



## RESOURCES, WILDLIFE & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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### **RE: Moose Population Monitoring Program**

The aerial survey portion of the Dehcho Moose Population Monitoring Program was conducted from 16-25 November we surveyed a total of 70 sample blocks of 16-17km<sup>2</sup> in size. The monitoring areas flown are subsets of the geospatial moose surveys flown during winter 2003/04. The monitoring areas cover approximately 4300km<sup>2</sup> in the Mackenzie Valley portion and approximately 2900km<sup>2</sup> in the Liard Valley portion. We flew coverage of 16% in both the Mackenzie Valley and Liard Valley portions of the survey, an increase from last year's coverage of about 13% as we had planned. The survey started in the north being based out of Wrigley and continued moving in a southerly direction ending in Fort Liard. Local observers from Wrigley, Fort Simpson, Jean Marie River, Nahanni Butte, and Fort Liard accompanied ENR staff on all monitoring flights. Freezing rain conditions delayed portions of the survey this year.

During the survey of the Mackenzie Valley portion of the program we saw a total of 46 moose and 12 boreal caribou. For the Liard Valley portion of the program we saw a total of 14 moose and 16 bison. Some of these animals were observed while commuting between the blocks we were sampling.

This is the second year of what we hope will continue to be an annual monitoring program jointly funded by a number of agencies as it was this year. Based upon this second attempt at surveying these monitoring blocks, we feel we have found the maximum survey coverage that we can effectively complete given the budget and winter weather/daylight conditions.

The aerial survey represents a portion of the moose monitoring program. The other key component of the program is the collection of biological samples from locally harvested moose to physically assess animal health and condition. Sampling kits were distributed amongst local harvesters and to local Band and Métis offices. Some biological samples

have already been forwarded to private labs for analysis while other samples will be forwarded at a later date.

Financial expenses for the Moose Monitoring Program are provided in the following breakdown:

**CIMP funds** (\$12,750) were applied toward the following expenses:

\$12,750: Paid for a major portion of the Air Tindi costs for positioning and depositing an aircraft in Fort Simpson and providing 39.5 hours of survey flying with a Cessna 185 survey aircraft.

Additional program costs include the following:

- Remaining costs for the air charter,
- Additional drums of AVGAS and their positioning,
- hiring local observers,
- crew travel and accommodations,
- vehicle rental in Wrigley,
- payment for the procurement of biological samples,
- costs for disease/parasite screening of fecal samples,
- costs for analysis of wolf stomachs for ungulate diet,
- tooth aging,
- laboratory and sampling supplies and equipment,
- costs of shipping,
- and other miscellaneous expenses

These expenses have been covered by funds from the ENR Biophysical Program, ENR Dehcho Biological O&M, and a contribution by Parks Canada.

Sincerely,

Nic Larter