

MEDIA RELEASE
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SAULT STE. MARIE, Mich.

Tribal regs ban baiting in CWD area

SAULT STE. MARIE, Mich. — Effective this hunting season, the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians instituted a ban on the baiting of deer in Kent, Ionia, Montcalm, Mecosta, Newaygo and Ottawa counties. Baiting and feeding deer will be prohibited in the Lower Peninsula beginning Jan. 31, 2019.

The regulation changes are necessary to help halt the spread of deer with Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD), a progressive wasting disease that is extremely contagious and always fatal. The six banned counties are identified as the Chronic Wasting Disease Core Area, where CWD has been found in a number of wild deer.

The Sault Tribe Board of Directors also approved prohibiting the transportation of deer carcasses from the Chronic Wasting Disease Core Area unless it is “deboned meat, quarters or other parts of a cervid that do not have any part of the spinal column or head attached, antlers, antlers attached to a skull cap cleaned of all brain and muscle tissue, hides, upper canine teeth, or a finished taxidermist mount.”

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends, as a precaution, hunters should avoid eating deer and elk tissues known to harbor the CWD agent — the brain, spinal cord, eyes, spleen, tonsils and lymph nodes.

In August, Michigan’s Natural Resources Commission approved a number of deer regulations to help stop the spread of CWD. Among those is an immediate ban on baiting and feeding in the 16-county area identified as the CWD Management Zone — Calhoun, Clinton, Eaton, Gratiot, Hillsdale, Ingham, Ionia, Isabella, Jackson, Kent, Mecosta, Montcalm, Muskegon, Newaygo, Ottawa and Shiawassee counties — along with restrictions on deer carcass movement.

The tribe’s Wildlife Management Program does not disagree in principle with the state’s regulation changes. “For the most part, they are a product of the best available information on the management of Chronic Wasting Disease,” said the tribe’s wildlife biologist, Eric Clark.

Clark added, “There are certain strategies — the increase antler point restrictions, for example — that we would not support; however, the Consent Decree does not require the tribes to follow suit with these type of regulations.”

The tribe’s resolution, “Amending Chapter 21 Baiting Regulations,” adds the following language to 21.519 Baiting:

(5) Notwithstanding subsection (1) above the baiting of deer in any manner whatsoever in Kent, Ionia, Montcalm, Mecosta, Newaygo and Ottawa Counties is prohibited.

(6) Effective January 31, 2019 baiting and feeding deer is prohibited in the Lower Peninsula.

(7) The possession and use of natural cervid urine-based lures and attractants while hunting or trapping game species is prohibited with the exception of synthetic cervid urine-based lures and attractants or natural cervid urine-based lures or attractants that are labeled with the official ATA (Archery Trade Association) Seal of Participation is legal.

Resolution, "Amending Chapter 21 Deer Regulations" adds the following language to 21.702 Deer:

The Chronic Wasting Disease Core Area is defined as Kent, Ionia, Montcalm, Mecosta, Newaygo and Ottawa Counties.

Transportation of deer carcasses from the Chronic Wasting Disease Core Area is prohibited unless it is deboned meat, quarters or other parts of a cervid that do not have any part of the spinal column or head attached, antlers, antlers attached to a skull cap cleaned of all brain and muscle tissue, hides, upper canine teeth, or a finished taxidermist mount.

Access Tribal Code Chapter 21 at <https://www.saulttribe.com/government/tribal-code> and the tribe's Natural Resources Division at <https://www.saulttribe.com/membership-services/natural-resources>. Anyone with questions is welcome to call Sault Tribe Law Enforcement and Conservation at (906) 635-6065.