



## North Carolina: Commission Proposes to Ban Cervid Urine

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On October 24, the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission (Commission) gave approval to present a proposed rule at statewide public hearings in January 2020 that would prohibit the use of cervid urine for taking or attracting wildlife.

The proposed regulation aims to protect the state's deer and elk herds from **Chronic Wasting Disease** (CWD), a contagious, always-fatal disease in cervids with no known cure or vaccine. While CWD has not been detected North Carolina, CWD has been detected in 26 states, including neighboring states Tennessee (2018) and Virginia (2009).

Specifically, the **proposed amendment** to 15A NCAC 10B .0201, Prohibiting Taking and Manner of Take, reads, "No person shall possess or use of any substance or material that contains or purports to contain any excretion collected from a cervid, including feces, urine, blood, gland oil, or other bodily fluid for the purposes of taking or attempting to take, attracting, or scouting wildlife."

As the Commission noted in their rationale for the proposed regulation, "The source of the

disease is an abnormal prion (a form of protein) that collects in the animal's brains cells and produces small lesions...CWD prions have been detected in urine, feces, blood and saliva of pre-symptomatic/symptomatic deer and these prions remains infectious when released into the environment." Urine-based lures are collected at farmed cervid facilities, and, as the Commission further noted, "there is no accurate CWD test of live deer, and there is no rapid, cost-effective test to determine whether commercial deer urines are prion-free."

A number of other states also prohibit the use of natural deer urine products in some manner. South Carolina was the most recent state to institute a ban on the use of natural deer urine as an attractant, **adopting the regulation** in July of this year. To date, whether the transmission of CWD through urine is possible, it has not been concretely proven. For example, we know that prions can be transmitted through urine, but we remain uncertain of how many prions it takes to infect an otherwise healthy deer with CWD, and are therefore uncertain of whether a sufficient quantity can be transmitted through urine alone. Regardless of this uncertainty, states that are more risk-averse have begun taking a precautionary approach regarding the use of deer urine in the field.

This latest proposed regulation related to CWD builds off of **new carcass import rules** that were implemented last year, which were also an effort to prevent CWD in the state.

Limiting the spread of CWD and providing additional funding for CWD research is a top priority for many hunting conservation organizations. Earlier this month, the Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation hosted a **Policy Luncheon** on Capitol Hill to discuss CWD.

## States Involved

- **North Carolina**

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## Your opinion counts

Which of the following do you think would most effectively support increasing hunting participation numbers?