

Wildlife inventory projects update for May 25th NE Roundtable

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The moose population in MU 7-34 does not appear to have changed between 2016 and 2022 based on the average density (0.74 +/- 0.13 moose/km² in 2016; 0.75 +/- 0.12 moose/km² in 2022).

- 2016
 - Population estimate: 1090 +/- 194
 - Density: 0.74 +/- 0.13 moose / km²
 - 22 +/- 8.1 bulls / 100 cows
 - 34 +/- 9.3 calves / 100 cows
- 2022
 - Population estimate: 1127 +/- 174
 - Density: 0.75 +/- 0.12 moose / km²
 - 33 +/- 9.7 bulls / 100 cows
 - 30.3 +/- 10.2 calves / 100 cows

MU 7-57 is more nuanced; the 2017 inventory was combined with MU 7-58 creating a joint population estimate. Both MUs were inventoried this winter; I can provide loose guidance (similar methods but not the same due to different survey efforts needed to develop a population estimate).

- 2017
 - 7-57 & 7-58 combined estimates
 - Population estimate: 948 +/- 172 moose
 - Density: 0.35 +/- 0.06 moose / km²
 - 41 +/- 11.5 bulls / 100 cows
 - 13 +/- 4.1 calves / 100 cows
 - 7-57
 - 58 bulls / 100 cows
 - 7 calves / 100 cows
 - 7-58
 - 23 bulls / 100 cows
 - 14 calves / 100 cows
 - Report comment that MU 7-58 has higher quality moose habitat, MU 7-57's habitat is largely confined to river valleys
- 2022
 - MU 7-57
 - Population estimate: 468 +/- 287 moose
 - Density: 0.24 +/- 0.15 moose / km²
 - 52 bulls / 100 cows
 - 41 calves / 100 cows
 - MU 7-58
 - Population estimate: 208 +/- 58 moose
 - Density: 0.28 +/- 0.10 moose / km²
 - 98 bulls / 100 cows
 - 33 calves / 100 cows

The 2022 combined MU 7-57 and 7-58 population estimate is lower than the 2017 survey by about 276 moose if you ignore each estimates minimum / maximum range. The moose densities have also declined in both MUs – 2017 was 0.35 moose / km²; in 2022 the densities were estimated to be 0.28 moose / km² (MU 7-58) and 0.24 moose / km² (MU 7-57). Calf survival has changed significantly – MU 7-57 has almost 6 times more calves in 2022 than 2017. MU 7-58 has approximately 2 times more calves than 2017.

MU 7-36 – the first moose inventory was completed last winter. The population estimate is 103 moose with 49 bulls per 100 cows and 38 calves per 100 cows. The density is 0.058 moose / km²

MU 7-45 – population estimate was 2,843 moose with a density estimate of 0.45 moose / km². The population demographics were 41 bulls per 100 cows and 58 calves per 100 cows.

The data analysis and reporting for MU 7-21B, 7-22, and 7-31 (composition survey) is ongoing.

Bighorn sheep in MU 7-19 have been collared to assess movement across the border into Alberta to better understand the population's habitat use, movement patterns, and develop a reliable population estimate.

Winter 2022/2023 – moose inventory funding has been confirmed for MU 7-32, 7-46, and 7-54.