

Resolution Statement on Chronic Wasting Disease in Texas

WHEREAS, public values of wildlife benefit all Texans, be they direct or indirect, some with measurable qualities and some with immeasurable qualities, all of which are integral to the overall well-being of our society; and

WHEREAS, hunting has been integral in financing wildlife conservation and management in Texas for well over 100 years through license fees, excise taxes, funds raised by hunting/conservation groups, and financial benefits derived from hunters' spending; and

WHEREAS, the health of wildlife, and the integrity of wildlife practices, may impact wildlife and agricultural markets that are important to Texas economies and cultures; and

WHEREAS, diseases can and do impact the health of wildlife populations, livestock, and farm crops, and diseases can impact markets which support industries affiliated with such wildlife, livestock, and farm crops; and

WHEREAS, Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) may pose a threat to the biological, ecological, and financial health of wildlife populations and to the broad wildlife-related economies in Texas, as well as to the working lands that supply a multitude of societal benefits to all Texas citizens; and

WHEREAS, CWD is a member of the Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathy Family (TSE), and it is known that other TSEs have caused harm to livestock and livestock-related markets, as well as to human health; and

Now therefore, be it resolved, the undersigned organizations and individuals (Undersigned), whose collective membership includes hunters, wildlife biologists, wildlife enthusiasts, ranchers, farmers, and other Texas citizens, are concerned over the findings of CWD in Medina, Lavaca and Hudspeth Counties, Texas, and Undersigned supports measures to effectively address risks associated with CWD in Texas; and

FURTHER, Undersigned supports reasonable and effective regulatory protocols put into place by agencies (Agencies) including, but not necessarily limited to, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and Texas Animal Health Commission; and

FURTHER, Undersigned recognizes that such reasonable and effective CWD-related protocols may include, but not necessarily be limited to, the following safeguards: testing of CWD susceptible animals; restrictions on movement of live CWD susceptible animals; testing of hunter-harvested CWD susceptible animals from high risk areas; and

FURTHER, Undersigned recommends that such CWD-related protocols err on the side of safety in protecting our state's wildlife resources, err on the side of safety in protecting livestock and farming interests, and err on the side of safety in protecting human health; and

FURTHER, Undersigned supports timely, clear, and transparent communication from Agencies to various wildlife, hunting, ranching, and farming stakeholder organizations, as related news develops on CWD in Texas; and

FURTHER, Undersigned recommends that Agencies provide public news releases and education-related materials to be dispensed to the public to help inform and educate the public on CWD; and

FURTHER, Undersigned recommends that Agencies and the Texas Legislature continue to seek regulatory refinement through best management practices which help minimize risks associated CWD and other potentially harmful diseases.

Executed this 13th day of July, 2015, and affirmed and supported by the organizations and individuals named on the attached signature pages which are made a part hereof for all purposes.

Borderlands Research Institute
Boone and Crockett Club
Caesar Kleberg Wildlife Research Institute
Hill Country Alliance
Houston Safari Club
National Wild Turkey Federation
Quality Deer Management Association
Texas Agricultural Land Trust
Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society
Texans For Saving Our Hunting Heritage
Texas Sheep and Goat Raisers Association
Texas State Rifle Association
Texas Wildlife and Fisheries Management Council
Texas Wildlife Association

Michael Bodenchuk - Professional Biologist, Member Texas Wildlife Association and Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society (TCTWS)
Dr. Fred Bryant - Past President TCTWS, Professional Member Boone and Crockett Club, Director Caesar Kleberg Wildlife Research Institute (CKWRI)
Dr. James Cathey - Certified Wildlife Biologist, Past President TCTWS
Dr. David Hewitt - Wildlife research scientist working for CKWRI
Dr. Wallace Klussmann - Texas Youth Hunting Program Founder