

Project Summary

Rocky Mountains Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit

Project Title: Yellowstone Wildlife Health Program - Brucellosis Meetings 2008

Discipline: Natural Resources
Type of Project: Technical Assistance
Funding Agency: National Park Service
Other Partners/Cooperators: Montana State University
Effective Dates: 9/1/2008 - 12/1/2008
Funding Amount: \$9,000

Investigators and Agency Representative:

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Project Abstract:

Background:

In 2007, Yellowstone National Park (YNP) recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Montana State University and the University of California, Davis, School of Veterinary Medicine Wildlife Health Center to establish the Yellowstone Wildlife Health Program, focused on understanding and addressing priority wildlife disease and ecosystem health problems at Yellowstone National Park. The Yellowstone Wildlife Health Program goal is to design and implement a long-term wildlife health assessment program to monitor and evaluate wildlife diseases and health indicators as a subcomponent of the Greater Yellowstone Network Vital Signs Monitoring Program. Specific objectives of the program include: Facilitation of cooperation among scientists seeking competitive grant funds to investigate wildlife health issues; Development of an outreach program, including educational materials for field courses on wildlife health, that provides information for the public, faculty, and federal and private funding agencies; Development of on-site wildlife veterinary services, including veterinary support for animal handling activities, disease surveillance, and disease outbreak investigation, including field evaluation, necropsy and specimen sampling; Establishment and coordination of on-site or cooperative wildlife disease diagnostics and field and laboratory research capacity; Facilitation of wildlife health professional capacity development, as well as research by veterinary students, graduate students, postdoctoral fellows, and post-graduate researchers. The cooperative project description below is within the scope of work of the Yellowstone Wildlife Health Program.

Purpose/Need:

The Federal and State Records of Decision in December 2000 for the Long-Term Interagency Bison Management Plan for Montana and Yellowstone National Park (IBMP) were the result of extensive deliberation and legal proceedings that yielded an unprecedented agreement amongst federal-state agencies (National Park Service, USDA Forest Service, USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, and Montana Department of Livestock and Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks). Under the IBMP, these agencies harness their respective skills and operational resources to work cooperatively within an adaptive management framework to conserve a wild, free-ranging, bison population while concurrently protecting against transmission of brucellosis from bison to cattle. Partner agencies are committed to the adaptive management framework of the IBMP. In keeping with this commitment, the partners have scheduled multiple working meetings between August and December 2008. These meetings will be open to the public with agendas designed so that partner agencies can effectively deliberate on recent recommendations by the US Government Accountability Office: assess the effectiveness and outcomes of IBMP management activities (highlighting winter 2007-2008); and considering prevailing conditions, develop and

incorporate short- and long-term adaptive management adjustments to the IBMP for winter 2008-2009 and beyond.

Outcomes with Completion Dates:

- 1) 1st Meeting Facilitation - September 8-9, 2008
- 2) 1st Meeting Report - September 12, 2008
- 3) 2nd Meeting Facilitation - October 2-3, 2008
- 4) 2nd Meeting Report - October 6, 2008

Keywords: Meeting facilitation, Yellowstone Wildlife Health Program, University of California, Davis, School of Veterinary Medicine Wildlife Health Center Yellowstone National Park, Montana State University