Southwest Wisconsin CWD, Deer and Predator Study

This study comprehensively examines factors that could influence deer population change in southwestern Wisconsin. These include Chronic Wasting Disease, predation, habitat suitability and hunter harvest.

TIMELINE
Launch: July 2017
Completion: June 2021

FUNDING
Pittman-Robertson

DNR PARTNER BUREAU
Wildlife Management

EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS
Deer hunters
Private landowners
Conservation Congress
CDAC
Interested Public

January, 2016 marked the beginning of the largest and most comprehensive deer research project ever undertaken in Wisconsin: The Southwest Wisconsin CWD, Deer and Predator Study. This initiative stems from Governor Scott Walker's commitment to reevaluating chronic wasting disease in Wisconsin.

This study is principally concerned with the potential for CWD to negatively impact deer populations. We are exploring the infection rates at which CWD reduces deer survival and reproduction enough to reduce deer populations. However, many other factors can influence deer populations, including hunting, predation and habitat quality. Therefore researchers will closely track these factors as well. This study will also estimate the abundance and distribution of bobcats and coyotes within the study areas and will examine their impact on deer survival and behavior.

KEY POINTS

- The Southwest Wisconsin Deer and Predator Research Project was announced in May 2016 as part of the Governor's CWD Initiative. The overall research goal is to comprehensively examine factors that could influence deer population change.
- OAS will work with volunteers and landowners to collar deer, coyotes and bobcats and then release them back into the wild for monitoring.
- DNR staff intend to collar animals for a total of four years. We will continue to monitor these animals for several years after collaring concludes.
- Obtaining a genetic sample from each collared deer will determine whether genes governing CWD susceptibility influence deer survival.
- Collaring deer, bobcats and coyotes allows researchers to determine survival rates, causes of mortality, movements and habitat use of these animals.
- We welcome more volunteer landowners to join the study. Landowner participation is crucial for our success, and we appreciate their support in making this study possible.

SPOKESPERSONS

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WILDLIFE RESTORATION

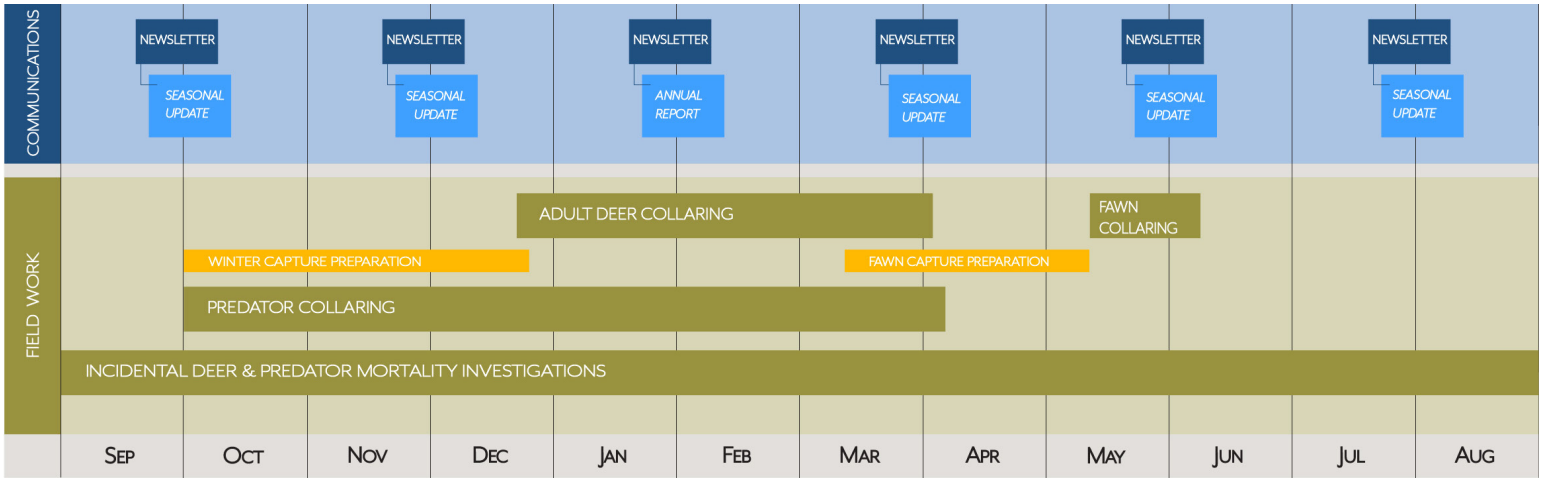
WISCONSIN DEPT. OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Office of Applied Science

Southwest Wisconsin CWD, Deer and Predator Study

ANNUAL TIMELINE

Throughout the year, each newsletter will include a seasonal update and background information about the study. To receive the newsletter, visit dnr.wi.gov and search keyword "field notes."



Fall Seasonal Update

Includes information on fawn survival and the number of pre-hunting marked predators on the landscape.

Winter Seasonal Update

Includes information about non-hunting deer survival and updated predator collaring numbers.

Early Spring Update

Contains updates on winter deer and predator fieldwork, including a more in-depth look at our study design.

Late Spring Seasonal Update

Includes winter collaring numbers for adult deer and predators and CWD testing results for captured deer.

Summer Seasonal Update

Includes an account of fawn collaring numbers and an update on predator cluster investigations.

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