

July 2026



Maw-lukutijik **Saqmaq**
Assembly of Nova Scotia
Mi'kmaw Chiefs

Moose Update



The Maw-lukutijik Saqmaq (Assembly), with recommendations from the Moose Management Committee and community members, have decided to **extend the moratorium on moose harvesting for another year**. This decision was difficult to make and took a lot of discussion. We understand the need to harvest to feed our families. We also know the responsibility our Nation has to protect the moose, and to make sure this species is here for future generations.

In our webinar last month, there was a lot of great feedback on whether the moose population was ready for harvesting, and if we could start back with a limited and controlled community-led harvest this Fall. In the end, the decision to close harvesting again this year is rooted in your concerns about the health of the moose population and ensuring we live by our Mi'kmaw values of conservation and protection.

Community members were clear that recovery needs to be prioritized over harvesting.

“Hearing our Nation talk about the moose like this is a strong example of asserting Mi'kmaw jurisdiction. We all care a lot about the moose population and we have been told, ‘if you do anything, make sure you do it right’.

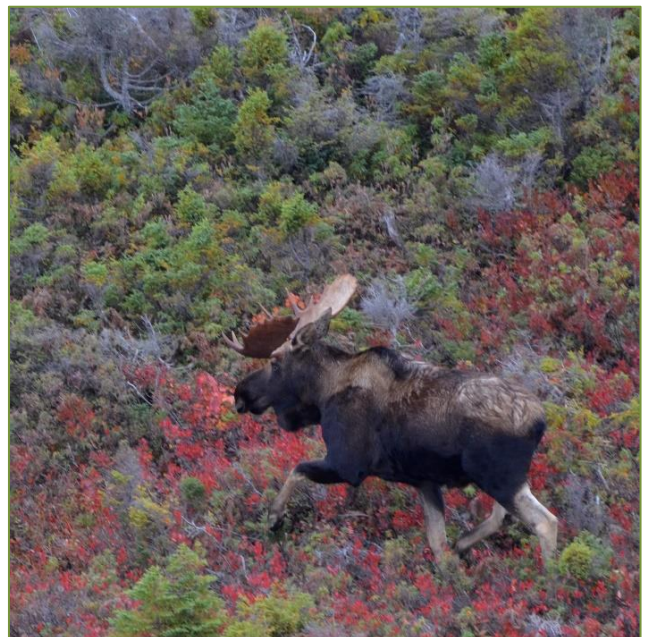
This is the right decision for the moose.”

Chief Norman Bernard, Assembly & Moose Management Committee

Moose Survey Results

Moose aerial surveys are typically done every three to four years to look at trends. The last survey was done in 2025 in all five Moose Management Zones and the Cape Breton Highlands National Park. DNR, KMK, UINR, CMM and Parks Canada all took part in the survey.

- 2025 survey showed signs of growth. Population was estimated at approximately 1,900 moose (+/-).
- Survey indicated more calves and bulls were found in the population.
- Population needs to be around 3000 to 3600 animals for a sustainable harvest.





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What happens during the Moose Population Aerial Surveys?

Surveys are done in the winter and are a cooperative operation led by the Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources (DNR), and includes Parks Canada, Kwiłmu'kw Maw-Klusuaqn (KMK), Unama'ki Institute of Natural Resources (UINR), and the Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq (CMM), covering all five Moose Management Zones and Cape Breton Highlands National Park.

In the days leading up to the survey, training is done with all participants and roles are appointed – from incident commander to safety officer, and information officer, for example.



On survey days, work begins at 7am with a weather check. If weather looks good, everyone meets at the staging area for a briefing on plans for the day.

Once in the air, crews look for moose using the distance sampling method, which involves flying lines across an area and recording the number of moose observed and their locations. This survey method calculates moose density estimates, calf/cow ratios and adult sex ratios in each region.



The data collected by the team is shared with all partners at the end of the survey.

Photos courtesy of UINR