A MEASURED RESPONSE: THE CHALLENGES ASSOCIATED WITH CHRONIC WASTING DISEASE COMMUNICATIONS

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CWD IN ARKANSAS

• 2 ½ Year-old female elk legally harvested near Pruitt, AR; Newton County
  • Harvested October 6, 2015
  • Positive results received February 17, 2016
  • NVSL confirmation received February 23, 2016

• 2 ½ Year-old female white-tailed deer demonstrating clinic symptoms near Ponca, AR; Newton County
  • Positive results received March 3, 2017
  • NVSL confirmation received March 9, 2017
# Prevalence Rates by Sex and Age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Not Detected</th>
<th>POSITIVE</th>
<th>Totals</th>
<th>Prevalance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Doe</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-1.5</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-2.5</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-3.5</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-4.5</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-5.5</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fawn</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bucks</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-1.5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-2.5</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-3.5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-4.5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fawn</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>266</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Plan outlined initial response to determine apparent prevalence, organize staff, and provide direction for potential regulatory changes, but lacked information for continued management.
MID-TERM AND LONG-TERM RESPONSE:

• Truly a stepwise process
  • Step 1: Determine disease prevalence
  • Step 2: Evaluate spatial distribution

• The answer to these two questions would determine messaging and communication response

• For Arkansas:
  • Disease response became a marathon; not a sprint
  • Communication would start local, continue local and expand statewide
“IF THE ARKANSAS GAME AND FISH COMMISSION BELIEVES THEY CAN MANAGE THIS DISEASE WITHOUT THE BUY-IN FROM LOCAL HUNTERS, THEY ARE FOOLS.”

- ANONYMOUS
COMMUNICATION RESPONSE:

• The concept of a measured response
  • Transparent and open
  • Science-based
  • Avoid fallacies, myths, and speculations
  • Concept was to over-communicate, but not cause alarm or panic among constituents
COMMUNICATION OUTLETS

Public Meetings

- Website
- Printed Press
- Video Outlets
- Radio/TV
OUTLINE OF PUBLIC MEETINGS

CWD Discovered – February 17, 2016

Newton County Public Meeting – February 29, 2016

Regional Meetings – Began on March 1, 2016

Statewide Meetings – Began on May 24, 2016
COMMUNICATION STATISTICS
(FEBRUARY 2016-PRESENT)

- Total Reach: 4.3 million
- CWD Web Page Visits: 140,241
- Videos Produced: 24
- Media Interviews: 174
- Newsletters: 47

- News Articles: 1,040
- Magazine Articles: 30 pages
- Public Meetings: 25
- Press Releases: 59
NEWTON COUNTY LICENSE SALES DATA (2014-2017)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>License Sales</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>4,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>4,075</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>4,150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>4,225</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CWD Discovered
FUTURE COMMUNICATION EFFORTS

- Development of a Social Science Program
  - Hiring of a Human Dimensions Specialist
- Marketing Coordinator
- Continued efforts for local face-to-face contact with hunters and private landowners
- Utilize all media outlets

92% (n=1,302) of all hunters say they read/heard/seen “A lot” or “A little” about CWD

- 2017 Survey of Arkansas Hunters Concerning Chronic Wasting Disease (June 2017)
Keeping Hunters Engaged

Keeping Hunters Informed

Maintain Value of Hunting

FUTURE COMMUNICATION CHALLENGES
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