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New CWD zone established Eradication area along Illinois border

By Anita Weier
July 1, 2003

The state Department of Natural Resources has established a new chronic wasting disease eradication zone along the Illinois border in an attempt to halt the spread of the fatal nervous system disease.

The main reason for the action is that 14 deer have been found in three northern Illinois counties.

The new 25-square-mile zone in the towns of Turtle and Clinton in Rock County is based on the DNR's recently passed rule calling for creation of an eradication zone extending up to 4.5 miles from any section where a diseased deer was located.

"State lines mean nothing to deer, and since the prevalence of CWD in the affected areas of Illinois is quite high, it is very important for Wisconsin to take action in our adjacent towns," said Doug Fendry, DNR wildlife supervisor for Rock County.

The department will host an open house July 15 from 3 to 7:30 p.m. in the town of Turtle Community Center, 6916 S. County J, in Shopiere, so landowners can learn more about the disease management strategy, Fendry said.

Wisconsin and Illinois officials have been working together on a coordinated management plan since last year. Illinois has been testing deer in the affected area, and will continue intensive testing to determine if the disease has spread further. Deer also will be tested intensively in Rock County, Fendry said.

Landowners will likely be issued permits for them or their agents to shoot deer on their property out of season.

Deer must be killed in order to be tested.

CWD is a fatal transmissible spongiform encephalopathy disease of deer and elk characterized by abnormal proteins called prions.

This fall, most of Rock County will be in a larger herd reduction zone, which serves as a buffer area from the center of the original disease core in Dane, Iowa and Sauk counties.

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Published: 10:07 AM 7/01/03