



Subject MOOSE MANAGEMENT POLICY		Policy No. WM.8.02.01	No. C
Compiled by - Branch Wildlife Branch	Section Program Development and Audit	Date Issued 1980 12 15	
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MOOSE MANAGEMENT POLICY

BROAD PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

TO PROTECT AND ENHANCE THE MOOSE RESOURCE AND TO PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR RECREATION FROM MOOSE FOR THE CONTINUOUS SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC BENEFIT OF THE PEOPLE OF ONTARIO.

PROGRAM TARGETS

- 1.0 To increase the moose population from 80,000 to 100,000 animals by 1985, 140,000 by 1995 and 160,000 by the year 2000.
- 2.0 To provide from this herd an annual harvest of 10,000 moose after 1985, 18,000 by 1995 and 25,000 by the year 2000.
- 3.0 To provide 350-400,000 hunting opportunities after 1985, 630-720,000 by 1995 and 750-875,000 by the year 2000. The quality standard for these opportunities will be a minimum individual hunter success rate of 12% or a maximum hunter density of 3 hunters per 25 km.
- 4.0 To provide 384-480,000 viewing opportunities at 8-10 selected sites by 1985, 768-960,000 viewing opportunities at 16-24 sites by 1995 and 1.2-1.4 million viewing opportunities at 24-30 sites by the year 2000. The sites selected for development would be aquatic feeding areas, browsing areas and natural or artificial mineral licks.

POLICY GUIDELINES

The moose management policy guidelines provide the framework in which planning and management should occur and provide the general direction for development of more specific program policies.

- 1.0 Moose are to be managed to provide a wide range of types of recreational opportunities.
- 2.0 Moose are to be managed for the optimum sustained social and economic benefit of the people of Ontario.
- 3.0 Native people's harvest of moose is to be recognized in the planning and management of moose.
- 4.0 Moose planning and management decisions are to be based on a thorough

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- 5.0 Moose management plans are developed to meet targets and achieve objectives.
- 6.0 Planning is a dynamic process and preference should be given to plans which provide for future flexibility.
- 7.0 The moose management planning process is to include a careful evaluation of alternatives.
- 8.0 Moose habitat management is to be coordinated with the planning and management of forests.
- 9.0 The planning and management of moose are to be coordinated with the planning and management of lands and waters.
- 10.0 Public participation is to occur in the planning and management of moose.
- 11.0 The basic unit for moose planning and management is to be the wildlife management unit.
- 12.0 Moose are to be managed through a corroboration of harvest, habitat and population assessment.
- 13.0 The non-hunting mortality of moose is to be managed to maintain or increase moose populations.
- 14.0 Moose are to be managed on the basis of the best technical information currently available.

MANAGEMENT POLICY

Harvest Control

- 1.0 Regulate the Moose Harvest by Limiting the Sale of Licenses.
A policy to regulate the harvest by limiting the number of licenses issued. The licenses issued could be to individuals (one licence per hunter) or parties (one licence per several hunters).
- 2.0 Regulate the Moose Harvest and Social Structure of the Herd by Age-Specific and Sex-Specific Licensing.
A policy to regulate the harvest and social structure of the herd by specifying the age or sex of moose that can be harvested. Bulls only, antlerless, or bull and calf licenses are typical examples. The number of licenses issued, however, would vary depending on the allowable harvest and the overall status of the herd.
- 3.0 Regulate the Moose Harvest by Controlling Hunter Access to Moose.
A policy to regulate the harvest by controlling the use of aircraft, snowmobiles and all-terrain vehicles. This policy includes the closure of seasons for short periods of time in specific, local areas to benefit moose. An area where logging operations have recently been completed and bush roads make moose easy to locate, is an example of a special area.

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4.0 Distribute Hunting Pressure by Both Area-Specific and Incentive Licensing.

A policy to distribute hunting pressure by issuing licenses for a specific management unit. It requires that hunters choose a specific unit in which to hunt. This is best coupled with a limited sale of licenses to provide an effective means of distributing hunting pressure.

The policy includes incentive licensing. This is where an incentive (early opening of seasons or reduced licence fees) is offered through special licensing.

5.0 Increase Recreation from Moose Hunting by Requiring Hunters to Hunt in Groups.

A policy to increase recreation by requiring that two or more hunters hunt together. It will allow a greater number of persons to participate in moose hunting although the hunters would have to share a moose.

Population Management

6.0 Manage Predators on a Selective Basis to Allow Moose Numbers to Increase.

A policy to control wolves where they are significantly depressing moose populations. The area and pack of wolves would be clearly identified.

In these special circumstances, where wolves are contributing disproportionately to the total mortality of moose, selective efforts would be applied to reduce predators, by trapping and snaring, and by shooting wolves from aircraft. Ministry of Natural Resources' personnel or persons hired on contract by the Ministry would carry out the predator control program. The policy would be applied only as long as the special circumstances prevail.

The objective of the predator control program would be to remove wolves from a designated area in order to effectively reduce predator pressure on the moose. The number of wolves removed, provincially, would be small.

The policy does not allow, under any circumstances, the widespread removal of wolves across broad areas of the Province.

Enforcement

7.0 Increase Enforcement of Legislation and Regulations to Control Legal Hunting and Suppress Poaching.

A policy where an increased effort would be made to enforce the Game and Fish Act and regulations thereunder.

Habitat Management

It is stated Government policy that the forest resources of Ontario on Crown Lands will be managed through the FOREST MANAGEMENT AGREEMENT.

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The moose habitat management policy would be the following:

8.0 Ensure that the Quality of Moose Habitat is Maintained.

The policy is to ensure that the quality of moose habitat is maintained or enhanced by direct involvement in the forest management planning process.

Wildlife managers will work closely with forest managers to produce moose habitat in the northern forest regions which approximates the habitat created by a large forest fire of medium intensity. The production of irregular shaped cuts, scattered shelter patches and high diversity of age class and species stands is the prime objective.

Prime habitats, such as aquatic feeding areas, mineral licks and winter concentration areas, are vital to moose survival. These sites require more stringent cutting restrictions.

Specific habitat requirements for moose vary in Ontario because topography and climatic conditions are not the same across the Province. To ensure that timber production will not reduce the quality of moose habitat, wildlife managers will emphasize upper limits on sizes of clear-cutting operations, within the planning process for forest management. At the same time, it is recognized that not all areas can be managed to maximize both timber and wildlife production, and compromises are a vital part of the management process.

In the southern forest regions, wildlife managers will emphasize that the selection system of timber harvesting be modified to produce cuts which result in greater removal of the canopy.

Inventory and Assessment

9.0 Improve Programs of Voluntary Reporting of Information by Hunters and Phase-in a Mandatory Registration and Reporting System.

A policy where moose hunters would be required to make a report on their hunt either in person or through the mail, and register moose harvested at Natural Resources' field offices and game checking stations.

Research

10.0 Increase Research Efforts as a Base for Intensification of Management and to Measure the Effectiveness of Management Policies.

A policy where an increased effort would be made to research the productivity, predation, habitat and diseases of moose.

Hunter Education

11.0 Initiate a Voluntary Moose Hunter Education Course and Firearm Proficiency Test, and Phase-in a Mandatory Course and Test for New Moose Hunters

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A policy where the hunter is kept informed of moose management activities through a voluntary course and publications. Moose hunters would be encouraged to enroll in the 20-hour course, where the hunter would be instructed in the basics of ecology, big-game management, hunting rules and regulations. Participants would be required to take a written examination. A firearm proficiency test will also be administered. Participants would receive a certificate upon successful completion of the course. This course would be mandatory for those persons convicted of violations of the Game and Fish Act and regulations thereunder. The hunter education course and proficiency test would be mandatory for all residents of Ontario who have not hunted moose in Ontario before. Failure to pass the course examinations would disallow the hunter from purchasing a moose licence to hunt moose in Ontario.

Non-residents of Ontario would be required to submit a hunter training certificate from their province or country, which meets the minimum standards in hunter training and proficiency with firearms, as determined by the Ministry, upon application for a licence. Applicants who are from jurisdictions where approved training courses are not available would be required to complete a correspondence course provided by the Ministry before applying for an examination. The applicant must pass the examination before applying for a licence.

It is stated Government policy that the resources of Ontario belong to all the people of Ontario. However, the Government recognized its obligations under the Indian Treaties and gives primary consideration to subsistence use by Native People.

For others, the allocation would be the following:

- 12.0 Provide that All Residents of Ontario be Treated Equally.
- 13.0 Favour Residents Over Non-Residents of Ontario.
- 14.0 Favour Residents of Canada Over Non-Resident Aliens.
- 15.0 Favour the Tourist Industry by Requiring that Non-Resident Use Established Tourist Facilities and Providing for Clients of Tourist Establishments by a Special Quota of Licenses.

Principles in the allocation policy:

- The moose resource is held in trust for all residents of Ontario by the Crown in right of Ontario.
- Resource maintenance, the protection of the self-renewing production of the moose resource, must have priority over allocation. Without the resource there can be no allocation.
- After consideration of resource maintenance, moose are to be managed according to stated public priorities to produce optimum sustained benefits.
- Resource rehabilitation must be carried out if sustained benefits to residents are to follow.

- Apportionment of the moose resource must be accomplished based on a sound biological rationale.
- Allocation of portions of the resource base for recognized benefits must be made explicit.

Priorities in the allocation policy:

There are five general priorities in the explicit allocation of the moose resource of Ontario.

- To maintain and/or rehabilitate (in the case of over harvested moose populations), the moose resource for the benefit of all the people of Ontario.
- To allocate the moose resource to Indian people of Ontario for their own personal consumption according to recognized treaty rights.
- To allocate the moose resource to other residents of Ontario.
- To allocate the moose resource to the commercial tourist industry.
- To allocate the moose resource to non-residents of Ontario.

The allocation of the moose resource to the user groups for sport hunting will be consistent with the recreational and economic objectives and targets of the moose management program.

Table 1. A summary of moose harvest and the number of moose hunters in Ontario, taken from mailed survey data and from Bisset (1997), (1998) (1999) (2000).

Year	Estimated Harvest				Estimated Number of Hunters			
	Bulls	Cows	Calves	Total	Resident	Tourist Industry	Total	Number of ATVs
1965*	7,013	4,675	2,922	14,610				
1966*	6,958	4,645	2,914	14,517				
1967*	6,340	4,226	2,641	13,207				
1968*	5,784	3,856	2,410	12,050				
1969*	5,920	3,946	2,466	12,332				
1970*	5,721	3,814	2,383	11,918				
1971*	6,275	4,183	2,614	13,072				
1972	not available							
1973	7,437	5,826	4,532	17,795	82,837	2800**	85,637	
1974	6,019	4,428	3,455	13,902	80,384	2800**	83,184	
1975	5,670	4,515	3,266	13,451	82,029	2800**	84,829	
1976	5,835	4,195	1,960	11,990	75,672	2893	78,565	
1977	4,936	3,643	1,719	10,298	66,270	2388	68,658	
1978	5,427	4,856	2,401	12,684	79,209	2475	81,684	
1979	5,425	4,501	2,432	12,358	70,768	2399	73,167	
1980 ¹	3,727	3,098	1,542	8,367	71,666	1599	73,265	
1981	3,988	2,783	1,477	8,248	66,852	1270	68,122	
1982	4,497	4,407	2,154	10,699	85,629	1379	87,008	
1983²	5,097	2,484	1,468	9,049	69,775	1915	71,690	53,000 ***
1984	5,916	2,781	1,642	10,340	77,017	1817	78,834	45,000 ***
1985	5,224	2,991	1,972	10,184	76,134	2316	78,450	42,000 ***
1986	5,509	2,741	2,558	10,808	77,409	2419	79,828	40,000 ***
1987	5,568	2,474	2,718	10,760	81,489	2936	84,425	38,000 ***
1988	6,089	3,182	2,777	12,046	84,185	2370	86,855	36,000 ***
1989	5,470	2,783	2,519	10,771	87,554	2667	90,221	34,000 ***
1990	5,816	2,779	2,398	10,994	88,595	2543	91,138	31,000 ***
1991	5,889	3,071	3,043	12,005	89,249	2373	91,622	30,000 ***
1992	6,015	3,374	3,221	12,608	92,894	2222	95,116	29,000 ***
1993	5,341	2,550	3,016	10,908	90,757	2275	93,032	27,000 ***
1994	6,188	2,833	3,596	12,616	102,657	2369	105,026	27,000 ***
1995	6,166	2,366	3,764	12,745	97,998	2485	100,483	24,000 ***
1996	6,134	2216	2,198	10,594	95,396	2200**	97,596	23,000 ***
1997	4,683	1,886	3,244	9,813	92,300	2700**	95,000	22,000 ***
1998	4,991	2,053	3,885	10,929	86,400	2600 **	89,000	22,000 ***
1999	4,890	2,025	4,002	10,917	84,130	2500**	86,630	21,000 ***
2000	5,455	2,018	3,625	11,098	82,210	2500**	84,710	21,000 ***

* Total harvest (Cumming 1974), kill composition based on Timmerman and Rempel (1998)

** estimated

*** rounded to the nearest thousands

¹ 1980 was the first year that a major change in hunting regulations occurred. From 1980 to 1982 two hunters were required to put their tag on a moose. As well, seasons were shortened and placed later to avoid the rut.

² The Selective Harvest System was started in 1983.