



Committee for Cooperative Moose Management
Meeting Minutes (Final Version)
February 18, 2016
Winnipeg River Learning Centre, Pine Falls

Present:

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| Mike Adey (MLOA) | Brian Kotak (MBMF) |
| Cam Neurenburg (LdB Wildlife Assoc.) | Bob Austman (MBMF) |
| Kelly Leavesley (MCWS) | Earl Simmons (MCWS) |
| Johnathan Spence (BON) | Stu Jansson (MB Trappers Assoc) |
| Jim Hoard (Pinawa Game & Fish) | Daniel Dupont (MCWS) |
| Orton Ramsay (BRFN) | Warren Bird (MCWS) |
| Leslie Orvis (Bloodvein FN) | William Young (Bloodvein FN) |
| Ernest McPherson (BRFN) | Ken Rebizant (MCWS) |

1. Introductions –everyone introduced themselves at the beginning of the meeting. Brian explained that he was invited to an east side moose meeting in BON on Jan 29. Several people expressed interest in coming to our next moose meeting to see what it is about. As a result, people from Bloodvein FN and Brokenhead Ojibway Nation are present at today’s meeting.

2. Review/Additions to the Agenda

Brian reviewed the agenda with the committee. No additions.

3. Minutes from the January 7, 2016 Meeting

Kelly wanted to clarify that we discussed a range of numbers as a moose population objective for GHA 26. This was just to get discussion going and the committee still needs to come to agreement on what the population objective should be (or what the range should be).

Kelly provided some historical background for those attending our moose committee for the first time. This committee has been going on for a long time (more than 20 years). CCMM started meeting again in earnest in 2010 as a result of moose decline in GHA 26. There have been moose population declines and the extirpation (loss) of moose in southeast Manitoba over time. This is also happening in Duck Mountains, northwestern Ontario and northern Minnesota. The CCMM provides a forum for Indigenous and non-indigenous people to discuss issues of common concern.

Cam welcomed the new people to the meeting and indicated that he was glad to see some new people. We all need to work together in order to ensure a sustainable moose population into the future.

There was a comment that New Brunswick almost lost their moose from brainworm, but the moose population is doing well now. Therefore, even with the presence of brainworm in Manitoba, there is still hope for our moose population. There was a question as to whether moose can adapt to brainworm. Is there some sort of immunity? Unknown. But population of moose has been completely wiped out in SE Manitoba. Maybe snail distribution is important as well.

Postpone approval of minutes to next meeting. Brian to add section dealing with change from the committee developing a “moose recovery strategy” to more of a “Status report and recommendations”. Committee members to send Brian any other revisions as well.

4. Winter Activity Updates

GHA 26 Moose survey – just completed it a couple a weeks ago. Results not compiled yet. Not able to do moose survey in Duck Mountains (snow conditions not adequate for the survey) and Porcupine Mountains not done. By next meeting, MCWS will be in position to provide numbers for GHA 26 survey.

Will there be a moose survey in GHA 17A, given that moose surveys were cancelled in western Manitoba? Not enough time this year. Also, MCWS want to do the survey in GHA 17A next year, which could potentially lever \$ from the federal government – e.g., HSP funding). GHA 17A moose also ranked lower as a priority than GHA 35 deer surveys for this year. Deer survey in GHA 35 to occur in the next few weeks. There is also elk collaring occurring in southeast Manitoba, and caribou collaring as well. One of the busiest winter MCWS has experienced in recent years for survey work and collaring.

There was a question as to whether there is an option to contract out surveys, if MCWS does not have human resources to conduct all surveys. Would be expensive, as currently MCWS staff time is already paid for. Hiring contractors would cost more.

Some committee members expressed concern that MCWS did not have the moose population estimate for GHA 26 calculated yet. MCWS explained that they do not have all of the information available yet in order to develop the population estimate. In addition, their population ecologist is responsible for determining the population estimate based on the survey data. She is currently away.

Ernest indicated the people he has spoken to think that there are more moose out there than before. He is happy about this, but also said we need to see the numbers from aerial survey.

There was a question about what kind of baseline moose data there is for GHA 17 and how the all season road has affected moose. There has been moose surveys in GHA 17A moose survey over last decade and ESRA has collected some data in GHA 17 (but this is focused only on the road corridor - 10 km on each side).

Local knowledge and traditional knowledge is very important to document initial conditions (pre development).

There was a suggestion that we invite ESRA to do a presentation to CCMM on their wildlife results.

William Young indicated that there are large concerns in Bloodvein FN about the all season road and its impacts on moose. Poaching and sport hunting (i.e., for the antlers only) are a concern. With the closure of moose hunting in GHA 26, everyone coming up to Bloodvein. This creates a danger. Night lighting is a concern. William explained that his community invited MWF and MLOA to the community for a meeting. They believe we all share the same concerns. William also explained that the community does not hunt all year. Sustainability is important. Only 6 bull moose were harvested by the community last fall. All the meat was shared in the community. He said that there is a need to clarify that Bloodvein FN does not abuse their hunting rights.

William stated that fall hunting has increased further up the all season road now. Winter hunt not so much. Not a drastic change right now, but he anticipates that will change (for the worse). The road refuge is important.

Stu indicated that when Nopiming Road was built, the historical hunters did not change their habits very much. They hunted in areas that they had always hunted in. But now that there are hunting closures, which could change things.

William indicated that education is important. Cam suggested that there be an establishment of moose committees in each community and participation on this committee.

Kelly indicated that a wolf survey also conducted in GHA 26, and was just finished today. Alaskan Trackers did the survey (as in previous years). Also, GPS collars were placed on 4 caribou, 4 moose, and 11 new wolves. 1 collared wolf from last year.

Previously, moose were collared in high density moose areas. This time, MCWS placed collars on moose from lower moose density areas.

MCWS targeted wolf packs for collaring in high density moose areas as well as lower moose density areas (i.e., in southern area where deer are more prevalent). GPS collars were deployed on 2 wolves per pack.

The committee indicated that they would be interested in Daniel bringing the wolf collar data to a future meeting.

Kill site investigation: Daniel indicated that wolves killed a bear this past week. Pulled the bear out of the den. Daniel saw them trying to kill the bear.

Deer head analysis/brain worm – nothing new to report

Trapper incentive program wrapped up now. Probably a similar or slightly lower number of wolves to last year. Around 50 this year. Not many wolves around Sand River East. But more moose this year at Sand River East is what trappers are saying.

Stu mentioned that collars would reduce the value of the wolf pelt. Is there compensation available to trappers? No compensation is provided.

Will the wolf trapping incentive program be renewed? Not at present. Was implemented as a short term program to initiate the recovery of moose. MCWS indicated that predator management is not an effective long-term solution.

There was discussion that ideally trappers should be removing entire packs of wolves. The trapping incentive program has been removing only some individuals of each pack. Not sure what the implications are.

Are there plans to continue the wolf surveys? Yes. MCWS will do this.

Caribou update – 4 collars have been reconditioned. Have been deployed.

NRO/enforcement – about 10 moose harvested in January in GHA 26 (somewhere in the moose protection zones, which is off limits to everyone for moose hunting). This occurred a little more than last year. Activity overall has been very low. Cam indicated that he has done a lot of traveling in the back-country and there has been no activity.

A month ago, MCWS has an undercover operation north of Pine Falls. 3 individuals were charged for taking moose illegally. Another person also shot a moose on the Translicense Road. \$2,500 fine for killing the moose out of season, \$2,500 for being in the closure area, plus an additional \$1,300 fine. About 6,300\$ in fines and 2 year hunting suspension.

4. Moose Management Recommendations Development

The committee discussed some ideas from last meeting. The committee discussed the need for monitoring. Game Guardians are in place through World Heritage Site program, although the funds for this are minimal

Need for more NROs and enforcement activity. Adequate resources are required for enforcement.

There is also a need for increased resources for monitoring (surveys, moose harvest).

Some recommendations could apply further north, especially in light of the development of the all season road network.

The recommendations we are developing, also apply to GHA 17A, 17 and 17B.

Suggestion that a Letter of recommendations on GHA 17A and 17 and 17B be sent to the minister from the committee. Recommendations would include:

- road refuge recommendation
- increased resources for enforcement (NROs)
- resources for moose monitoring (surveys, harvest)

Suggestion that on-going forums to discuss issues related to moose should continue. However, \$ are needed to make this happen

Warren Brid indicated that Black River FN would be willing to provide a letter of support.

As the meeting was running late, the committee did not continue to work on recommendations. A full day meeting was suggested, for our next meeting.

6. Next Meeting

April 6 at the Winnipeg River Learning Centre (10 am to 4 pm, with lunch provided)