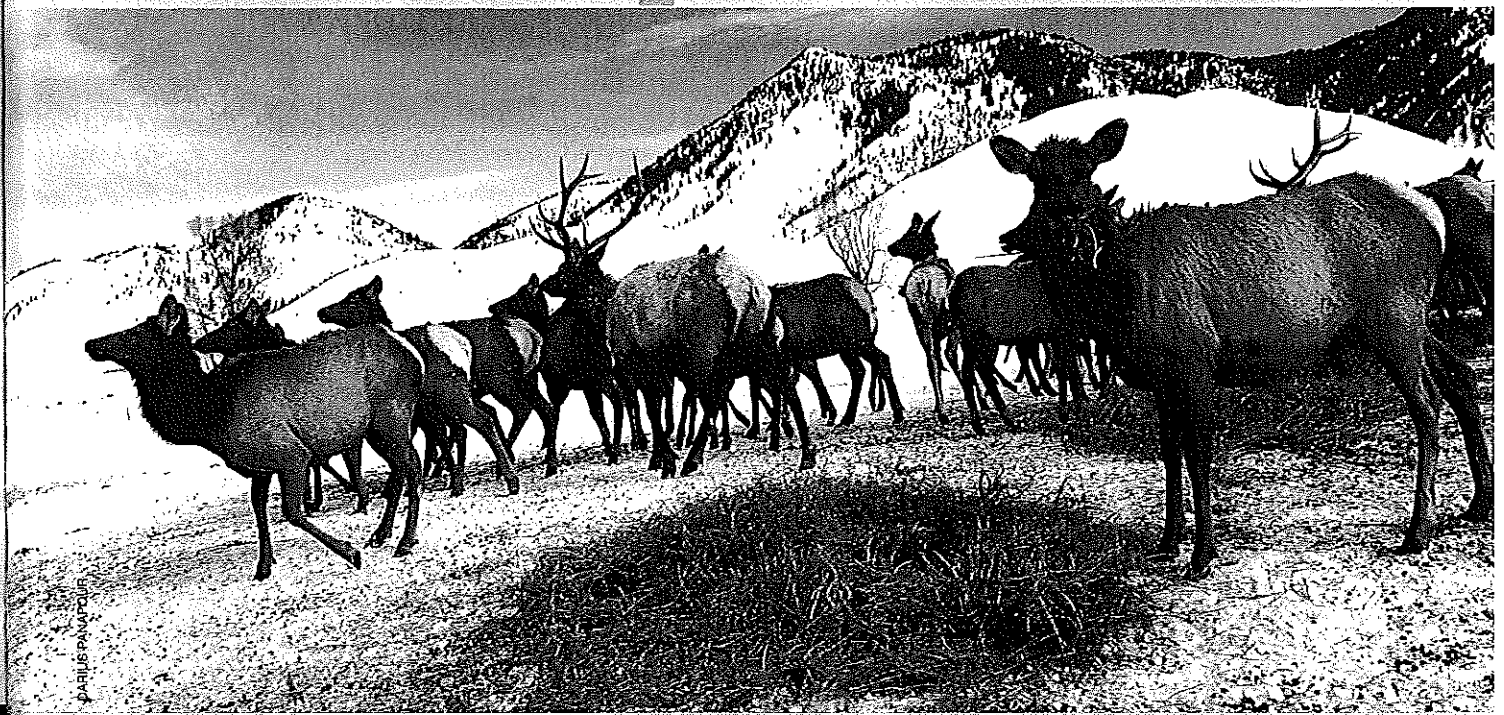


A Road Map | To Solutions



Here is a summary of the main ideas that were generally agreed upon at the RMEF's Greater Yellowstone Area Brucellosis Workshop:

- **Create a brucellosis "bulldogger":** perhaps an elder statesman, retired politician, public land manager or judge who appreciates both conservation and livestock interests and can ride herd over the process, compelling all groups to accept compromise and move toward a solution. That individual would be more effective than a committee and would need to have the authority to expedite decisions on a given timeline. Jack Ward Thomas' name was suggested as a possibility.

- **APHIS should embrace a split-state approach to managing brucellosis:** This would create a special "disease elimination zone" in the 20 counties that make up the Greater Yellowstone area, so cattle that test positive for brucellosis would not affect the status of herds elsewhere in the three states.

- **Vaccinate, separate and mitigate:** Ranchers with cattle inside Greater Yellowstone should be required to vaccinate their cattle and be subject to rigorous testing before animals are shipped to market. The federal government could provide incentives to build goodwill by reimbursing ranchers for the cost of vaccination and testing. The federal government in

concert with Congress and the states must make funding for development of an oral brucellosis vaccine for cattle a top priority. As much as possible, cattle should be kept separate from wildlife during periods of the year when the risk of brucellosis transmission is highest.

- **Separate politics from science:** research is essential to good decision-making, but it must be impartial. University cooperative units should take the lead on research and assure it meets the highest standards of science.

- **Phase out Wyoming's feedgrounds:** coordinate with the state of Wyoming and the National Elk Refuge to instate a 10-year deadline to close all feedgrounds and end the century-old practice of supplemental feeding. This could begin with a pilot program to shut one down in the first year to study the effect and lay plans for future closings. A gradual withdrawal will help assure wild elk numbers settle into population equilibrium. Until feeding stops, Wyoming will continue to serve as a reservoir for brucellosis and could become a dangerous staging area for chronic wasting disease.

- **The governors of Idaho, Montana and Wyoming should develop a unified position:** They could then carry this position together to the secretaries of Agriculture and the Interior to advocate for backing.