

How to Comment

You can provide comments about the proposed plan by:

- Attending a public meeting
- Submitting written comments by mail to:  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
Environmental Quality Division  
P.O. Box 25287  
Denver, CO 80225
- Submitting comments electronically to:  
<http://parkplanning.nps.gov/anti>

Please include your full name and address with the comments, so we may add you to our mailing list for future notices about this process. Since this EA will address two park units, be sure to note if your comment is intended for one or both of the battlefields.

Our practice is to make comments, including names, home addresses, home phone numbers, and E-mail addresses of respondents, available for public review. Individual respondents may request that we withhold their names and/or home addresses, etc., but if you wish us to consider withholding this information, you must state this prominently at the beginning of your comments. In addition, you must present a rationale for withholding this information. This rationale must demonstrate that disclosure would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of privacy. Unsupported assertions will not meet this burden. In the absence of exceptional, documentable circumstances, this information will be released. We will always make submissions from organizations or businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives of or officials of organizations or businesses, available for public inspection in their entirety.

*Updates on the planning process will be provided at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/anti>*



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
Environmental Quality Division  
P.O. Box 25287  
Denver, CO 80225

NEPA and Where We are in the Process

NPS is preparing an EA in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), which requires federal agencies to analyze impacts to the natural and human environment for any major federal actions, such as the development of this plan. The following highlights important steps in the NEPA process:

- Internal Scoping for the Plan/EA
- ★ 30-day Public Scoping and Comment Period—We Are Here ★
- NPS Reviews Public Scoping Comments, Completes the Development of Alternatives, and Analyzes Impacts of the Alternatives
- Release Plan/EA to Public for Review
- 60-day Public Review and Comment Period
- Public Meetings on Plan/EA
- Finalized Plan/EA and Decision

Antietam National Battlefield, Maryland  
Monocacy National Battlefield, Maryland

National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior



Chronic Wasting Disease Detection and Initial Response Plan and Environmental Assessment Public Meetings

February 2007

You’re Invited!

Your Participation Will Help Shape This Plan

Because of your interest in Antietam and Monocacy National Battlefields, we are requesting your input in developing the Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) Detection and Initial Response Plan/Environmental Assessment (plan/EA). Your participation is vital to our planning process. There are a number of ways to be involved, including attending the upcoming public scoping meeting (see below), or submitting comments in writing (see last page for more information about how to submit comments).

Public Scoping Meetings

Scoping is the first step to involve the public in the environmental impact analysis process. Scoping includes holding meetings and providing opportunities for the public to comment so that their concerns are identified early. Because the EA will analyze many complex ecological and social issues, your participation is encouraged and needed.



Public Scoping Meetings Schedule and Locations

Antietam National Battlefield Visitor Center – Monday, February 12, 2007, 6:30-9 pm

The Gambrill House at Monocacy National Battlefield – Tuesday, February 13, 2007, 6:30-9 pm

The Antietam National Battlefield Visitor Center is located at 5831 Dunker Church Road, Sharpsburg, MD 21782 and is accessible by traveling approximately 10 miles south on Rte 65 from I- 70 (exit 29 when traveling east, 29A when traveling west). More detailed directions are available on the battlefield’s website at [www.nps.gov/anti](http://www.nps.gov/anti).

The Gambrill House is located at 4801 Urbana Pike, Frederick, Maryland 21704, approximately 3 miles south of the City of Frederick, on Maryland Route 355. More detailed directions are available on the battlefield’s website at [www.nps.gov/mono](http://www.nps.gov/mono).





Purpose

The purpose of this plan is to develop a range of strategies for the detection of and initial response to chronic wasting disease in white-tailed deer at Antietam and Monocacy National Battlefields, since the disease has been detected near the park units and may threaten park resources.



Need

A detection and initial response plan is needed at this time to address:

- The use of a range of CWD surveillance and initial response actions in light of recent detections in nearby geographic areas and how they affect Antietam and Monocacy National Battlefields.
- Imminent or potential threats to park natural resources and components of the cultural landscapes, primarily white-tailed deer populations, from the establishment or spread of CWD.
- Cooperation and coordination with state wildlife and agricultural agencies, as well as other stakeholders, regarding prevention, surveillance, research, and initial response actions for CWD.

Preliminary Alternative Management Strategies

The following are preliminary ideas about actions that could be taken to detect CWD and to initially respond if the disease is detected.

- Continue Current Management (No Action Alternative)
- Detection:
  - Opportunistic Surveillance
  - Targeted Surveillance
  - Live Test for CWD
  - Lethal Removal for CWD Testing
- Initial Response:
  - Targeted Surveillance
  - Live Test for CWD/Lethal Removal of Positive Cases
  - Lethal Removal
  - No Further Action After Detection

Objectives

Objectives are what must be achieved to a large degree for the action to be considered a success. In addition, any plan the park develops must be consistent with the laws, policies, and regulations that guide the NPS. All alternatives selected for detailed analysis must meet all objectives to a large degree, and resolve the purpose and need for action.

General

- Ensure actions are consistent with pertinent National Park Service management policies.

Deer Populations at Antietam and Monocacy National Battlefields

- Estimate ongoing risk of CWD infection in the white-tailed deer population of Antietam and Monocacy National Battlefields based on known disease risk factors.
- Appropriate to the level of risk, develop adaptive management protocols for the detection of CWD presence, prevalence, and distribution, as well as an initial response to the disease.

Cultural Resources

- Minimize disruption to the natural resources and components of the cultural landscapes from CWD or implementation of surveillance and initial response activities for the disease.

Human Health and Safety

- Minimize the potential for health and safety issues for park staff and visitors associated with CWD surveillance and initial response activities.

Visitor Experience and Involvement of Interested Parties

- Cooperate and coordinate with state wildlife and agricultural agencies, as well as other interested parties, with respect to detection of CWD and initial responses to positive cases.
- Enhance the awareness and understanding of CWD and NPS resource management issues, policies, and mandates as they pertain to prevention, surveillance, and response to the disease for visitors and other interested parties.
- During implementation of CWD surveillance and initial response activities, minimize disruption to visitor use and experience.

Park Management and Operations

- Minimize impacts of CWD surveillance and response activities on current park operations, including budget and workload.

Chronic Wasting Disease Background

CWD is in the family of diseases known as the transmissible spongiform encephalopathies (TSE) or prion diseases (a prion is an infectious protein). It is a self-propagating neurological disease that affects captive and free-ranging deer, causing brain lesions that result in progressive weight loss, behavioral changes, and eventually death in affected animals. CWD is in the same family as bovine spongiform encephalopathy, also known as “mad cow.” However, there is currently no evidence that CWD is transmissible to humans or domestic livestock.

Studies have suggested that bodily secretions such as feces, urine, saliva, and blood are possible means of CWD transmission between deer. Prions are also known to persist in the environment and contribute to the spread of CWD. Studies have also shown that CWD can be efficiently transmitted in high density captive herds.

*In 2005, CWD was detected in Slanesville, West Virginia, near a number of national park units, including Antietam and Monocacy National Battlefields.*

Chronic Wasting Disease in National Parks

As of January 2007, CWD has been found in 10 states and two Canadian provinces in captive and farmed populations. In free-ranging populations, CWD has been found in 11 states and two provinces. However, CWD has been found within only two national parks: Rocky Mountain National Park in Colorado, and Wind Cave National Park in South Dakota. Recently, CWD was detected in Slanesville, West Virginia, within 60-miles of several national park units, including Antietam and Monocacy National Battlefields, as well as Shenandoah National Park. Current National Park Service policy directs park units within a 60-mile radius of a known CWD case to conduct opportunistic surveillance (testing deer that die in the park from vehicle collisions, predation, research, etc.) and targeted surveillance (testing deer that show clinical signs of the disease).

Since the detection of CWD in New York and West Virginia, state agencies in the Northeast have been increasing CWD surveillance and creating CWD action plans. Many of these plans call for actions that ultimately go beyond NPS-defined targeted and opportunistic surveillance and call for lethally removing deer that appear to be healthy to detect and/or manage CWD. The state of Maryland’s plan calls for population reduction as a tool to limit the potential for CWD transmission under specific circumstances. Several states have inquired how the NPS will participate in these CWD management plans as they are implemented.

Chronic Wasting Disease Surveillance at Antietam & Monocacy National Battlefields

The battlefields have recently begun targeted surveillance for CWD per current NPS policy. To date, deer showing clinical signs of the disease have not been reported at either park unit. When appropriate, opportunistic surveillance will also be conducted as deer become available in the battlefields.

Because of their proximity to the positive CWD detections in Slanesville, West Virginia, the National Park Service is conducting a multi-regional effort that involves CWD detection and initial response at Antietam and Monocacy National Battlefields (NPS National Capital Region) and Shenandoah National Park (NPS Northeast Region). These park units have chosen to go forward with a NEPA process to examine the range of strategies for the detection and initial response to the disease and to increase coordination with states and other stakeholders. While Shenandoah’s NEPA process will occur independent of the process for Antietam and Monocacy, the NPS is coordinating the efforts closely.



*Opportunistic Surveillance is defined as taking diagnostic samples for chronic wasting disease testing from deer found dead. These specimens must have died accidentally, naturally, through a removal effort documented through a specific planning/NEPA process, or by causes other than for the purpose of testing.*

*Targeted Surveillance is the lethal removal of any deer that exhibits clinical signs consistent with chronic wasting disease.*