



WISCONSIN CONSERVATION CONGRESS

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August 28, 2003

TO: DNR Board Members

FROM: Steve Oestreicher, Chairman Wisconsin Conservation Congress

RE: Baiting and Feeding Rule

The Conservation Congress continues to support your stand against the baiting and feeding of deer in Wisconsin. When CWD was discovered in Wisconsin the Congress was the first group to come out and support a ban on baiting and feeding. At the May 2002 DNR board meeting we proposed a 3-year moratorium on these practices and we stand by this position.

Over the past year and a half you have received huge amounts of information from wildlife experts from within the state and all over the country, I don't need to reiterate any of that information to you. Even with all the research done to date there is still much we don't know about this disease. Although there are disagreements among people on the exact way it is spread there is no real disagreement on the fact that it is contagious from animal to animal. (Even it's name - transmissible spongiform encephalopathy tells us that).

The discovery of this disease in Wisconsin was a devastating blow to the wildlife community. The experts say that keeping deer from congregating is the best hope in preventing the spread of CWD and other diseases. Not one single vet or animal health professional supports reinstating baiting or feeding.

I know this is a tough position to take and that you are under considerable pressure to compromise. Even though politics is the art of compromise there are occasions when it is not the right thing to do. This is one of those times. We cannot afford to take any risks in this fight to stem the spread of CWD.