



Committee for Cooperative Moose Management
Meeting Minutes (Final Version)
April 23, 2015
Manitoba Conservation and Water Stewardship
Lac du Bonnet, MB

Present:

Stu Jansson (MB Trappers Assoc.)	Trevor Barker (MB Hydro)
Brian Kotak (MBMF)	Gerry Arbez (MB Wildlife Federation)
Cam Neurenburg (LdB Wildlife Assoc.)	Bob Austman (MBMF)
Orton Ramsay (Black River FN)	Jim Hoard (Pinawa Game & Fish)
Ernest McPherson (Black River FN)	Vince Keenan (MBMF)
Daniel Dupont (MCWS)	Paul Millan (Brokenhead River G&F Assoc)
David Heinrichs (MB Metis Fed)	Mike Adey (MLOA)
Earl Simmons (MCWS)	Mitch Walker (MCWS)
Ron Missyabit (MCWS)	

Introductions – everyone introduced themselves at the beginning of the meeting. David Heinrichs introduced himself to the committee. He is the new Natural Resources Coordinator for MB Metis Federation.

Additions to the Agenda – None

Minutes from the October 9, 2014 Meeting – It should be noted that Earl Simmons was at the meeting. Page 3 - Moose modeling. Vince Keenan indicated that the no forest harvest scenario was run in the model but was not documented. The forest harvest model was constrained to maintaining moose habitat to +/- 10% of current.

Winter Updates

a) 2014/15 Surveys

Poor snow conditions prevented aerial surveys from being conducted for moose and wolves. Moose surveys are usually done by mid Jan but there was not enough snow. This was the case throughout the province (Porcupine Mountain and Duck Mountain were not flown either). Decided to fly deer surveys if weather permitted. A deer survey of GHA35 (Southeast MB) was contemplated, but was cancelled. Deer surveys were flown GHA25A and GHA22 (western region). MCWS is not aware of the results yet. Turtle Mountain moose survey was flown this winter. Plan to fly moose and wolf survey in winter 2015-16 in GHA26. There was a question whether funds will be available for GHA26? Yes, this GHA is at the top of the priority list. Annual wildlife branch meeting is in May. GHA26, Duck and Porcupine Mountains are priorities. 20 wolf collars were purchased for GHA26 with some of the unused money from the cancelled surveys.

Can we use trail cameras as a tool for monitoring? Are useful for some studies, but not for population monitoring. Wildlife branch is looking for alternatives to aerial surveys, in case winter weather patterns continue to prevent aerial surveys.

Cam indicated that it is important for people to have detailed information about what took place, and the results.

Mitch indicated that the Moose News newsletter needs to be published so that information gets out to the communities, etc. It has been quite a while since we published it. Kelly advised that HSP funding was applied for and included \$ for Moose News. Mitch suggested that we don't need to wait for the funding. Can produce something cheaply or do it through the local newspapers. Local information is also important.

b) Moose/Wolf Collaring

2 moose collars were refurbished and re-deployed this past winter. We now have 6 moose (3 Garner-Gem and 3 at Quesnel Lake). 4 wolf collars were also deployed. Previously had 4 collars on wolves – 2 lost contact with them- 2 wolves were trapped. 20 new wolf collars in hand right now. Will not likely deploy all 20 this coming winter. Will use that new 20 collar data to look at more data analysis (not just kill site investigations).

c) Wolf Kill Site Investigations

Daniel indicated that he started going back out recently to do investigations. Collecting any info on the prey (marrow, hair-for stable isotopes, jaw and skull, scat). Approx. 200 kill and resting sites were visited so far. 5 of 6 kill sites Daniel and Bob visited recently were moose calves. MLOA – wolves are feeding on grain bait barrels (due to lack of deer?). Sometimes wolves will dig bears out of dens and kill them

d) Funding Applications

Hunter angler preservation fund (MLOA) is available.
HSP was a new opportunity (prevention stream).

Treasury Borad submission for the moose committee is still in the works. Kelly is working on this. The funding is for recovery plan workshops. Approx \$15K. Could hear in May.

e) GHA17 Split

Discussions continued about how to split GHA 17 into 2 smaller ones: into 17 and 17B. It is proposed to split the GHA into an eastern and western portion. Still needs to be finalized by MCWS. There was a question about surveys being scheduled for GHA17B. MCWS is hoping so. They are talking with ESRA about surveying this winter. ESRA is

surveying part of the area. ESRA has been surveying up to about 20km from the road. That is close to the boundary of GHA17B/17. There was some frustration expressed by many that it is essential that baseline info is available for GHA17B, but the road is already in place in sections.

With only 1 road in and out, why not set up a moose check station? Bloodvein FN has hired a game guardian. MCWS will work with this individual.

Q. Can not MCWS exert pressure on ESRA to do the moose surveys as a condition of the road development? It was suggested to invite ESRA/Joro to the next meeting. They can do a presentation on what they have done. We should put some questions together in advance. We can talk about the need to have adequate baseline data for the next GHA. How many years has ESRA been flying moose surveys? At least 3 or 4 years. Moose Committee should make recommendation to province/submission during EA that next section of road have adequate monitoring.

f) Designated Routes

Map is out of date and MCWS wants to take the opportunity to make the revisions

In GHA26 and 17A

Roads that are not accessible anymore, changes need to be made to the designated routes (removals, additions). Has not been discussed with any groups yet. For example, remove part of Beaver Creek road (past the bridge), Black River grade, camp 26 at OHanly, hydro ROW to Gordon Lake.

Sandy River east would be a new designated route. Terminal Lake to Shoe Lake would be new. MCWS needs to talk to the cottage owners in the area.

Comment: changes to designated routes in GHA26 should be done as part of the moose recovery strategy.

Timelines to change designated routes. GHA17A – MCWS wants the changes in place for this fall. For GHA26 this could take longer.

Recommend to do changes to GHA17A (beaver creek) now, and use moose recovery planning to finalize designated routes in GHA26.

g) Officer Reports

Earl reported that moose hunting success was low in GHA17A (winter season). Only 3 moose kills in closure area this winter. Therefore, not many taken illegally. This is good news. People in the communities and area have been respectful of the closure. Total of 8 moose taken by FN hunters outside of closure area. Officers are seeing more moose than previous years, which is a positive sign. Officers are also not seeing as many wolves in GHA26.

Consultation Update

a) Chief George Barker Wildlife Refuge

Proposed expansion of wildlife refuge from Bloodvein River to Berens River. Will be consulting with up to 9 Aboriginal communities. Financial approval for consultation process for some communities is in place, but need signatures from communities (for funding agreements). Consultation will start soon with Bloodvein FN. Also with the MMF. 300m on either side of road. Is it possible that we could go through the fall hunt without the refuge in place? Not sure, depends how quickly consultation goes. Why does the process take so long? There are other consultation processes going on. Depends on how the communities prioritize this and other consultation processes. Ideally, need to have consultations done this fall. The refuge then needs to be approved by the province before it can be put in place. There was a comment that the refuge should have been part of the license for the road (get it in place before construction). We don't want the same thing to happen in GHA17B that happened in GHA26.

There is an issue with the fact that you can build the road much faster than you can protect the resource (e.g., through consultation meetings).

How does this road refuge affect trapping? May have to design something new – e.g., an ungulate refuge, but makes enforcement more complicated.

Comment that eliminating trapping from refuge will affect communities. Trappers have used the winter road system for trapping for years. Many trappers won't have the means to travel outside of 300m buffer. This type of allowance for trappers is already being done in the Whiteshell, so the model already exist. No shooting for big game within the 300m, but can trap. Can carry a gun, just not loaded.

Moose committee recommends to MCWS that a wildlife refuge should be put in place (should have been put in place prior to road development) 300m ungulate/big game refuge (no hunting area) but trapping continued to be allowed in the buffer. No loaded guns in 300m buffer. However, a small caliber rifle to dispatch animals if required.

b) Moose Conservation Closure

This timing of lifting the restrictions, and how to lift them and re-introduce hunting, needs to be part of the moose recovery strategy for GHA26.

Workshop Planning

Workshop should deal with how, when and process of opening up hunting in GHA26

1 ½ days – evening plus full day?

1st evening – information sharing?
Full day – facilitated discussions?

Status of modeling – have hired a population ecologist. She started in January.

Evening Session

-More modeling scenarios?
Management approaches in other jurisdictions?
Info from other moose research projects?
Presentation by CCMM members?
Habitat modeling?
Other ideas?

Facilitated Session

Moose population goal?
Target date for achieving population goal?
When should hunting be reintroduced?
What is the annual sustainable harvest?
How to achieve an annual sustainable harvest?
Other topics?

Workshop Date? June 24/25 (Wed evening/Thurs). Send letter of invitation to Hollow Water Bloodvein and Brokenhead. Letter should go to their Chief and Council. Send out notice to committee members.

Brian/Bev to book South Beach Casino Hotel as the workshop venue.

It was suggested that we need to acknowledge the commitment of the communities in the region regarding the conservation closure. News release? Moose News? Other mechanism?

Update on MBMF

Brian indicated that the MBMF has now entered its second year without any core funding. The office is now only open 1 day per week. It is getting more difficult to keep the MBMF going without core funding support. The MBMF is utilizing its own bank account to keep things going, but this will only keep the organization going for another year or so.

Next Meeting

The workshop will be the next time we get together.

Finally, Daniel indicated that the North American Wildlife Society annual conference will be held in Winnipeg in October. It will be a very large conference.