Veterinary Services

Game and Fish Wildlife Disease Laboratory

Bighorn Sheep Herd Health Assessment

The Wildlife Disease Laboratory staff continued working on both cultures and PCRs from samples collected during last month’s herd health assessment of the state’s bighorn sheep herds. This is a three year project to document the presence of bacterial pathogens circulating in these herds, and to evaluate how they are affecting overall health (e.g. pregnancy, adult and lamb survival).

Mountain Goat Surveillance

Our field surveillance efforts in March were centered on mountain goats rather than bighorn sheep. Mary, Hank and Jessica spent four days in the Snake River Canyon between the Town of Alpine and Hoback Junction, darting mountain goats from the side of the road. The entire operation was orchestrated by South Jackson wildlife biologist Gary Fralick, with additional help from Kyle Lash and Rob Hipp. Because this is a collaborative study with Montana State University, we were also joined by Dr. Robert Garrett and Carson Butler who provided help chasing goats and taking samples. Mary collected additional data on physiological response to anesthesia to help evaluate a new drug protocol for mountain goat immobilization.