

# Adaptive Unit Moose Hunt

## Informational Packet | 2023



[mefishwildlife.com/adaptiveunithunt](https://mefishwildlife.com/adaptiveunithunt)



Congratulations on receiving an adaptive unit/WMD 4A moose permit! Maine’s moose hunt is a hunt of a lifetime, and one that requires lots of preparation. This guide was designed to help you prepare for your adaptive unit (Wildlife Management District 4A) moose hunt. To view this same guide online with direct links and videos, please visit [mefishwildlife.com/adaptiveunithunt](http://mefishwildlife.com/adaptiveunithunt)

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*Information appearing in this book may not be valid after July 2024*

## 1. Adaptive unit moose hunt

Over the last two decades winter tick induced moose mortalities have increased. A 7-year adult cow and calf mortality study by Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife (MDIFW) documented a high frequency of mortalities (>50%) among GPS collared calves prior to reaching their first birthday. In addition, winter tick infestations have been linked to reduced reproduction in Maine moose resulting in lower levels of cow productivity.

In 2017, the MDIFW Wildlife Division introduced the concept of establishing an Adaptive Management Unit in a portion of the moose core range to test whether reducing the moose population can break the winter tick cycle plaguing young moose. ***An intensified moose harvest and population reduction would be evaluated to assess the feasibility of reducing winter tick infestations on moose and subsequently reducing the impact of ticks on overwintering calf mortality and depression of reproduction.***

This moose reduction measure, or Adaptive Management Framework, will occur in Wildlife Management District 4. WMD 4 is divided into a ~1,000 square-mile subunit, WMD 4A. The department will increase cow harvest in the Adaptive Unit to a level that will slowly decrease the overall subunit population. The Adaptive Framework allows management changes to occur as new information is learned from the study in an iterative (repeating) process. Over the course of the study, hunting permit numbers may increase/decrease based on how removal of cows impacts the population; we expect that permit numbers will need to reach a critical threshold before population reductions occur.

MDIFW will closely monitor any possible changes in population from year to year. **MDIFW will continue to put GPS collars on overwintering calves in WMD 4 to assess survival. MDIFW will continue annual helicopter surveys to determine moose numbers, sex, and age composition, and will monitor the health and reproduction with biological data collected from the moose harvest by using ovaries, canine teeth, and weight. MDIFW will also continue to examine winter tick numbers to determine if decreases in winter tick are occurring.**

### SEASON DATES AND PERMIT LEVELS 2023

Table 1: Adaptive Hunt Moose Permits by North and South Zone for 2023

DATES	North	South	TOTAL PERMITS
	ANTLERLESS	ANTLERLESS	
Oct 16-21	100	100	200
Oct 23-28	75	75	150
Oct 30-Nov 4	100	100	200
Totals	275	275	550

***\*Nov 6-Nov 11 Adaptive/WMD 4A Permit Holders with unfilled tags can hunt their respective Adaptive Zone this week***

### WHY ANTERLESS MOOSE HUNTING

This is a different type of moose hunting than the September and early October hunt that is framed around the rut and breeding behavior. Most adult cows will not be in heat by mid-late October. ***Removal/harvest of adult cows is necessary for population reduction. The reduction cannot be accomplished through harvest of bulls.*** Whether the adult cow is harvested before or after the breeding season makes no difference biologically. Calf moose are also legal and should be considered fair game for harvest. Due to winter tick, many calves will not survive to their first year of life, removal by legal harvest is an important alternative.

## 2. Adaptive Unit Boundaries and Subzones

**Hunt Location:** Permit winners are assigned to hunt in the south or north section of the adaptive unit. The north and south zone is divided by the St. Aurelie Road (From Quebec border to junction with Caucomgomoc Road).

- **WMD 4A-North:** Beginning at the point where the St. Aurelie Road intersects with the Quebec Border in Big Six township, then northerly along the Quebec-Maine border to the point where the American Realty Rd intersects the Maine-Quebec border in T11R17 WELS; then following the American Realty Rd easterly to the Maibec-Connector Rd (also known as the Thibodeau Connector Rd) south to the intersection with the Ross Mountain Rd, then east on the Ross Mountain Rd to the intersection with the St. Juste Connector Rd, then southwesterly to the intersection with the St. Juste Rd, then easterly along the St. Juste Rd to the intersection with the St. Aurelie Rd, then south along the St. Aurelie Rd to the intersection with the Caucomgomoc Road. Then westerly along the St. Aurelie Road to the Quebec border.
- **WMD 4A-South:** Beginning at the point where the Golden Rd intersects the Maine-Quebec border in T5R20 WELS; then following the Maine-Quebec border northerly to the point where the St. Aurelie Rd. intersects with the Quebec border in Big Six township; then following the St. Aurelie Rd easterly to the intersection with the Caucomgomoc Rd, the southeasterly along the Caucomgomoc Rd to the intersection with the Russell Mountain Rd, then southwesterly along the Russell Mountain Rd. until the junction with the 490 Rd, the southerly along the 490 Rd to the Golden Rd, then westerly to the start at the Canadian Border

Please see the map on page 10.

## 3. Hunting Tactics

**Moose Hunting – For more detailed information on moose hunting, rules, and regulations check out the moose hunter’s guide at [mefishwildlife.com/moosehunt](http://mefishwildlife.com/moosehunt)**

**Tactics: Due to increased number of hunters and cow/calf behavior post-rut, it is highly recommended that hunters scout areas either prior to the hunt or as part of their hunt plan. Driving roads all day may prove successful, but a better tactic is to map out multiple areas where fall habitat will indicate fresh moose sign. Time will be better spent with A map and on foot scouting/cruising areas than driving roads and potentially interfering with other hunters. Still hunting, setting up a blind near fresh sign, and glassing young cutover areas will be the predominate way to hunt.** From Guide and Outfitter Dave Hentosh of Smoldering Lake Outfitters:

*Congratulations on your selection for an antlerless moose permit! Tactics for pursuing a cow moose are vastly different than a bull for several reasons. Even during the rut cows are not likely to come to a call. Their social structure and competition for a bull’s attention often cause them to move away from other cows. Secondly, with the post rut timing of the cow hunts, moose are more focused on food and building some reserves for winter.*

*While not as interactive as calling, spot and stalk, stand, hunting and still hunting are exciting and effective ways to hunt for a cow moose. Moose will move further from roads and accessible areas as human activity increases. Finding those hidden spots and getting off the beaten path will greatly increase your odds.*

*Skinning and quartering your animal will make it manageable to pack out and will provide much higher quality meat for the table. I highly recommend the gutless method, as it will keep the digestive fluids and bacteria from contact with your meat. If you are unsure about how to do this there are several videos on the process on MDIFW web site.*

*When scouting look for the **freshest** sign of browse. Post rut moose move toward the hardwoods to browse on the new growth and buds of hardwoods. This is also a time when they will strip bark and eat the cambium layer of 4 -6" maples. Moose do not travel much during this time of year. When you find a group of animals, take your time. If it doesn't work, they won't be far away.*

*Big bulls sometimes lose their antlers early, when run down or injured during the rut. Small antlers are often hard to see, especially in heavy cover or low light conditions. Determining your target animal is imperative, so take your time and don't force it. Remember if it doesn't work out and you don't push the animals they won't be far tomorrow.*

*With a few animals still coming into season, you may encounter small groups of moose, typically a couple of young bulls and cow or cow/ calf group. Again, it is imperative that you know your target to take the animal your tag is valid for. When encountering a group of moose, it is crucial to make certain that there are no animals behind your intended target. A great way to prevent a double kill is to have the other members of your party focus on everything around your target animal while you get on the shooting sticks and focus on making the shot. They can help tell you when it is safe to shoot and help determine that yes, it is a cow or a calf, and there are no other moose standing in its path. But remember, it is the shooter's responsibility to be sure of the target and beyond.*

*When stalking, animals are often facing away from you. One great way to determine the sex of the animal you are following is to examine the rump. Bulls are one solid dark brown/black color. Cows on the other hand have a white patch surrounding the genitals. Cows tend to have a lighter solid colored face, while bulls have a lighter forehead and darker muzzle. This gets a little tricky when looking at young animals in wet or low light conditions. With a good set of binoculars, tripod shooting sticks, game bags and a tote sled you can take the game to the moose and have an exciting backwoods adventure. I hope these tips will help you have an enjoyable successful moose hunting adventure.*

*Congratulations again and good hunting,  
Dave*

*Dave Hentosh  
Smoldering Lake Outfitters  
The Veterans Afield Foundation*

*Weather: Hunters should review the forecast for the hunt week and plan accordingly. Above normal temperatures are common and result in fewer moose being seen. Wind and precipitation can both help and hurt a hunt depending on intensity. With only 6 days, it is critical to plan out the hunt week and capitalize on the best hunting days.*

## 4. Distinguishing Bulls, Cows, and Calves

# Moose Characteristics

**Moose Identification - Differentiating Between Bulls, Cows, and Calves:** This may seem obvious antlers vs no antlers but knowing the different physical characteristics between bulls and cows will help ensure your target and increase efficiency. In the thick woods of Maine, it is more common to see parts of a moose than the whole! Honing your observation skills for the hunt is a key but often overlooked ingredient to success.



### Bulls

1. The face of a bull is **bicolor**; that means it has a dark muzzle that contrasts with a brown face.
2. The hind end of a bull will be **dark with no vulva patch**.
3. The dewlap or bell of a bull, especially as they grow older will tend towards a **disk shape** and may or may not have a rope attached below the disk.
4. And of course, usually have antlers



### Cows

1. The face of a cow is typically **uniform in color** and can be light tan or brown.
2. All cows have a **white vulva patch** below the tail. 99% of bulls do not.
3. The dewlap or bell tends to be small and rope-like.





**X Don't shoot!** You may kill both animals. This image is intended to show size comparison and behavior.



## Calves

The majority of the time a calf will be with or near a cow, especially when spooked.

1. Calves have a **short snout** relative to adults and can be readily distinguished when side by side.

2. The **body of a calf appears square**, while adult moose are rectangular.

3. Behavioral cues are important when you see a big moose and a small moose but cannot readily determine sex and age. When alert and responding to movement from hunters or other disturbance, calves **will typically shadow the cow and when stopped may touch snout to snout with cow**. By October calves will typically be close to 400 pounds.

4. Male calves which qualify as antlerless moose have small bumps (pedicels) on either side of their ears but no hardened antlers

## Target, sex/age identification is critical to a moose hunt, specifically with the subpermittee system!

Even in the thick Maine woods it remains critical to use binoculars to identify target and remain on the same page and in direct communication with the subpermittee. Since cow-calf pairs travel together and the limit is one moose per hunter it remains imperative to identify your target and ensure that you know what is behind the target including another moose! Thus, identification coupled with shot placement is imperative.

And remember... **by law an antlerless moose is a moose without antlers that means your permit allows you to shoot a female moose without antlers, a female calf, or a male calf moose without antlers.** Male calves in October/November have small bumps (pedicels) on either side of their ears but no hardened antlers. Yearling bulls can have short spike antlers or branched antlers (these are illegal to harvest during the antlerless and adaptive unit hunt).



Photos by Tori Lee Jackson and Ron Logan

## 5. Enforcement Issues and Common Mistakes

As a hunter and moose permit holder, it is your responsibility to understand and follow all of Maine's hunting laws. Below we have included a few reminders, but before you go, be sure to view all of Maine's hunting laws at [mefishwildlife.com/laws](http://mefishwildlife.com/laws)

- **Hunter Orange Requirement** – Anyone who hunts any species with a firearm or crossbow in a Wildlife Management District that is open to moose hunting must wear one article of solid-colored hunter orange clothing (hats count). When moose season overlaps the firearms season on deer, then two pieces must be worn. On October 20 and 21 (youth deer days) and starting October 28 (the opening day of firearms season on deer for Maine residents) through November, all hunters must wear two articles of orange.

*Tip: Always keep your orange on, even when in the vehicle traveling. This way you do not forget it when you leave the vehicle.*

- **Permittee/Subpermittee and the hunting together requirement** – The permittee and subpermittee must physically be in the presence of each other while hunting, without the aid of visual or audio enhancement devices. The permittee may hunt alone, but if the permittee and subpermittee hunt together they must be in contact. The subpermittee may not hunt unless in the presence of the permittee.

*Tip: The subpermittee should ALWAYS be with the permittee. If a moose crosses the road, do not spread out in hopes of finding "the moose" as you may think you are harvesting one moose, and, be looking at two different targets. Direct communication is essential.*

- **Loaded firearms - Riding in bed of truck/trailers** – Rules have changed in the past few years regarding loaded firearms **in and on** motor vehicles. No loaded firearms are allowed in a parked vehicle, moving vehicle, or a vehicle with the engine running. A loaded magazine inserted into a weapon is considered loaded.
  - *A person who is hunting may rest a loaded firearm or crossbow that is under their control on the vehicle to shoot only when the vehicle is not in motion and the engine is off. **Note:** you cannot stand in the bed of a truck and use the roof as your rest spot. Feet must be planted on the ground. It is unlawful to shoot from an observation stand located in the bed of a truck.*
- **Hunter listed on multiple permits** – It is prohibited to hunt/kill more than one moose per year. Once you have killed a moose – you are done hunting moose for that year regardless of how many permits a hunter may be listed on.
- **How to avoid double kills** – Moose often travel in groups and calves often stand close to a cow. As a hunter, it is your responsibility to be sure of your target and beyond. Before you shoot, always check to make sure there isn't a second moose behind your target.

One well-placed shot is best. If you must take another shot, always be sure you are shooting at the original moose you shot at to begin with. Take a breath and make sure there aren't two separate moose. *If you end up having two moose down, please follow guidance under "Mistake Kills"*

- **Identifying your target** – Hunters need to put effort into checking for antlers and other physical characteristics to ensure they're identifying the correct target. Binoculars and another person looking for the shooter is very helpful when looking for antlers to be sure of a legal harvest. If you end up shooting a moose with antlers – do not disturb the scene – leave the moose where you shot it and follow steps outlined below.

- **Mistake kills.** Hunters may find themselves in the unfortunate position of having killed an antlered moose while they have a permit for an antlerless moose. There are also instances of double kills. Many of these incidents begin as a non-intentional act. However, leaving an unused moose to spoil in the woods is intentional and is not a responsible way to handle an unfortunate incident. In addition, if a hunter kills a moose, leaves the moose to spoil and then continues hunting and kills another moose, the hunter has committed numerous extra violations during the process. We encourage all hunters who find themselves in one of these unfortunate circumstances to leave the moose in place and report the incident including GPS coordinates as soon as possible to the Maine Warden Service. Each incident will be investigated independently.
- **Learn the WMD boundaries before the hunt** – Boundaries are mapped (see page 10) and described in a narrative that can be helpful to refer to when looking at a map to determine lines. Take the time before your hunt starts to become familiar with the boundaries in your zone.

*Tip: Purchase a Maine Atlas—it is the best way to ensure you know where you are.*

- **Never block roads** – Hunters will often find their area to hunt in and find it frustrating that other hunters/vehicles keep driving on a road they are actively hunting on. We get multiple complaints about this every year. Remember, blocking a road is a violation of the law.

*Tip: If you want to hunt a road that is a dead-end road, it's acceptable to leave one of your helpers or even a vehicle at the end of the road to let other hunters know that you are hunting that road – without blocking it. MOST hunting parties will know what this means and be respectful and hunt somewhere else. If you leave a person at the end of the road, they can let other vehicles know that there is a hunting party hunting on the road, but they cannot block the road or tell other hunters they can't proceed onto that road.*

- **Use of drones** - A person on the ground or airborne may not use aircraft (including drones & remote-controlled aircraft) to aid or assist in hunting deer, bear, or moose.
- **Transporting a harvested moose** - Prior to registration, any harvested moose in transit must be open to view, meaning that the animal is not concealed and can be readily observed in whole or in part from outside of the vehicle or trailer transporting it. A transportation tag with the hunter's name, address, and hunting license number must be attached to the moose.

View all of Maine's hunting laws at [mefishwildlife.com/laws](http://mefishwildlife.com/laws)

## Report Violations

*"If you see something, say something."* It is crucial that you report any suspected violation of law to ensure a safe, fair, and ethical moose hunting season. Time and locations, GPS coordinates, and plate numbers from vehicles involved in suspicious events are helpful to Maine Game Wardens. Hunters may report violations to Warden Service headquarters in Greenville at 207-695-3756, Ashland at 207-435-3231, or anonymously to Operation Game Thief at 1-800-253-7887.

## 6. Moose Registration Stations

*You will be assigned to hunt either in the north or south zone divided by the St. Aurelie Road (From Quebec border to junction with Caucomgomoc Road—see map on the following page). The Adaptive Unit is entirely within the North Maine Woods and hunters will be required to pay their own day use/overnight fees. Reference your permit to determine which zone you must hunt in.*

***MDIFW registration stations are listed below and are at key entry/egress points within the North Maine Woods; hunters will be required to stop and will be able to legally register moose and provide biological data.***

Field Registration Stations:

### **1. 20 Mile (Pittston Farm) Checkpoint**

- This station is in Pittston Academy Grant (Maine Atlas Map 48) on the Northern (20 Mile) Road. This will be the registration station location for hunters leaving the woods to the south and traveling the Golden Rd to Rockwood.

### **2. Clayton Lake**

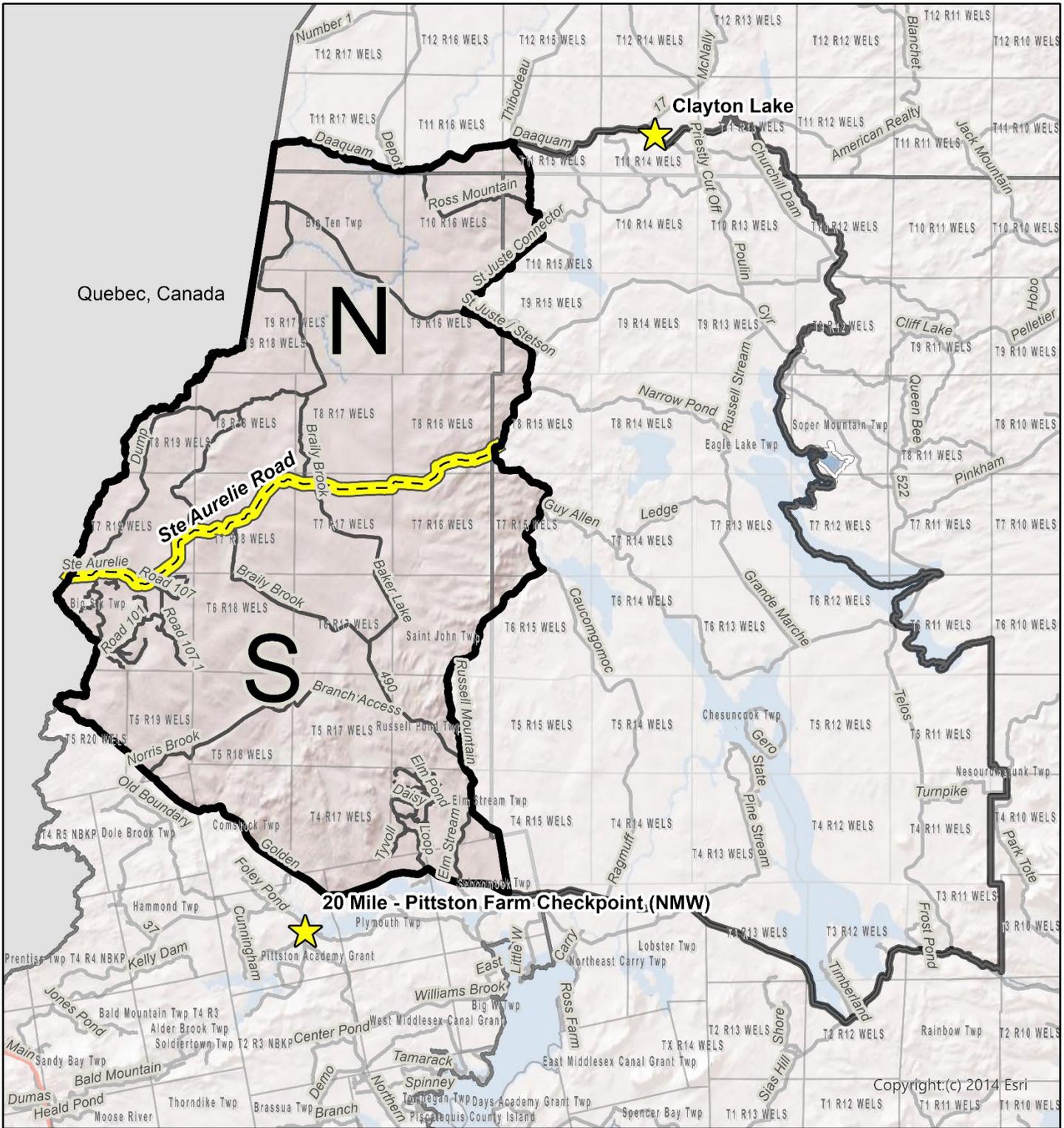
- This station is in Clayton Lake Twp (Maine Atlas Map 61) on the Reality Rd. This will be the registration station location for hunters leaving to the north and heading west to Ashland.

**See the following page for a map of the registration stations.**

At the registration station, you will be able to legally register your moose and provide biological information. We highly recommend bringing moose out in pieces, especially if temperatures exceed 50 degrees Fahrenheit.

**A new law went into effect in 2021 requiring all moose hunters to bring the moose head to the registration station. This is your evidence of gender. However, for a female moose you must also bring out the ovaries.**

At the registration station, you must present your hunting license and the moose permit that you received in the mail. For yearling and older cows, you can bring the ovaries to the registration station in a small bag. At the station, you will be asked to mark an X on a map to show the site of the kill. Station operators will register your moose, then pull a canine tooth for aging, check for lactation, count winter ticks, and weigh the animal. All canine teeth that are properly identified will be aged by MDIFW staff by the end of the year and age results will be posted online in late winter.

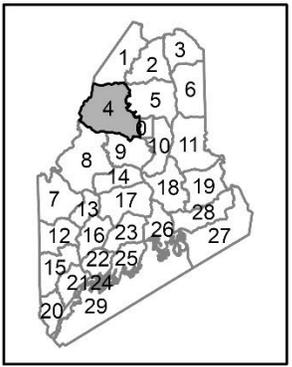
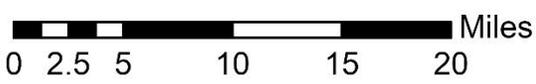


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**MAINE WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT DISTRICT (WMD) 4  
MOOSE MANAGEMENT WESTERN SUBDISTRICT (4a-shaded area)  
NORTH AND SOUTH ZONES**



-  WMD 4 - East/West Subdistricts
-  North/South Zone Boundary
-  Check Stations



## 7. Ovary Removal Instructions:

Removing the ovaries from all yearling and older cows is the most important information the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife can get from this hunt. Your cooperation in removing these 2 ovaries and presenting them at the registration station is greatly appreciated. Cow ovaries are the best source of information to determine whether the cow would have 0, 1, or 2 calves the following May. Some cows will not be successful in carrying a calf to full term. The annual feeding on moose by winter ticks, results in loss of body condition in adult cows. The size/weight of an adult cow going into the fall breeding season is critical to her ability to ovulate and carry a fetus through to calving. By examining the cow's ovaries, we have a very strong indication of cow productivity in the region, twinning rates, and age of 1<sup>st</sup> reproduction. Getting the age, weight, and reproductive status of these cows is vital to the management of moose and allocation of annual moose permits.

**FOR SUCCESSFUL COW HUNTERS WHO BRING IN BOTH OVARIES YOU WILL BE ENTERED INTO A DRAWING FOR A CUSTOM ENGRAVED 113 RANGER BUCK KNIFE!**

Please view the guide on the following two pages to learn how to remove the ovaries. Before you go on the hunt, you can also watch these how-to videos:

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=yrg0Vvj1qzk](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yrg0Vvj1qzk)

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=M5lp87z5Cd0](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M5lp87z5Cd0)

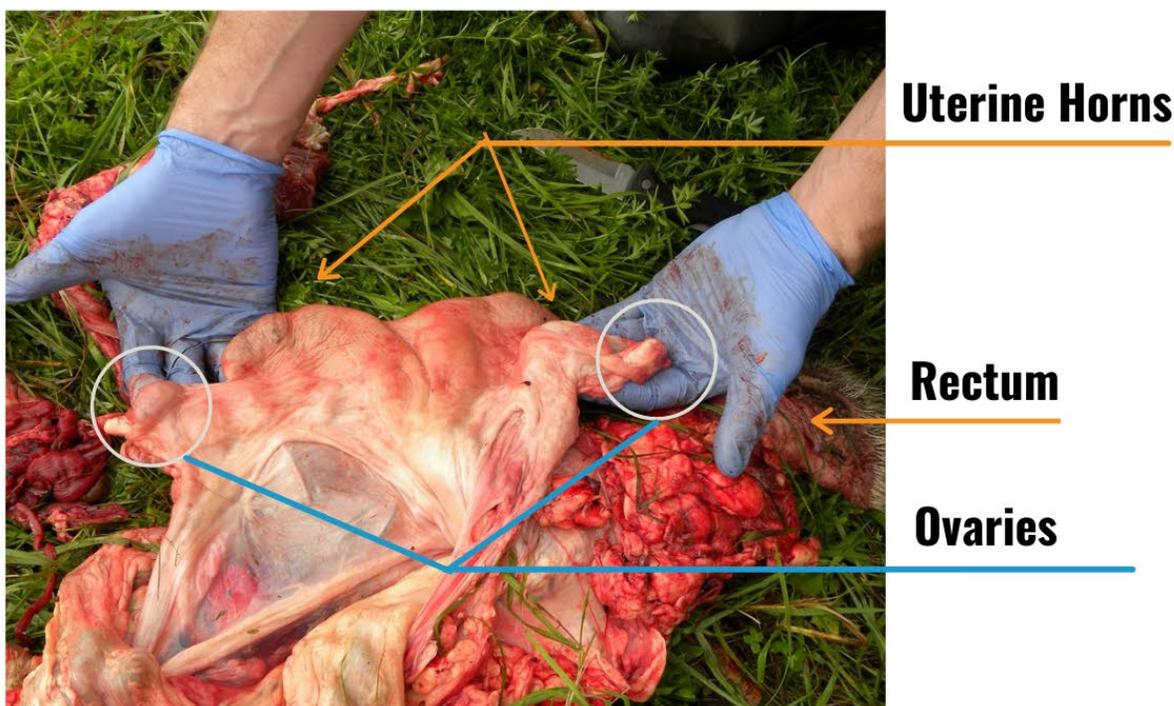


# Moose Ovary Collection from Gut Pile

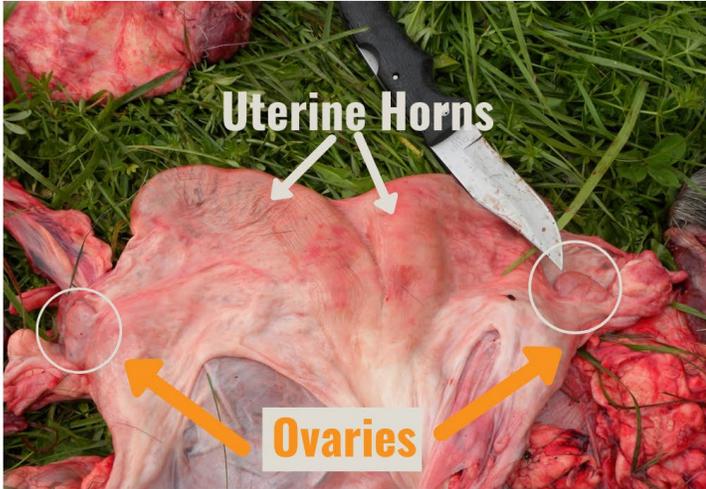
- 1 After you field dress the moose and once the guts are rolled out onto the ground, stretch out the organs so the stomach is at one end and rectum is at other end of pile.



- 2 Uterus tissue is elastic and smooth. Here is the uterus and ovaries laid in one's hands.



- 3 Ovaries are egg-shaped and there are two, 1 at each end of the uterus, to the far left and right.



- 4 Here is some round fatty tissue next to ovary, that may look yellow, do not confuse this.



- 5 The knife is pointing to the ovary which should be cut out. Ovaries are less than 1 inch in length.



- 6 Cut out each ovary and store in a bag, bring to registration station. **Thank you!**



The above process helps one located and remove the ovaries after the moose is field dressed. **If you wish to locate the ovaries while field dressing your harvest:**

1. Push the internal organs up towards the chest so you see where two tubes (the rectum and the vagina) exit through the pelvic bone.
2. The vagina is the tube nearest the belly. Grasp this tube and follow it carefully towards the chest until it forks into two tubes, which are the left and right horns of the uterus.
3. Locate the uterus and insert your fingers under it until the organ lies in the palm of your hand. Notice a thin, almost transparent membrane that connects this organ to the animal's back. Carefully follow the horns of the uterus (left and right sides) to the ovaries. These are bean-shaped organs less than 1 inch in length (about the size of a grape). They may be covered with fat so keep looking! The ovaries will appear more pinkish in color and will be firmer to the touch than fat globules.
4. Cut the membranes holding the ovaries in place then place them in a plastic bag. Both ovaries are needed. If you have any problems the entire uterus can be removed by cutting through the vagina. The ovaries and the uterus can be kept together and cooled until registering your moose

## 8. Meat Care

You just had a successful moose hunt that you enjoyed with family or friends, don't you want to cherish those memories by taking home hundreds of pounds of delicious, wholesome moose meat? Don't spoil your hunt! Properly field dress and cool your meat. The conservative value of 300 pounds of moose meat based on hamburger and steak prices - \$1,800 - DON'T WASTE IT!

### Plan for all facets of your moose hunt

- ✓ This includes getting moose out of woods, processing moose, and care of meat
  - Do not underestimate the challenge of getting a 400+ pound animal out of the woods – we highly recommend quartering moose to get the moose cooled off as quickly as possible for the highest quality meat
  - When scouting an area, keep in mind how you will get your future harvest out of the woods
- ✓ Know ahead where you are going to tag your moose (see pages 9-10)
- ✓ Identify/contact meat cutter/processor ahead of time, preferably in the summer (visit [mefishwildlife.com/moosehunt](http://mefishwildlife.com/moosehunt) to find a list of moose meat processors)
  - ✓ Know where they live, how to get there, and hours of operation

### After the shot

- ✓ As soon as the animal is down, and you have located the moose, place a transportation tag on the animal
- ✓ Take a few minutes to recognize the success of the hunt and take a deep breath before the next step of the hunt begins
- ✓ You must cool off the moose as soon as possible to protect the meat from spoiling, and to ensure the highest quality table fare possible. **Immediately field dress the animal (see how-to video below)**
  - Warm weather, dirt, hair, rumen contents, urine are your meat spoilage enemies-take field dressing slowly and methodically to preserve the highest quality meat
- ✓ If a cow, find the ovaries and place in a bag to bring to tagging station
- ✓ Now it is time to bring the moose to your truck and head to the tagging station. Ultimately you have two options:
  1. Quarter the moose. The Department HIGHLY recommends quartering the moose in the field.
  2. Bring the moose out in its entirety.

**Working fast and efficient is critical because meat starts to spoil above 40 degrees Fahrenheit. The sooner you can get the hide off and start cooling off the moose, the better.** In the same amount of time it takes to twitch a whole moose that was harvested a few hundred yards off the road, you can quarter a moose and put in game bags and coolers. Quartering a moose in the field not only saves time, frustration, and often some physical labor, but also gives you the best quality meat possible.

Moose are 101 degrees Fahrenheit on the inside, even if the day is cool, the moose is not. To prevent spoilage, the temperature of the meat matters, not the air. At temperatures above 40F meat begins to spoil and when the thermometer hits 70F bacteria double every 20 minutes! For example, at 50F you may have between 3 and 6 hours to get the moose meat completely cooled down to refrigerator temperature (40F). So, removing the hide, parting out the hindquarters, neck meat, rib meat, backstraps, and tenderloins and putting in coolers is critical.

**If you decide to quarter your moose, here are a few recommendations:**

- ✓ There are several types of game bags (cotton, canvas, synthetic, or cheesecloth) and considering what they do for your meat and all the effort you put into your hunt—absolutely worth every penny. Some brands include (Allen, Alaska Game Bags, Caribou Gear)
- ✓ For moose it makes sense to have 1 large game bag for each quarter and a 5<sup>th</sup> bag for the neck meat, rib meat, backstraps and tenderloins. People have their own methods and practices of how they do this, but bottom line is bagged meat is ideal protection from dirt, flies, grease, debris, etc.
- ✓ Whether using a gutless method or gutting the moose-then quartering, a good, sharp hunting knife (drop point 3.5”-5” blades are nice) and a small saw (for cutting thru sternum and splitting pelvis) are essential.

**If you decide to bring the moose out in its entirety, here are a few recommendations and considerations:**

- ✓ Moose are 101 degrees on the inside – this heat must escape for rapid cooling of the carcass, so make sure there is abundant air flow, if possible, prop open the hindquarters (versus leaving the heavy hindquarters to lay against each other)
- ✓ Bring frozen milk jugs to store in body cavity to cool temperature. Bags of ice in the cavity will not protect the back straps or cool down the hindquarters no matter how much you stuff in there.
- ✓ It is critical to get the hide off your moose as quickly as possible and have gear ready to keep the carcass and/or meat cool
- ✓ A moose should not be hung for cooling if temperatures are above 45 degrees Fahrenheit
- ✓ Keep dirt and dust off your moose. The woods road will be extremely dusty, and moose hauled out on trailers and truck beds will be covered in dust, take precautions to keep dust off the meat

**The following are links demonstrating proper methods of field dressing your moose (these may also be found at [mefishwildlife.com/adaptiveunithunt](http://mefishwildlife.com/adaptiveunithunt)):**

Field dressing a moose in Maine: <https://youtu.be/dw1ItcstKF0>

Quartering a moose in the field in Maine:  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=dw1ItcstKF0&t=410s](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dw1ItcstKF0&t=410s)

Finding the ovaries in a moose: <https://youtu.be/dw1ItcstKF0> or <https://youtu.be/M5lp87z5Cd0>

**Find a moose meat processing facility: [mefishwildlife.com/moosemeatprocessing](http://mefishwildlife.com/moosemeatprocessing)**

**Tip: It is best to reserve a spot and let them know your hunt plans as soon as possible to have available space.**

You may also be interested in the following videos about moose on the Department’s YouTube channel @mefishwildlife:

- [Managing Maine’s Moose](#)
- [Moose Hunting: Field Care](#)
- [Moose Hunt Preparation](#)
- [Moose Hunting 101](#)
- [Avoiding Moose Hunting Pitfalls](#)

## 9. North Maine Woods:

The Adaptive Unit is entirely within the North Maine Woods and will require you to enter through one of the following checkpoints: 20-mile, Caribou, Telos, Oxbow, 6 Mile, or St. Francis. Landowners within the area are very supportive of the hunt and continue to allow access on their private lands. In addition, landowners are opening additional campsites for this hunt. Please obey all rules and minimize your impact.

**North Maine Woods fees:** Day use fees are \$11/day and camping fees are an additional \$12/night, per person for Maine residents. For six nights/seven days in 2023, fees will total \$138 per person. For nonresidents the daily fee is \$16 per person, plus camping fee is \$15/night. For six nights the total is \$181. Hunters do have the option to purchase a fall season camping plus day use pass at \$140.00 for residents and \$180.00 for nonresidents. All North Maine Woods fees and passes are based per person. The fall season pass is valid from August 20th through November 30th and can be purchased at any North Maine Woods staffed checkpoint and via the phone or in person at the Main Office in Ashland. Please feel free to contact the main office at 207-435-6213 or email at [info@northmainewoods.org](mailto:info@northmainewoods.org) for further information. Visitors can also streamline their registration process at checkpoints by printing on-line registration forms which can be handed to checkpoint staff upon arrival: [northmainewoods.org/images/pdf/NMW-Self-Registration-Form.pdf](http://northmainewoods.org/images/pdf/NMW-Self-Registration-Form.pdf)

**Camping in the North Maine Woods:** Camping permits are issued at the checkpoint upon entrance to the North Maine Woods area. Camping is allowed at designated, marked camping areas for a two-week maximum time per campsite. The North Maine Woods map, DeLorme's Maine Atlas and Gazetteer, and maps at the checkpoints show campsite locations. **Due to the expanse of the area and staff limitations, campsites are available on a first come/first served basis. Reservations are not accepted.**

**There are three types of campsites available for use:**

- Authorized Campsites  
While all campsites are rustic, there are steel fire rings, cedar picnic tables, and toilets at authorized campsites. Fires may be carefully built in the steel fire rings. A Maine Forest Service Fire Permit is not required.
- Designated Fire Permit Campsites  
These are locations where overnight camping is allowed but where building campfires requires a Maine Forest Service Fire Permit. The locations of designated fire permit campsites are shown by a different symbol on the maps. These campsites have fewer facilities than authorized campsites. Although many fire permit campsites are not as attractive as authorized campsites, November hunters prefer sheltered locations rather than windswept lake shore campsites.

We strongly urge obtaining a fire permit in advance of arrival at NMW. The most convenient location to obtain information and fire permits is the Northern Region Headquarters in Ashland. This may be done by telephone at (207) 435-7963 Monday *through* Friday 8 - 4pm

- Temporary Campsites for the Adaptive Moose hunt  
These additional sites have been generously designated and signed by the landowners and NMW Inc., to accommodate the increase in moose hunters during the adaptive unit moose hunt season in western WMD 4. There are no outside fires allowed and sites may or may not have outhouses. Please minimize your impact and carry out all trash and litter. See below on important **Waste Management**.

There will be a lot of people looking for a place to set up campers. If you are unable to find space at one of the other, signed campsite locations, it is permissible to camp in other locations for a short period of time. Just remember no fires and don't block side roads

### **WASTE MANAGEMENT AT CAMPSITES WITHOUT PRIVIES**

Please respect the landowners and the environment and use the following practice to properly dispose of human waste:

- Find a site at least 200 feet from water (70 big steps), trails, and campsite.
- Dig a hole (bring a solid shovel to camp) at least 6-8" deep depending on your need and group size
- After each trip to the latrine throw some dirt on to cover the waste and toilet paper
- Use as few latrine holes as possible
- When you break camp, fill in hole completely
  - You might also consider for these sites the following to make your camp more comfortable:  
[cabelas.com/shop/en/luggable-loo-seat-and-cover](http://cabelas.com/shop/en/luggable-loo-seat-and-cover) or [dickssportinggoods.com/p/reliance-luggable-loo-toilet](http://dickssportinggoods.com/p/reliance-luggable-loo-toilet)

### **OTHER OVERNIGHT ACCOMMODATIONS**

In addition to camping, overnight accommodations are provided by commercial recreational facilities within and adjacent to the area. Over 50 businesses including sporting lodges, housekeeping camps, outfitters, and guiding services provide overnight accommodations. A list of these businesses is available at checkpoints, from the NMW main office or on the NMW website with links to web sites showing what the businesses have to offer. The businesses listed on the NMW website are licensed by NMW to operate in the area and insured to provide safe visits for guests. [The Maine Sporting Camps Owners Association](http://The Maine Sporting Camps Owners Association), P.O. Box 89, Jay, ME 04239 has a detailed brochure of its members including a map of locations and lists services provided.

### **FIREWOOD - CAMPFIRES**

Cutting live trees for firewood or to use as tent supports is prohibited. You are welcome to use dead and downed wood for your fire at an authorized location. Extreme caution is always the rule. Remember a small fire is best for cooking. By Maine law there is a \$50.00 fine for leaving any fire unattended. The steel fire-ring is the only place a fire may be built at an authorized campsite.

Moving a steel fire-ring or building your own rock fireplace at authorized sites is not permitted. When building a fire at a designated fire permit campsite, use caution and common sense in locating your fire. Use existing fireplaces if they are available and safe. By Maine law, having an unauthorized cooking or warming fire is illegal and punishable by fines. Fires outside a steel-ring require a written fire permit from the Maine Forest Service.

- **Use only local firewood and kindling.** Moving firewood into Maine is illegal and moving firewood around Maine is a big mistake. Forest destroying insects travel with firewood.
- **Never leave a fire unattended or allow the smoke to become a nuisance.** Never use accelerants to start a fire or burn prohibited materials like trash, metals, and plastic. Never discard ashes in areas with combustible materials.
- **Before leaving or going to sleep, ensure the fire is out.** Keep at least five gallons of water and a shovel near the fire. Make sure the fire is completely out before leaving the area or going to bed. And when you think the fire is out, check it again to be safe. The coals should be cool to touch.

### Links to North Maine Woods Campsites:

Authorized Campsites: [northmainewoods.org/maps/guide.html](http://northmainewoods.org/maps/guide.html)

Fire Permit Campsites: [northmainewoods.org/maps/fpc.html](http://northmainewoods.org/maps/fpc.html)

Campsite Inventory List: [northmainewoods.org/images/pdf/campsite-inventory-list.pdf](http://northmainewoods.org/images/pdf/campsite-inventory-list.pdf)

### All-Terrain Vehicles

No bicycles, motorcycles, all-terrain vehicles or horses are allowed at any time of year in the North Maine Woods area. This is necessary for logging road safety and to reduce the possibility for forest fires in hard to reach locations.

### CONTACT INFO NORTH MAINE WOODS:

[northmainewoods.org](http://northmainewoods.org) | [info@northmainewoods.org](mailto:info@northmainewoods.org) | 207-435-6213

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## Contacting Maine Warden Service

It can be difficult to reach a Warden in the North Maine Woods. Cell phone service is non-existent in many places. Hunters on the western portion of WMD 4 may get some service from Canadian cell towers. Check with your cell provider before your hunt to see if your phone will work on those towers. All North Maine Woods checkpoints have the ability to reach Wardens. Some satellite communications services such as “in-Reach” make contacting help easier when out of cell range. There are a number of cell phone “phone booths” in the North Maine Woods. These are not actual booths but instead spots where a cell phone call may be made due to small windows of reception. These locations are often marked by North Maine Woods staff, and should be noted while scouting and hunting.

*To reach a game warden 24-hours a day, please contact the dispatch at the regional communication center nearest you at one of the numbers below.*

### Central Division - Greenville [Directions](#)

Physical Address: 19 Village Street

Mailing Address: PO Box 551, Greenville, ME 04441

(207) 695-3756

**Regional Communication Center (Bangor) 1-800-432-7381**

### Northeastern Division - Ashland [Directions](#)

Physical Address: 63 Station Hill Road

Mailing Address: PO Box 447, Ashland, ME 04732

(207) 435-3231

**Regional Communication Center (Houlton) 1-800-924-2261**

**Learn more at [mefishwildlife.com/adaptiveunithunt](http://mefishwildlife.com/adaptiveunithunt)**

