



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.



Figure 1. Meat Goats
Source: DOL photo stock

FISCAL YEAR 20

July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020

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LOOKING BACK

Summary Highlights Tahnee Szymanski, DVM

The state fiscal year 2020 annual report, spanning July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020 (FY20), describes work done by the Animal Health Bureau to carry out our mission. This mission includes safeguarding the health and food production capacity of our state's livestock and poultry industry and preventing the transmission of animal disease to man. Our mission is accomplished with four major areas of activity: import/export regulations, disease control, alternative livestock, and field operations. As part of this work, the Animal Health Bureau provides education to animal owners, livestock producers, and veterinarians.



Figure 2. Tahnee Szymanski, DVM
Source: Personal Photo

This fiscal year included the conclusion of two bovine tuberculosis epidemiological investigations, a transition in the primary screening test used for brucellosis surveillance, an expansion of the Designated Surveillance Area for brucellosis and the state's first chronic wasting disease detection in a captive cervid in 20 plus years.

Through the hard work and dedication of Animal Health Bureau staff, we also saw significant gains on emergency preparedness and were able to retire several import permits as the increased use of electronic documentation has rendered them obsolete. In partnership with our state public health counterparts, the first annual One Health in the 406 Conference was held covering occupational risks to females of reproductive age.

The Bureau remains committed to brucellosis management, disease traceability and the use of electronic health documents, and monitoring animal imports to protect the health of our livestock industry.

I am humbled to work with such a remarkable group of people. The commitment of the staff of the Animal Health Bureau to the quality and integrity of the work they do ensures that our mission is carried out fairly and effectively and truly contributes to the success and health of Montana's livestock industry.

Sincerely,
Tahnee Szymanski, DVM
Bureau Chief
Assistant State Veterinarian

ANIMAL HEALTH STAFF

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 (14), Evan (18), 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 after several years in large animal ambulatory practice. 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, tuberculosis, as well as other cattle, equine, and small ruminant disease programs. In her off-duty time, Tahnee enjoys hiking, kayaking, snowshoeing, and other outdoor adventures with her eight year-old daughter, Campbell. Tahnee is also an avid reader and loves making quilts from repurposed materials.

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 of Livestock as the Brucellosis Program Veterinarian in June of 2009. He enjoys pheasant hunting and quality time with his wife Eleana, and daughters, Stella (16) and Grace (13).

Anna Forseth, DVM grew up in Three Forks, Montana. She received her bachelors degree from Montana State University in 2012, her veterinary degree from Colorado State University in 2016 and her Masters degree from Iowa State University in 2020. She joined the Department of Livestock in 2018 as a Program Veterinarian, after working in the swine industry in Iowa following graduation from veterinary school. Anna oversees the department's animal emergency preparedness and One Health efforts, the state's National Poultry Improvement Plan program, and disease programs including rabies and Johnes. Anna is married to Rocky Forseth, and they have two children, Olie (2) and Joslynn (1). The Forseths stay busy exploring the great outdoors of Montana, spending time at the family ranch in Fairfield, farm in Three Forks, and visiting friends throughout Montana.

Import Office

Brooke Ruffier grew up in Butte, Montana. She holds two bachelor degrees from Rocky Mountain College in Billings, Montana: one in Equitation and Training and the other in Business Management. Brooke joined the department in March 2017. She manages the import office and the alternative livestock program. Brooke pals around with her corgi and enjoys training 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 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!

Kaylee Hiel grew up in Helena, Montana. She previously worked as an Operations Manager, and a Residential Coordinator for people with developmental disabilities, dedicating time to coaching Special Olympics. She joined the Department of Livestock in September 2019 as a Permit Technician and now manages the blanket permit program. She enjoys traveling, hiking, baking, and spending time with her family and dogs.

ANIMAL HEALTH STAFF

Britta Sekora grew up in Shelby, Montana and attended Carroll College for History and Constitutional studies. Britta was hired by the Department of Livestock in September 2019 and is now a Permit Technician and manages the poultry program. She lives in South Helena with her husband and two daughters, age 3 and 7. In her free time Britta enjoys knitting, hiking, golfing and spending time with her family.

Keeling Gilkey re-joined the Montana Department of Livestock in May 2019 as a License Permit Technician. She manages import quarantine, permit violation orders, and import permits. Keelin has lived in Helena since 2002 and loves spending time with her family and her dog Boone, as well as traveling and exploring with her friends. In her spare time, she trains horses and rodeos.

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 veterinary clinic as a veterinary technician. Sara joined the Animal Health Bureau of the Department of Livestock in May 2016. She is a 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, daughter, four dogs and six horses on their growing ranch.

Leslie Doely is a native of Creston, Montana in the Flathead Valley. She graduated from Montana State with a BS in Animal Science and soon after married high school sweetheart, Josh. The couple both secured jobs in Helena in 2010 – Leslie as a temp with Department of Livestock. Leslie has held several positions with DOL but is currently enjoying her role as the Brucellosis Compliance Specialist. The couple have two feisty boys, ages 2 (Callaway) and 5 (Cooper), a small beef cattle and meat goat operation, a few horses, chickens, cats, dogs and a big garden to keep them all busy and enjoying the outdoors.

Enforcement

Tyler Thomas grew up outside of Billings Montana. He graduated from Northeast College in Powell Wyoming with a degree in Agricultural business in 2000. Tyler hired on with the Department of Livestock in July 2002 and Tyler now holds the Assistant Administrator's position for Brands Enforcement. Tyler is married to 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 also 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, has a son who is a senior in college, and a daughter in the 8th grade. Off-duty Travis likes to rope with his kids and work in his shop.

Bison Program

Clay Vines was born and raised in Montana. He grew up and went to high school in Livingston, Montana. He attended Dawson Community college in Glendive, where he graduated with a degree in Criminal Justice; Law enforcement. He stayed competitive on the rodeo team participating in team and calf roping. Clay became a fishing guide in college and Fishing Outfitter in the years to follow. In 2014 he took a job with the Montana Department of Livestock and is now the Bison Program Manager living in the West Yellowstone, Montana area.

Mike Himmelspach was born and raised in Livingston Montana. He has spent most of his life guiding hunters and ranching in Paradise Valley. Mike hired on with the Department of Livestock in January of 2019 with the Bison Management Program. He successfully completed the Montana Law Enforcement Academy, in December of 2019. Mike enjoys hunting, riding horses in the mountains, and camping. Mike lives in Paradise Valley with his wife Alison.

DISEASES

Brucellosis—DSA Headcount and Testing

The number of tests performed on Designated Surveillance Area (DSA) cattle and domestic bison drives the total cost of the brucellosis surveillance program (see Figure 3).

Costs have increased over time due to the increasing size of the DSA. Additionally, each year more producers voluntarily conduct whole herd testing as a best management practice. The correlation between number of DSA-related tests and cost of reimbursement varies due

to the percentage of tests for which reimbursement is requested. In FY20, fewer reimbursement eligible tests were unclaimed, resulting in the total amount reimbursed for FY19 and 20 being nearly equal despite a significant decrease in the total number of tests for FY20. This substantial drop in test numbers is discussed in the next section.

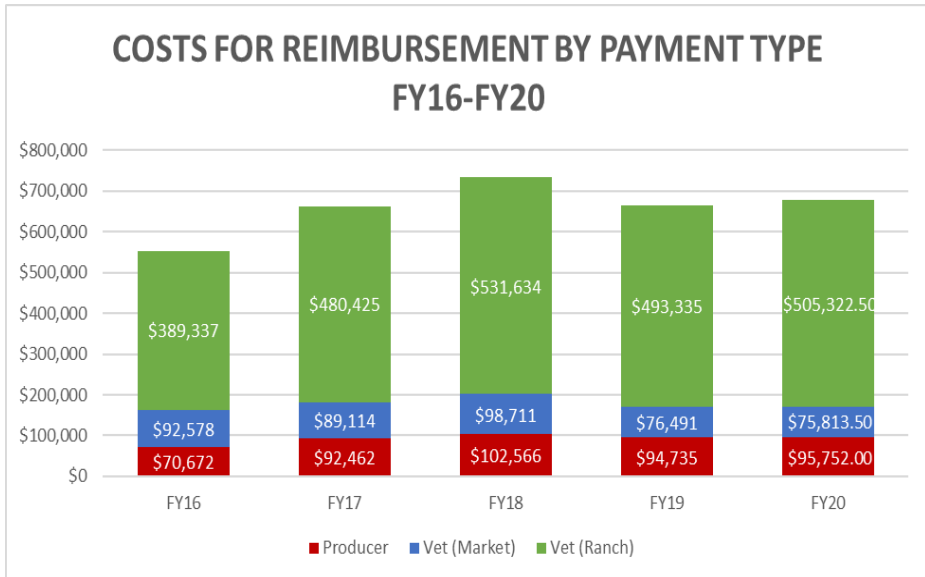


Figure 3. Cost Reimbursement by payment type. Source: DOL Staff

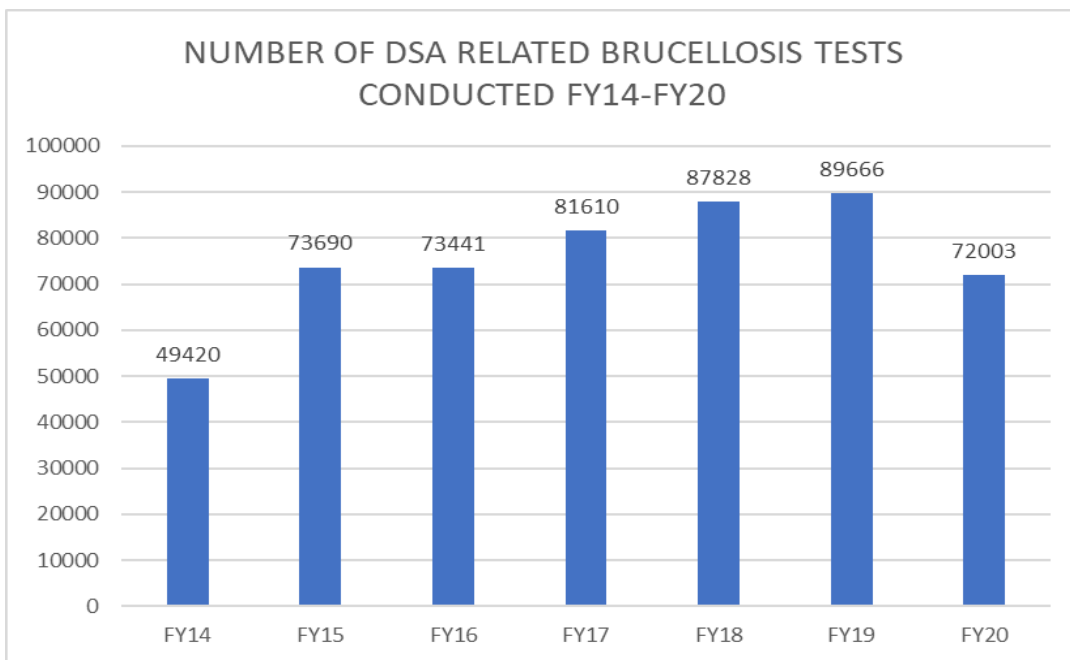


Figure 4. Brucellosis testing long range statistics. Source: DOL Staff

D I S E A S E S

Brucellosis—Epidemiologic Investigations

Affected Herd Investigations—Annual testing of the affected Gallatin County bison herd was completed as part of the ongoing investigation. The herd was found to be positive in 2010. The herd has ongoing exposure to positive elk during the risk period and therefore brucellosis exposed bison are routinely detected during annual testing. The 2019 annual test identified four suspect animals with low Fluorescent Polarization Antibodies (FPA) values. These animals were held for 60+ day retests. All animals tested negative on subsequent testing and were classified as negative animals. This gives the 2010 Gallatin County bison herd its first negative whole herd test. Two negative whole herd tests are required to release a herd from quarantine.

A positive herd was identified in Madison County following voluntary whole-herd testing. The herd was placed under quarantine, adjacent herds notified, and the affected animal was removed from the herd. Six adjacent herds, encompassing seven 641 head of livestock, were required to test. No additional positive animals were found. The affected herd will conduct the first whole-herd, post removal test in the fall of 2020.

Suspect Animal Follow Up— An epidemiological investigation was started after a single animal from a Madison County herd tested positive on a brucellosis serologic test. The owner elected to euthanize the animal in lieu of holding the animal for subsequent testing as allowed under the newly developed guidance for the use of FPA as the primary screening test. The animal was sampled for culture. The culture was negative for brucellosis and the herd was released from quarantine.

A second investigation of a brucellosis reactor detected at a Montana livestock market was conducted. The suspect was sold into slaughter channels and was therefore unavailable for subsequent testing. The herd of origin was placed under quarantine until a negative whole-herd test was completed in January 2020.

An additional investigation is ongoing following the detection of a brucellosis reactor at slaughter in Idaho. No official identification was present on the reactor at slaughter. Department of Livestock is using information from the plant and brand inspection data to identify potential source ranches for the reactor.

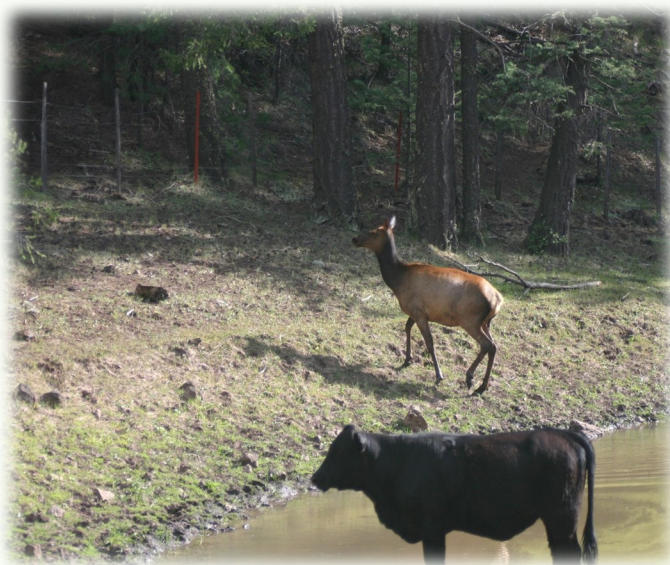


Figure 5. Same habitat used by elk and cows. Source: <https://www1.usgs.gov/coopunits/project/98043805696/jmerkle>

D I S E A S E S

Brucellosis – Compliance Assessment

An annual assessment is conducted to monitor compliance with Designated Surveillance Area (DSA) testing regulations. The Fiscal Year 2019 (FY19) evaluation includes 107,319 cattle and domestic bison in 376 herds (see Figure 6). A total of 88,520 DSA associated tests were conducted in FY19. Compliance with DSA testing requirements is high; 98% of known DSA producers were in compliance with requirements for movement and sale.

The focus for the FY19 assessment was to determine compliance based on qualifying activities (animals leaving the DSA and/or changing ownership) vs. previous assessments which only determined compliance at the producer basis. The results show that only 396 out of 107,319 animals owned by nine of the 376 producers that utilized the DSA had some violation of test requirements. Three of the nine producers with violations moved cows out of the DSA (within Montana) for seasonal grazing without performing the required tests. These producers are working with field enforcement staff to complete testing in fall 2020. Animals from the remaining six producers with violations have either been tested or sold into slaughter channels. In all cases of noncompliance, the qualifying activity was determined to be low risk.

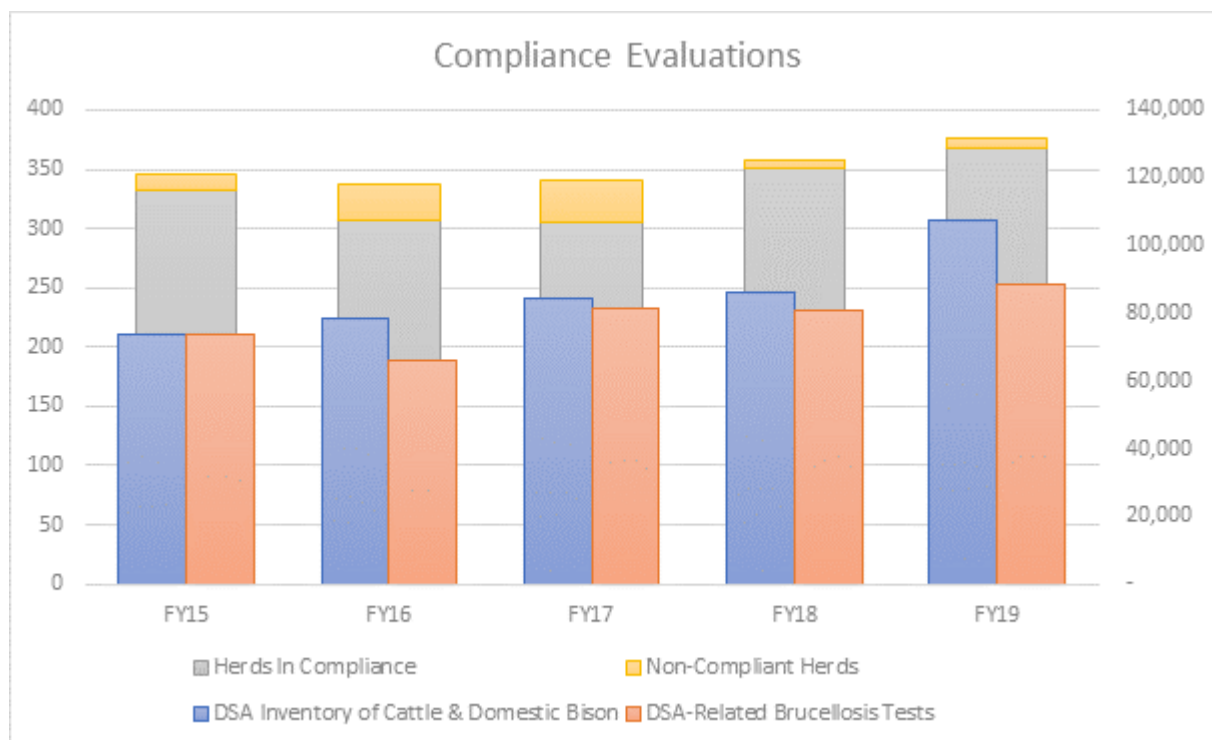


Figure 6. Illustrates the high compliance to DSA testing regulations over time . Source: DOL Staff

D I S E A S E S

Brucellosis

Transition to the Fluorescent Polarization Assay (FPA)

During the summer of 2019, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) notified state animal health officials that USDA could no longer produce antigen for the Rapid Automated Presumptive (RAP) brucellosis test. The RAP test had been the primary screening test for brucellosis testing in U.S. laboratories since 2014. The benefits of the RAP test were its relatively high sensitivity (78%), nearly 100% specificity, low cost, minimal labor needs, automation, and rapid turnaround time.

Following an evaluation of available testing options, the Montana Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory (MVDL) elected to use the FPA plate test for screening. The FPA test has nearly a 100% rating for both sensitivity and specificity, but had only been used for confirmatory testing (rather than screening) because it costs laboratories nearly two times that of the RAP. Fortunately, MVDL was able to secure federal funds to offset the cost of using the FPA for the initial year, and therefore minimize the impact of a necessary price increase for testing.

Unfortunately, the transition to the FPA test resulted in an increased number of brucellosis suspect animals, resulting in 33 herds being placed under quarantine while suspect results were reconciled. While it was believed that none of the suspects were true positives, the established protocol prevented these animals and their respective herds from being classified as brucellosis negative in a timely manner. In response, USDA in partnership with Greater Yellowstone Area States and state animal health officials from across the country worked on a testing and interpretation protocol that is now in its second iteration. The new protocol ensures that positive animals are successfully identified while minimizing the number of false positive serologic tests. The department recognizes the importance of minimizing the impact of quarantines and additional testing on DSA producers to maintain producer confidence in the program. Unfortunately, the increased number of brucellosis suspects resulted in a decrease in total test numbers for FY20. Some producers, concerned about the high rate of suspect test results, elected not to conduct voluntary herd testing for the year. The decrease in testing is concerning as our historically high level of surveillance helps with marketing confidence and has received praise from USDA following their review of Montana's brucellosis program.

Program Review

In 2019, Department of Livestock (DOL) hosted a Brucellosis Program review committee from USDA for the triennial evaluation of the state's Brucellosis Management Program. The review committee evaluated the adequacy of the state's brucellosis rules and infrastructure, the department's enforcement of brucellosis rules, cattle surveillance, diagnostics/laboratory capability, producer education and cooperation, wildlife surveillance and risk mitigation activities, and the overall effectiveness of Designated Surveillance Area (DSA) boundaries, testing, and movement restrictions.

The level of testing and compliance with brucellosis regulations earned us high marks from USDA during the 2019 Brucellosis Program review. The review acknowledged the extremely low risk of exporting a brucellosis positive animal out of our DSA and complemented the state on a strong working relationship with producers, veterinarians, and Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP). The more timely matching of movements with required testing is one area where continued improvement is needed.

D I S E A S E S

Brucellosis – DSA Boundary Adjustment and Targeted Elk Surveillance

In May 2020, the Animal Health Bureau (AHB) proposed a Designated Surveillance Area (DSA) boundary adjustment in Madison and Beaverhead Counties (Figure 7 below). The proposed change to the boundary, effective July 11, 2020, followed the detection of seropositive elk outside of the current DSA during the winter 2020 targeted elk capture conducted by Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP).

In early 2020, elk captures were conducted in the Bangtails and the Ruby Mountains. Fifty animals were captured and tested in the Bangtails which complemented the 49 samples collected during the prior season in the same area. All samples from 2019 and 2020 surveillance activities tested negative. Thirty-two elk in these survey groups were fitted with GPS collars during the capture to help understand the movement patterns of elk in the area.

Ninety-eight elk were captured in the Ruby Mountains with 43 animals randomly receiving GPS collars to monitor movement. Two additional shoulder season hunter harvest samples were also tested. Of the 100 samples, two were found to be serologically positive and confirmed at the National Veterinary Services Laboratory. Based upon the decision matrix the department uses to evaluate the need for a boundary adjustment, this detection met the criteria for an expansion (see Figure 7).

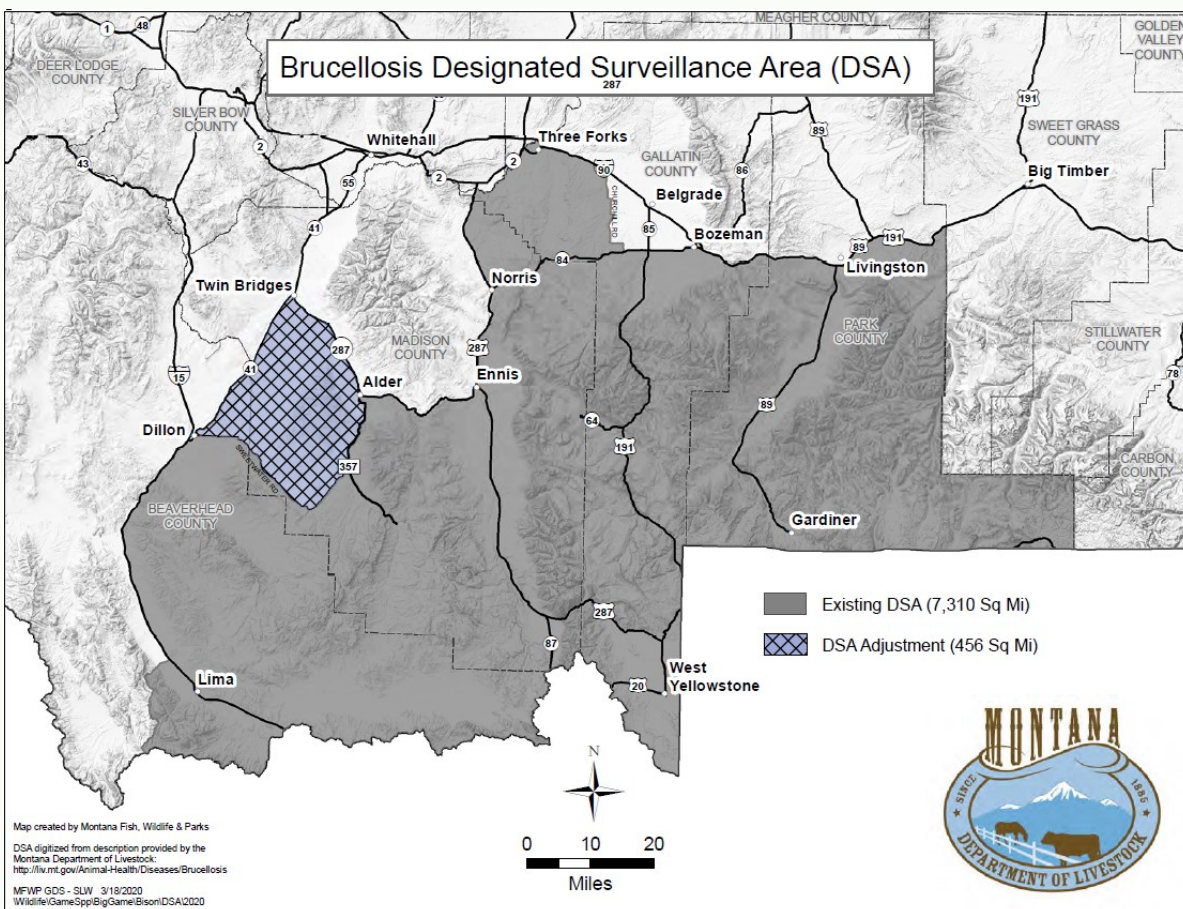


Figure 7. DSA Boundary with expansion. Source: DOL Staff and Fish, Wildlife and Parks.

DISEASES

Johne's

In response to feedback from the veterinary community and buyers of Montana cattle, and an increase in Johne's cases in Montana, the Department of Livestock (DOL) announced the Johne's Control Program in August 2019. The goals of the program are to increase Johne's testing within the state's cattle industry, reduce the spread of Johne's Disease, and maintain the positive reputation of Montana's cattle genetics. At the producer level, additional program objectives include:

- 1) Help producers identify positive animals/herds and implement management practices to eliminate the disease,
- 2) Support noninfected herds by identifying biosecurity practices to prevent the introduction of the disease into their herds, and
- 3) Create market opportunity for participating herds to advertise their involvement in the program.

Outreach about the program, the disease, and testing prevalence in Montana (Figure 8), has included both targeted and wide scale messaging. The department submitted newsletter articles to Montana Stockgrowers Association and Montana Farm Bureau Federation as well as to state breed associations. The Animal Health Bureau (AHB) has also sent information about the program directly to producers who have had a positive Johne's test. We currently have seven herds enrolled in the program and 39 veterinarians certified to participate. Ultimately, we would like buyers and sellers of Montana cattle to understand that a positive, managed herd is lower risk than a herd with an unknown/nonadvertised status.

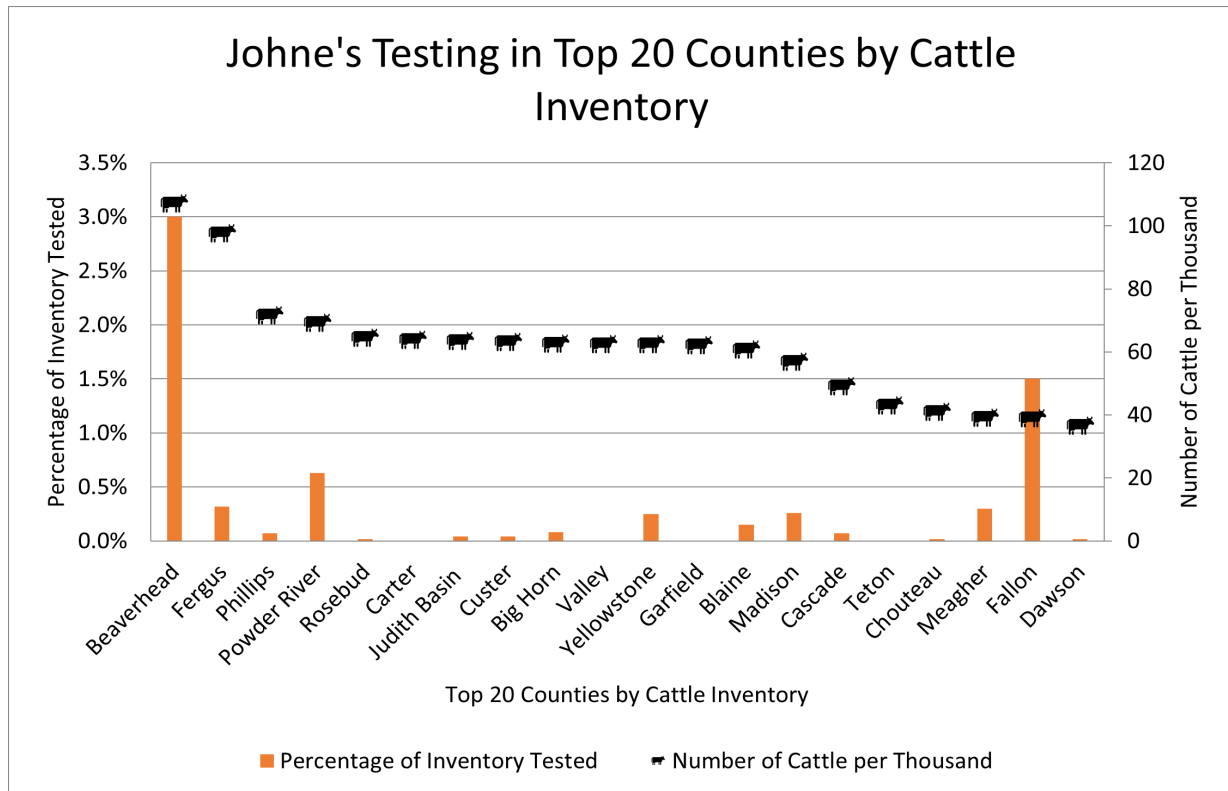


Figure 8. Johnes testing FY20.
Source: DOL Staff

DISEASES

Rabies

Montana had 19 positive submissions for rabies in 2019: 17 positive bats and 2 positive skunks. The counties with positive submissions included Flathead, Glacier, Hill, Mineral, Missoula, Lewis and Clark, Gallatin, Park, Yellowstone, Rosebud and Big Horn. Of the positive cases, 9 resulted in action by the department, including sixty-day county quarantines in response to the positive skunks in Big Horn and Missoula Counties.

Over the past ten years, the Montana Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory has diagnosed 208 cases of rabies. This count includes 145 bats, 52 skunks, 3 cats, 3 dogs, 3 cattle, and 2 horses. These animals were submitted from 33 counties. Rabies has been diagnosed in terrestrial (land-dwelling) species in 17 of the 33 counties with positive diagnoses. The Animal Health Bureau (AHB) believes rabies is present in wild animal populations throughout the state and the cases mentioned above likely do not represent the true distribution of rabies in Montana.

FY20 Montana Rabies Distribution by Species

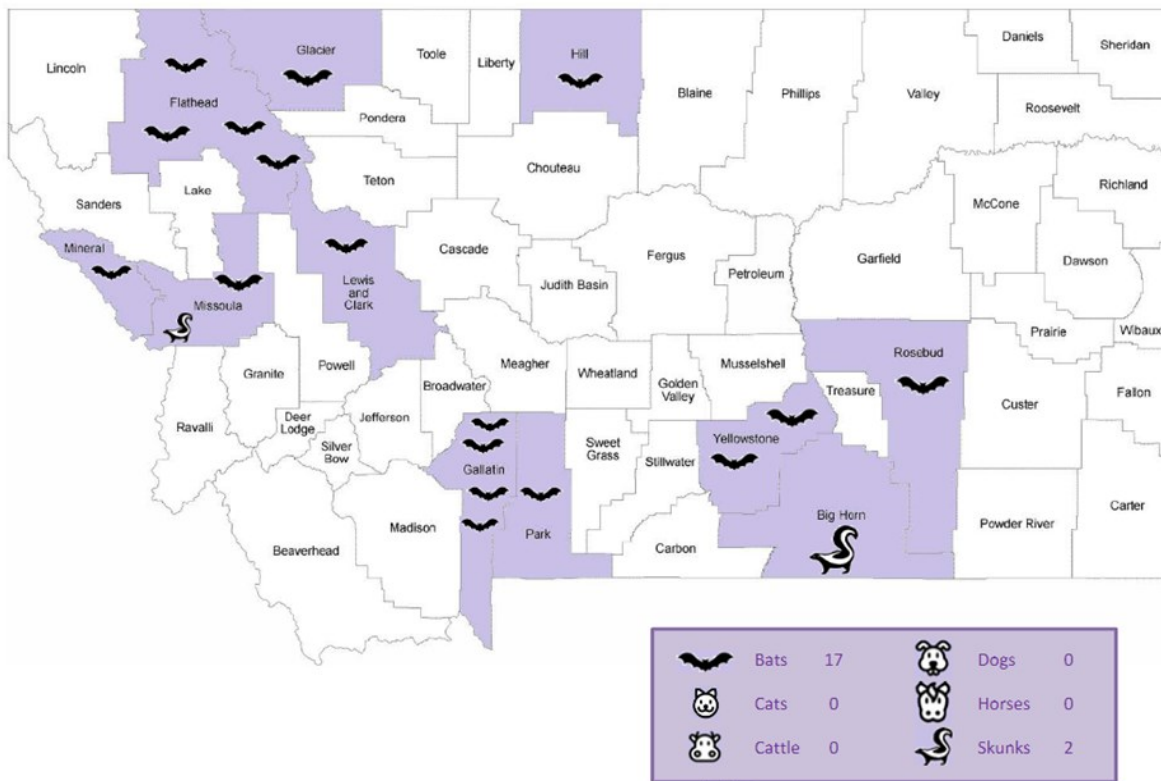


Figure 9. Montana Rabies Distribution by Species and County FY20 .
Source: DOL Staff

DISEASES

West Nile Virus (WNV)

Montana had two confirmed cases of West Nile Virus (WNV) in 2019. This number was a sharp decline from the 52 cases reported in 2018. The 2019 cases were diagnosed in Flathead and Lake Counties. One of the 2019 cases was a horse with an unknown vaccination history that resulted in euthanasia. The second case involved a horse with no vaccination history that fully recovered from the disease. Historically, horses testing positive for the virus who were also showing clinical signs had not been vaccinated. The WNV vaccines available for horses have shown to be effective against the virus protecting animals from the development of clinical signs. For this reason, the American Association of Equine Practitioners (AAEP) recommends administration of a WNV vaccine as part of their core vaccination guidelines.

Positive WNV cases are also reported to the Department of Public Health and Human Services to support identification of positive mosquito pools within the state and to help with messaging for WNV prevention in people. In 2019 there were four human cases of West Nile Virus and seven positive mosquito surveillance samples collected. While direct transmission of West Nile Virus between animals and people does not occur, a veterinarian's diagnosis of West Nile in an animal still warrants client education about the zoonotic potential of the virus. An infected mosquito is the route of transmission for both animals and humans, so a positive case of West Nile Virus in a horse, cat, dog, bird or rabbit, suggests that the animal owner may have been exposed to the same infected mosquito population.



Figure 10. West Nile Virus Map FY20. Source: DOL Staff

D I S E A S E S

Tuberculosis

The Animal Health Bureau (AHB) continued work on three epidemiological investigations in FY20: a bovine tuberculosis (TB) positive steer found at slaughter in South Dakota in June 2018, a TB positive steer found at slaughter in South Dakota in December 2018, and a TB positive cow found at slaughter in Nebraska in March 2019.

The epidemiological investigation of the June 2018 TB positive steer determined that there were 99 potential sources from South Dakota, North Dakota, Montana, Minnesota, and Wyoming. No identification was collected at slaughter. Based upon direction received from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), states were required to conduct whole herd testing on all potential source herds. Montana had 17 potential source herds, of which, one was not required to test due to sale of red-sided cattle only and one herd was not available for testing due to a herd dispersal. Testing of the remaining 16 herds was completed by November 1, 2019. A total of 4,867 head were tested. Forty-four Caudal Fold Test (CFT) suspects were found. Of these 44, two Comparative Cervical Test (CCT) suspects were found that were taken to the Montana Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory for port-mortem tissue collection. No TB reactors were found in Montana.

Twenty-five animal health, brands enforcement and United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) employees worked on the investigation, logging 2,027.5 hours and 47,482 miles (see Figures 12 and 13 below).

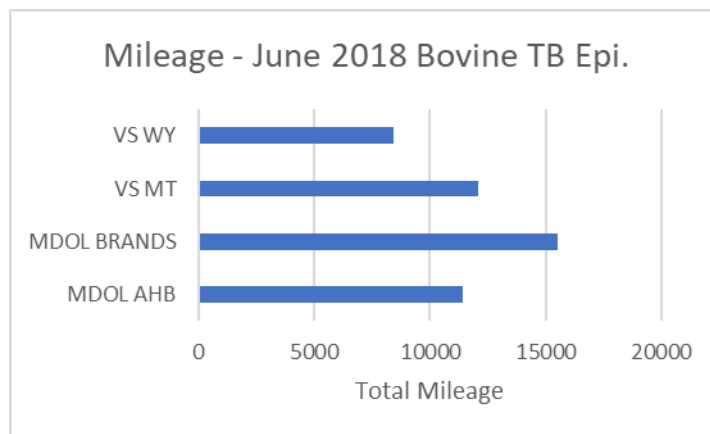


Figure 11. Mileage
Source: DOL Staff
VS: Veterinary Services

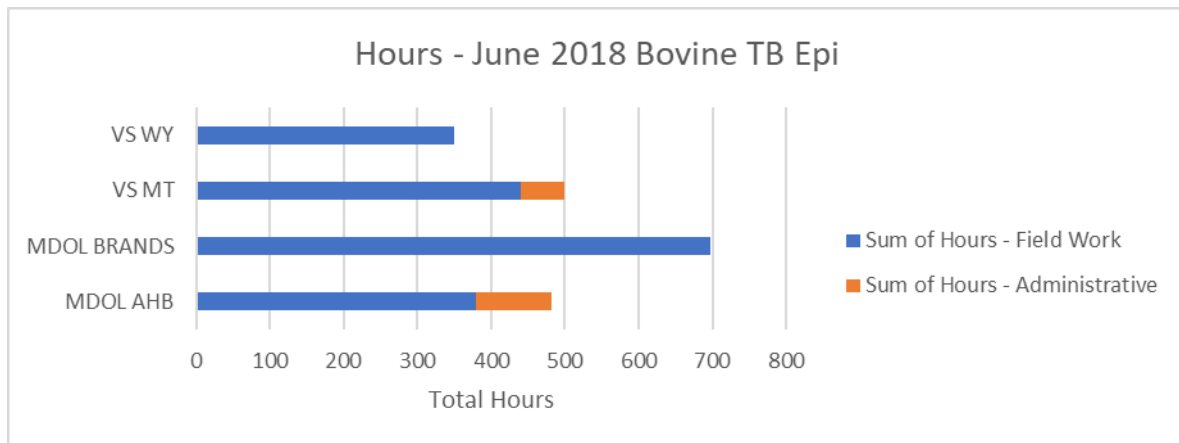


Figure 12. Total hours committed to investigate/test the 1-in-99 TB trace
Source: DOL Staff
VS: Veterinary Services

D I S E A S E S

Tuberculosis, continued

The investigation of the December 2018 TB positive steer involved three traceback herds with one located in Garfield County, Montana. The other two potential source herds were located in South Dakota. The Garfield County herd was placed under quarantine pending completion of a negative whole herd test. This testing was completed in July of 2019 with all animals testing negative. The herd quarantine was released with no further follow up testing required.

The investigation of the March 2019 TB positive cow found at slaughter in Nebraska is ongoing. The herd has completed an initial whole herd test with all animals testing negative. The herd has been released from quarantine but is required to complete an assurance test. The assurance test is scheduled for November 2020.

The Animal Health Bureau (AHB) also received Dual Path Platform (DPP) positive results on a single cow elk from central Montana. The herd was placed under quarantine and the animal was retested at 60+ days. The second DPP test was also positive and the animal was classified as a TB reactor. United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) approved indemnity on the cow elk and AHB and USDA staff performed post-mortem tissue collection for histopathology and culture. An abscessed lymph node was observed in the pharyngeal region during necropsy. Results from histopathology diagnosed an *Actinobacillus* type organism, with no evidence of tuberculosis, although culture results are pending. The herd remains under quarantine pending final culture results.

Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD)

In January, the Animal Health Bureau received confirmation that an elk from an Eastern Montana captive cervid herd had tested positive for chronic wasting disease (CWD). The animal was slaughtered for home consumption and was showing no clinical signs of disease. The animal was tested in compliance with Montana's mandatory CWD surveillance regulations, requiring all animal mortalities in animals over 12 months of age to be tested. The herd was placed under quarantine and is pending depopulation of remaining animals. The animals will be depopulated for home consumption and samples collected for CWD testing. The last detection of CWD in a captive cervid herd in Montana was in 1999.

The origin of the disease in this herd is most likely exposure to positive wildlife or infectious material. Movement of captive cervids is an unlikely contributor as the herd has not had a new introduction in 20+ years. The last movement of an animal off the premises was 12 years prior. The herd has historically maintained a high level of compliance with surveillance requirements, suggesting that the disease would have been found if it had been in the herd for an extended period associated with the movement of a positive animal into the herd. Finally, CWD has been confirmed in wildlife within 50 miles of the affected premises.

The AHB notified both Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP) and Department of Health and Human Services (DPHHS) of the CWD positive result. Department of Livestock (DOL) is working with FWP on conducting joint inspections of all alternative livestock facilities to evaluate perimeter fencing as a result of this finding.

The department also received numerous calls for interviews. The department received a public records request pertaining to the identity of the CWD affected herd. In consultation with legal counsel and the Board of Livestock, the request was denied. The department is charged with keeping test information confidential mandated by law in 81-2-115, MCA.

D I S E A S E S

Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD), continued

Animal Health Bureau (AHB) worked with United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and United States Geologic Survey (USGS) on reporting the positive premises at the national level. Typically, positive premises are identified to the county level. Eight of Montana’s alternative livestock producers are the sole alternative livestock producer in their county; county level reporting effectively identifies the affected producer. AHB was able to develop reporting zones (Eastern, Central, and Western) that would comply with confidentiality laws but provide more localized data about the location of affected herds within Montana.

Dr. Szymanski attended a USDA virtual CWD summit that included attendees from wildlife agencies, the federal government, tribes, and industry. The summit was intended to present current information available on diagnostics, transmission, inactivation of prions, behavior of the prion in the environment, and develop consensus on actions needed to combat the transmission and spread of CWD.

Trichomoniasis

The FY19 positive herd in Glacier County completed all required testing, including a post-breeding season test of all non-virgin bulls, to be released from trich affected herd status. As a result, all the bulls sampled from this herd were negative and all market/sales restrictions were lifted on the herd. Additionally, Department of Livestock (DOL) staff worked with the local veterinarian and tribal staff to identify and notify adjacent herds. All adjacent herds completed a single negative test of all non-virgin bulls. There were no confirmed cases of Trichomoniasis for FY 20 (see Figure 11).

Trichomoniasis Bulls by County					
County	FY16	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20
Carter			1		0
Custer	4				0
Fallon		2			0
Glacier				1	0
Yellowstone	2				0
Total Negative Tests	9765	7310	7308	7341	8412
Total Positive Tests	6	2	1	1	0

Figure 13. Trichomoniasis positive bulls per county by state fiscal year. Source: DOL Staff

D I S E A S E S

Equine Herpes Virus-1 (EHV-1)

A Ravalli County premises was quarantined for EHV-1 after two horses were euthanized and tested due to severe neurologic signs. A positive PCR for EHV-1 was reported on kidney tissue of the second fatality. The horses were part of a herd of 60+ animals with limited travel onto or off of the affected premises. Following the initial detection of disease, additional animals were confirmed infected after exhibiting either respiratory or neurological symptoms. Dr. Szymanski worked with Dustin Datisman, Brands Enforcement District Investigator, and the local accredited veterinarian on the terms of the quarantine, including an inventory of all animals on the property conducted by Datisman. The local veterinarian reported that as of December 18 all horses were free of clinical signs. Following 28 days free of any clinical signs of EHV-1, the premises was released from quarantine.

Malignant Catarrhal Fever (MCF)

MCF was confirmed in an 18 month old beef heifer in Gallatin County. This confirmation was the second MCF mortality on the property in the past two years. The premises houses both cattle and sheep, with commingling occurring for a portion of the year. Dr. Szymanski worked with the local veterinarian and producer on management options, including maintaining temporal and spatial separation of cattle and sheep.

Rabbit Hemorrhagic Disease (RHD)

Several states reported cases of RHD in both domestic and wild rabbits in FY20, which is a foreign animal disease associated with high mortality rates in rabbits. In response, the Animal Health Bureau (AHB) worked on outreach to veterinarians, Montana State University Extension, and rabbit owners in Montana. Additionally, AHB worked with animal health officials in Idaho regarding the potential movement of rabbits from states impacted by RHD.

The Animal Health Bureau (AHB) followed up on two reports in FY20; the first involving a single rabbit mortality. The local veterinarian provided a history and despite the low risk of RHD, samples were submitted to Foreign Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory (FADDL) for testing. The animal tested negative for RHD.

The second report of rabbit mortalities was associated with a research facility at the University of Montana. The rabbits had been wild caught in Oregon and transported into Montana for research purposes. The deceased animals had samples collected and submitted for testing for rabbit hemorrhagic disease (RHD). Additionally, AHB worked to notify Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP) and officials in Oregon of the potential for disease in these animals. The animals tested negative for RHD. AHB worked with FWP and officials at University of Montana on education regarding state of Montana import requirements to ensure that future shipments are in compliance with both agencies' requirements.

Seneca Valley Virus (SVV)

South Dakota notified the AHB regarding a foreign animal disease investigation conducted at a swine buying station near Aberdeen, South Dakota. The pigs at the station originated from Montana, North Dakota, and South Dakota in the three to four days prior to Labor Day weekend. Lesions were first noticed Tuesday after Labor Day and a Foreign Animal Disease (FAD) investigation was completed. The swine were positive for Seneca Valley Virus. South Dakota provided Montana with the origin premises, however, Department of Livestock (DOL) staff were unable to establish contact with the premises due to lack of identifying contact information.

D I S E A S E S

Vesicular Stomatitis Virus (VSV)

In April 2020, VSV was detected in New Mexico. With the index case of VSV in the United States for 2020, Montana Department of Livestock (MDOL) implemented increased import requirements for animals originating from VSV affected states, including Certificates of Veterinary Inspection (CVI)s issued within seven days of entry into Montana and a required VSV statement on the CVI. Between April and June 2020, VSV has been confirmed in seven states.

The Animal Health Bureau (AHB) worked with local veterinarians and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Veterinary Services (VS) on several reports of animals with oral lesions. These include:

- A horse in Sweet Grass County - Samples were collected and submitted to National Veterinary Services Laboratory (NVSL) in Ames, Iowa. Preliminary results for the horse were negative.
- A Montana origin horse that was presented at a South Dakota veterinary clinic with oral lesions and a two-week history of hypersalivation. Based upon duration and appearance of clinical signs, it was determined that the risk of VSV was low and samples were not submitted for additional testing.
- A Madison County horse with oral lesions - The horse presented for difficulty eating and the lesions were found upon oral examination of the animal. The Montana premises of the horse had received a horse from a premises in Colorado that had previously been under quarantine for VSV. A biopsy and serum were submitted to NVSL for VSV testing and the premises was placed under a verbal quarantine. NVSL reported all testing for VSV as negative and the quarantine was released.
- A Wisconsin origin horse presented to a Rosebud County veterinarian with oral lesions. One of the differentials, though less likely to be the cause, was Vesicular Stomatitis. The MDOL was notified of the case by the Montana Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory (MVDL) after receiving a request for a VSV serologic test. Following discussion with the veterinarian and evaluation of images of the lesions, DOL determined USDA animal health officials that VSV was unlikely and the veterinarian was directed to pursue the primary differential, *Streptococcus equi, subsp. equi*.

Strangles

In 2019, the DOL updated the state's reportable animal disease list. In addition to other diseases, strangles was added to the list because it is a reportable disease to the USDA, National Animal Health Reporting System (NAHRS). In FY20, 19 cases of strangles were diagnosed at the Montana Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory (MVDL). Cases by county include: Carbon, Custer (two cases), Gallatin (two cases), Garfield, Golden Valley, Hill, Madison (two cases), Park, Powder River, Silver Bow, Stillwater (four cases), Teton, and Yellowstone. Strangles is a category two reportable disease which means veterinarians are to immediately notify state officials of positive cases. While some category two diseases such as anthrax, trichomoniasis and contagious foot, result in a quarantine order from the department, strangles does not. Instead, management of strangles cases is fully directed by the submitting veterinarian. The department has been offering guidance to veterinarians, based on information from the American Association of Equine Practitioners (AAEP), American College Veterinary Internal Medicine (ACVIM), as well as the Florida and Georgia State Veterinarian's offices/Departments of Agriculture. Department recommendations focus on diagnostic options, considerations for quarantines, when to release horses from quarantine, how an animal may test out of a quarantine, and biosecurity practices to minimize spread of disease.

TRAINING / EDUCATION

National Poultry Improvement Plan

The National Poultry Improvement Plan (NPIP) program focuses on managing disease risk in live birds and hatching eggs throughout the country. The program was initially developed to combat *Salmonella pullorum*, a disease that can cause high mortality in young poultry and has expanded to include many additional diseases of concern, notably avian influenza. Montana currently has fifteen certified NPIP flocks which are either backyard poultry, game birds, or commercial operations in Flathead, Glacier, Yellowstone, Ravalli, Sweetgrass, Musselshell, Lincoln, Granite, and Pondera counties. To become enrolled in and to maintain NPIP status, flock testing is required for *Salmonella pullorum* +/- Avian Influenza. This year, 679 birds were tested for *Salmonella Pullorum* and 138 were tested for avian influenza. The department has two NPIP authorized testing agents and are looking to train more individuals in the future, due to the growing interest in NPIP participation from poultry owners.



Figure 14. Department of Livestock (DOL) staff attending NPIP testing in Great Falls
Source: DOL Staff

TRAINING / EDUCATION

Deputy State Veterinarians Joint Veterinary Training

The Animal Health Bureau (AHB) conducted three joint accreditation/deputy state veterinarian training sessions for 46 veterinarians new to practice in Montana. The sessions are in partnership with United States Department of Agriculture - Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service-Veterinary Services (USDA APHIS VS) and provide information to veterinarians on issues specific to Montana, including brucellosis, trichomoniasis, Johnes and traceability. The joint accreditation is voluntary for veterinarians to attend, but is a requirement for veterinarian to perform official disease program work in Montana per ARM 32.3.140. Due to Covid-19 restrictions, the AHB and USDA APHIS VS provided its first online accreditation session in June.

AHB continues to publish quarterly StockQuotes newsletters and as needed Department of Livestock (DOL) Update email blasts for Montana deputy state veterinarians. Past editions of the newsletter and associated One Health insert are available on the web at: <http://liv.mt.gov/Animal-Health/Newsletters>. Twenty-one DOL Updates were sent to veterinarians covering topics such as: Montana Johnes Control Program, Rabbit Hemorrhagic Disease, feral swine, emergency preparedness, import regulations, winter preparedness, RFID reader reimbursement, reportable disease updates, Veterinary Medical Loan Repayment Program, COVID-19 guidance, and brucellosis testing in elk.

Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program

The Animal Health Bureau (AHB) submitted shortage nominations to the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) for the next cycle of the Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program (VMLRP). Last fiscal year, Montana had two successful applications in our designated shortage areas. The VMLRP program provides up to \$25,000 per year for three years towards student loans. Montana's shortage nominations are as follows:

2020 Shortage Nomination Area (by county)	Priority
Custer, Prairie	High
Powder River, Carter	High
Garfield, McCone	Critical
Wheatland, Golden Valley, Musselshell	High
Daniels, Roosevelt, Sheridan, Valley	High
Gallatin (Public Practice)	Critical

Table 15. VMLRP Table
Source DOL Staff

Emergency Preparedness

The Animal Health Bureau's (AHB) emergency preparedness activities in 2020 focused on readiness for the early stages of an outbreak. Specifically, our efforts focused on the structure of the state incident management team (IMT), assisting producers with Secure Food Supply Plans which will allow for business continuity, and securing a funding opportunity for euthanasia equipment and resources to train animal health officials for mass euthanasia. The AHB held three meetings in July and August for producers, veterinarians, extension, etc. to learn about the Secure Pork Supply program. Thirty-one swine operations (29 colonies) attended the meetings.

In August, we also began holding Incident Management Team (IMT) meetings with MT Disaster Emergency Services, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), and Montana State University Extension. We identified roles and responsibilities within the Command, Operations and Planning sections and then began focusing on specific tasks within these sections. Carcass disposal options were addressed in response to the COVID-related packing plant closures and the backup that resulted in the swine industry. The AHB also spoke with the Montana Sheriff and Peace Officers Association Board about foreign animal diseases and their anticipated involvement in a response. Last, the AHB was awarded a \$25,000 grant through the National Animal Disease Preparedness and Response Program as part of the 2018 Farm Bill. The money will fund the purchase of 12 captive bolt guns and ten euthanasia training activities, offered throughout the state. The captive bolt euthanasia trainings will each be a one-day course, presented to those expected to be involved in an animal health emergency, including local veterinarians, Brands Enforcement, and Animal Health Bureau personnel.

Department of Livestock Response to COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic brought many challenges to agricultural industries. In response to the increase in coronavirus cases and the subsequent orders to minimize travel and gatherings, the Department of Homeland Security declared agriculture as critical infrastructure. This declaration allowed for business continuity in all sectors of agriculture, including the Department of Livestock (DOL). To maintain capability and access while complying with social distancing recommendations, the Animal Health Bureau moved to 100% remote work in March.

The DOL partnered with the Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS) on outreach materials targeted to farmers, ranchers, livestock market owners, horse owners and veterinarians. Both departments recognized that these individuals would still be conducting essential business, requiring face-to-face interaction, and wanted to address some of their activities with specific recommendations. The Animal Health Bureau (AHB) reached out to producers who were branding, shearing or pregnancy checking livestock in the early stages of the outbreak, for equestrian facilities who work with multiple horse owners, and market owners working with buyers and sellers trading livestock. DOL also provided guidance to veterinarians which included considerations about risk mitigation, including recommendations from their colleagues in the field.

In addition to the above outreach activities, the AHB addressed the impacts associated with the wide-scale packing plant shut-downs. The AHB worked with the Montana Pork Producers Council (MPPC) to identify opportunities to help producers if market access is lost or decreased. The DOL, MPPC, and DPHHS also spoke about resources available to producers to address the mental health impact they may be facing. In response to mass euthanasia events happening in other states due to lost market access, DOL held a conference call with a DEQ, USDA and (a Subject Matter Expert from) Montana State University (MSU) extension on carcass disposal needs in response to COVID-19. The packing plant closures also caused many farmers, especially in Midwest states, to seek new outlets for their animals. These closures resulted in an influx of pigs coming to Montana for harvest and for sale to individual buyers for feeding. The AHB wrote a press release asking Montanans to be aware of the requirements to move swine into the state and to sell pork products.

TRAINING / EDUCATION

PUBLIC HEALTH

The Department of Livestock and the Department of Public Health and Human Services hosted the first annual “One Health in the 406” conference in November. The conference was held at Montana State University in Bozeman. This year’s conference focused on occupational hazards to female veterinarians of reproductive age. In a report by the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA), approximately 62% of veterinarians are female. Based on current veterinary school enrollment statistics, this percentage is expected to continue to rise. Additionally, the National Association of Veterinary Technicians in America (NAVTA) reports that more than 90% of veterinary technicians are female. This conference served as an educational opportunity for the veterinary, public health and human healthcare communities to join and learn about these hazards and discuss mitigation strategies. Conference presenters represented state public health, local/county public health, the Montana Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory and the State Public Health Laboratory, South Dakota State Public Health, as well as a livestock industry representative (National Pork Board) with extensive public health education and research experience.

Presentation highlights included a Q-fever case study and prevalence data on zoonotic diseases diagnosed in people in Montana. The Animal Health Bureau (AHB) plans to continue collaborating with Department of Public Health in the future on an annual One Health event.

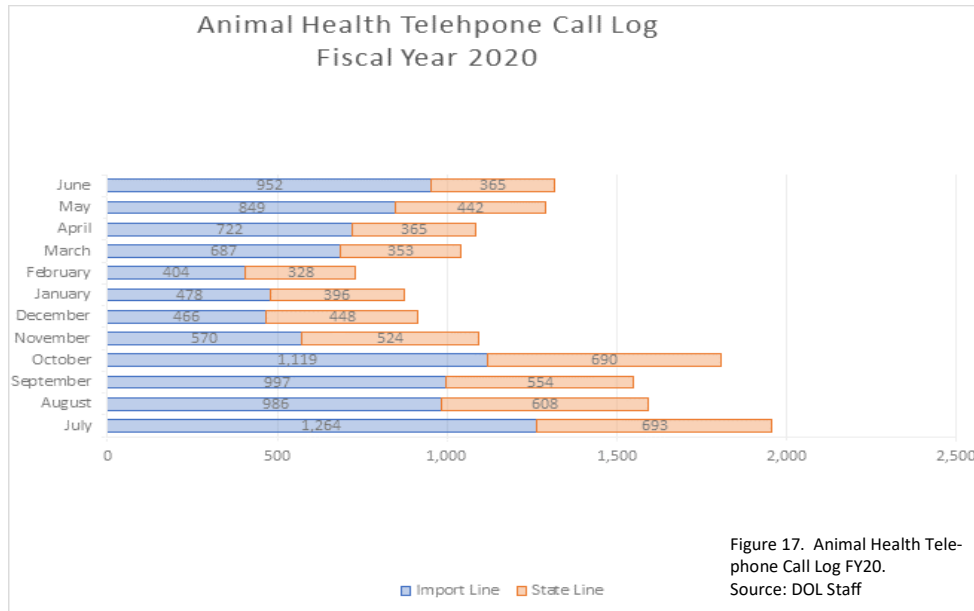


Figure 16. Presentation at “One Health in the 406” conference. Source: DOL Staff.

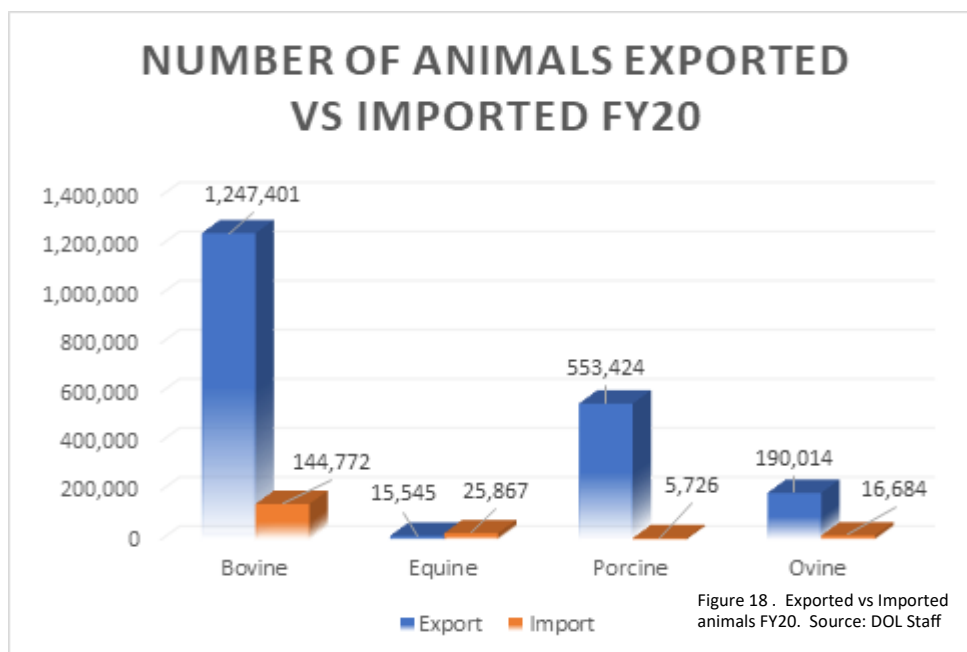
PROGRAM PERFORMANCE

Import/Export

The Import/Export section of the Animal Health Bureau strives to provide excellent customer service through a busy call center, an after-hours answering service, and several online systems. The call center processed 15,260 calls between the state vet line and the import line. Both lines receive permit requests, general questions, and transfers within the department. See Figure 17 below.



The online permit system provides an additional permitting option for out-of-state veterinarians with horses traveling into the state. The application and payment system for specialized permits provide an alternate means for customers to submit and pay for applications for annual equine permits, equine and bovine semen permits, poultry shipping permits, biologic shipping permits and a few additional annual permits. During FY20 the import/export office processed a total of 38,830 import and export health certificates.



PROGRAM PERFORMANCE

Import/Export, continued

Import Permits and Program Modifications

In March, 2020, the import/export office implemented changes to import requirements to enhance traceability. To address efficiencies gained associated with the transition to electronic documentation and compliance issues, several import permits and programs were modified. These include:

Annual Equine Permits: Because of lack of compliance with health certificate regulations, the annual equine permit was eliminated. Equine owners that travel out of state regularly have the option to utilize the Global Vet Link Equine Extended Certificate of Veterinary Inspection (EECVI) if they would like a horse health certificate that does not require a permit number. This certificate is available for horses traveling with their owners for riding, for movement between certain states, and through Global Vet Link only.

Electronic Import Health Certificates: Electronic health certificates including Global Vet Link, AgView, and VetSentry upload automatically into USAHERDS. This functionality enables the department to eliminate the need for permit numbers for these forms of health certificates. Because traceability information is being received in real time, the need to verify movement requirements through a permit number from our office is no longer necessary.

Reptile Import Requirements: Import requirements for reptile imports were eliminated.

Beef Cattle Identification Memo: To increase traceability the department updated the *Cattle Identification Memo*; the brand exemption for beef cattle was discontinued. All animals over the age of 18 months must have official identification and that identification must be listed on the health certificate. The only exemption to this rule is for herds with seasonal grazer/commuter herd permits from the department.

Biologics: Permit requirements for most permanent biologics were eliminated. Permits are still required for anthrax, brucellosis, rabies, and modified live poultry vaccines.

PROGRAM PERFORMANCE

Montana Exotic Imports FY19

Animal Health Bureau staff verifies that requested imports of exotic species are in compliance with Fish, Wildlife and Park's prohibited species list, as reviewed by the Classification Review Committee.



Figure 19. River Otter. Source: DOL Staff

ANIMALS	QUANTITY IMPORTED
River Otter	2
European Pin Marten	1
Eurasian Lynx	1
Blue Fox	1
Love Bird	1
Opossum	1
Fisher	2
Arctic-Fox	3
Cerval	1
Bobcat	2
Reindeer	2

Figure 20. Exotics statistics. Source: DOL Staff

The Montana Department of Livestock allows various species of exotic animals to be imported into Montana. To protect Montana's native wildlife and livestock, importation of exotic animals are categorized into three groups:

- controlled species,
- noncontrolled species, or
- prohibited.

Prohibited species such as monkeys are only allowed to be imported to approved research facilities.

REPTILES	QUANTITY IMPORTED
Alligators/ Crocodiles	3
Turtle	11
Snakes	47
Lizards	79
Tree Frogs	6

Figure 21. Exotics statistics. Source: DOL Staff

EXOTICS IMPORTED FOR SCIENTIFIC PURPOSES	QUANTITY IMPORTED
Trumpeter Swan	5
Rhesus Monkey	40
Cynomolgus Monkey	24

Figure 22. Exotics statistics. Source: DOL Staff

F E R A L S W I N E

Animal Health Bureau (AHB) staff spent a considerable amount of time on feral swine during FY20. This effort included work with the Montana Invasive Species Council (MISC) on the development of a statewide outreach program, extensive contact with industry and the general public to provide education about feral swine and Montana's regulations, and response to reports of potential feral swine.

The increased focus was largely due to reports of feral swine to the north of Montana in Alberta and Saskatchewan, and concerns of these populations expanding south into Montana. Collaboration with MISC allowed for the development of the Squeal on Pigs MT campaign and a state-specific outreach plan.

MISC and Montana Department of Livestock (DOL) hosted a Feral Swine Summit in Billings in November 2019. The summit was attended by policy makers from both the United States and Canada, industry, wildlife groups, and state and federal livestock and wildlife representatives. Following the summit, AHB staff attended and spoke at over a dozen different industry meetings, including regional stockgrower groups, the Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge Community Working Group (CMR CWG), the Ft. Belknap Tribal council, the Private Land Public Wildlife Council, weed control groups, and conservation districts.

An additional outcome of the Feral Swine Summit was the development of a state response plan based on concerns expressed about the ability of DOL to effectively deal with an incursion of feral swine into Montana. The response ensures that all partners are aware of reports of feral swine and provides a consistent template that clearly delineates who is able to remove feral swine from the landscape. A key element of Montana's regulations is the ban on hunting of feral swine and DOL is committed to ensuring that a hunting constituency does not become established within Montana.

The increase in public awareness about feral swine resulted in a sharp increase in the number of reports the department received. During FY20, reports included:

- A loose pig on the south side of Billings. The pig was reported to Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP) who then notified DOL. Shawn Hando, District Investigator, followed up. The pig was a pot-bellied pig. Animal Control in Billings had been working on a second reported loose pig in the same area. Both pigs were related to a recent Craigslist posting pertaining to rehoming two pot-bellied pigs.
- A feral swine sighting in northeastern Montana. Through the regional FWP game warden, it was determined the sighting was falsely reported to see how far the rumor would spread. The false sighting was reported to DOL by a member of the Legislative Environmental Quality Council (EQC).
- A Craigslist posting selling Russian boar piglets. The seller was located in NV and was trying to expand their sales range. The seller was informed that Russian boars are prohibited species in Montana.
- A report of feral swine outside of Belgrade determined to be a privately owned animal and not a prohibited breed of swine.
- A potential feral swine sighting off of Hwy 287, south of Three Forks. The report turned out to be 3D archery targets.
- A pig carcass resembling feral swine disposed of on the edge of property south of Ryegate. Enforcement staff responded and were able to determine the pig was an owned animal of an adjacent landowner.
- A sighting south of Emigrant. Animal health field personnel followed up and determined the sighting was of a pet pot-bellied pig that had temporarily escaped its pen.
- A loose pig in Flathead County. The pig was an owned pot-bellied pig that had gotten out of the fence.

P R O G R A M P E R F O R M A N C E

Special Licenses and Permits FY20

Permits/Licenses/ Certifications Program	Permits/Licenses/ Certifications Applications	Permits/Licenses/ Certifications Fees Collected
Annual Equine Import	126	\$670.00
Annual Equine Semen Import	44	\$408.00
Annual Poultry Import	66	\$264.00
<i>Brucella Ovis</i>	45	\$94.00
Biologics	32	\$720.00
Bovine Semen Domestic	2	\$8.00
Bovine Semen International	2	\$84.00
Equine Feedlot	1	\$1,450.00
Montana Bull Stud	3	\$1,050.00
NPIP Test Agent	0	\$0
Seasonal Grazer	62	\$1,210
Six-Month Horse passport	31	\$290.00
Trichomoniasis Quarantine Feedlot	6	\$160.00
TOTAL	420	\$6,808.00

Figure 23. FY20 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

ALTERNATIVE LIVESTOCK

During fiscal year 2020, Montana imported two reindeer from Washington for exhibition. Eighty-two elk, white tail deer, mule deer, and big horn sheep were exported to Texas, Oklahoma, Wisconsin, Utah, and Idaho.

There are 18 alternative livestock herds in the state, with two of these herds being mixed species herds. Herd sizes range from 2 to 280 animals. The majority of the alternative livestock animals are elk. During fiscal year 2020, there were 832 animals in alternative livestock herds. There were 253 births and 149 deaths, of these deaths 143 animals were age eligible and tested for chronic wasting disease (CWD).

Animal Health Bureau (AHB) staff completed review of multiple alternative livestock annual inventories and assigned herd status in the Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) Herd Certification Program accordingly. The CWD Herd Certification Program is a cooperative effort between the department and United States Department of Agriculture - Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (USDA APHIS) to monitor, control, and contain the spread of CWD in farmed cervids.

This certification program contains levels of herd monitored statuses. With each successful year of surveillance, participating herds advance in status (levels I-IV) until reaching five years with no evidence of CWD, at which time herds are certified as being low risk for CWD. Certification status is required to import or export to other states. Requirements for enrolled herds include fencing, individual official identification, regular annual inventories, and testing of all cervids that die over the age of 12 months. AHB completed annual herd inventories/reviews of 17 alternative livestock premises. (refer to Figure 24 below)

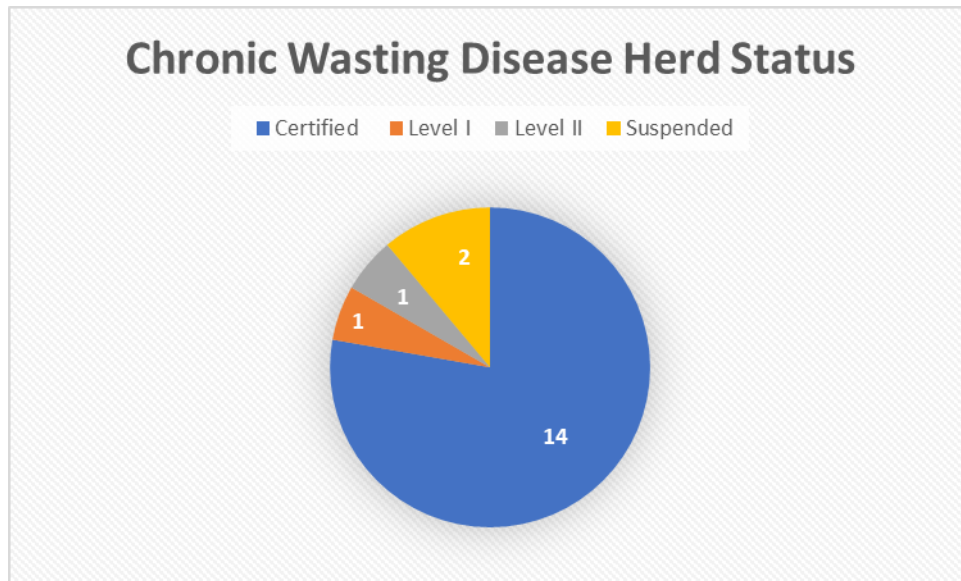


Figure 24. The pie chart above illustrates the Chronic Wasting Disease Monitored Herd Status of the 18 alternative livestock ranches for FY20. Compliance with regulations must be met every year after certification status. If compliance with regulations is not achieved herds are put into suspended status until requirements are met.

Source: DOL staff

B I S O N M A N A G E M E N T

Throughout the winter months of 2019/2020 the Bison Program assisted Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks with bison hunts and monitored bison using the tolerance zones both north and west of Yellowstone Park.

Tribal members from various native tribes were able to harvest bison throughout the winter. When the hunts were nearly over in the spring two bull bison went beyond the tolerance

zone on the northern side of Yellowstone Park Near Gardiner, Montana. Despite hazing attempts to turn the bison back to the tolerance zones, the Bison continued north towards cattle grounds in Paradise Valley. Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks was contacted but was unable to secure a hunter for the bison. The two bison were lethally removed by field staff, and then transferred to tribal members for salvage of the meat.

There are two separate management areas on the west (West Yellowstone) and north (Gardiner) boundaries of the park.

- Zone 1 is the area inside the park, near the park boundary.
- Zone 2 is the tolerance zone outside of the park boundary.
- Zone 3 is the outside of the park where there is no tolerance; animals in Zone 3 are hazed back into Zone 2 (tolerance zone).

In the spring months, more bison moved out of the tolerance areas mostly on the West side of Yellowstone Park near West Yellowstone, Montana. The bison that did leave the tolerance area on the west side were mostly small groups of mature bulls. All the groups were successfully moved back to the year-round tolerance zone of Horse Butte.

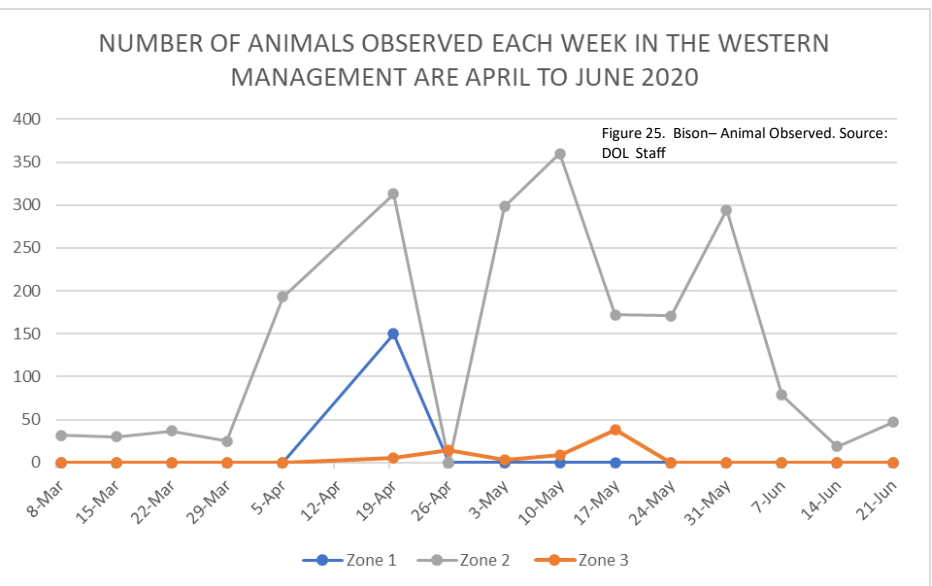


Figure 25. Bison- Animal Observed. Source: DOL Staff

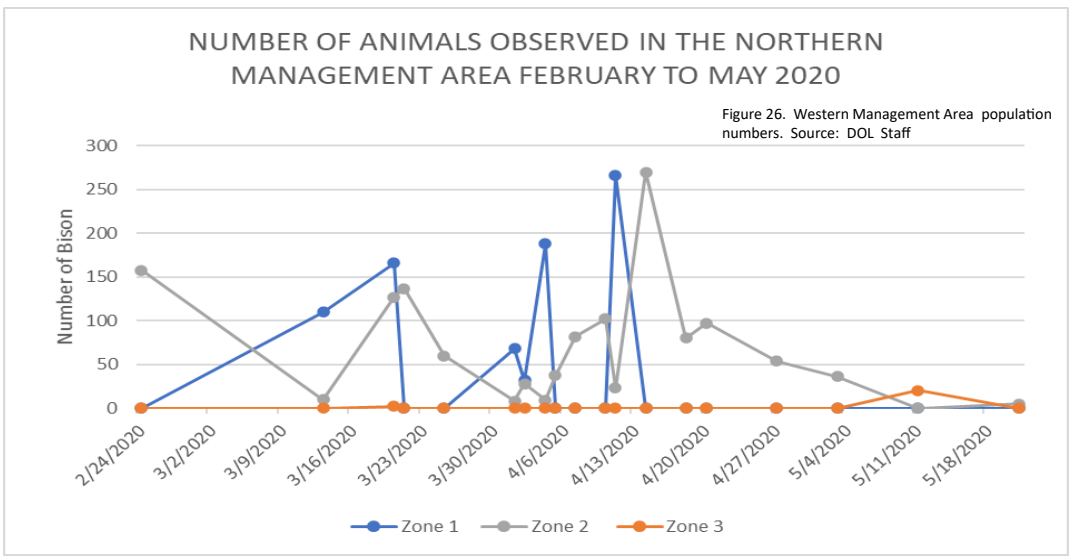


Figure 26. Western Management Area population numbers. Source: DOL Staff

PROGRAM PERFORMANCE

Administrative Rules of Montana (ARM) Rulemaking



Figure 27. Administrative Rules Books
Source: <http://goo.gl/cPAv1J>

Reportable Diseases: Necessary changes to ARM 32.3.104 were adopted that will allow the department to track and manage diseases of special interest to Montana's livestock industries. The changes will also assist the department with reporting responsibilities to national and international animal health officials.

Compatibility with Federal Rules: The department updated ARM 32.3.1303 (Identification) to reflect recent changes to United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) scrapie program standards. These recent changes increase the requirements for official identification of goats.

Animal Health Amendments:

- **Requirements for Importations, Importation of Diseased Animals and Documents for Importation:** Historically, the Department of Livestock has required that animals, animal semen, and animal biologics have both a health certificate and an import permit for entry into Montana. Import permits allowed the department to obtain real time movement data ahead of the receipt of paper health certificates in the Helena office, a process that can take several weeks. Electronic health certificates allow for the rapid transmittal of movement data making the permit an unnecessary step. For biologics, a health certificate is not the most appropriate documentation of importation, and for many biologics, there is no clear benefit of regulating importation. The screening and qualification process that these products undergo to be licensed by the USDA Center for Veterinary Biologics far exceeds the level of expertise within the Department of Livestock. Therefore, the department amended ARM 32.3.202 requirements for importation, 32.3.203 importation of diseased animals, 32.3.206, official health certificate documents for importation, and 32.3.207 permits in response to HB112.
- HB112 was a department-requested piece of legislation that revised the requirements for importation of animals, animal semen, and animal biologics into Montana, clarifying documentation and permit requirements for animal movements, and repealed regulations for semen used in artificial insemination.
- The changes to the MCA associated with HB112 are set to take effect October 1, 2019, and amendments to the above administrative rules reflect that house bill.
- **Requirements for Goats:** In FY19, Montana imported 737 goats; 264 of those goats were dairy breeds and 473 were meat breeds. The department added clarifying language specifying that only dairy breeds of goats are required to have a negative brucellosis test prior to importation. Testing of goats for brucellosis is primarily focused on *Brucella melintensis*. This disease is considered a foreign animal disease and is not known to be present in the United States. The primary concern of the disease is spread to humans through the consumption of dairy products thus the focus on dairy breeds of goats. *Brucella abortus* rarely affects small ruminant species.
- **MCA Updates:** The department updated the authorizing an implementing statutory citations on a variety of rules to reflect changes made by the 2019 Legislature.

Alternative Livestock Amendments:

- **Waivers to Identification:** The department amended ARM 32.4.201 and 32.4.203 to clarify language regarding the tattoo of alternative livestock born on a Montana alternative livestock premises and transferred to a second Montana alternative livestock premises. The department also changed the process by which an animal is eligible for a waiver to identification to provide a more realistic waiver option without increasing the risk associated with issuing such a waiver.

PROGRAM PERFORMANCE

Administrative Rules of Montana (ARM) Rulemaking, continued



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

Alternative Livestock Amendments, continued:

- **Definitions:** The department adopted changes to the definition of bill of sale and certificate of veterinary inspection.
- The department also updated definitions for exposed and trace herds/animals.
- **Inspection of alternative livestock:** The department removed the requirement to have animals inspected by a veterinarian prior to transport to a veterinary hospital for emergency treatment.
- To be consistent with United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) chronic wasting disease program standards, the department proposed and adopted to increase the number of days an alternative livestock licensee has to report on-farm mortalities.
- Amendments were made striking existing language in ARM 32.4.401 (change of ownership testing requirements for alternative livestock), and 32.4.403 (requirements for alternative livestock gametes [ova and semen] and embryos) referencing alternative livestock as shooters as this is a prohibited activity according to Fish, Wildlife and Parks statute.
- **Importation of Alternative Livestock:** The department clarified language in ARM 32.4.601 with no change to the intent or meaning of existing language.
- **Quarantine facility:** The Department of Livestock removed references to new applications for alternative livestock licenses because the issuance of new licenses under 87-4-407, MCA, has been prohibited since November 7, 2000.
- **Requirements for mandatory surveillance of Montana alternative livestock farm cervidae for chronic wasting disease:** Requirements were clarified for annual herd inventories and inspections to be consistent with proposed USDA program standards. These changes included an annual visual inspection of all animals, a three-year requirement for physical inspection, and record keeping requirements for alternative livestock licensees.
- Language was also amended to increase the amount of time an alternative livestock licensee has to report deceased cervids.
- **Alternative livestock monitored herd status for chronic wasting disease:** The department created a provision allowing the reduction of Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) status of producers who fail to comply with CWD testing requirements.
- **Import requirements for cervids:** A condition was added to rule by which the state veterinarian can deny the importation to include presence of CWD or lack of an established surveillance program for wildlife.
- **Management of alternative livestock cervid herds identified as CWD trace herds:** The department updated the duration of a quarantine for CWD trace herds to be consistent with newly published USDA program standards.
- **Management of CWD positive alternative livestock cervid herds:** Changes were adopted to ARM 32.4.1313 to reflect changes and updates to USDA CWD program standards. The changes are in line with existing language and current management of CWD infected and exposed premises. Additionally, the department added a stipulation to importation of cervids to establish that an area may not be designated as free of CWD if no wildlife surveillance has been conducted.

LOOKING FORWARD



Figure 28. Montana landscape
Source: DOL Staff

We enter the new state fiscal year still in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic with disruptions impacting our industry and grappling with the new primary screening test for brucellosis. I cannot forecast what lies ahead, but I am confident in the ability of our staff and their commitment to ‘protect, promote, and foster’ livestock health in Montana. The accomplishments and successes of our strong team give me confidence that we are able to meet any challenge.

The efficiencies that our import office have accomplished, continued strengthening of our state’s traceability system, and the gains made in emergency preparedness are just a few of the past successes that leave me excited for the coming year and assured that we are able to meet any challenge ahead to better serve Montana’s livestock industry.

Thank you for letting us serve you!

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