



Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

Targeted Elk Brucellosis Surveillance Project January 2017 Update

In December 2016 and early January 2017, we used ground and aerial telemetry to locate 49 out of 51 collared elk in the targeted elk brucellosis surveillance project (Figure 1). We located the 1 collared, seropositive elk in the Sage Creek population on winter range adjacent to the Blacktail WMA (Figure 2). We located all 5 collared, seropositive elk in the Black's Ford population on winter range north of Hwy 84 and east of the Madison River (Figure 3). We located all 10 seropositive and 3 seronegative collared elk in the Mill Creek population on winter range in the foothills northeast of Mill Creek (Figure 4). We located 11 of 12 elk from the Greeley, Deer Creeks, Greycliff Creek and Work Creek populations south of Big Timber (Figure 5). All elk are on winter range. We were unable to locate 1 seronegative collar from the Deer Creeks population. We located 19 of 20 collared elk from the Silver Run and Border populations (Figure 6). We found 7 of 8 collars from the Silver Run population and 1 collar from the Border population southeast of Red Lodge and just north of Wolf Creek. The remaining collar from the Silver Run population is still northeast of Red Lodge near the North Fork of Sand Creek close to her location from the previous flight on 7 November. The Border elk that was with a group of Silver Run elk in early November moved farther northeast and is now near Bridger, Montana. The remaining collars from the Border population are spread out from Littlerock Creek west of Clark, Wyoming, to the MT-WY border, and just south of Belfry, Montana (Figure 6). Six out of 10 collars from the Border population were located in Montana. We have been unable to locate 1 collar from the Border herd since August.

Mortalities

One seronegative elk from the Silver Run population was harvested in November during the rifle hunting season. Another seronegative elk from the Greeley population was harvested in December during the shoulder season. In Mill Creek, 1 seropositive elk (MC02; Figure 4) died from lion predation in late December. The GPS and VHF components of satellite collars on 4 seronegative elk in various herds have ceased functioning and these elk will no longer be located.

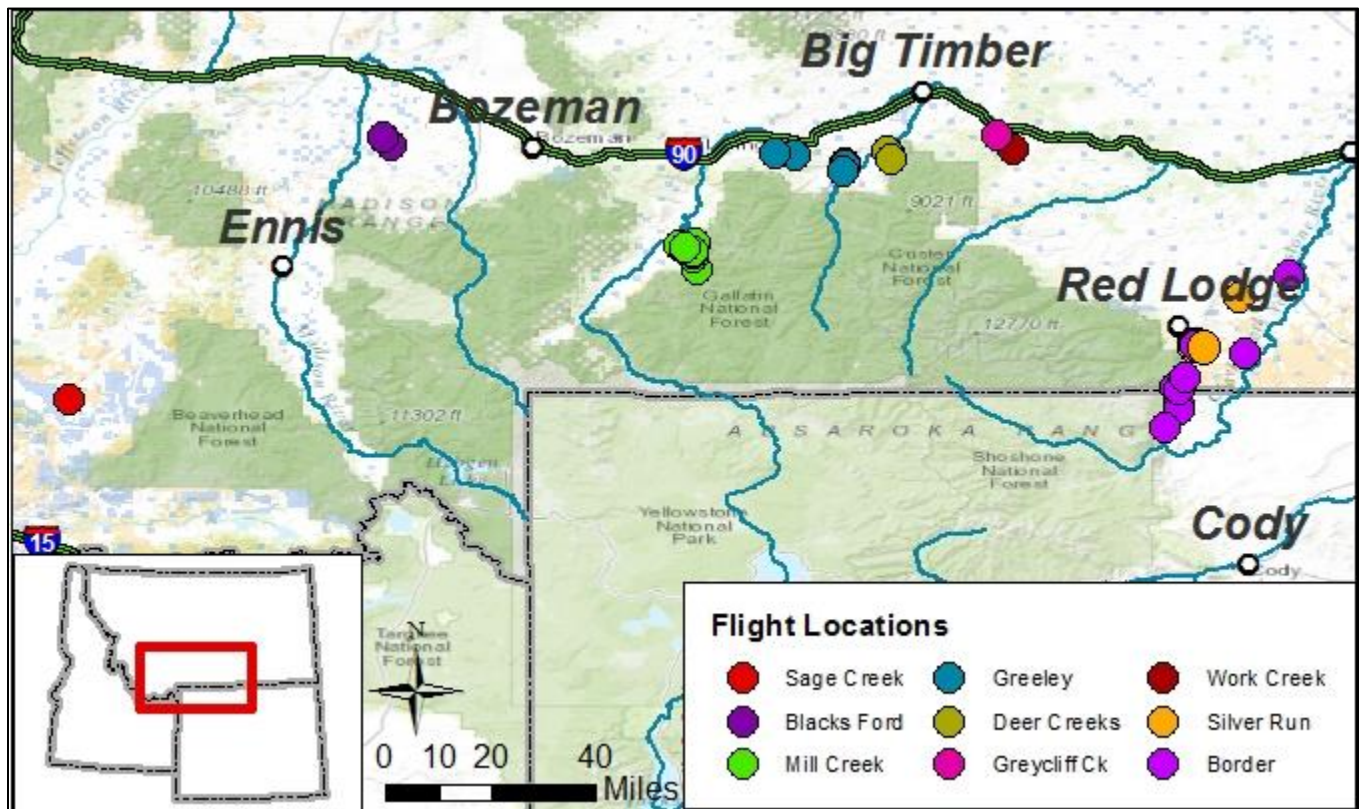


Figure 1. Location of collared elk in the Targeted Elk Brucellosis Surveillance Project during December 2016 and January 2017.

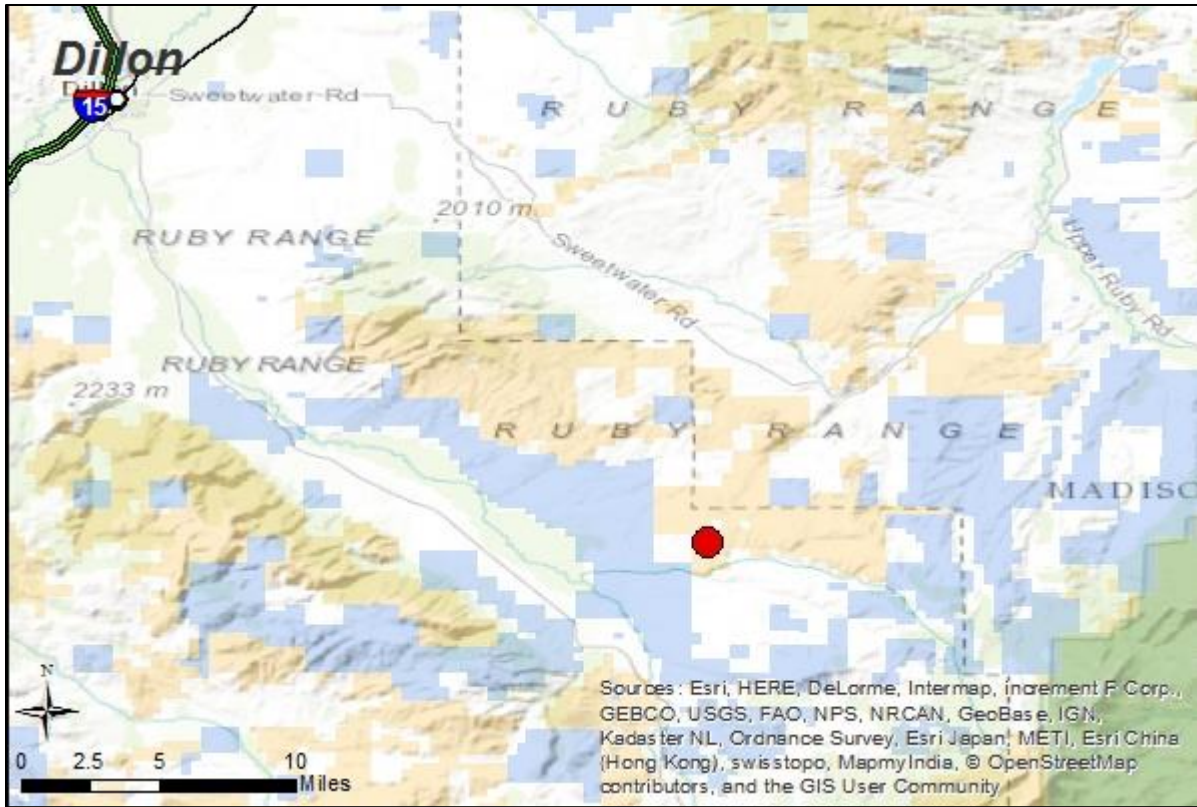


Figure 2. Location of last collared elk in the Sage Creek population on 5 January 2017.

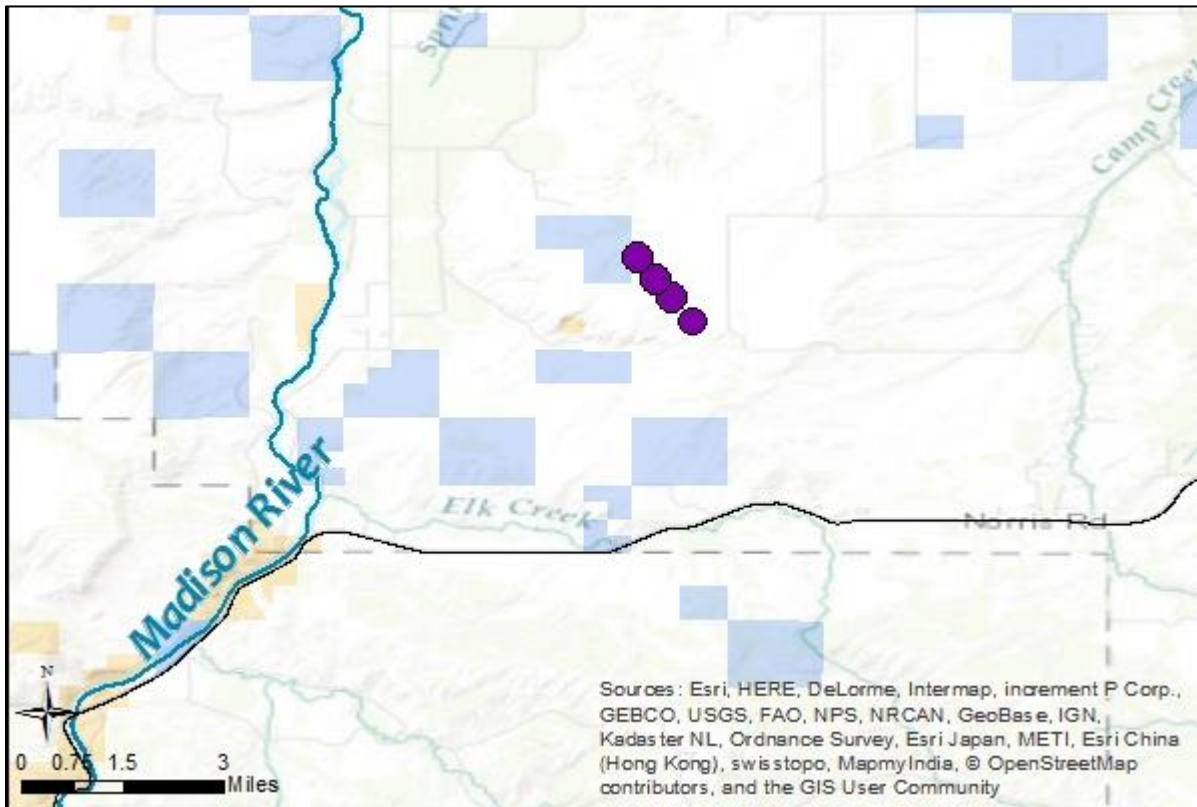


Figure 3. Location of 5 collared elk in the Black's Ford population on 4 January 2017.

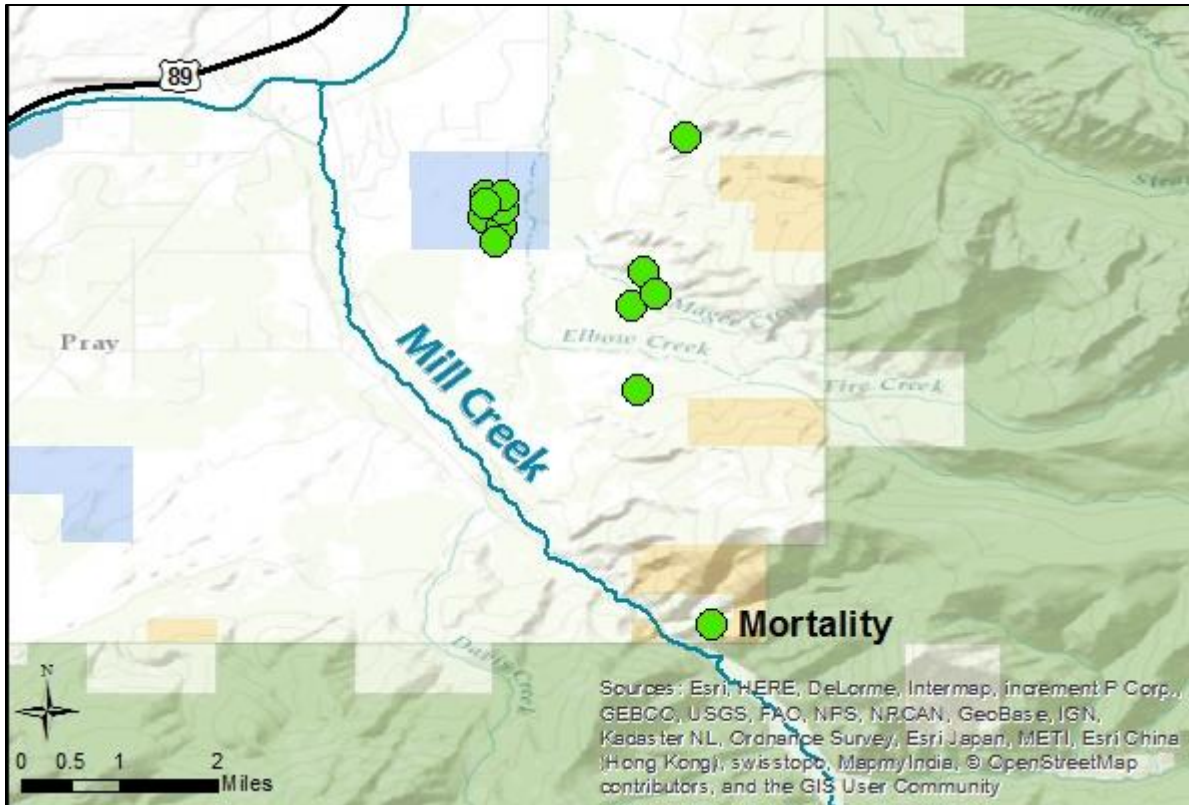


Figure 4. Location of 13 collared elk in the Mill Creek population on 20 December 2016.

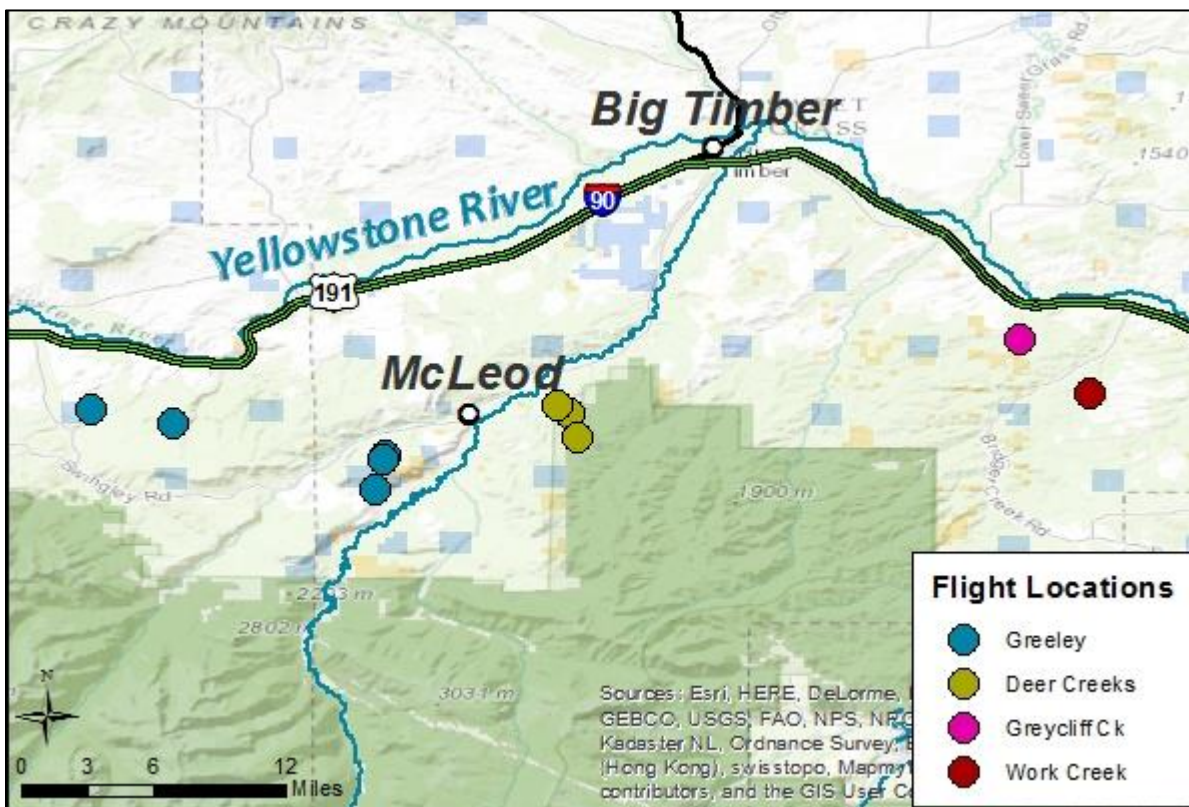


Figure 5. Location of collared elk in the populations south of Big Timber in December and January.

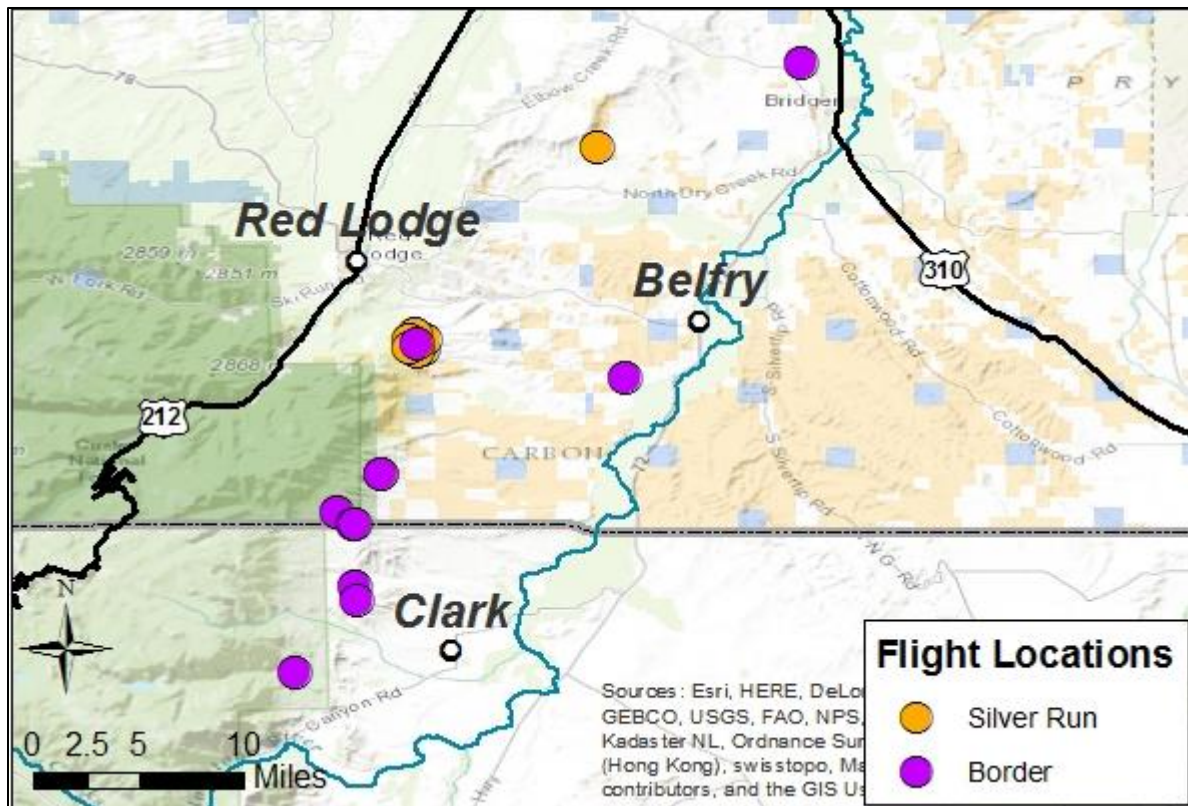


Figure 6. Location of collared elk in the Silver Run and Border populations on 21 December 2016.