

Project: Wildlife Harvest Data Collection Budget: 18K

CATG

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Purpose: The purpose of this project is to document the numbers of specific wildlife species harvested by season, month, and geographic location for the 2004/2005 harvest season. This project will support objectives outlined in the Yukon Flats Cooperative Moose Management Plan. This project builds upon earlier harvest data collection efforts by the Council of Athabascan Tribal Governments (CATG) in cooperation with the Office of Subsistence Management, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Objectives:

- 1) Estimate the number of moose, bears, wolves, and furbearers harvested by season, month, and geographic location from August 1, 2004 to July 31, 2005.
- 2) Estimate the percentage of households using, harvesting, hunting, receiving, and giving away moose or other meat and furs.
- 3) Estimate number of active hunters and trappers in each village.
- 4) Estimate the monthly harvest of moose by village to ensure that the harvest quota for Game Management Unit 25 (D) West is not exceeded.
- 5) Communicate the objectives of the Yukon Flats Moose Management Plan to local residents of the Yukon Flats.

Study Area: The area of interest is the Yukon Flats. The Yukon Flats is a vast wetland basin bisected by the Yukon River and includes the confluences of many major drainages including the Sheenjek, Porcupine, Black, and Chandalar rivers and Beaver and Birch Creeks. Villages surveyed in this project will be those with significant use of this region and include Beaver, Birch Creek, Canyon Village, Chalkyitsik, Circle, Fort Yukon, Stevens Village, and Venetie. Chalkyitsik is a high priority due to the lack of information from recent surveys.

Procedures: Technicians will be hired in each village to collect wildlife harvest data. Because CATG has conducted end product wildlife harvest data collection contracts since 1991 it is expected that CATG has existing capacity to begin data collection with minimal need to hire and train technicians. The project supervisor will discuss the goals, objectives, and methods of the project with each technician prior to initiation of the survey.

Household interviews will be conducted in spring 2005. Specific information collected includes the number of moose, bears, wolves, and furbearers harvested by season, month, and geographic location. Incidental harvest of unclassified game (such as porcupines) can be noted on the survey forms. Geographic location will be identified by township and range. Technicians also will document what types and amount of meat and furs a household is using, giving away, receiving, and hunting or trapping. Technicians will communicate the objectives of the Yukon Flats Moose Management Plan during each interview. Every attempt will be made to inventory 100% of households in each community; however, budget constraints may limit the inventory. (If budget constraints do limit the ability to survey 100% of Yukon Flats village households, for the village of Fort Yukon only, a subset of households may be sampled. In this instance, 50-75% of the households would be randomly selected for survey and the results will be extrapolated to represent the Fort Yukon harvest.) Survey technicians will interview the primary hunter in each household whenever possible.

Confidentiality will be assured to all participants to increase participation in the survey. Names will not be assigned to the survey form; each household will be identified by a unique household identification number. Technicians will submit the list of household identification numbers to their respective village tribal office for filing. A survey form will be completed for each household interviewed and the completed form (original or faxed copy) will be submitted to CATG for processing. Survey forms will follow the format previously established by CATG but modifications will be made to measure trapper efforts and furbearer harvest.

Technicians will be required to keep a log of their efforts in each community. A tracking sheet will outline their attempts to contact each household. Households will be identified by a household identification number and the tracking sheet will be submitted to the village tribal office and CATG for filing. The tracking log will follow previously established formats established in CATG Technical Document 03-02.

In addition to the one time household survey conducted in each village, technicians will monitor moose harvest and report this information monthly. Moose harvest will include potlatch moose. These data will be reported monthly by CATG to the FWS Liaison.

Deliverables: A monthly report will be prepared that summarizes the moose harvested in each village. In addition, a summary will be prepared annually for all species on which harvest data has been collected. The summaries will be reported to the FWS Liaison via phone, fax, or e-mail. The February 28th report will also include a summary of the moose harvested from August 25, 2004, to February 28, 2005. The report formats will follow CATG Technical Document 03-02.

Timeline: August 1, 2004 to July 31, 2005 -- Monthly summaries of moose harvested are to be reported to the FWS Liaison at the end of each month. The February 28th reporting date will include a summary of the fall/winter moose harvest (2004-2005).

Spring 2005 – Household interviews documenting harvests between August 1, 2004, and March 31, 2005, are conducted in each of eight villages or as many villages as funds allow.

April to May 2005 – Data are compiled and analyzed and a draft report is prepared. Sample data and tracking sheets from each village will accompany the draft report.

June 1, 2005 - A draft report is submitted to the Refuge Liaison for review and comment.

July 1, 2005 - A final report is submitted to the Refuge Liaison.