



National Deer Alliance Discusses Social Science of CWD

INDIANA, Pa. (March 27, 2020) — National Deer Alliance (NDA) president and CEO Nick Pinizzotto recently discussed the social science behind chronic wasting disease (CWD) management at two national wildlife management conferences. Pinizzotto presented his talk, “Biology vs Sociology: The Paradox of Chronic Wasting Disease,” at the Southeast Deer Study Group meeting in Auburn, Alabama on February 24, and at the North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference in Omaha, Nebraska, on March 12.

The talks focused on people management with respect to the disease. Pinizzotto emphasized that people, and hunters specifically, are the real key to beating CWD. He noted that hunters are the best tools wildlife managers have available, and that disease management input and buy-in from hunters is crucial to the fight against CWD.

“Right now the CWD battle is with the people,” Pinizzotto said during one talk. “To have any chance of success, we need to engage hunters and win their trust. It won’t be easy. We’ll always have naysayers, those who tell people only what they want to hear. But they won’t solve this problem. Yes, we have biology on our side, but that doesn’t matter if we don’t win the people and keep hunters on our side.”

NDA prioritizes deer diseases and chronic wasting disease rises to the top. CWD is an unprecedented threat to healthy deer herds. Unlike other known or visible diseases though, CWD does not kill large amounts of deer at the same time, and affected deer often don’t show signs or symptoms until death is near. These factors, in addition to other communication and non-scientific-based reasoning from vocal groups and individuals, can leave hunters and members of the public confused, or without a sense of urgency of what’s at stake. So, clear and continued communication with hunters, and the general public, is incredibly important.

“It’s important to look at CWD as a forever disease, or at least an issue that we’ll all be dealing with for a long time with no foreseeable end in sight,” said Pinizzotto. “Hunters are the greatest conservationists and we’ll play the most important role when it comes to managing this disease.”

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For more from Pinizzotto's presentations, or to speak to him directly, he is available at nick@nationaldeeralliance.com.

Becoming an NDA member is free. Join and sign up for the award-winning NDA "On Watch" e-newsletter at NationalDeerAlliance.com. NDA is calling upon all deer enthusiasts to support its mission to serve as the guardian of wild deer conservation, and our hunting heritage. Visit the [NDA website](#) to learn more.

About National Deer Alliance: NDA is a nonprofit conservation organization with a mission to serve as the guardian for wild deer conservation and our hunting heritage. Focusing primarily on issues at the policy level, NDA is a leader in advocating for sustainable, science-based conservation of wild deer and fair-chase hunting, and is a source for credible, responsible, and timely information. NDA is an established and respected leader in the fight against chronic wasting disease. Learn more at nationaldeeralliance.com. Learn more at nationaldeeralliance.com.

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