

Wildlife Disease Information Node Collection Development Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this Collection Development Policy is to help define the scope and future development of the Wildlife Disease Information Node (WDIN) by creating guidelines for the selection of free electronic material available via the Internet. While this policy will primarily serve the staff responsible for the creation and maintenance of the website, it may also demonstrate the intent of the collection to users and, when necessary, justify content decisions.

Background

WDIN's primary objective is to build partnerships and provide tools to facilitate long-term collaborative efforts in the wildlife disease arena. WDIN seeks to achieve this objective by utilizing electronic technology in order to create a virtual space for both information and community. The wildlife health field continues to expand and change. Web resources are an ideal source for a collection because they are dynamic and fluid, continuing to evolve and reflect the most current information in wildlife health.

WDIN functions as part of the National Biological Information Infrastructure, an electronic information network. The WDIN project consists of two parts, a website and a database; this policy will focus on developing the website content. Although both the collection and the community it serves primarily occupy a virtual presence, the WDIN office is located at the USGS National Wildlife Health Center in Madison, Wisconsin.

Scope

The aim of this policy is to create a framework for sorting through Internet resources in order to collate the most useful resources available on this topic into one location, thus creating a one-stop resource for wildlife health information. The WDIN collection seeks to insure the availability of quality resources from authoritative sources by focusing on free, electronic resources concerning wildlife diseases that are readily accessible to all. Further, WDIN will insure maximum access to these Internet resources through the cataloging and maintenance of all records, including updating URLs on a regular basis. This policy does not address electronic resources such as full text databases and electronic serials due to price and access limitations.

Wildlife Disease Information Node Collection Development Policy

Responsibility Statement

Selection responsibility will be shared by all working on WDIN. However, the ultimate responsibility for the inclusion or exclusion of content on the WDIN website resides with the Content Manager or the Project Leader. Decisions regarding any structural changes in content will be made in collaboration with the Project Leader, who oversees content decisions.

As a government agency, some limitations apply to what type of content is permissible. Suggestions and requests from the community of users are encouraged and will be considered for inclusion based on adherence to the Collection Development Policy.

The workflow for approval will be as follows. Support staff will assist with searching for new materials based on the guidelines outlined in this policy. All potential content will then be submitted to the Content Manager who will review and approve. When an item falls into a gray area, it will be referred to the Project Leader who will then make a final decision. If support staff and the Content Manager disagree on the inclusion of a resource that cannot be resolved, the Project Leader will be consulted. The Collection Development Policy will be adjusted as necessary to reflect any changes in type of content or decisions to incorporate gray areas into Policy.

Community Profile

Materials for WDIN are selected to attract a diverse community of users interested in wildlife health. While wildlife professionals are the target audience, other professionals along with public and policymakers have a vested interest in having access to wildlife health information. Many of the same diseases that affect wildlife health also have an impact on human and domestic animal health; therefore, the community of WDIN users will also include but is not limited to: wildlife biologist, medical professions, veterinarian, decision makers and concerned citizens together with many other interest groups.

Community Needs Assessment

The field of wildlife health is constantly changing as new knowledge is acquired. Although WDIN's community of users is diverse, all share a need for the most current information available. Further, even within a specific community of users it is necessary to have material that represents the full range of technical levels in order to cater to all levels of interest. While meeting the educational needs of wildlife professionals is a major objective, frequently WDIN is used as an intermediary source for primary information to present wildlife health information to a larger audience.

Wildlife Disease Information Node Collection Development Policy

Feedback from NWHC users focus group highlights the follow types of information as useful: scientific literature, maps, photos, video, databases, specialized web sites, research activities and new portals. In addition, website statistics will enhance feedback, creating a tracking method and reflection for what resources the community utilizes most.

Collection Goals

The focus of the collection activity is to continually seek and catalog new information resources. Ideally, the site should be updated at least bi-weekly. The need for current, updated information is a priority for the both the collection and its community of users. The primary method of retrieving this information is through searching the Internet but the collection is also enhanced by references from current awareness subscriptions.

The primary composition of the collection will consist of conventional wildlife health information; although, some room will be reserved for more controversial or editorial materials. The coverage of different viewpoints will be proportionately representative to the acceptance within the wildlife health community. While the inclusion of alternative perspectives is seen as important to providing a comprehensive view of the wildlife health community's body of knowledge, this inclusion will be limited to only the best resource(s) available. As such, new information will in all likelihood replace any coverage that may already exist in WDIN. This type of information is considered valuable in that it is useful to community members to see where new ideas are converging, diverging and intersecting. However, material that has no scientific merit or representation in the literature will not be given any unnecessary authority through placement on the WDIN website. For this reason WDIN will not collect materials that validates any information lacking scientific support. Moreover, questionable resources for which authenticity is not easily verifiable will be excluded by default.

Short Term Plans

Currently, cataloging new resources is the central activity. Since there are many areas to collect new content in, only specific subject areas will be targeted initially. While all users within the community will find useful content in the collection, resources for wildlife disease specialists and wildlife biologists will be prioritized. Gradual expansion of the collection will continue as time and resources permit based upon the Community Needs Assessment.

Long Term Plans

Wildlife diseases are a global challenge; thereby a future goal will be to collect resources from other countries and international organizations. Not only would this enhance WDIN's collection but it would also expand WDIN's usefulness to a larger community.

Wildlife Disease Information Node Collection Development Policy

In order to best accommodate the collective knowledge of the WDIN community, mechanisms are being developed for user feedback through the website. As such, the website will then be better able to reflect the community's information needs by incorporating recommendations for future content and relevancy of current material based on user feedback.

Selection Criteria

The following are some guidelines to follow when collecting resources for WDIN. Ideally, selected resources should meet a majority of the primary criteria, particularly in subject content through an approved source. However, some items outside of these criteria may also be relevant; finding this type of information could lead to the potential expansion of criteria or the inclusion of some broader types of material. Material that does not fit within the selection criteria should be carefully reviewed.

Subject Content

Topics for Primary Focus

- ◆ Wildlife disease/Wildlife health
 - ° Wildlife management (control and prevention)
 - ° Surveillance
 - ° Disease detection and diagnosis
 - ° Use of technology to improve disease detection and management (GIS technology or data sharing information systems)
 - ° How wildlife diseases are integral to larger context
- ◆ Zoonoses – the human health connection
- ◆ Connection between domestic animals and wildlife health

- ◆ Selected specific diseases – includes any relevant, newly emerging disease that becomes a significant concern
- ◆ Current research activity within community
- ◆ Events and meetings important to wildlife community – as a member of and forwarding this information for cataloging
- ◆ Resources focusing on health and disease issues related to mammals and birds.

Additional Topics for Later Inclusion

- ◆ Ecosystem health
- ◆ Bioterrorism
- ◆ Editorial and controversial content
- ◆ Resources focusing on health and disease issues related to amphibians, fishes, invertebrates, and reptiles.

Wildlife Disease Information Node Collection Development Policy

Topics to avoid collecting

- ◆ Resources that affect WDIN'S mission negatively by:
 - ◆ presenting wildlife as a pest or are more concerned with how wildlife is harmful to humans/environment
 - ◆ material that validates agendas different from WDIN's mission, that also does not add any further new or good information
 - ◆ material with no scientific or supportive evidence
- ◆ Material that is too general or redundant to what already exists in the collection
- ◆ Material with an emphasis on human or domestic animal health with no connection to wildlife

Approved Sources

This list is only a guideline for selecting content. Controversial, editorial or other material that is not from an approved source should be carefully reviewed.

Primary Sources

- ◆ Academic (.edu)
- ◆ Government (.gov)
- ◆ Professional organizations (.org)
- ◆ Consortia/ Non-Profit – Members include governmental, academic and professional organizations

Secondary Sources

- ◆ Trades/Commercial
- ◆ Non-profit organizations with political agendas – Members include public supports, lobbyists and others that share strong environmental views

Languages

Initial Focus

- ◆ English

Later Inclusion – In order of priority

- ◆ French and Spanish
- ◆ Other languages

Wildlife Disease Information Node Collection Development Policy

Geographical Areas

Initial Focus

- ◆ United States

Later Inclusion – In order of priority

- ◆ Canada and Mexico
- ◆ European Union
- ◆ Southern Western Hemisphere
- ◆ China and Japan
- ◆ Other Eastern Hemisphere Countries
- ◆ Other...

Types of Material

Primary

- ◆ Bibliographies
- ◆ Approved Research Grants
- ◆ Reports
- ◆ Images
- ◆ Journal Articles
- ◆ On-line books
- ◆ Management plans
- ◆ Maps – Static and Interactive
- ◆ Information systems and databases
- ◆ Reference materials
- ◆ Fact sheets / FAQ's
- ◆ Instructional – including continuing education and K-16 materials
- ◆ Laws and regulations
- ◆ Manuals – Practical, “how-to” materials
- ◆ Methods and techniques
- ◆ News
- ◆ Proceedings
- ◆ Presentations
- ◆ Standards and guidelines
- ◆ Tools and software
- ◆ Thesis/dissertations

Secondary

- ◆ Editorial

Wildlife Disease Information Node Collection Development Policy

Format of Materials

Primary – On-line material

- ◆ On – line materials
- ◆ Audio-visual
- ◆ Images
- ◆ PowerPoint
- ◆ Word documents
- ◆ PDFs
- ◆ Flash

Secondary

- ◆ Citation information to paper-only materials

Collection Evaluation and Assessment

An evaluation of the collection and its contents will be conducted routinely on a bi-monthly schedule. A program will sort the material every two months, providing the oldest resources to be reviewed, creating a rotating schedule that targets the resources most in need of reevaluation. The evaluation process will consider the continued relevancy of specific resources as well as portions of the collection. At this time, any necessary cataloging will occur to reflect all new or changing content for specific resources. Further, statistics used for evaluating the collection will also guide the future expansion or reduction of certain collection portions or subjects.

Deselection

Due to the potentially ephemeral nature of Internet resources, it will sometimes be necessary to remove items from the WDIN collection. The collection will be checked monthly for broken links, at which point items of concern will be corrected or removed. Material whose information has lost its currency or reliability will also be weeded from the collection. Feedback from use statistics will be the catalyst for reviewing specific content or portions of the collection that may no longer be pertinent to the collection based on low usage.

Wildlife Disease Information Node Collection Development Policy

Policy Review and Revision

The relevant WDIN team members will review the Collection Development Policy on a yearly basis over the next three years, after which bi-yearly reviews will be conducted.

Wildlife Disease Information Node Collection Development Policy

The policy requires more frequent reviews initially because the site will be growing and evolving exponentially, in both content and development. A routine evaluation of the policy will ensure that it reflects the overall composition of the collection. For example, if a shift occurs in the type of resources being cataloged in order to meet user demand, then the policy will need to be updated to highlight these selected resources.

Furthermore, the policy review should include conducting another survey or focus group, consisting of volunteers that reflect the composition of the larger user community. This step will guarantee the site is adapting and changing to suit the wildlife health community.