



October 12, 2001

To: News Editor

From: Ernie Wittwer, MRUTC Director

Subject: Feature story and fact sheet on deer crashes in the Upper Midwest

I am enclosing for your consideration a brief story on the important issue of deer-vehicle collisions on the highways of our region. I hope you will find it appropriate for use in your publication. I am also enclosing for your future reference a fact sheet on deer crashes and how drivers can avoid them.

The deer-crash problem has been around for many years, but it is growing worse as the numbers of deer and vehicles both increase, particularly in the Upper Midwest.

The Deer-Vehicle Crash Information Clearinghouse is a regional Midwest effort, currently funded by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation. We are just beginning our work, but a technical advisory committee of transportation and natural resources professionals has already been formed. Members from the five participating states of Illinois, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota and Wisconsin are listed in the enclosed material. A board of directors is also being formed, with members to be announced later this fall.

We have begun to gather available research and information about strategies for reducing the number and severity of deer crashes. This information will be made widely available—through an Internet Web site, workshops and other channels.

A large portion of the Clearinghouse effort is informational and educational in nature. We thought it was important, at this critical peak time for deer crashes, to introduce to you the objectives of the project and also begin our educational efforts. In the enclosed story and fact sheet, we describe the Clearinghouse and provide information about deer crashes and driver tips for avoiding deer.

Thank you for your assistance in bringing this information to the attention of the public.