



ANNUAL REPORT

MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF LIVESTOCK - Animal Health Bureau

Mission Statement

To control and eradicate animal diseases, prevent the transmission of animal diseases to humans, and to protect the livestock industry from theft and predatory animals.

Serving Montana Since 1885



Glacier National Park
Source: DOL Staff

FISCAL YEAR

July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2018

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LOOKING BACK

Summary Highlights Tahnee Szymanski, DVM

FY18 was marked primarily by change. The most significant being a structural reorganization at the Department of Livestock.

The Department of Livestock, the Animal Health Division, the Diagnostic Laboratory, Meat Inspection, and Milk and Egg were combined into a single Food Safety and Animal Health Division with Dr. Zaluski serving as the administrator, while also maintaining his role as State Veterinarian. The four divisions are now bureaus within the new division and I, as the Assistant State Veterinarian, have been tasked with leading the Animal Health Bureau as Bureau Chief. This reorganization has been a significant in-house change and we have all worked together to prevent minimal disruption in communication and interaction with the livestock industry in Montana. We remain committed to providing high-quality service.



Figure 1. Tahnee Szymanski, DVM
Source: Personal Photo

The department also saw the retirement of a long-time employee, Evaleen Starkel. Evaleen contributed years of dedicated service to our agency and provided training and guidance to all of us in Animal Health. Her service to the livestock industry in Montana will be greatly appreciated for years to come.

The Animal Health Bureau continues to work on animal disease traceability, import regulations for animal moving into Montana, and disease program work. This past year saw a significant disease investigation associated with the detection of equine infectious anemia in Gallatin County as well as continued tuberculosis epidemiologic work associated with the detection of bovine tuberculosis in a South Dakota beef herd. Brucellosis management is also an ever-present and integral part of the work the Animal Health Bureau does. This includes the detection of two new brucellosis infected herds as well as the detection of brucellosis in elk outside of the boundary of our Designated Surveillance Area (DSA).

The following report documents all the work and effort of our Animal Health Bureau staff to protect the livestock industry in Montana as well as public health. I am humbled by the people I work with daily both within the Department of Livestock and throughout the state of Montana. Thank you for the tremendous work that you do!

Sincerely,

Tahnee Szymanski, DVM

A N I M A L H E A L T H S T A F F

Marty Zaluski, DVM grew up in Butte Montana, and graduated from Michigan State University College of Veterinary Medicine in 1997. He joined the Department of Livestock in 2007. As the state veterinarian and the administrator of the Animal Health & Food Safety Division, he is focused on the mission of protecting animal and public health. He oversees the bureaus of Animal Health, Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory, Meat & Poultry Inspection, and Milk & Egg. He has been highly involved in Montana's brucellosis program, trichomoniasis, traceability, animal imports and food safety. Marty Zaluski is married to Heather Zaluski, MD and has three children, Kate (13), Evan (17), and Maia (20). In his off-duty time, Zaluski enjoys brewing beer, riding dirt bikes, hunting, and boating.

Tahnee Szymanski, DVM is a Helena native and a 2004 graduate from Oregon State University College of Veterinary Medicine. She joined the Department of Livestock in 2008. As the assistant state veterinarian and Animal Health Bureau Chief, Dr. Szymanski is responsible for the import office, Montana's state traceability program, animal health enforcement field staff, the alternative livestock program, and several disease programs. These include trichomoniasis, rabies, tuberculosis, as well as other cattle, equine, and poultry disease programs. Tahnee is married to Seth Szymanski and has one child, Campbell (6). In her off-duty time, Szymanski enjoys hiking, kayaking, snowshoeing, and quilting.

Eric Liska, DVM grew up on the family Angus ranch in Nebraska, graduated from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln with a bachelor's degree in science and a minor in agriculture. Following his graduation from Kansas State University College of Veterinary Medicine in 1998, he practiced and owned his own large animal veterinary practice in Helena for 11 years. Eric came on board with the department as the Brucellosis Program Veterinarian in June of 2009. He enjoys pheasant hunting and quality time with his daughters, Stella (14 years old) and Grace (11).

Samantha Novak grew up in Elliston, Montana and attended Helena Community College receiving a certificate in medical assisting. Samantha was hired by the Department of Livestock in October 2016 and is now a License Permit Technician. Samantha manages the *B-ovis* Certified Free Flock Program, Alternative Livestock, and Six-Month Passport Programs. She lives in the Helena Valley with her husband. Samantha likes to spend her free time with her family moving cows, haying, and helping out when needed.

Brooke Ruffier grew up in Butte Montana. She holds two bachelor degrees: one in equitation training and the other in business management - graduating from Rocky Mountain College in Billings in 2013. Brooke joined the department March 2017 as a license and permit technician and manages the exotics, annual equine, and poultry programs. Brooke pals around with her Corgi and enjoys training reining horses.

Cinda Young-Eichenfels grew up in Three Forks Montana and graduated from Carroll College with a Bachelor's Degree in English Writing/History in 1996. She furthered her education with a Paralegal Certification. Cinda joined the Department of Livestock in May 2012 and is the department's Administrative Rules Specialist and is editor of our monthly and annual reports. On her hobby ranch, Cinda raises a few chickens, attends to her horses, and looks for adventures in travel whenever possible!

Sara Morell grew up as a child of an army dad mostly in Louisiana and Germany, but has been in Montana since 1991. In 2006, Sara graduated with a Computer Science Degree and entered the healthcare industry until January 2017, when she began working for the Department of Livestock. Sara has three hard working boys (16, 20, and 25) that live in Lake County that are super busy on the spud farm and guest ranch. When not working with book authors in her off time, she enjoys hunting, fishing, kayaking, hiking, and time with friends and family.

A N I M A L H E A L T H S T A F F

Sara Starkey grew up in Southern California and earned an Associate's Degree in Equine Health from the University of Montana Western. She then spent four years working at a mixed animal practice veterinary clinic as a vet technician. Sara joined the Animal Health Bureau of the Department of Livestock in May 2016. She is our program specialist and manages seasonal grazer and biologics programs, coordinates the veterinary accreditation seminars, oversees electronic health certificate management and manages import quarantines. In her free time, Sara spends time with her husband, four dogs and six horses on their growing ranch.

Ernie McCaffree was born and raised on the family cattle and sheep ranch north of the Musselshell in Eastern Montana. He attended Miles Community College in Miles City Montana. Started riding for the Department of Livestock (Brands) circa 1979. Ernie is the Western Montana Animal Health/Brands Law Enforcement Supervisor with specialized training in Animal Health compliance, Yellowstone National Park Bison and Alternative Livestock. Ernie has a small acreage in the Flathead Valley and runs a few cattle and horses. He is married to his wife of 36 years (Wendy) and two sons Zane and Shane - each are married and have a daughter. Ernie spends all the time he can outdoors with family, working livestock and hunting. He has a metal and wood shop where he makes custom-built branding irons and beautiful wood projects.

Tyler Thomas grew up outside of Billings Montana. He graduated from Northeast College in Powell Wyoming with a degree in Agricultural business in 2000. Ty hired on with the Department of Livestock in July 2002 and Tyler now holds the Assistant Administrator's position for Brands Enforcement for the Central Area. Tyler is married to his wife Marlo and has two boys Gunnar (11) and Gavin (9). Tyler likes to hunt, fish, help his friends on their ranch, and goes to catfish tournaments around the state and nation. Tyler coaches and watches his kids in their sport activities!

Travis Elings grew up in Montana and graduated from Browning High School. In 1997, Travis graduated from Dawson Community College in Glendive with an Ag Business Degree. Travis hired on with the Department of Livestock in 1997, first working in Great Falls. Travis is now located in the Billings area and is the Eastern Montana Area Supervisor working animal health and brands investigations. Travis lives in Shepherd Montana, is married and has a son who is a sophomore in college and a daughter in the 6th grade. Off-duty Travis likes to rope with his kids and work in his shop.

TEAMWORK

Coming together is a beginning,

Keeping together is progress,

Working together is success.

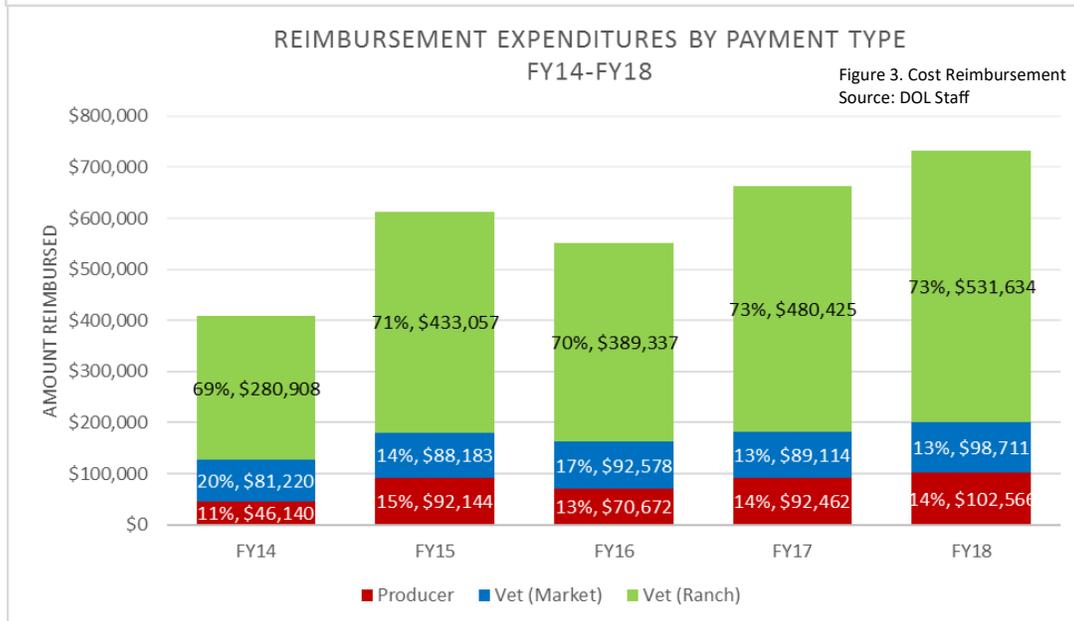
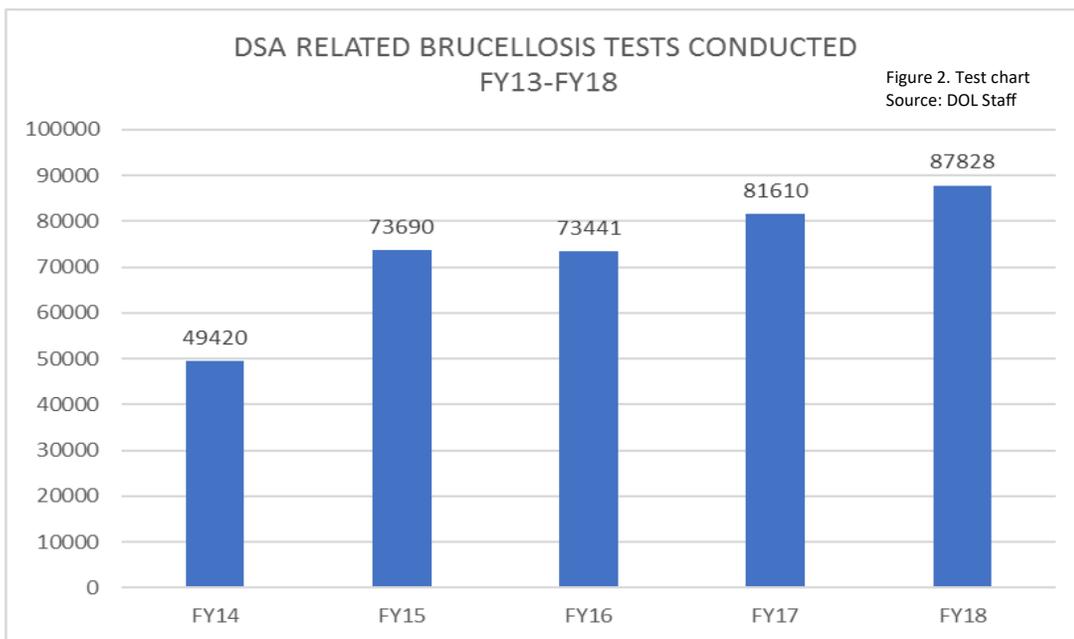
—Henry Ford

D I S E A S E S

Brucellosis

Annual Designated Surveillance Area (DSA) Compliance Evaluation

The annual DSA compliance evaluation is an internal audit of compliance with brucellosis testing requirements for movement and change of ownership. Based on feedback from the legislative performance audit, the FY17 compliance evaluation placed emphasis on reconciling brucellosis test data with movement and sale data recorded by the Brands Enforcement Division. Additional effort was made to identify new/additional DSA producers as well as to establish a herd size for all DSA producers to better evaluate compliance. After a preliminary review, FY18's evaluation includes 359 known producers active in the DSA with approximately 86,302 test-eligible animals and 81,610 DSA associated brucellosis tests. These tests include 8,656 tests conducted as part of epidemiologic investigations.



DISEASES

Brucellosis, continued

Designated Surveillance Area (DSA) Boundary Adjustment

In May of 2018, the Animal Health Bureau (AHB) proposed (see Figure 4 below) a DSA boundary change to include cattle and domestic bison that utilize this area in DSA surveillance testing and identification requirements.

The recommendation to change the boundary followed the detection of brucellosis exposed wildlife outside of the current DSA boundary during the risk period. (Figure 5 in Elk Surveillance, p. 8) The risk period is early winter through early summer (January 15 thru June 15). During this time, elk are pregnant and can therefore shed the bacteria in abortion or birth materials and fluids.

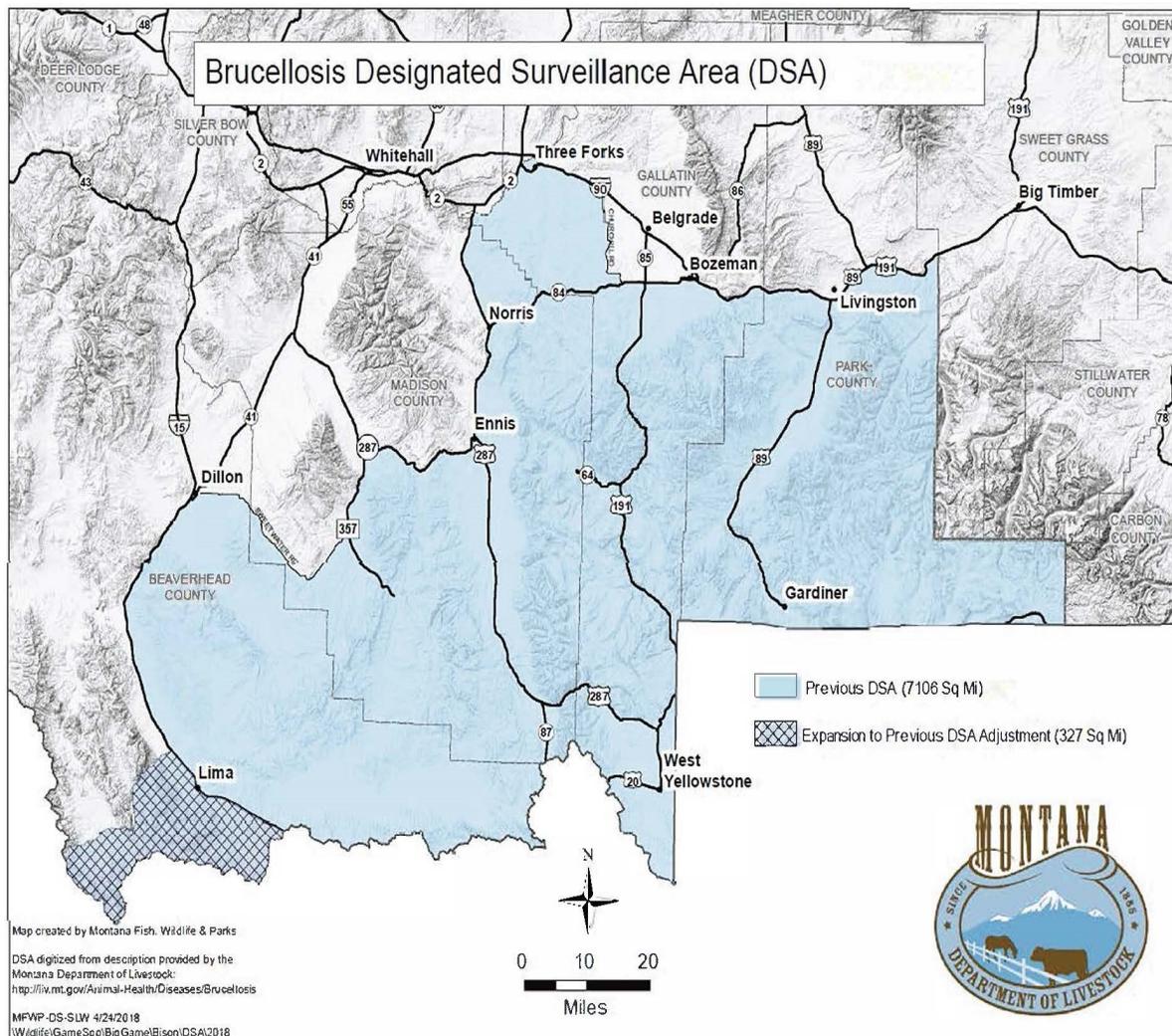


Figure 4. Proposed DSA
Source: FWP and DOL

DISEASES

Brucellosis, continued

Elk Surveillance

In 2011, Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP) began a multi-year targeted elk brucellosis surveillance project. Since 2011, the Department of Livestock (DOL) has supported the project with federal cooperative agreement funds. Locations for elk capture have been prioritized by likelihood of brucellosis exposed elk and potential for exposure to livestock in late winter and spring.

The goals of the multi-year study and surveillance project are to evaluate: 1) the prevalence and spatial extent of brucellosis exposure in southwest Montana elk populations, 2) the extent of elk movement and interchange between infected and adjacent elk herds, and 3) the risk of seropositive elk shedding and potentially transmitting *Brucella abortus*.

The Designated Surveillance Area (DSA) boundary was adjusted in 2011, 2012, and 2014 following elk surveillance captures to include livestock at risk of exposure to positive wildlife. Subsequently, brucellosis affected herds have been found within the new boundaries.

Each year, elk captures include new animals for surveillance as well as recaptures of elk in the surveillance project. The multi-year project will end in the early winter of 2020 with the final capture and removal of the positive elk initially captured in 2015.

This fiscal year's elk surveillance capture was completed in the **Tendoy Mountains** southwest of Dillon where 100 elk were captured and tested. Thirty animals were collared to monitor movement. Forty elk were captured in the northern region of the Tendoy's and 60 in the southern. One serologically positive elk was discovered in a group captured in the southern Tendoy's. No positive elk were found in the group captured in the northern region. Despite negative test results, 40 elk is not a large enough sample size to have confidence that elk in the northern area are free of the disease.

DOL continues to work closely with FWP to determine the 2019 live elk capture location(s). The number of elk tested in the northern Tendoy's does not give us statistical confidence that positive elk do not exist; therefore we plan to capture additional elk in the northern Tendoy's in 2019. Another area of likely capture will be in the Bangtail Range northwest of Livingston.

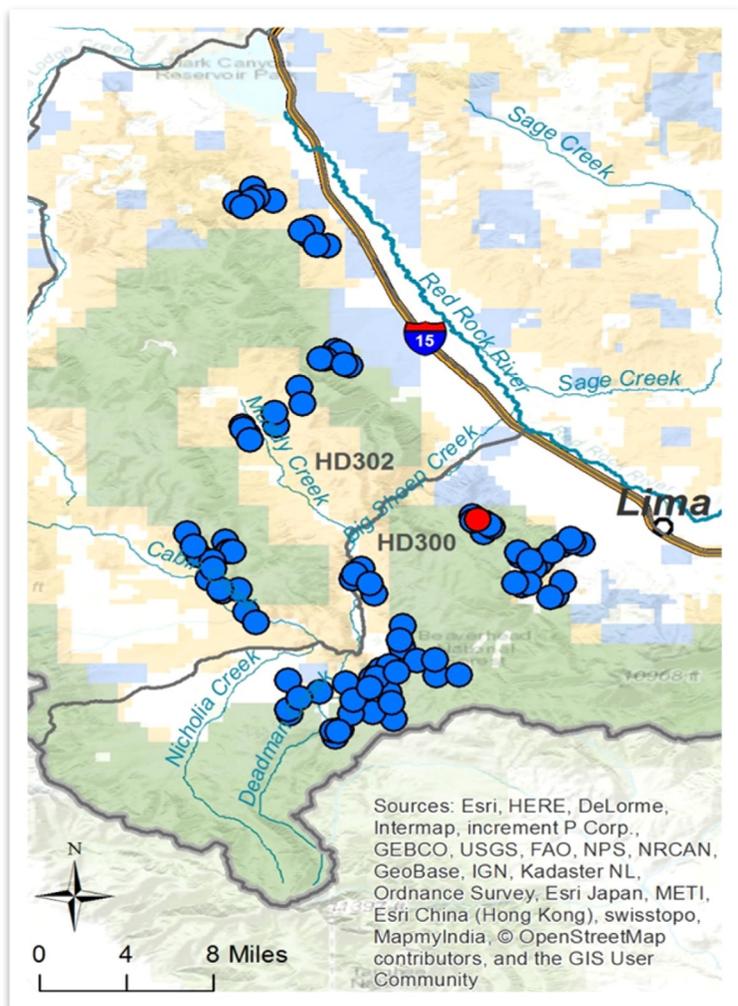


Figure 5. Capture locations of 99 seronegative elk (blue) and 1 seropositive elk (red) in the Tendoy Mountains and Lima Peaks area southwest of Dillon, Montana. Source: Fish, Wildlife and Parks

D I S E A S E S

Brucellosis, continued

Epidemiologic Investigations

Epidemiologic investigations of affected herds in Montana have found elk are the most likely source of brucellosis in all affected herds since 2007. Epidemiologic investigations are conducted to confirm disease was not introduced (trace-in herd) by domestic livestock or spread to other domestic livestock (trace-out) through animals sold out of the affected herd. Genotyping is also a useful tool in an epidemiologic investigation. Once *Brucella abortus* is cultured from the positive animal, the bacteria are genotyped (genetic analysis). In some cases, the genotype of bacteria isolated from an affected herd have been an identical match to cultures from nearby wildlife.

Also, as part of the epidemiologic investigation, multiple whole herd tests are performed on the index herd to make certain that all infected animals are removed. Following the release of quarantine an assurance test is completed 6-12 months later.

Early in FY18, Montana had three affected herds under quarantine for brucellosis. All three were discovered within Montana's DSA. One herd is in Madison County, one in Gallatin County, and the third is in Beaverhead County (initially found in FY17).

The Madison County herd was detected during a voluntary whole herd test in August 2017. Only one animal was culture positive. All in herd and adjacent animals six months of age and older were required to be tested.

The Madison County investigation was simplified due to historical voluntary annual herd testing. The extensive testing information allowed us to pin-point the exposure time to the spring of 2017. It also allowed us to exclude some neighboring herds as a potential source. Regardless of exclusion as an adjacent herd, most neighbors choose to perform annual herd testing because they understand that their livestock could be exposed to the same infected wildlife each spring.

The Gallatin County herd has been under quarantine since 2010 and performs annual herd testing. Due to the constant spring exposure to brucellosis infected elk, interspecies transmission continues to occur and therefore positive domestic animals continue to be found annually, keeping the herd under quarantine. Sexually intact animals can only be sold directly to slaughter. This operation has adapted to the likelihood of long-term quarantine by feeding and finishing animals on ranch.

The Beaverhead County herd under quarantine in FY18 was discovered in FY17 during a routine voluntary herd test. *B. abortus* was cultured from two bulls. Genotyping helped to narrow the likely source to elk in the area. The genotype was nearly identical to a culture from an elk fetus found in 2011. This herd was released from quarantine following multiple herd tests, with the final test post calving in the spring of 2018.

D I S E A S E S

Equine Infectious Anemia (EIA)

In September 2017, the Animal Health Bureau (AHB) received notification of three horses positive on a screening test (ELISA) for Equine Infectious Anemia (EIA). Samples for the animals were sent to the National Veterinary Services Laboratory (NVSL) for confirmatory testing. The horses were tested for a planned out-of-state movement. Following confirmation of the positives tests by confirmatory testing (AGID) at NVSL, the premises of origin was placed under quarantine and the remainder of equids on the property tested. Twenty percent of the animals were found to be EIA positive.

All horses within 200 yards of the affected premises were identified. Additionally, movements onto and off of the affected premises were traced. Owners of exposed animals were contacted and required to conduct EIA testing. If the exposure was greater than 60 days prior, a single negative test was required of exposed animals. For exposures less than 60 days prior, animals were quarantined pending a negative test at 60 days post exposure. Twelve adjacent or exposed premises with 50+ equids were identified. Several traces were for horses in slaughter channels. Final disposition for one of these animals was not identified. Additionally, one animal had since changed ownership and the Department was unable to locate the horse. All other horses were test negative.

A herd plan was developed for the affected premises. The herd plan included information on whole herd testing as well as disposition of all EIA reactors. Following two additional whole herd tests, the owners elected to euthanize all EIA reactors (22 head) along with a single foal born to a positive dam. The testing protocol and plan for disposition of the EIA reactors was developed with input from the affected owners, the local veterinarian, and USDA APHIS VS personnel.

In January 2018, twelve personnel from AHB, brands, and United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) conducted euthanasia of the 23 animals. This operation was conducted using ICS structure and included an incident commander and safety officer. The animals were euthanized by gunshot and buried on the premises. The department worked with a biomedical company on sample collection of the EIA reactors prior to euthanasia. The sample collection was approved by the owners of the animals and samples were provided to the company for research and development.

Following the removal of all EIA reactors from the affected herd, an additional whole herd test was conducted 60+ days post-removal. At this time, all remaining horses remained negative on an EIA AGID and therefore the quarantine of the premises was released. According to the herd plan, all remaining animals will be tested one additional time in the fall of 2018 for assurance purposes.

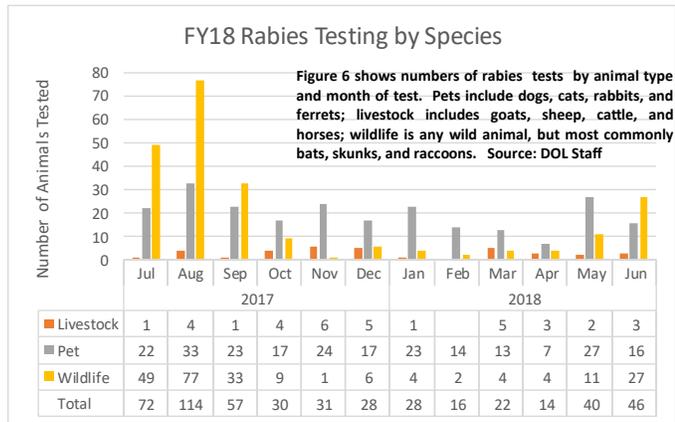
Department of Livestock (DOL) provided updates regarding the EIA cases in Montana on the National Equine Conference Call of the Infectious Disease of Horses and the Animal Emergency Preparedness Committees of United States Association of Animal Health (USAHA).

DISEASES

Rabies

Montana saw 11 cases of rabies, all bats, in FY18. The bats were collected from Gallatin, Flathead, Missoula, Jefferson, Lewis and Clark, Valley, Park, and Granite counties. Both positive and unsuitable rabies results are followed up by the Animal Health Bureau (AHB) to evaluate the potential for pet exposure and make management recommendation based upon exposure and vaccination status of the exposed animal.

For the second year, the AHB partnered with the Department of Public Health and Human Services for four installments of the 2018 “Rabies Roadshow.” These trainings were offered to local jurisdictions, public health nurses, and veterinarians to provide current information on rabies management in Montana. Sessions were held in Kalispell, Miles City, and Helena (two sessions).



FY18 Montana Rabies Distribution by Species

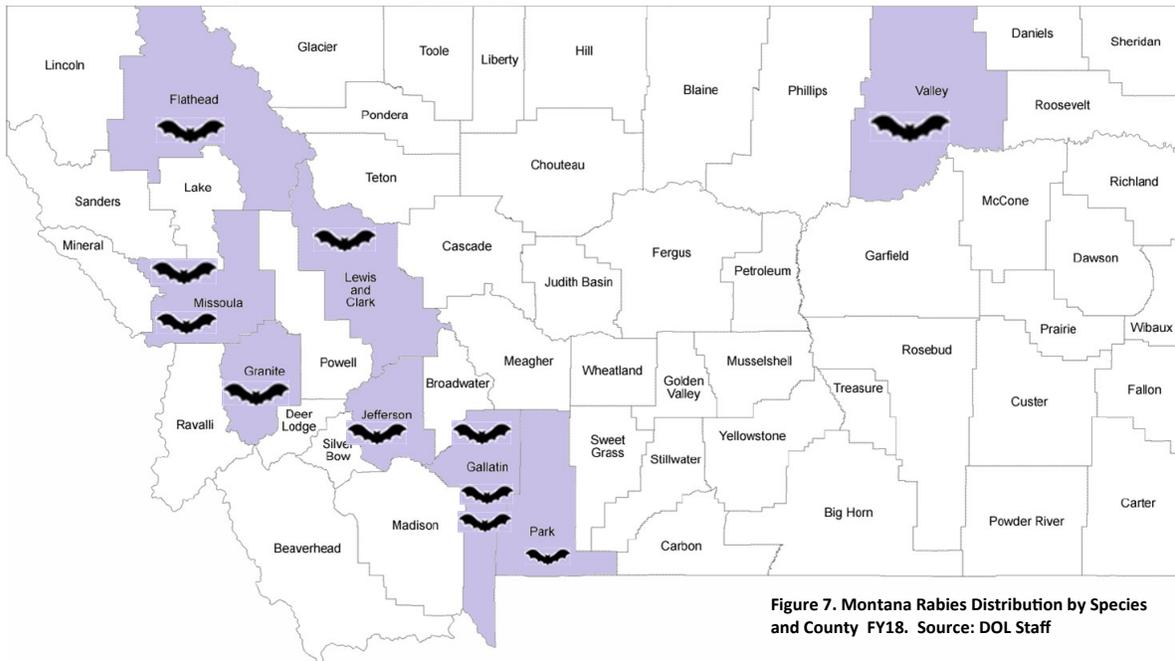


Figure 7. Montana Rabies Distribution by Species and County FY18. Source: DOL Staff

DISEASES

Trichomoniasis

During FY18, the Animal Health Bureau (AHB) worked on two trichomoniasis epidemiologic investigations.

The first was a positive bull in Carter County. The affected herd had been run in common with a second herd for several years. Both herds were placed under quarantine pending testing of all non-virgin bulls, completion of neighbor notification, and classification of all females over 12 months.

Four adjacent herds were notified of testing requirements. Don Selle, District Investigator, worked closely with these herds and determined that two herds had no exposure and were exempt from testing requirements. All testing of the affected and adjacent herds was completed with no additional positive bulls detected—all quarantines were therefore released. The affected herd is required to complete a post-breeding season test during the fall of 2018.

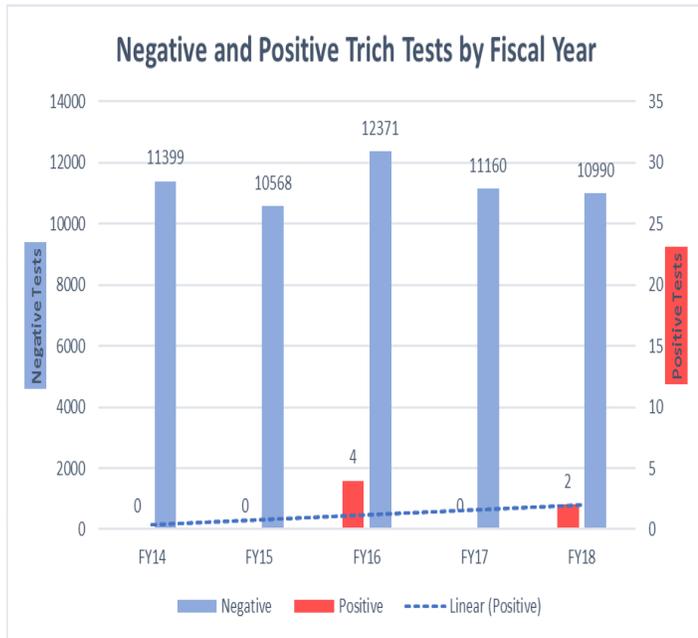


Figure 8. Numbers of negative and positive tests for trichomoniasis in cattle. Source: DOL Staff

The second case of trichomoniasis was a bull in Choteau County. The herd was placed under quarantine and an epidemiologic investigation started. Paul Johnson, District Investigator, worked with the affected herd to notify adjacent herds of testing requirements. Many of the adjacent herds had already turned out bulls. Department of Livestock (DOL) worked with these producers on the most appropriate means to get bulls tested. All adjacent herds were placed under verbal quarantine. The affected herd completed a voluntary herd management plan. All females had been away from bulls for >120 days and had calves at side. Following the completion of three negative individual tests on all remaining nonvirgin bulls, this herd will be released from quarantine. The herd will also be required to complete a post-breeding season test during fall 2018.

To evaluate compliance with Montana's trich testing requirements, the AHB sent out a letter to all individuals with a brand inspection on a bull associated with one of the four trich epizootic area counties (Yellowstone, Big Horn, Glacier, and Pondera). This evaluation included 400+ producers. The letter served as a reminder of trich testing requirements for bulls moving within and out of the counties. Approximately two dozen producers called with clarifying questions following receipt of the letter. Two producers called and indicated they were not previously aware of trich testing requirements and would start incorporating testing into their annual management program.

D I S E A S E S

Tuberculosis (TB)

Following notification of a new trace from the 2017 bovine TB positive herd in South Dakota, the Animal Health Bureau (AHB) worked with the Montana producer and United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to coordinate testing of animals. The Phillips County producer received 88 pairs, of which 14 originated from a heifer cohort that contained animals from the affected South Dakota herd. AHB worked closely with the producer to minimize impact of testing requirements due to drought, fire risk, and limited grass supplies. Testing was conducted by USDA with help from Department of Livestock (DOL) brands personnel. Ten animals were identified as originating from the original heifer cohort of interest, including one animal with a brand from the index SD premises. This animal was indemnified and a full post mortem examination completed. No gross or histologic lesions were detected. No further action was taken for this trace out. All other animals were negative to the TB test.

Throughout the year, DOL worked with USDA on reports of TB suspects identified during routine or export TB testing. State or federal officials conducted follow up testing on these suspects and all were negative. This reporting included, white tailed deer for interstate movement, beef cattle for international export, sporting bovines for exhibition, and testing for sale at the Denver Stock Show.

Dr. Szymanski attended a three-day bovine tuberculosis eradication program training in Manhattan, Kansas. The course, put on by USDA, included information on current testing methods, whole genome sequencing, epidemiology of TB in the United States, and management of affected herds.



Figure 9. Cow
Source: DOL Staff

DISEASES

West Nile Virus (WNV) - 7/1/17—6/30/18

In August, the Animal Health Bureau, (ABH) was notified of the first West Nile Virus positive horse for 2017. Department of Livestock (DOL) issued a press release associated with the detection. Total equine West Nile Virus cases for Montana for 2017 was eight. Montana saw cases in the following counties: Cascade, Golden Valley, Lake, Sanders, and Yellowstone County. None of the reported cases were current vaccinates for WNV.

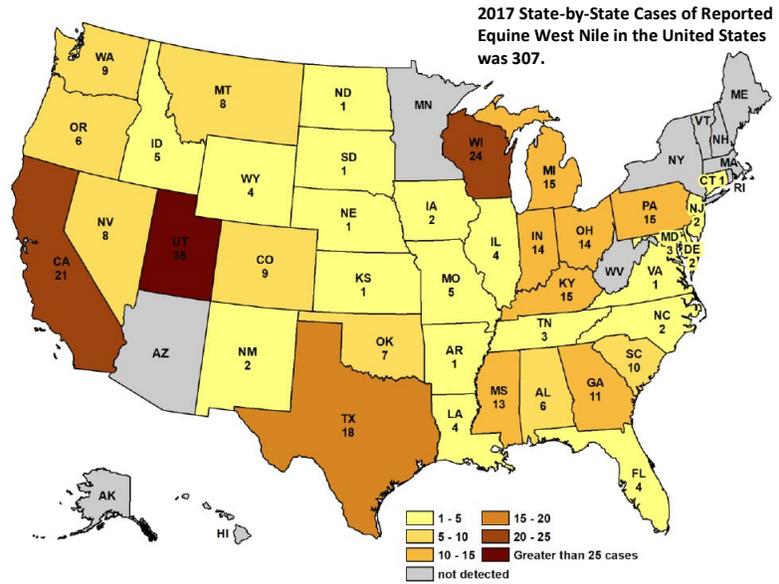
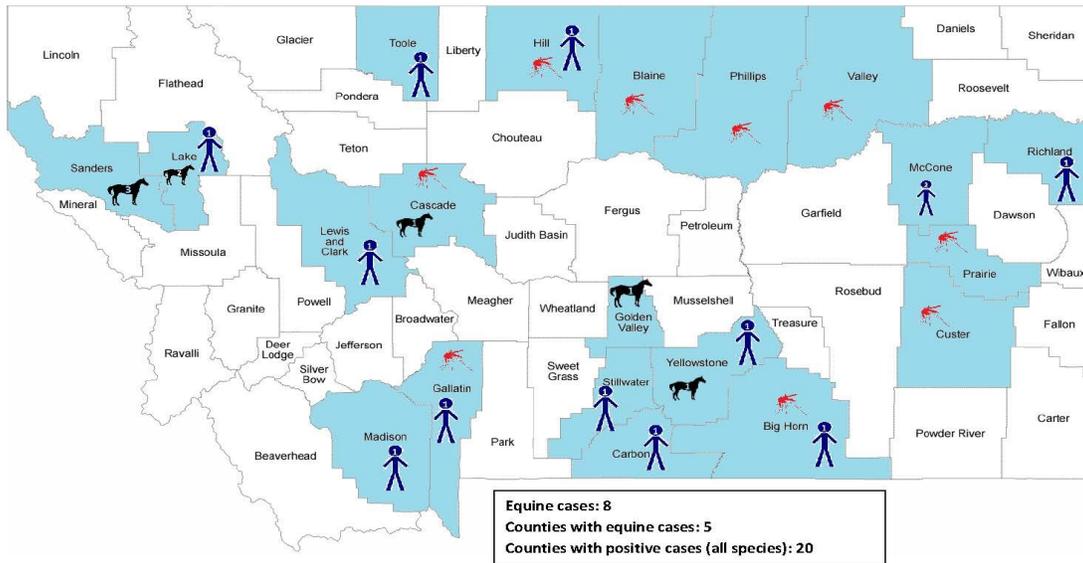


Figure 10. West Nile Map. Source: https://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_health/downloads/animal_diseases/2017-wnv-report.pdf

FY18 Positive WNV



 = positive mosquito pool identified

Figure 11. Map of Montana West Nile by county FY18
 Source: DOL Staff

D I S E A S E S

Other Diseases

Vesicular Stomatitis (VS)

A Missoula County veterinarian reported to the department a horse with oral lesions. Samples were collected and submitted to National Veterinary Services Laboratories (NVSL) for testing. The animal was positive on one of the vesicular stomatitis screening tests. The test can be indicative of early onset of disease or past exposure. The animal had previously been in Southern Colorado and New Mexico. This animal and all herd mates were held in quarantine pending completion of a ten-day retest. Index of suspicion was low for VS due to the animals travel history and low likelihood of VS in Western Montana in September. Confirmatory testing from NVSL was consistent with past exposure and not a current infection, and therefore all quarantines were released.

During fiscal year 2018, the Animal Health Bureau also received the following suspected/confirmed disease reports from accredited veterinarians:

- ⇒ A stud colt with lesions on the sheath and penis – after consultation with USDA and the attending veterinarian, the history and lesion description was not consistent with VS. No further action taken.
- ⇒ A calf with oral lesions – A Foreign Animal Disease Diagnostician (FADD) visited the premises and collected samples for submission to Plum Island to rule out Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD). Based upon physical examination, lesions were consistent with papillary stomatitis.
- ⇒ A horse with oral lesions in Sweet Grass County. Based upon physical examination findings of the local veterinarian, samples were submitted to NVSL for testing to rule out the potential for VS. At fiscal year end, negative serology results had been reported with virus isolation pending. Verbal quarantine was released on the animal due to a low index of suspicion.

Equine Herpes Virus (EHV-1)

A mule with upper respiratory disease that tested positive for the neuropathogenic strain of EHV-1 was reported to the department. Based upon disease severity, recent travel history, and test results of herd mates, no additional action was taken. DOL provided the attending veterinarian with biosecurity recommendations to be shared with owner.

Health officials from North Dakota worked with the Animal Health Bureau following the detection of equine herpes myeloencephalopathy (EHM) at an event in Bowman County, North Dakota. The event did not have any Montana attendees, but there were Montana origin horses at the facility before the event.

Brucella canis

Animal Health Bureau (AHB) received multiple reports of *Brucella canis* positive dogs. Two dogs in Gallatin County, and one each in Silver Bow and Yellowstone Counties. Through coordination with Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS), recommendations on treatment and zoonotic risk was provided to the veterinarian and owner. Additionally, DPHHS and AHB are working together on outreach to pet shelters following these recent cases.

D I S E A S E S

Other Diseases, continued

Blue Tongue Virus

Animal Health Bureau (AHB) received information from the state entomologist at Montana State University that environmental conditions were prime for the transmission of bluetongue virus. As a result, Dr. Szymanski worked with the Montana Wool Growers Association on recommendations for their upcoming ram/ewe sale. DOL guidance included a pretreatment of animals prior to the sale, ideally three weeks prior, and a second treatment at check in. Previous recommendations included the application of a fly tag to animals. Based upon feedback from ram sale management; this process was modified to a second treatment with topical insecticide due to past problems with the fly tags.

Canine Respiratory Disease

Following reports of an increased number of canine respiratory disease cases in Gallatin and surrounding counties, AHB worked closely with local veterinarians and the Cornell Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory. A single positive result for canine influenza was reported from a dog in Gallatin County. All other PCR tests and serologic testing of other clinically ill dogs were negative. Based upon this information and in consultation with virologists at Cornell, the AHB communicated to the veterinary community and to the public that there was not conclusive evidence that the canine influenza virus was widespread in canine populations in Montana.

Johne's

AHB continued to develop outreach materials for Johne's and engaged stakeholders to evaluate the need for a more involved state Johne's program. Outreach materials were developed and included two, one-page handouts outlining mitigation and testing strategies and letter templates to send to producers with a confirmed case of Johne's in their herd or an epidemiologic link to a confirmed Johne's positive animal.

The letter advised the herd owner of the risk that the disease is present in their herd and provided disease information and recommendation on how to manage the disease.

AHB continues to receive reports from veterinarians around the state regarding newly diagnosed Johne's positive herds. AHB works with these veterinarians and producers to provide recommendations on disposition of positive animals, herd testing, and biosecurity.



Figure 12. Mules
Source: Stock Photo

TRAINING / EDUCATION

Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program (VMLRP)

The department had six successful nominations for shortage situations in Montana for the 2018 VMLRP funding cycle (Figure 13 below). Veterinarians practicing in these areas may apply for veterinary loan forgiveness up to \$25,000 a year for a maximum of three years. The nominations from Montana for the 2018 funding cycle are as follows:

<u>2018 Shortage Nomination Area</u>	<u>Priority</u>	<u>Carryover</u>
Big Horn, Rosebud, Treasure	High	Yes
Glacier, Liberty, Pondera, Toole	High	Yes
Garfield, McCone	Critical	Yes
Blaine, Phillips	Moderate	No
Powder River, Carter	Moderate	No
Daniels, Roosevelt, Sheridan, Valley	High	Yes

Figure 13. FY 18 VMLRP Status for Montana. Source: DOL Staff.

Deputy Veterinarian Training/Outreach

Three deputy state veterinarian trainings sessions were conducted for veterinarians new to practice in Montana. These sessions are conducted in partnership with USDA APHIS VS and cover regulatory standards for practicing veterinarians, including traceability and official disease work. Fifty new veterinarians received training during FY18. Additionally, the Animal Health Bureau (AHB) worked with a single veterinarian on provisional deputy veterinarian status. The veterinarian had recently returned to Montana after practicing in Oregon for multiple years. Provisional status was granted to the veterinarian to allow issuance of CVIs but the veterinarian was required to attend the next deputy vet session for a refresher on state regulations.

For existing veterinarians in Montana, the AHB continues to publish a quarterly newsletter, including a One Health insert, and periodic electronic Department of Livestock (DOL) updates. The newsletter is available on our website at: <http://liv.mt.gov/Animal-Health/Newsletters>. Additionally, the AHB worked with the Montana Veterinary Medical Association (MVMA) to include a public health/regulatory track at the annual meeting. Drs. Szymanski, Liska, Pride (DPHHS), Ramsey (FWP), and Linfield (USDA) presented a half-day session that included discussion of brucellosis, tuberculosis, traceability, Johnes, CWD, plague, tularemia, Q fever, and rabies in Montana.

AHB staff also attended MVMA committee and membership meetings to provide updates to attendees.

The AHB took the following actions regarding compliance issues with deputy state veterinarians:

- Informal veterinary consultations were conducted with APHIS and IES for a veterinarian that had violated several federal and state standards for the completion of health certificates. The veterinarian has since moved to fully electronic health certificates and has worked with staff to remedy any issues.
- Szymanski worked with USDA on veterinary compliance issues, including incorrect management of official tags and issuing a CVI without a valid veterinary license.
- Szymanski also worked with a local veterinarian on a tagging violation issue. The veterinarian failed to place official identification (ID) in animals at the time of brucellosis testing, but ID was listed. The official ID recorded on the test chart was later placed in other animals for interstate movement. DOL worked with USDA and the veterinarian on resolution of the issue and corrective action against the veterinarian.

TRAINING / EDUCATION

Western States Livestock Health Association (WSLHA)

Montana hosted the 2018 Western States Livestock Health Association (WSLHA) annual meeting in Big Sky June 11-13. Dr. Szymanski served as the 2017 President for WSLHA. The meeting featured discussion of the recent United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Agriculture Response Management and Resources (ARMAR) exercise, illegal importation of equids from Mexico, a semen PCR test for *B. ovis* detection, tuberculosis, brucellosis, traceability, and non-regulatory disease and interstate movement of animals.

The group toured the Flying D Ranch and was treated to a discussion about anthrax, *Mycoplasma bovis*, Johne's, and brucellosis by staff.



United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) Subcommittee on Brucellosis

Dr. Liska took a five-year national leadership role as the chairman for the USAHA subcommittee on brucellosis in the fall of 2017. This subcommittee works with state and federal animal health officials and researchers on brucellosis related topics. The subcommittee helps to guide new research and regulation based on science and an understanding of the disease. At the 2017 USAHA meeting, the subcommittee agenda included presentations on new diagnostics, updates from research and the Greater Yellowstone Area States.

Emergency Preparedness

FY18 was a busy year for emergency preparedness at the Department of Livestock (DOL). The department continued to work with the Department of Administration to advance continuity of business planning for DOL. This planning ensures that DOL is able to provide services to the public during any type of event that affects staff or infrastructure. Every bureau has now completed ranking the importance of each process that they conduct based on overall importance to the state. DOL has several processes that are critical to the state of Montana because they protect the health of humans and animals and support the livestock industry's contribution to the state economy.

DOL also continued to participate in the Montana Emergency Response Framework as the lead agency for Emergency Support Function (ESF) 11: Agriculture and Natural Resources. ESF 11 was activated for the first time in response to requests for livestock feed assistance following a series of severe winter storms in February 2018. DOL worked with the Department of Agriculture, Disaster and Emergency Services (DES), and several national non-governmental organizations to coordinate the donation of more than \$70,000 that was used to purchase and deliver hay to the Northern Cheyenne and Fort Belknap American Indian reservations. As the lead agency on ESF 11, DOL also participated in regular planning meetings and several table top exercises with other lead ESF agencies.

In April 2018, DOL held a table top exercise to validate the state National Veterinary Stockpile (NVS) plan. The state Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS), DES, Department of Transportation, USDA-VS-APHIS and staff from NVS participated in the exercise. The exercise identified strengths of the Montana NVS plan including cooperation with other state agencies and coordination with DPHHS to make use of the plans and infrastructure for the Strategic National Stockpile Plan. The exercise also helped identify areas for improvement in the Montana plan such as inclusion of an alternate warehouse in case an outbreak occurs in a remote part of the state or the main warehouse written into the current plan is unavailable.

Another large event for DOL emergency preparedness was participation in the Agriculture Response Management and Resources (ARMAR) exercise May 7-10, 2018. Montana was invited to participate in this exercise as the index state after exercise organizers analyzed real cattle movement data for the other participating states and found that all those states had received cattle from Montana. This was a functional exercise which meant that all actions were carried out in real-time, as they would be during a response, up to the point of actually sending anyone into the field. Players in Montana included staff from DOL, DPHHS, DES, FWP, Montana Department of Agriculture, FBI, USDA-VS-APHIS and ten members of a National Incident Management Team (NIMT) from USDA. By the end of the exercise more than 60 people were participating in Montana's response. Five other states and several departments within USDA also participated in the exercise. The exercise helped to identify gaps in DOL's emergency preparedness including outdated plans, insufficient staff training in the Incident Command System (ICS), poor communication during the event, and lack of resources devoted to emergency preparedness. Strengths identified during the exercise included cooperation with other state agencies and USDA, including the use of the NIMT.

National Veterinary Stockpile (NVS)

Mission

To provide the veterinary countermeasures, animal vaccines, antivirals, or therapeutic products, supplies, equipment, and response support services that States, Tribes, and Territories need to respond to damaging animal disease outbreaks.

Purpose

Homeland Security Presidential Directive 9 established the NVS in 2004 to protect the nation's food supply by maintaining sufficient amounts of countermeasures capable of deployment against the most damaging animal diseases within 24 hours. The directive reflected the national concern that terrorists could simultaneously release animal diseases of catastrophic proportions that would quickly deplete available resources within the State, Tribe, or Territory and overwhelm the private sector's ability to support such a disaster.

Goals

Deploy within 24 hours of approval countermeasures against the most damaging animal diseases, including Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza, Foot-and- Mouth Disease, Exotic Newcastle Disease, and Classical Swine Fever.
Assist States, Tribes, and Territories plan, train, and exercise for the rapid request, receipt, processing, and distribution of NVS countermeasures during an event.

Figure 15. NVS Mission
Source: USDA web site [here](#)

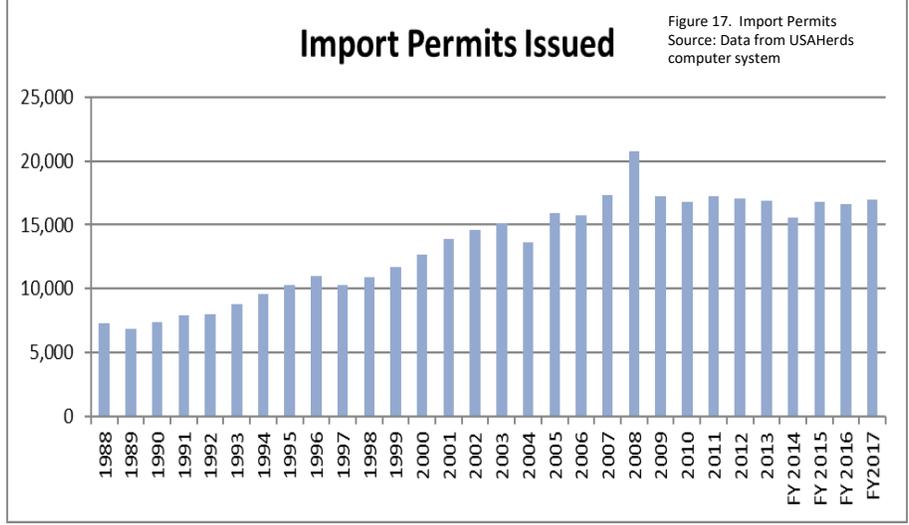
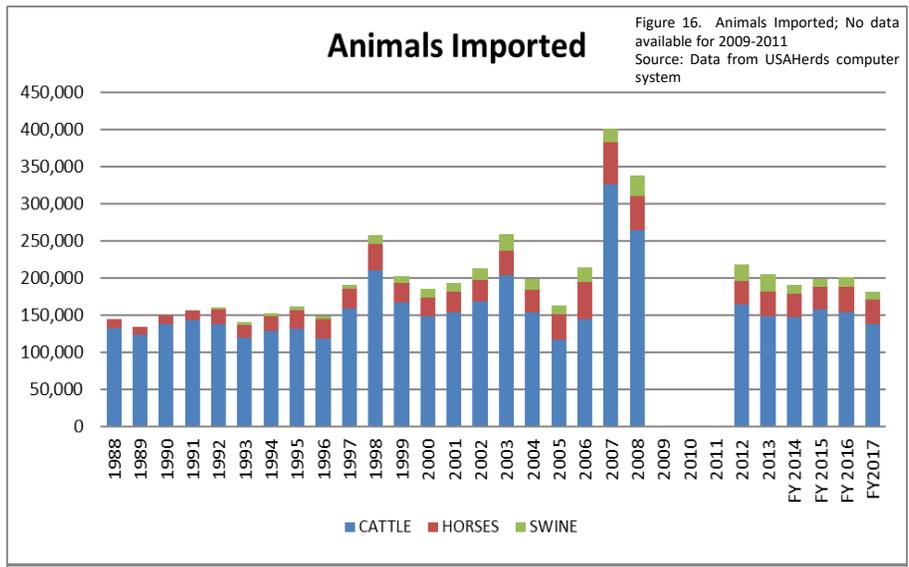
PROGRAM PERFORMANCE

Export/Import Export Certificate Data

This section of the Animal Health Bureau strives to provide excellent customer service through a busy call center, an after-hours answering service, and several web-based online systems. We are currently developing a new web-based online permit system for veterinarians to use that will be free of charge. The application and payment system for specialized permits provides an alternate avenue for customers to use email and their personal computer systems to submit and pay for applications for annual and six-month equine permits, equine and bovine semen permits, poultry shipping permits, biological shipping permits, and a few additional annual permits. The department collected a total \$6,846.00 for 431 transactions using this system. The fee for each type of permit is set by rule and must be commensurate with costs to the department.

AHB implemented a new identification policy for imported exotic mammals. Many of these animals are the same species as native Montana wildlife, so we require the imported animal to be identified and linked to the import certificate and permit documents.

During the reporting period we issued 15,555 permits for 132,041 cattle; 26,470 horses; 9,383 sheep, and 11,295 pigs to enter or return to Montana.



PROGRAM PERFORMANCE

Montana Exotic Imports FY18

Imports of exotic species are verified as to not conflict with Fish, Wildlife and Park’s prohibited species list, as reviewed by the *Classification Review Committee*.



Figure 18. River Otter
Source: DOL Staff

Exotic animals imported for permanent residency in Montana, fur farms, game farms, and sanctuaries for FY18	
ANIMAL	QUANTITY IMPORTED
Artic Fox	2
Bobcat	3
Capuchin Monkey	4
Corsican Sheep	2
Coyote	1
Elephants	2
Falcons	1
Fisher	2
Fox	2
Kodiak Bear	1
Lynx	1
Painted Desert Sheep	3
Pine Martin	4
River Otter	4
Serval Cats	2
Skunk	1
Tiger	11
Wallaby	1
Woodchuck	2
Reptile Imports	
Lizards	1122
Snakes	231
Turtles	106
Tree Frogs	95

Figure 19. DOL Table
Source: DOL Staff

The Montana Department of Livestock allows various species of exotic animals to be imported into Montana. In order to protect Montana’s native wildlife, livestock importation of certain species of exotic animals falls under three categories:

- controlled species,
- noncontrolled species, and
- prohibited.

Some species, such as the cynomolgus monkey, are prohibited and are only allowed to be imported to approved research facilities.

Exotics Imported for Scientific Purposes FY18	Quantity Imported
Cynomolgus Monkey	18
Egyptian Fruit Bats	14

Figure 20. Imports of exotic animals into Montana
Source: DOL Staff

PROGRAM PERFORMANCE

Special Licenses, Permits, and Veterinary Forms

FORM	REVENUE FY2017	REVENUE FY18
SV-7—Large Animal CVI Book	\$15,288.00	\$19,072.00
SV-7A—CVI Convoy Replica Book	\$427.00	\$38.00.00
SV-7B—CVI Continuation Pages Book	\$777.00	\$111.00
SV-7HP—Six-Month Horse Passport	\$770.00	\$385.00
SV-7GF—Alternative Livestock CVI	\$245.00	\$60.00
SV-7GFC—Alt. Livestock Continuation	\$30.00	\$0.00
GF TAGS—Game Farm Tags	\$703.32	\$347.00
Trichomoniasis Forms	Discontinued	Discontinued
Trichomoniasis Tags	\$8,202.67	\$8,799.23
TOTAL	\$26,442.99	\$28,812.23

Figure 21. Revenue generated from the increased fees for veterinary forms and tags. By Montana Code, fees are commensurate with costs and include employee time, shipping, and handling. Source: DOL Staff

Permits/Licenses/ Certifications Program	Permits/Licenses/ Certifications Applications	Permits/Licenses/ Certifications Fees Collected
Annual Equine Import	88	\$575.00
Annual Equine Semen Import	50	\$413.00
Annual Poultry Import	43	\$172.00
B-Ovis	21	\$422.00
Biologics	12	\$450.00
Bovine Semen Domestic	3	\$12.00
Bovine Semen Int'l	3	\$126.00
Equine Feedlot	1	\$1,450.00
Montana Bull Stud	3	\$1050.00
NPIP Test Agent	0	\$0.00
Seasonal Grazer	65	\$1281.00
Six-Month Horse passport	798	\$425.00
Trich Quarantine Feedlot	10	\$296.00
TOTAL	1096	\$9042.00

Figure 22. Revenue generated from special licenses and permits. Official Centralized Services (CS) analysis may differ due to actual dates and items that were received and processed. The Animal Health Bureau data is shown to display specific program item revenue. Source: DOL Staff

PROGRAM PERFORMANCE

Administrative Rules of Montana (ARM) Rulemaking—FY18



Administrative Rules Books
Source: <http://goo.gl/cPAVU>

Fees: The Department of Livestock proposed and adopted a fee decrease for the SV-7GF alternative livestock Certificate of Veterinary Inspection (CVI) book from \$35.00 to \$20.00. The program redesigned the original SV-7GF CVI book to individual forms in bundles of 25 certificates and will now have these forms printed by the State of Montana.

The department raised the price of large animal CVI books and CVI convoy replica books to ensure fees are commensurate with costs as required by 81-1-102(2), MCA.

Alternative Livestock: The Animal Health Bureau received a request from an alternative livestock producer to consider allowing producers to apply tags to alternative livestock and collect samples for Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) submission. Prior to the change, only an alternative livestock accredited veterinarian or other department designated agent may perform those tasks. After consulting with other states that have alternative livestock programs, it is clear that the majority of those states allowed producers to perform these tasks. The department amended the rules necessary to allow Montana alternative livestock producers to apply tags and collect CWD samples from their own animals.

Designated Surveillance Area (DSA): The department amended ARM 32.3.435 TESTING WITHIN THE DSA, to make the language consistent with the definition in ARM 32.3.401(7) (see other rule changes).

The department amended ARM 32.3.455 BRUCellosIS TESTS TO BE REPORTED, to clarify that only brucellosis test results on Montana origin animals must be reported within seven days. Test results from the Montana Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory are reported electronically in the Vetstar Animal Disease Diagnostic System (VADDS). Electronic or paper reporting of testing performed at an out-of-state laboratory would also be acceptable. A positive brucellosis result on any animal including an out-of-state animal performed in Montana is required to be reported per 81-2-107, MCA and ARM 32.3.104. Negative test results on out-of-state origin animals will now not need to be reported.

Cattle: The department proposed to add a whole-herd negative tuberculosis test on the birth herd of origin on importation of cattle from Mexico because the Chairmen of the Agriculture Committees of the 65th Montana Legislature requested the department increase the testing requirements for M-branded cattle imported into Montana over concerns of potential risk of the introduction of tuberculosis into Montana. A hearing was requested and held August 16, 2017. After written comments were received and oral comments heard, the department decided no further action would be taken on ARM 32.3.212 and 32.3.212B.

Also sections of ARM 32.3.212 and 32.3.212B were reorganized for clarity. Authorizing and implementing citations were updated to accurately reflect sources of rulemaking authority and implementation.

PROGRAM PERFORMANCE

Alternative Livestock Statistics

Year	Fish, Wildlife and Parks Licensed Facilities	Department of Livestock Computer Animal Inventory	Calves/Fawns Born
2011	41	2,061	279
2012	39	1,206	265
2013	39	1,226	252
FY14	35	888	252
FY15	33	875	259
FY16	31	765	258
FY17	31	776	212
FY18	26	809	249

Figure 23. Alternative Livestock Statistics for Facilities and Inventory. Source: DOL Staff

Exports from Montana Alternative Livestock Ranches

State	Bighorn Sheep	Elk	Mule Deer	Grand Total
Idaho	0	24	0	24
Colorado	0	1	0	1
Ohio	11		8	19
Oklahoma	0	0	9	9
Virginia	3	0	0	3
Missouri	0	0	5	5
Iowa	8	0	0	8
Grand Total	22	25	22	69

Figure 24. Montana Alternative Livestock ranches exported—69 animals to 8 different states during FY18
Source: DOL Staff

PROGRAM PERFORMANCE

Alternative Livestock, continued

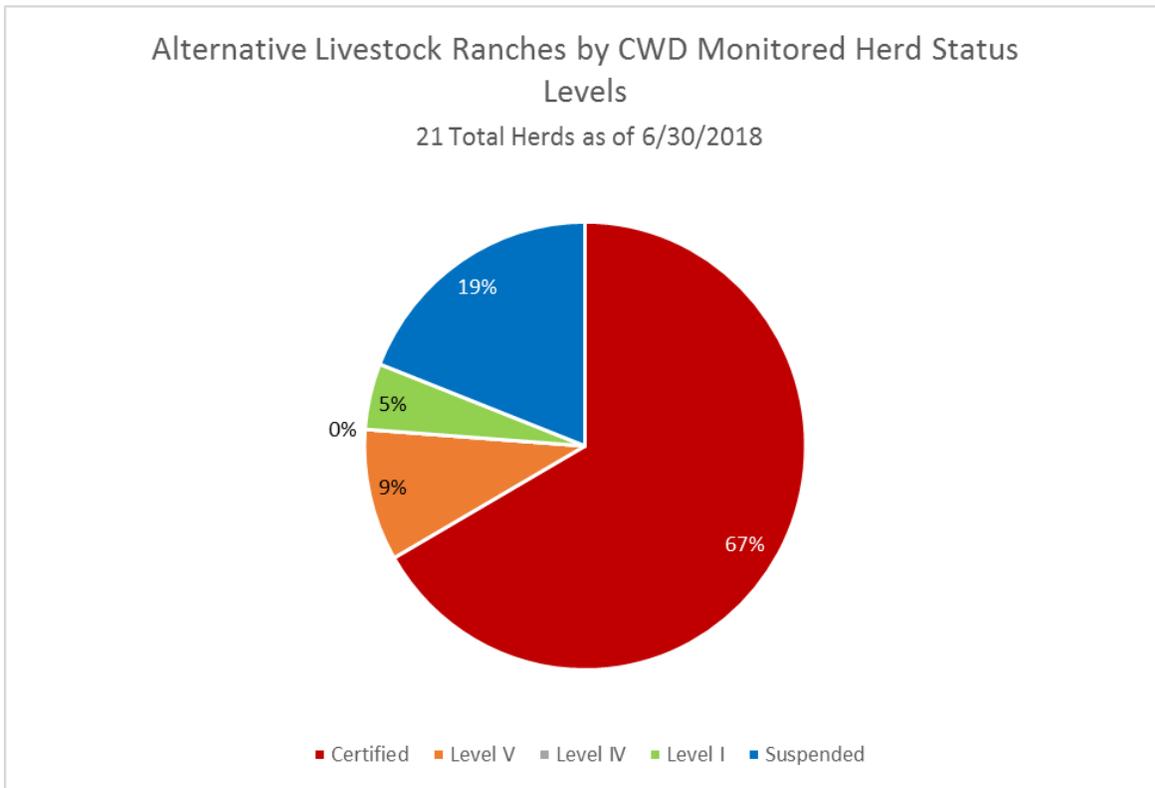


Figure 25. Increasing levels (I-V) correspond with increasing compliance with federal and state CWD surveillance activities in a herd; Certified is the highest level and is the status required to export animals to another state. Source: DOL Staff



Figure 26.. Elk calf. Source: Stock Photo

PROGRAM PERFORMANCE

MANAGEMENT/STAFF

The Animal Health Bureau experienced two staff changes during the fiscal year. Evaleen Starkel, the long-time supervisor of the Import/Export office, retired in August. Sara Morell was hired in December as the new import office manager. Also, a full-time position in the office was reduced to part-time. As these challenges were faced, the staff worked diligently to handle the calls and data entry needs. Each team member brings a tremendous amount of knowledge and education to the import office.

IMPORT/EXPORT STAFF MEETINGS

During FY18, the import/export staff conducted regular staff meetings to discuss and review website content, records management and retention, standard operating procedures (SOP) applications the bureau uses to track animal movement. The purpose of these meetings is to ensure that Animal Health programs and regulations are messaged and applied consistently. Particular emphasis is placed on cross training and efficiency.

INFORMATION SHARING

The Animal Health Bureau published four quarterly newsletters to an average of 726 deputy state veterinarians. The information is also shared with some Canadian and western states' state veterinarians as well as other interested parties. Topics of the newsletter included brucellosis, diagnostic laboratory news, emergency preparedness, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), and an insert from the Department of Public Health & Human Services called the *Montana OneHealth*. The newsletter and insert are available on our website at <http://liv.mt.gov/>.

USAHERDS

USAHerds is our data entry system that we use to document all livestock movements in and out of Montana. This system allows the department to track potential disease threats and quarantine animals until the risk has been mitigated. In April 2018, two Animal Health Bureau staff traveled to Oklahoma City, Oklahoma for the annual user group meeting. Thirty two states that utilize this application also participated. The purpose of this workshop is to communicate with the developers, talk with other states on import/export related topics and learn upcoming enhancements. Brooke Ruffier and Sara Morell's post conference report can be found [here](#).

PROGRAM PERFORMANCE

FIELD REPORTS

Tyler Thomas, Assistant Administrator of Brands Enforcement Division



This past year, Thomas took on another role as Market Bureau Chief, along with his current role as Assistant Administrator, Brand Enforcement Division. FY18 was a year of opportunity to help reinforce our agency meet department goals and objectives.

Markets: Time was focused on markets and market compliance, including numerous visits to the markets assisting them with questions or concerns. Leslie Doely and Thomas helped in various locations with sales, training in Fusion, clearing holds out of central office, and navigating central office in general.

Market Compliance Tech, Martha Howey, retired and her position was filled by Michelle Satre. Together Michelle and Thomas trained and led the markets on related issues.

Conferences: The International Livestock Identification Association conference was held in Boise, Idaho and in attendance were Thomas, Leslie Doely, Mark Simenson, Randy Poser, and Cally Goyins. Topics included Idaho Lieutenant Governor and Speaker of the House talking about agriculture in Idaho; brands and livestock laws on reservations; the new packing plant in Kuna, Idaho; NCBA views on identification and traceability; drug trafficking in rural America and how it affects local inspectors; ADT; and animal disease disaster and prevention.

Western States Rural Ag Enforcement Convention was held in Reno, Nevada and was attended by Thomas and Elings. Agenda items included computer investigations, booby traps and bombs in rural settings, money laundering in agriculture, and polygraphs used for hiring potential law enforcement officers.

Employees: Interviews to hire positions within the Brands Enforcement Division were conducted for market inspectors in Miles City and Billings, district investigator in Glasgow, and Market Compliance Technician in Helena.

Meetings/Training: Numerous Board of Livestock and managers meetings in Helena were attended by Thomas. The Montana Sheriff's and Peace Officers Association met in Lewistown and Billings which highlighted networking with other Sheriffs' Offices. At the Board of Crime Control meeting; use of force and new FBI documentation requirements were discussed.

Four weeks of training at the Montana Executive Leadership Institute at the Law Enforcement Academy reinforced life-long leadership and leadership styles.

Brand Operations: Assistance was offered to the Animal Health Bureau bleeding heifer calves for DSA compliance, investigating an equine infectious anemia disease case, and attendance at the Western States Animal Health Conference in Big Sky touring the Flying D Ranch.

Miscellaneous: Numerous other important duties were spearheaded by Thomas which included organizing the spring and fall firearms qualifications, working the Northern International Livestock Expo (NILE), working the with markets and IT on various computer and archer issues; helping various Sheriff's Offices in other counties. Along with Travis Elings, Ted Wall, Randy Poser, and Dan Bugni, putting together spring training for department investigators at the Broadwater County Fairgrounds, and focusing on officer safety and deadly encounters during truck stops and building searches.

PROGRAM PERFORMANCE

FIELD REPORTS

Western Area—Ernie McCaffree, Area Manager



Trainning: International Livestock Identification Association (ILIA) met in Boise, Idaho for their firearms qualifications and annual meeting with McCaffree in attendance.

Investigations (felony included): The department put together six cases of illegal shipments of horses, cattle, sheep, and goats into Montana. Quarantines were issued, and testing was done to meet Montana Import requirements.

Assistance was offered to several Sherriff's Offices dealing with illegal branding, animal cruelty around the state due, mostly, to hard winter conditions.

Other cases investigated were theft of cattle, dog's vs livestock, shot cattle, DSA violations, train killed cattle, Trichomoniasis and brucellosis follow-up. Other miscellaneous brands and animal health violations were handled as well.

Western Area Field Report Metric FY18	
Rodeo Inspections	5
Sheep Permits	2
Cattle Inspected	800
Lifetime Horse Inspections	184
Annual Horse Inspections	171
Horse Trip Permits	25
Grazing Permits	6

Wildfires: Response was immediate by McCaffree for local assistance concerning the wildland fires in western Montana in July and August of 2017.

Figure 27. Field Metric
Source: DOL Staff

Alternative Livestock: Tagging and identification issues were resolved regarding four cases of alternative livestock compliance.

DSA Cattle were tested and a truck sealed concerning a brucellosis positive cattle herd in the DSA.

Assistance: McCaffree and other DOL staff assisted in Equine Infectious Anemia (EIA) testing of a large horse herd in Gallatin County. Twenty three positive EIA reactors were euthanized and buried out of a herd of approximately 123 head. Remaining herd was tested three more times and quarantine was lifted.

Employees: Teamwork was at the forefront as McCaffree filled in for two of the district inspectors as they attended the 12-week training at the Montana Law Enforcement Academy in Helena—supervising and consulting with seven field men total.

International Equine Exports: Quarterly inspections of the Bouvry Exports horse feed lot in Shelby were completed by McCaffree and Mike Hayes for compliance of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Bouvry and Department of Livestock.

Miscellaneous: Stray livestock were identified and returned to owners; in most cases with some being sold as an estray if no owners were found.

PROGRAM PERFORMANCE

FIELD REPORTS

Eastern Area—Travis Elings, Area Manager



Elings took on more of a supervisory role this year. There were many changes in the district and overall enforcement is up as the investigators are very proactive in looking for and handling problems as they arise.

Agency Cooperation: The eastern area worked very closely with the newly hired Billings Animal Control deputy and assisted each other on a regular basis. When the new officer started, he spent some time in the yards getting livestock experience and going over horse colors, cattle breeds, and learning how to read brands.

Computer Systems: Evaluations with a new computer system (Fusion) took up a lot of time this year. Challenges with the system are being met and overcome through diligence and patience.

Special Sales: The eastern area management, along with numerous other investigators worked the Northern International Livestock Expo (NILE) in Billings. Six different cattle sales and two horse sales were worked during the week-long event. All of the cattle are worked in and out of the NILE.

Eastern Area Field Report Metric FY18	
Investigator Calls	30/mo
Law Enforcement Calls	3/mo
Felony Investigations unknown	5
Felony Investigations	3
Warnings	7
Lifetime inspections	43
Annual Inspections	18
Cattle inspections	978
Misdemeanor tickets	3

Figure 28. Field Metric
Source: DOL Staff

Investigations: In Chinook and Glasgow there were several calf mutilations. Investigation is ongoing. The Cheyenne reservation tribe suspended working with the department. Requests from producers to work with their cattle still continue, however.

Equipment: A hydraulic chute staff picked up in West Yellowstone was refurbished. Staff obtained a set of panels and a panel trailer which is valuable for investigations and animal health work.

Training: Law enforcement for the department received new shotguns and ballistic vests replacing twenty-year-old equipment. The eastern area attended the Western States Investigators Training and Convention. Classes on fraud, cellphone investigations and officers' rights were high on the class list. Elings is on the board of Western States as secretary and will move up to vice president in the coming year.

Assists: The department responded to numerous requests for help from Sheriff's Offices throughout the eastern side of the state. One big investigation this fiscal year was in the Glasgow area and involved eleven dead horses – the investigation is ongoing. The other assist was a cruelty case outside of Baker in which the horses were eventually seized, the suspect was arrested and convicted. The horses were sold at the Billings Livestock Sale.

Employees: The eastern area saw many new employees this fiscal year in Glasgow, Glendive, and Miles City. These investigators went to the law enforcement academy are now running their districts. The eastern area's communication skills are hard at work keeping a good team in touch.

LOOKING FORWARD

This first year following the Department's reorganization has been one of adjustment. Adjustment to new roles, new responsibilities, and new personnel. With the year behind us, I am excited to turn our vision towards the future to improve the services that we offer as well as to increase the effectiveness of the work that we do.

The presence of brucellosis in wildlife in an ever-expanding region of southwest Montana will continue to present challenges for the Department. Brucellosis management in Montana is time consuming, costly, and a recognized burden to our livestock producers in this region. It is also necessary to ensure that our trading partners have confidence in the disease-free status of Montana origin cattle and domestic bison. Moving forward, we will continue to advocate for research and development of better tools for the management of brucellosis.

Tuberculosis is a disease that we are spending more time on each year. Fortunately, this hasn't been due to the detection of bovine tuberculosis in Montana, but instead due to detections in other states with tracebacks to Montana cattle. As we look forward, we expect that there will be additional tracebacks that will require action on our part. Working to strengthen our state's traceability program will improve our ability to respond to all traces, no matter the disease.

Electronic records are critical to the success of our state's traceability program and therefore to many of our disease specific management programs (brucellosis, tuberculosis, and trichomoniasis). Electronic records include animal movement documentation (CVIs), as well as official disease work (brucellosis vaccination and testing) and brand inspection data. This coming year, the Animal Health Bureau will be turning our focus to increasing and improving the use and efficiencies of electronic records.

Our participation in the national foot and mouth disease outbreak simulation this past May gave the Animal Health Bureau a fresh perspective on what is needed to ensure that Montana is prepared to respond to a large-scale disease outbreak. The lessons learned during the exercise will steer our efforts in planning and preparedness for years to come.

We look forward to the coming year and the challenges it will bring.

Tahnee Szymanski, DVM
Assistant State Veterinarian
Animal Health Bureau Chief



Figure 29. Open field
Source: DOL Staff