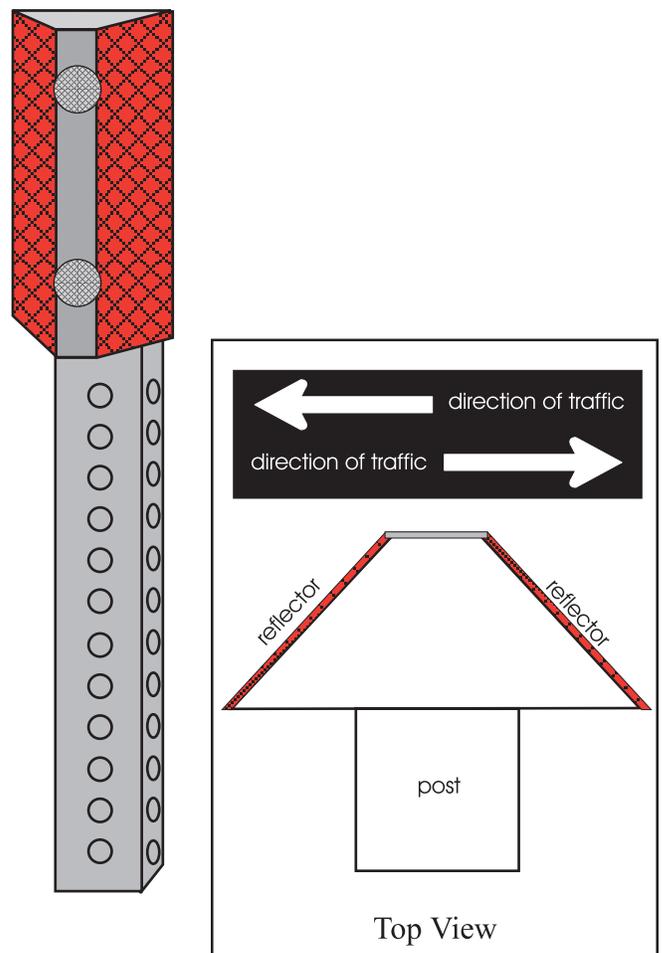


Deer Crossing Signs

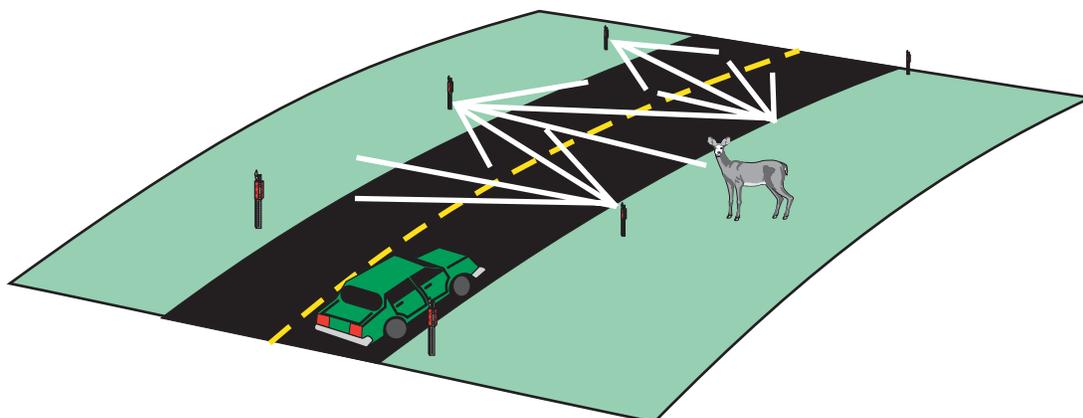
Animals on the road are a major cause of crashes in rural Iowa and are becoming more frequent in urban locations. Crashes involving deer can result in significant property damage or serious injury to drivers and passengers. The installation of warning signs for deer crossings should be considered carefully, since occurrence of deer on the roadway is occasional and overuse of deer warning signs leads to general disregard of the signs by the driving public.

Special reflectors to alert deer of night traffic have been developed, marketed, and deployed along roads in some areas in Iowa. However, results from the use of these devices have been inconclusive. Consequently, to warn of areas where deer are most likely to be encountered, it is recommended that criteria be established for warranting appropriate warning signs. These criteria could include good documentation of locations where vehicle crashes involving deer have occurred. The Accident Location and Analysis System (ALAS) for crash history, as well as local records of struck deer removal, can be valuable. Review of data for a three-to-five year period is suggested.

Travel speed of vehicles also should be considered. For example, some jurisdictions only



Deer reflector (top and side view)



Use of deer reflectors

provide signing where speed is in excess of 45 miles per hour or in topography where sight distance is occasionally limited by roadside obstructions or vertical and/or horizontal curvature. Using these data and geometric characteristics as reference, consultation initially with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) local conservation officer or area game warden and then with the DNR wildlife research supervisor may result in a recommendation from that agency for placement of deer crossing signs to warn drivers of a particular area of concern.

Section 2C.37 of the *MUTCD* describes the use of specific crossing signs, including the Deer Crossing Symbol sign (W11-3). In addition, a supplemental plaque, Deer Crossing (W11-3p) can be used. To advise drivers of a more precise location where encounters with deer are likely, it is suggested to use a supplemental plaque, such as Ahead or Next X Miles.

It is suggested that areas signed for deer crossing be reviewed occasionally to verify the continued need for signs. However, unless major factors of

habitat use or road configuration change, the removal of these signs may not be appropriate. Any anticipated change in signing should be reviewed with DNR representatives.



W11-3



W11-3p



Supplemental plaque