

MOOSE MANAGEMENT ISSUES AND CONCERNS

Raised by Working Group June 24, 1999

Population

- Moose population far surpassed the population objectives established by the working group in 1985.
- Moose population needs to be decreased in parts of Maine prone to high incidences of moose/vehicle collisions.

Moose Hunting

- Length of season – hunter densities and safety.
- Season timing (meat spoilage, competing uses, perceived high grouse kill by moose hunters).
- Need to spread hunters out.
- Need to expand the area open to hunting to address safety issues in high human population centers.
- Numerous lottery issues (once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, multiple chances, waiting period for successful applicants, block of permits for sporting camp owners, subpermittee issues, etc.).
- Managing a public use on private land – need to consult with corporate/industrial landowners when developing a season framework.

Moose Viewing

- Need to recognize the importance of moose viewing to Maine's tourism industry, in addition to hunting.
- The Departments Moose Management Plan should address the growing importance of nonconsumptive activities associated with moose and consider creative ways of addressing these interests (e.g. areas dedicated to moose viewing and closed to hunting).

Moose Issues and Concerns

- Moose are more valued alive than dead in the Moosehead Lake Region – important part of tourism in the area. Concerned with potential conflicts between hunters and fall foliage viewers.

Moose/Vehicle Collisions

- The issue of safety is of great concern in many areas.
- Current harvest levels are not addressing the problem.
- The Department needs to continue exploring multiple ways of reducing the risk of moose/vehicle collisions including population management, education, speed limit reduction, fencing, and habitat management along roadways. The Department should also continue to remove problem animals as warranted.

Management

- Management should be in the hands of MDIFW and out of the political arena.
- Many social issues concerning moose require legislative action. How does this fit into the Department's need for a moose management plan?
- Need to ensure that the Department has adequate staffing and funding resources to conduct an accurate assessment of the moose population to meet its management responsibilities.

Habitat

- Habitat damage associated with high moose densities, primarily the negative affects on deer wintering areas.
- The condition of the forest is expected to change. As the forest matures and the amount of areas in young stands declines, the ability of the land to support moose will decline also.