future activities and club direction. Share the related articles in this newsletter with fellow members and develop or update deer management goals for your lease. I think you will find that it makes hunting more rewarding to develop goals and reach them.

DEER POPULATIONS CAN BE MANAGED FOR MANY OUTCOMES.

GAME ON!



Carter Hogg, Webster Parish, LA

Carter, the 9-year-old grandson of Bill Hogg, with his magnificent buck. Carter represents the fourth generation of hunters on the same leased property. The look on his face is an iconic glimpse into the sheer enjoyment gained from this sport.

GAME ON!



Cade Goodson Bowie, Howard, AR

This 14-point buck was 14-year-old Cade's first wall hanger.

GAME ON!



Mitch Edwards, Yalobusha County, MS

His first deer

FORESTRY RESEARCH AND YOUR HUNTING CLUB

By Drew Pigott, research forester, and Paul Durfield, senior lease manager

Since its inception in 1969, Weyerhaeuser Research and Development has employed a diverse team of scientists, researchers, and support staff to increase timber productivity while being good stewards of the environment.

Though research needs have changed over time, active research studies of different shapes and sizes continue across our timberlands.

Forestry in the southern United States is a long-term investment of up to 30 years from the planting of trees until final harvest. Consequently, research projects can take significant time, resources, and effort. Some studies may be small, perhaps only one tenth of an acre, while

others occupy multiple acres.

Recognizing a study

Weyerhaeuser research installations can often be identified on multiple sides of the study area by a yellow sign on a tree or post. Trees also may sport a painted number or small metal tag. If an extended study starts or is underway on your lease, you will receive more information about extra care you may need to take to protect the research.

Take care

Since research requires significant investments, we ask recreational users to please avoid altering or damaging any study areas they encounter. Attaching a deer stand to a research tree, for instance, may seem harmless, but could wound the tree, impact the data, and alter the study results. This is also true of ATV or UTV traffic in

research study areas. These vehicles may inadvertently disturb the site,



a marker, or the trees themselves in a manner that could impact the research results.

Avoid entering if you can

While you are free to hunt in and around research plots, the best way to avoid any potential damage is to avoid entering the study area.

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**Dennis Kube & Mike Mills,
Craven County, NC**

Forestry Research

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Forest research is important and takes time and money intended to make forests more productive and sustainable. So certain activities must be avoided to prevent disturbances to soil, plants, or trees.

Always reach out to your lease manager before doing anything that could potentially damage important research, and thank you for being aware of ongoing research while enjoying your lease.

Activities to avoid IN OR NEAR RESEARCH PLOTS

- Never disk, mow, or plant food plots within research areas.
- Do not drive or ride ATVs/UTVs through research areas.
- Avoid any herbicide or fertilizer applications there.
- Don't hang deer stands on trees in the designated area.
- Never trim limbs or make shooting lanes in research plots.
- Avoid hunting the area if research staff are present. (It's rare.)
- Notify your lease manager of anything out of the ordinary, such as fallen or dead trees.



Thanks for sending more photos than we could print this issue! Look for more in the fall.

Send Us Your Hunting Photos!

Did you harvest the deer of a lifetime? Or did your child recently take their first wild turkey? We would like to share your success in an upcoming *Weyerhaeuser Outdoors*. Please email photos to amy.james@weyerhaeuser.com, along with details surrounding the hunt. Your photo and story may appear in a future issue!

GAME ON!



**Jerry McKinney & Matt Lathem,
Hancock County, GA**

Matt doubled up with his buddy Jerry. This was Jerry's first buck.

GAME ON!



Karen Griffin, Union County, AR

GAME ON!



Alan Crnko, Livingston Parish, LA

About this deer, Alan said, "As it turned out, this was a well-known buck that many other hunters had caught in photos, but everyone was very tight-lipped about his location. I was the one lucky enough to be at the right place at the right time. The buck was chasing a doe and, oddly, had a doe chasing him, too. That proved to be his undoing, as once he made it to my shooting lane, he stopped to see where she was, providing me enough time to make a clean shot. Once I made it to camp with the deer, word got around. Many hunters started showing me photos of this up-to-now "unknown" buck. My property borders Weyerhaeuser's, making it convenient for me to enjoy access. The eight-point buck was healthy, weighing in at 192 pounds with an 18-inch spread."

GAME ON!



Tehya Billy, McCurtain, OK
A first deer!

GAME ON!



Richard Griffin, Union County, AR

Stay in touch and informed!

Check out the useful content at
www.wyrecreation.com

And our helpline for all phone support:
855-248-6872



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