

Chairman Patten, Committee Members... My name is Wyatt Thompson. I will be talking about some data that the Game and Fish has been collecting from unit 3F2. CWD was first found in North Dakota in 2009 in the southwestern part of the state, more specifically inside the borders of unit 3F2. The North Dakota game and fish department then moved quickly, implementing the first restriction on hunting over bait in the state within the borders of unit 3F2 through their 2010 Chronic Wasting Disease proclamation, even after a bill to ban baiting introduced into the legislature in 2007 and 2009 was shot down.

70 positive CWD cases have been found in North Dakota in 13 years of testing. 48 of these cases have come from 3F2, or 68.6% of all positives. In the last 3 years of released data 2019-2021, 34 of 52 positives have come from 3F2, or 65% of positives from that time frame, even though the baiting restriction had been in place for 9 years prior.

-I did not include 2022 data in this as it was not released when I typed this originally but would include 8 more positives from 3F2.

In North Dakota since 2009 there has been 1 deer found dead in our state where they say CWD was the possible cause of death but are unable, with 100% certainty, to say that CWD was the direct cause. This deer was found dead, then tested positive. For a disease that is being pushed as always fatal, in a state where the average lifespan of a deer is roughly 3 years and a disease that usually takes 3-4 years to show symptoms, my question is where are the dead deer in the state from this always fatal disease, especially in units with higher prevalence rates?

In the spring of 2019, after finding that one doe that had possibly died due to CWD, the ND Game and Fish department went in and did targeted removal of 52 additional deer, 29 adults and 23 yearlings and fawns. After the results came back, with not 1 of these deer testing positive, none of the meat was used or donated, just disposed of. The North Dakota Game and Fish Department culled 52 CWD negative deer for test results on a disease that has had 1 possible fatality in our state.

After running through those numbers and remembering a baiting restriction has been in place now for 12 years total in 3F2, has that restriction the Game and Fish implemented been effective at impacting spread beyond a normal, natural deer to deer interaction, especially after the drastic spike the last 3 years?

At a Minot CWD meeting this past year, the Game and Fish Department stated they are moving away from data collection in 3F2, going to less frequent but more thorough testing. although from 2019 through 2021 hunter head participation across the state has already dropped from 15% to 4.9% over that time span. 3F2 has been the data collection site in the state that could back up the science they want us to believe... That a baiting restriction slows the spread of CWD, yet they are moving away from data there, specifically after the huge leap in positives from 2019 through 2022. Perhaps the data and science does NOT match the narrative and agenda.

Casey Anderson mentioned in his testimony in the house that in 2021 there was an independent survey sent out to hunters in North Dakota where 74% perceived a baiting restriction to be slightly to very effective at managing CWD.. If that independent survey was correct, why would this bill have this much traction? Submitted Testimony in support of this Bill on the House side was about 75% and had

one of the largest numbers of testimony submitted out of any bill introduced, with an 80% due pass on the House Floor.

I thank you for the opportunity to testify today and will answer any questions to the best of my abilities that the committee might have.

Thank you for your time,
Wyatt Thompson