CHRONIC WASTING DISEASE: Alberta's approach

Photo: SK Environment

CWD Workshop

Edmonton

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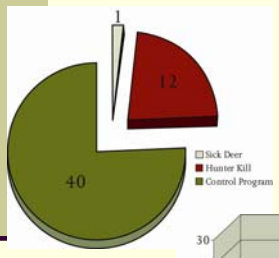
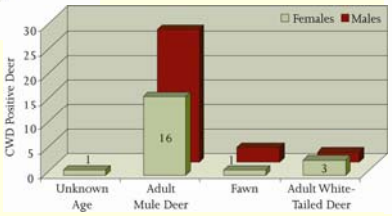
on behalf of Alberta's CWD TEAM

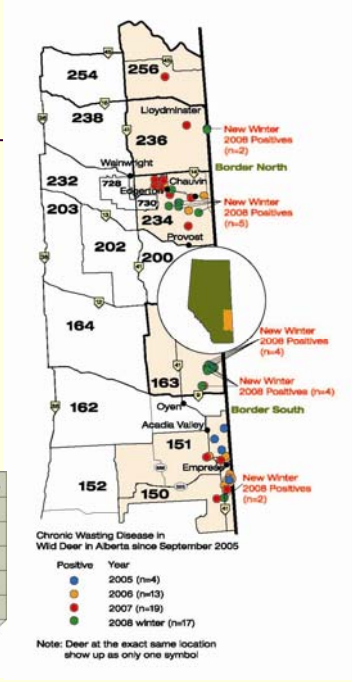
CWD Current Status

(May 1, 2008)

- 53 wild deer in Alberta
- 48 mule deer, 5 white-tails
- 23% hunter-kill, 75% control

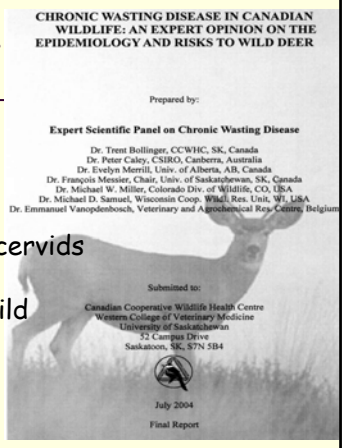






CWD Expert Panel Report

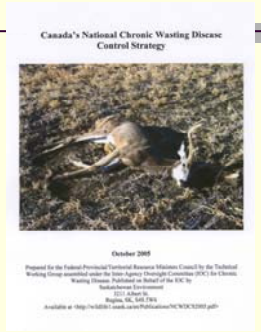
- CWD not part of native ecosystems
- CWD introduced recently to free-ranging cervids in Canada
- No natural barriers to further spread in wild deer



http://wildlife1.usask.ca/Publications

- Recommend <1 deer/km^2 of critical habitat to reduce transmission risk

Canada's National Chronic Wasting Disease Control Strategy *



- stamp out new foci
- limit spread from known areas

Primary tool: population reduction in & around affected areas

* http://wildlife1.usask.ca/Publications/NCWDCS2005.pdf

Alberta's Ongoing Strategy:

GOAL: find & remove infected deer; limit further spread

Hunter Component:

- **Maximize testing & hunter harvest along eastern border**
- **Target clinical deer for surveillance**
- **Use targeted hunter harvest to generally reduce deer density in areas of CWD risk**

Fish and Wildlife Component:

- **Enhance surveillance in high risk areas**
- **Target winter control around new cases**

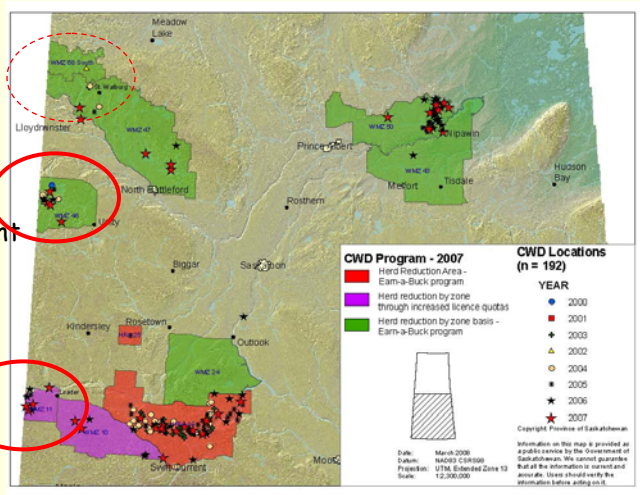
Alberta's Risk Areas

March 2008

Spillover from Saskatchewan

Recent arrival in AB

Limited establishment

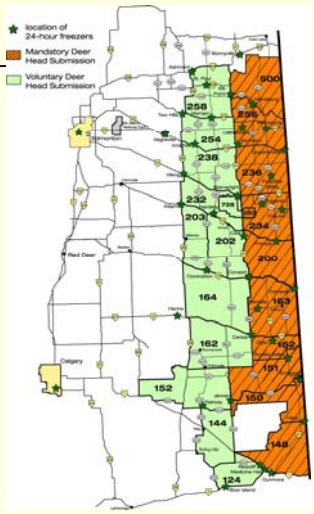


Hunter component

- Over 22,000 heads since 1998
- Tools:
  - Mandatory submission in risk area
  - Increased hunting season length
  - Increased # licences
  - Quota licences in designated CWD risk areas
  - Increased landowner opportunities

Deer with CWD: n=12

Year	# tested	# positive	Prevalence
2003	415	0	
2004	1303	0	
2005	1660	1	0.06
2006	2965	4	0.14
2007	5170	7	0.14



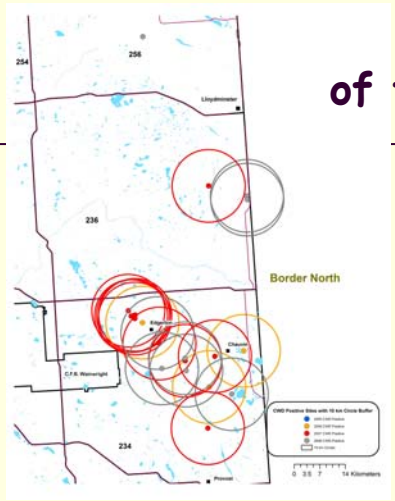
2008 fall map

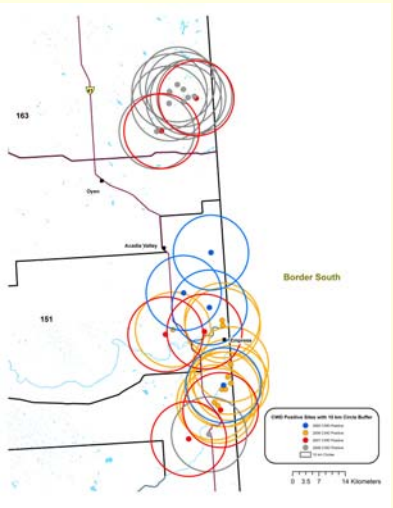
Risk-based Response:

PROGRAM	Location	Response to …
May 2001	Lloydminster	SK first positive wild deer
Winter 2003	Barrhead	3 cases in farmed cervids in central AB
Spring 2005	Chauvin	New SK wild case along border
Fall 2005	Oyen	First wild case in AB
Winter 2006	Red Deer & S. SK Chauvin (Saskatchewan*)	New fall cases & Continued herd reduction S SK river in Saskatchewan
Winter 2007	Empress Chauvin/Edgerton	New case & continued herd reduction 3 new cases & continued herd reduction
Winter 2008	Empress/S SK River Sibbald Chauvin/Edgerton Paradise Valley	New positive, cont'd herd reduction 2 new fall cases 3 new fall cases, cont'd herd reduction New fall case

* Shot by SK Environment staff

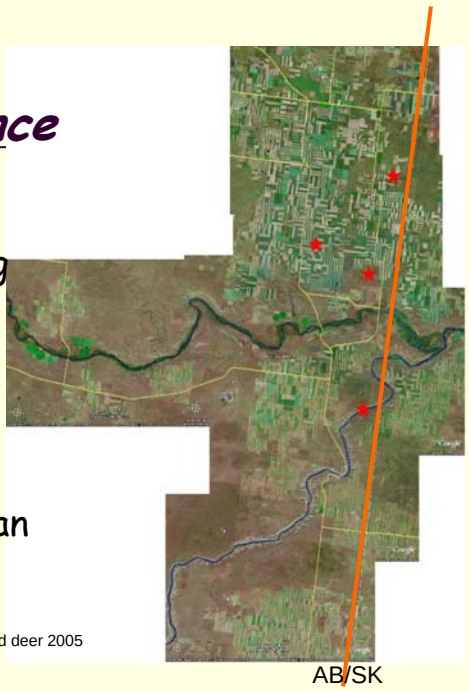
Cumulative areas of targeted CWD control

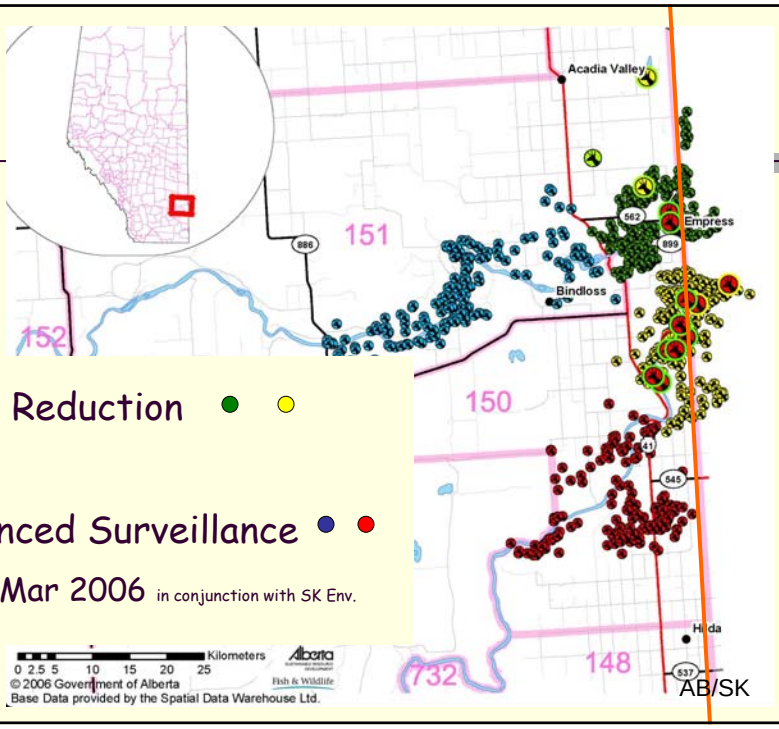




Winter 2006 enhanced ***surveillance***

- Goal: to assess the extent of incursion of CWD into Alberta along primary river valleys
- Action: systematic collection of 250 deer from each of Red Deer and South Saskatchewan valleys





Herd Reduction ● ●

&

Enhanced Surveillance ● ●

Jan – Mar 2006 in conjunction with SK Env.

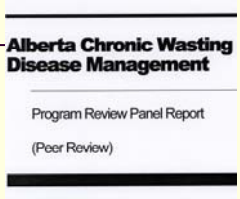
Research …

deer movement, landscape use, and genetics

In conjunction with University of Alberta
… and parallel to similar study in Saskatchewan

Newsletter at: http://ursus.biology.ualberta.ca/

Peer Review of Alberta programs



- Generally supportive of provincial approacn
- Saw strength in combined approach of hunters, landowners, stakeholders & government
- Offered suggestions to improve programs
- Commended effort & approach by Alberta in dealing with CWD

- Report available at: www.srd.gov.ab.ca/fishwildlife/livingwith/diseases/pdf/CWD-ABreview_FINAL.pdf

Conclusions:

Combine hunter effort and strategic response

Use herd reduction and low deer density in high risk areas to prevent further spread – interim tool until something better – such as vaccination or live animal test

Primary goal: contain CWD to manageable areas

Acknowledgements:

- An army of **Fish and Wildlife staff**
  - Officers, biologists, technicians, admin support, temporary staff
- **Landholders, hunters, guides, & residents**
- Alberta Agriculture & Rural Development