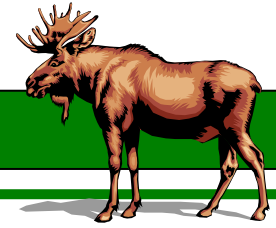




Ministry of  
Natural  
Resources

Ministère des  
Richesses  
naturelles



## Resources Report – Status of Moose in WMU 21A

March 2009

### Introduction

Resources Reports have been prepared to provide information to hunters and other members of the public on the status of moose populations in individual Wildlife Management Units (WMUs) across Ontario. These reports will be updated periodically, every one to three years, as new information becomes available.

### Description of WMU 21A

Wildlife Management Unit 21A is located east of Lake Nipigon on the north shore Lake Superior. The boundaries run along the eastern shore of Lake Nipigon and the Nipigon River to Lake Superior, along the Lake Superior Coast to Schreiber point, then south to the US border. The boundary then runs north to the Pic River. The eastern boundary follows the Pic River, then the Caramat Road to Highway 11, which is the northern boundary, but changes to the Blackwater River near Beardmore. It travels along the river back to Lake Nipigon.

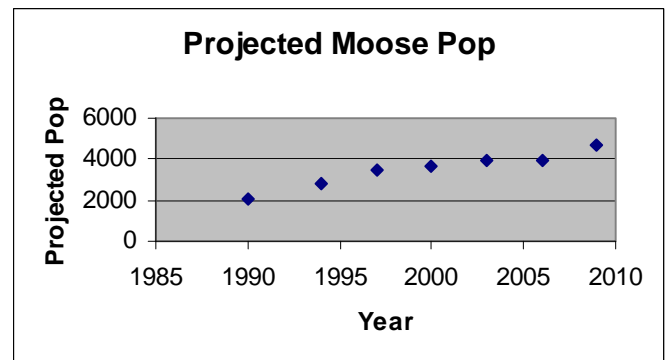
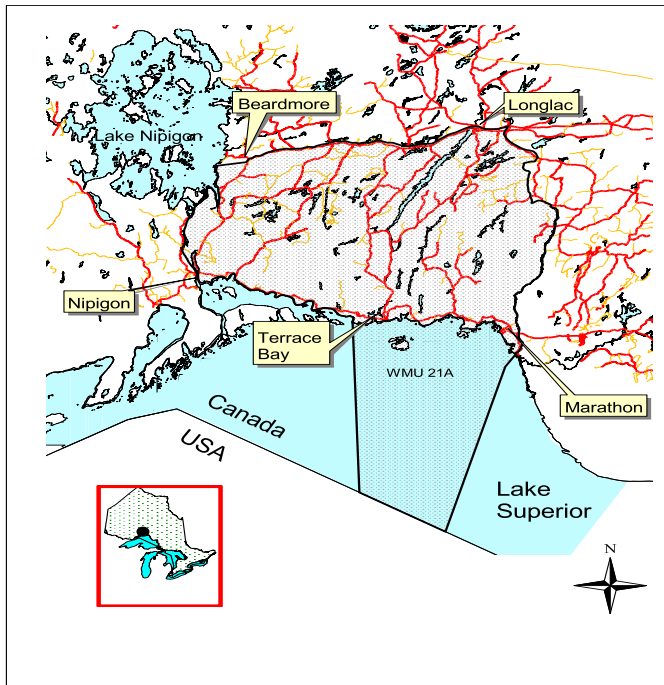
### Habitat

WMU 21A is an area of diverse geography and habitats. The area is located in the boreal forest of Northwestern Ontario. The primary tree species are black and white spruce, balsam fir, trembling aspen and white birch. Other species include cedar and pines.

The area is prime moose habitat with numerous lakes and wetlands that provide both shelter and food over the summer months. Forest operations occur over almost the entire area providing habitat for the moose and access roads for the hunter.

### Survey History and Moose Population

Since the mid 1970s WMU 21A has been surveyed regularly by air. Prior to 1990, various methods were used to survey the unit. In 1990 the province introduced a standardized survey, which is conducted every three years.



Since the standardized survey began in 1990, the Ministry of Natural Resources staff has seen a slow but steady increase in the size of the moose population, as seen in the above chart. The mid-winter population was estimated at approximately 2,070 animals in 1990 and has stabilized at an estimated 3,911 animals in 2006.

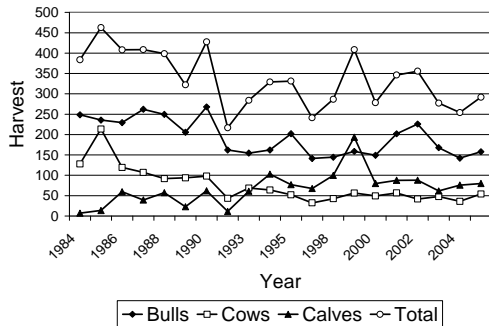
The population ratio of bulls, cows and calves has stayed relatively constant over the years at an average of 31% bulls, 54% cows and 15% calves.

## The Moose Hunt

There are two moose hunting seasons in WMU 21A. The archery hunt begins on the third Saturday in September and runs to the beginning of the rifle season on the second Saturday in October. The rifle season closes on December 15 of every year.

The good road access and relatively high number of tags available have made the WMU a popular destination for hunters. Tag fill rates for gun hunters have generally increased over the years, with the fill rate for cows higher than the fill rate for bulls. This trend has stabilized more recently. Tag fill rates for the archery hunt vary greatly, probably due to variances in the timing of the rut. The number of moose harvested by both residents and the tourist industry in WMU 21A generally ranges from 250 to 400 animals per year.

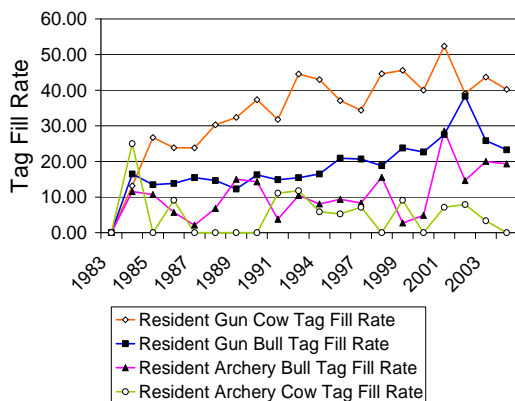
Moose Harvests (Resident and Tourist Industry) 1984-2005 - WMU 21A



## Tag Quotas

Tag quotas are adjusted annually to reflect the most recent population survey and the predicted tag fill rate. Tag fill rates have generally stabilized over the years. As the population has continued to increase slightly, the stabilized fill rate has allowed the number of available tags to increase over the past 4 years while the harvest remains sustainable. If survey results show that the herd is decreasing in size, tag numbers may need to be decreased.

Trend in Tag Fill Rates by Tag Type, 1983-2005 - WMU 21A



The guaranteed group size for bulls in the gun hunt has varied between 4 and 5 for Pool One hunters over the past few years. Guaranteed group size for cows in the gun hunt varies between 5 to 8 for Pool One hunters for the past few years. Archery guaranteed group sizes have averaged three for Pool One hunters for bulls and two for Pool One hunters for cows.

2005 Resident Moose Draw Statistics  
WMU 21A

Pool 1 Choice 1	Gun Bull	Gun Cow	Archery Bull	Archery Cow
Quota	515	128	100	112
# applicants	1747	669	199	19
Hunter/tag ratio	3.4	5.2	2.0	0.2
Guaranteed Group Size	5	5		
# of groups	308	109		
# of Hunters in Groups	1296	468		
% hunters in groups	74.2%	70.0%		
Group Success Rate (Chance of a group getting a tag)	97.7%	81.7%		
% of Hunters applying in groups associated with a tag	98.9%	87.2%		
Random Allocation Step 3 (Individuals chance of getting a tag once the group tags are removed)	46.5%	18.5%		
Individual Success Rate in a completely random draw (i.e. no guaranteed or large group allocations)	29.5%	19.1%		
Tags available in Northern Draw	27	7	5	6
# applicants in Northern Draw	102	81	0	0
Success Rate in Northern Draw	26.5%	8.6%		

## Other Wildlife

White-tailed deer are abundant in pockets along the southern portion of the WMU, primarily along the Highway 17 corridor.

Some areas along the shores and islands of Lake Superior are home to woodland caribou, remnants of herds that formerly ranged throughout the area.

## Strategy

The management strategy for WMU 21A is to at least maintain the moose population at the current level. Tag quotas will be adjusted, based on the population surveys and the tag fill rates to maintain the moose population at its current size.

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