

Public Comments

Chronic Wasting Disease Action Plan

Paul Svenkeson

Hotsprings SD

Position: other

Comment:

Please stop feeding the deer and let Natural selection run its course as a means to cull the herd of the sick animals.

Peter Makoweski

Pierre SD

Position: other

Comment:

The CWD problem has now been around for many years, and most likely longer than we know., since the recent reliable testing has only recently been accepted. The state has done what most other states have done to control the spread and yet the problem is still there. There are no known treatments to controlling the prions that cause this condition. The only natural control of these prions are environmental factors. We can't control this and yet we keep spending the GFP dollars to control what can't be eliminated only curtail the spread what is now being done.

Other

Aaron Lewandowski

Waubay SD

Position: other

Comment:

I think we need to cut tags in South west Robert County deer numbers are way down. U need to work with the tribe in sisseton sd and have them cut back

Mike Kluth

Mount Vernon SD

Position: other

Comment:

What are we doing to control the EHD outbreaks every year? I have never in my life seen the amount of deer that have died since 2012 when I first heard of EHD. And the population just keeps getting less and less every year. I have 20
Cell cameras out and I am lucky if I get 10
Deer pictures in a night. Years prior I have had to change batteries in my camera this year I have not.

Mark Boddicker

Hermosa SD

Position: support

Comment:

I would like to see in the CWD Management report state that the State of SD's Disease Control is doing further research to find a cure for CWD.

I also believe this is critical to SD tourism and the Dept. of Tourism should help pay for this research.

Justin Newton

Lennox SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

Topic is CWD.

I oppose the state getting involved with CWD. How about we allocate funds towards fixing a much larger problem like EHD. I come from a CWD county in MN where they literally brought in sharpshooters to decimate the population and it took at least 10-15 years to recover. I don't know how a disease like CWD can even be talked about right now when EHD has been massacring deer populations in South Dakota. Less deer = less disease. Right now the deer populations are horrible after the last 2 years of EHD so I'm not sure how CWD is even on anyone's radar. Deer that have CWD can live up to 6-7 years old. EHD kills 90% of deer immediately. How can we be so blind to the actual problems that exist. I see gfp is saying this CWD issue is important because it will affect hunters, photographers, etc. EHD is affecting these groups of people a whole hell of a lot more.

Ban gravity feeders all you want, that I have no issue with. I'd also ban mineral blocks and when doing so please ban it from being sold in the stores to people without some sort of livestock farming identification card.

Bring some deer genetics from southern states to stop the EHD problem. Put money towards researching other solutions.

- If a house with a squeaky door is on fire. You don't fix the squeaky door till you put out the fire or the fire will end up fixing the squeak for you.

Rob Neuenfeldt

Flandreau SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

CWD has been around for decades and the deer populations keep increasing. Why are ALL the cervids not dead in Colorado by now??

Completely opposed to CWD regulation without better scientific proof.

Troy Becker

White Lake SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

I am talking about the CWD and not feeding deer. Is the SDGFP going to listen to what they are preaching about the feed of the deer? I know that they buy hay and feed hay to different winter deer herds across the state. This should stop as you are pulling deer from miles away to a location with other deer in winter herds spreading disease. Two hay areas that you give hay to they do not allow hunting. You are pulling deer from other hunters areas and some deer don't return and you are submitting them all to different diseases.

Sam Benne

Rapid City SK

Position: oppose

Comment:

The raise in lease fees at Angostura is unnecessarily high at 5.4% and to take that into future lease years seems to be a grab at additional fees that are not justified. Why would the rate be set at 5.4% when inflation has been decreasing

Drew Carlson

Fargo ND

Position: other

Comment:

No comment text provided.

Eugene Opbroek

Spearfish SD

Position: other

Comment:

I do a lot of hunting all on public land. I don't understand why the GF&P pays farmers and ranchers for walk-in areas that have no cover for wildlife and have virtually no wildlife on them. I have hunted the same walk in areas for years and I have never seen any wildlife on them. I hunt predators year round so it is not that the wildlife uses the areas on a seasonal basis. Are these areas ever checked for the amount of cover, food, water etc. for wildlife or is it a deal if you are getting paid one year you will continually get paid every year. Are they checked by GF&P officials or is this left entirely up to the landowner. Looks like a lot of abuse and waste of money that could be spent elsewhere.

Karen Haynes

Chamberlain SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

To Members of the Commission

I am submitting this written testimony in opposition to the Nest Predator Program for the following reasons:

- There is no scientific evidence of any benefit whatsoever. Our neighboring states have abandoned nest predator programs which they conducted due to a number of reasons, including citizen votes against it as in Iowa. Additionally, other states found that scientific evidence did not support the continuation of the program.
- At \$10 per animal tail, the cost is extreme and clearly not sustainable. Ideally, children should be learning about ecosystems and the role that each individual plays in those systems and not killing animals for money. That just sounds so very wrong.
- Since it's implantation approximately 350,000 animals have been killed. With the program starting each year in the spring, many offspring are left unable to survive after the parent is killed.
- The best way to ensure survival of ground nesting birds is habitat protection and that is not being sufficiently emphasized when the focus is on the elimination of predators.

In conclusion, I suggest that South Dakota follow the lead of our neighboring states and abandon this cruel and senseless program.

Nancy Hilding

Black Hawk, SD

Position: support

Comment:

Nancy Hilding
President
Prairie Hills Audubon Society

We submit a formal letter in opposition to the Nest Predator Bounty Program. We ask you to terminate it's funding for 2026. This letter will likely end up towards the bottom of the public comment section, as formal letters are normally placed there.

Nancy Hilding

Black Hawk, SD

Position: other

Comment:

Nancy Hilding
6300 West Elm St.
Black Hawk, SD
605-787-6466

It is Sunday night and written comments are due, but you don't have the agenda published on "Current Meeting" web page.. You all should publish the agenda before the written comment deadline, so we know what actions you might be considering

I oppose the Nest Predator Bounty Program. I believe it is a prime example of FRAUD, WASTE AND ABUSE.

It is fraud because GFP in 2019 knew statewide bounty programs wouldn't work. Your Ring Neck Pheasant Management Plan at that time advised against predator control and preferred habitat management.

You have wasted probably 5 million dollars over 7 years on an in effective program, at least with regards to protection of ground nesting birds.

You maintain trapping is recreation, when it is really done to raise money or protect gardens/livestock/property. Why do we need to spend state dollars bribing people to engage in a business endeavor.

It is abuse because of all the dead animals who suffered in traps for up to 3 and a partial days west River and 2 and a partial day east River and all their dependent young who starve to death, die of thirst or are preyed upon. There was no valid justification for this suffering.

Thanks Nancy

Paula Vonweller

Deadwood SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

I am adamantly opposed to the nest predator bounty program because it has failed to protect ground-nesting birds. The staggering \$4.5–5 million poured into this initiative in recent years could have made a meaningful impact if invested in habitat restoration and protection—measures that actually strengthen bird populations. Instead, this program wastes public money on the indiscriminate and inhumane killing of 50,000 mammals every year, relying on outdated and unacceptable practices.

Wildlife Action Plan

Heath Weavill

Hill City SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

I would like to see this action plan include both CWD and EHD response, treatment and preventative measures.

Dustin Sperlich

Lennox SD

Position: support

Comment:

Chronic Wasting Disease continues to challenge deer herds across the Midwest, but there are several practical steps our state can take to help slow its spread and protect future hunting opportunities. One of the most effective strategies used by wildlife agencies is to reduce the number of older deer within infected areas. Mature bucks carry CWD at much higher rates than younger deer, and they travel more widely during the rut, increasing the chance of moving the disease across the landscape. By encouraging targeted harvest of older deer—through additional tags, extended seasons, or management-zone regulations—our state can lower disease prevalence, slow transmission, and help stabilize long-term herd health.

Beyond harvest strategy, there are several other tools we can adopt to limit environmental contamination and deer-to-deer exposure. These include tightening carcass-transport rules from known CWD areas, providing clear and convenient disposal sites for high-risk parts, expanding hunter-harvest testing opportunities, and reducing practices that unnaturally congregate deer, such as baiting and feeding. Coupled with good communication between landowners, hunters, and wildlife managers, these steps create a science-based approach that supports both conservation and our hunting heritage. With the right combination of targeted harvest and smart management, we can keep our deer herd strong for generations to come.

Mitch Mehlhaf

Menno SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

EHD is 100x the problem that CWD will ever be.

Check out all the research that says that CWD prions do not degrade in any kind of timely fashion in the soil.

We will never dream of controlling CWD much less eradicating it.

South Dakota deer numbers are what they are for one reason and that is EHD. I'll never understand why our government officials can't understand that. Year after year total deer herds decimated up to 90% while deer with CWD can live out their entire life cycles be harvested and consumed safely or even die of old age.

Wake up and start using our license fees and tax money effectively!!!!

Mike Jarding

Hot Springs SD

Position: oppose

Comment:

Supplement deer feeding needs to stop. What more proof do you need. Deer feeders spread CWD. We can't stop the disease, but we can slow the spread. SDGFP biologist indicated last meeting that deer feeding is one of the biggest CWD spreaders. please make a regulation to stop supplement feeding deer.

Ross Wright

Sioux Falls SD

Position: support

Comment:

Please make it a law to stop supplemental feeding of deer and other cervids in South Dakota to slow the spread of CWD. This practice is leading to the urbanization and human habituation of deer statewide while facilitating the spread of this disease. If the department were to outlaw this practice, it would help spread deer and other cervids out, slow the spread of CWD, and keep game out of urban areas where they can not usually be legally or safely harvested by hunters.

Christopher Kessler

Brandon SD

Position: support

Comment:

The number of archery and rifle tags allocated to hunters, resident and non resident alike should be cut period. Archery tags especially because the season runs for an extended period of time. At least until deer numbers can rebound in the affected areas of our state.

Keep a ban on harvesting the does in those counties until the numbers increase. In the areas of the state that have the most severe population loss, or eliminating a season all together to give the deer a chance. People will be ok not shooting a deer for a year or two in specific areas affected by EHD and CWD.

Best regards, Chris Kessler