

## **COMPATIBILITY DETERMINATION**

**USE:** Hunting

**REFUGE NAME:** Moosehorn National Wildlife Refuge

**DATE ESTABLISHED:** July 1, 1937

### **ESTABLISHING AND ACQUISITION AUTHORITIES:**

Moosehorn National Wildlife Refuge (NWR, refuge) was established by Executive Order 7650 dated July 1, 1937 "...as a refuge and breeding ground for migratory birds and other wildlife:..."

### **REFUGE PURPOSES:**

"...as a refuge and breeding ground for migratory birds and other wildlife" Executive Order 7650

"...for use as an inviolate sanctuary, or for any other management purpose, for migratory birds." 16 U.S.C. 715d (Migratory Bird Conservation Act)

"...suitable for - (1) incidental fish and wildlife-oriented recreational development, (2) the protection of natural resources, (3) the conservation of endangered species or threatened species..." 16 U.S.C. 460k-1 (Refuge Recreation Act)

"...the conservation of the wetlands of the Nation in order to maintain the public benefits they provide and to help fulfill international obligations contained in various migratory bird treaties and conventions..." 16 U.S.C. 3901(b), 100 Stat. 3583 (Emergency Wetlands Resources Act of 1986).

Specific reason for establishment was the research and management of the American Woodcock with additional responsibilities for other migratory birds and endangered species management.

### **NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE SYSTEM MISSION:**

The mission of the National Wildlife Refuge System (Refuge System) is "to administer a national network of lands and waters for the conservation, management and, where appropriate, restoration of the fish, wildlife, and plant resources and their habitats within the United States for the benefit of present and future generations of Americans" (Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997, Public Law 105-57).

### **DESCRIPTION OF USE:**

#### **(a) What is the use? Is the use a priority use?**

The use is public hunting of big game (white-tailed deer, turkey (fall archery only), black bear, and moose, bobcat, and raccoon), upland game (ruffed grouse, red squirrel, gray squirrel, porcupine, woodchuck, skunk, fox, coyote, and snowshoe hare), upland and migratory game birds (American woodcock and Wilson's snipe), and waterfowl (ducks and geese) at Moosehorn

NWR.

Hunting was identified as one of six priority public uses by the National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act of 1966 (NWRSAA) (16 U.S.C. 668dd-668ee), as amended by the Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997, when found to be compatible.

**(b) Where would the use be conducted?**

Moosehorn NWR has held an annual deer hunt since 1954. Hunting occurs on approximately 28,122 acres. Most of the habitats that occur in hunt zones are deciduous forest, coniferous forest, or a mix of the two, as well as some shrub habitat, grasslands, and natural and managed wetlands. These habitats support small and large mammals and resident birds all year round and neotropical migratory birds during the nesting season and spring and fall migrations. No more than 40 percent of refuge lands will be open to the hunting of migratory game birds as per regulations established in the CFR (16 U.S.C. 668dd(d)(1)(A) for refuges, such as Moosehorn NWR, that have been designated, acquired, reserved, or set apart as an inviolate sanctuary (<https://www.fws.gov/guidance/sites/guidance/files/documents/605fw2.pdf>).

**Table A-1.** Existing and Expanded Hunting Opportunities on Moosehorn NWR

| Hunting Unit   | Opportunities   |
|--|---|
| Route 191 East<br>Baring (16,025 acres)              | Expanded opportunity for Fall Turkey with archery equipment only. Currently opened to white-tailed deer, black bear, and coyote. Closed to moose, bobcat, raccoon, ruffed grouse, squirrel, porcupine, woodchuck, skunk, snowshoe hare, fox, migratory game birds, waterfowl, and crow.     |
| Route 191 West<br>Baring (3,292 acres)               | Expanded opportunity for Fall Turkey with archery equipment only. Currently opened to white-tailed deer, black bear, and coyote, moose, bobcat, raccoon, ruffed grouse, squirrel, porcupine, woodchuck, skunk, snowshoe hare, fox, migratory game birds, and waterfowl. Closed to crow.     |
| Edmunds Hunt Zone<br>(5,716 acres)                   | Expanded opportunity for Fall Turkey with archery equipment only. Currently opened to white-tailed deer, black bear, and coyote, moose, bobcat, raccoon, ruffed grouse, squirrel, porcupine, woodchuck, skunk, snowshoe hare, fox, and migratory game birds. Closed to waterfowl, and crow. |
| Edmunds Hunt Zone<br>Plus Waterfowl<br>(3,090 acres) | Expanded opportunity for Fall Turkey with archery equipment only. Currently opened to white-tailed deer, black bear, and coyote, moose, bobcat, raccoon, ruffed grouse, squirrel, porcupine, woodchuck, skunk, snowshoe hare, fox, migratory game birds, and waterfowl. Closed to crow.     |

The lands within Moosehorn NWR can be classified into four different categories based on the proposal to modify the hunt program. Hunt Permits and maps of all areas open to hunting will be

available at the refuge office and designated locations, and are attached to this document. Hunting will not be permitted after March 31 and before the opening of the bear season in late summer each calendar year.

The Edmunds Division and the part of the Baring Division lying west of State Route 191 are open to American woodcock, common snipe, ruffed grouse, waterfowl, snowshoe hare, red and gray squirrel, skunk, woodchuck, porcupine, raccoon, bobcat, eastern coyote, black bear, white-tailed deer, and moose hunting. White-tailed deer hunting on these divisions include the archery, firearms, and muzzleloader seasons. Black bear may be hunted during the State prescribed season. Eastern coyote, red squirrel, and woodchuck may be hunted from October 1 through March 31, annually.

White-tailed deer hunting would also open on the portion of the Baring Division that lies east of Route 191 during the archery, firearms, and muzzleloader seasons. Black bear and coyote may be hunted incidental to the deer hunt in those areas. During the archery deer season, hunters may only use long, recurve, or compound bows.

That portion of the Edmunds Division that lies north of Hobart Stream and west of US Route 1, refuge lands that are east of US Route 1, and refuge lands that lie south of South Trail would be open to waterfowl hunting. The portion of the Baring Division lying west of State Route 191 will open to waterfowl hunting. Waterfowl hunting will not be permitted at the Nat Smith Marsh and Fields and Bill's Hill Ponds and Fields.

Areas not open to hunting are posted with "No Hunting" and/or Safety Zones and Closed Areas signs on the Baring Division. No hunting areas include the Moosehorn Game Sanctuary, Southern Gravel Pit, Headquarters Complex Safety Zone, and Magurrewock Closed Area. All areas closed to hunting will be clearly defined on refuge maps.

**(c) When would the use be conducted?**

Hunting seasons for big game (excluding turkey), small game, and migratory game birds will be in accordance with the State of Maine with the exception of red squirrel, woodchuck, and coyote. There is no closed season for these species in Maine, but they may only be hunted on refuge lands between October 1 and March 31 annually. Turkey hunting is only allowed during the fall turkey season with archery equipment. This restriction was implemented to minimize disturbance to priority wildlife species nesting on the refuge, to balance priority public uses and avoid conflicts, and to ensure a safe working environment for refuge staff and volunteers while conducting fieldwork.

We allow hunters to enter the refuge 1 hour before legal shooting hours in the morning and they must exit the refuge by 1 hour past legal shooting hours in the evening, with the exception of hunters pursuing raccoon or coyote at night. Night hunting for eastern coyotes is permitted from the beginning of the season in December through March 31. In cooperation with the State, hunting season dates and bag limits may be adjusted in the future as needed to achieve balanced wildlife population levels and to limit conflicts with other user groups.

**(d) How would the use be conducted?**

Where possible hunt methods for big game, upland game, and migratory game birds will be in

accordance with Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife (MDIFW) regulations, except for turkey hunting which will only be allowed during the fall turkey season and limited to archery only. Refuge regulations may be stricter than State regulations in some cases to ensure compatibility with refuge purposes and the mission of the Refuge System. Hunting must be conducted in accordance with State and Federal regulations, as supplemented by refuge-specific regulations (50 CFR 32.38).

Refuge hunters must also comply with the following regulations:

- Hunters will be required to sign and carry the refuge brochure. The brochure will serve as the hunting permit.
- We allow hunters to enter the refuge 1 hour before legal shooting hours, and they must exit the refuge by 1 hour past legal shooting hours, except for hunters pursuing raccoons and coyotes at night. Legal hunting hours follow State regulations.
- Hunters may only possess and use non-toxic shot while hunting migratory game birds and upland game with a shotgun.
- Use of game or trail cameras by the public is prohibited on refuge lands.
- Use of electronic calling devices and deer and moose decoys is prohibited on refuge lands.
- Baiting is not permitted on refuge lands.
- Falconry is not permitted on refuge lands.
- Only temporary or portable blinds or ladders are authorized for use on Moosehorn NWR. Tree stands may not be set up prior to the opening day of the archery deer season. Any tree stand, blind, or ladder left on the refuge overnight must be labelled with your name, address, phone number and hunting license number. Hunters must remove all tree stands, blinds, and ladders from the refuge on the last day of muzzleloader deer season.
- Migratory game bird hunters are required to remove portable or temporary blinds and decoys from the refuge following each day's hunt.
- Motorized vehicles may only be used on designated routes of travel. All vehicles must be properly registered in accordance with Maine law. Off-road vehicles are prohibited.
- Moosehorn NWR allows the use of pointing, flushing, and retrieving dogs to assist with hunting in accordance with State law. Hunters wishing to use hounds or other dogs to pursue bear, bobcat, coyote, and/or raccoon must obtain a Special Use Permit from the Refuge Manager.

### *Wilderness Area*

Portions of both divisions of the Moosehorn NWR have been designated as part of the National Wilderness Preservation System. The Edmunds Wilderness and Birch Islands Wilderness, comprising 2,706 acres, were established by Public Law 91-504 on October 23, 1970. The Moosehorn Wilderness (in the Baring Division) comprising 4,680 acres, was established by Public Law 93-632 on January 3, 1975. While hunting is permitted in both of Moosehorns' Wilderness Areas, there are several restrictions needed to comply with the Wilderness Act:

- The use of motorized and/or mechanized vehicles and equipment is prohibited in the Wilderness Areas. This includes all vehicles and items such as winches, pulleys, and wheeled game carriers. Big game animals harvested within the Wilderness Areas must be removed by hand without the aid of mechanical equipment of any type.
- The construction of permanent blinds is prohibited in the Wilderness Areas. The use of simple, temporary screens, made of dead and down native materials, or temporary commercial blinds is permitted. All temporary screens or blinds must be dismantled and/or removed at the end of each day.
- Access within the Wilderness Areas is limited to foot travel or non-motorized watercraft. Outboard motors, including electric motors are prohibited on waters within the Wilderness Areas. Vehicles may not be parked within the boundary of the Wilderness Areas. The boundaries of each Wilderness Area are depicted on the various Hunting Maps, and are posted with "Wilderness Area Boundary" signs.
- Horses and other pack animals are not permitted in Moosehorn's Wilderness Areas.

The refuge will make a reasonable effort to allow hunters access to all portions of the hunt areas. The intention is to provide safe, quality hunting opportunities that consider the welfare of the refuge wildlife resources. Access within the refuge for all hunt seasons is through walking, snowshoeing, and vehicle on designated interior roadways. All refuge properties open to hunting and refuge specific regulations will be identified in our annual hunt brochure.

### **(e) Why is the use being proposed?**

Hunting is a healthy, traditional recreational use of renewable natural resources deeply rooted in America's heritage, and it can be an important wildlife management tool. During the planning process for the draft Moosehorn NWR Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP), the Service identified a goal to provide opportunities for wildlife-dependent recreation, including hunting, where appropriate and compatible with refuge purposes.

Department of the Interior Secretarial Order 3356 directs the Service to enhance and expand public access to lands and waters on national wildlife refuges for hunting, fishing, recreational shooting, and other forms of outdoor recreation. The proposed action will promote one of the priority public uses of the Refuge System, and providing opportunities for visitors to hunt will promote stewardship of our natural resources and increase public appreciation and support for the refuge.

## **AVAILABILITY OF RESOURCES:**

There are sufficient funds within Moosehorn NWR's annual operating budget to conduct these hunts. All hunts will be conducted in accordance with existing Federal and State regulations. FWOs, the Zone Officer, and State Game Wardens with the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife will conduct periodic patrols and compliance checks. Table A-2 provides an estimate of the annual operation of the hunting program.

**Table A-2.** Funding and Staffing Requirements for the Refuge Hunt Program

| <b>Item</b>  | <b>Annual Costs</b> |
|--|---------------------|
| Kiosks with Maps and Regulations and Gate repair and maintenance       | \$1000              |
| Hunting Map/Brochure Printing  | \$500               |
| Program Administration including Annual Program Development and Review | \$2500              |
| Law Enforcement - including salary and misc. expenses                  | \$6000              |
| Signs and Posting (No Hunting Zone and Exterior Boundary)              | \$1000              |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>\$10,000</b>     |

## **ANTICIPATED IMPACTS OF THIS USE:**

Hunting has the potential to have positive or negative effects on wildlife resources and refuge visitors. A positive effect of increasing access to the refuge will be the additional wildlife-dependent recreational opportunities on refuge properties. This can translate into more widespread and stronger support for Moosehorn NWR, the Refuge System, and the Service. Although we anticipate this to be minimal, potential negative effects may include user conflict during hunting seasons.

### *Vegetation*

The number of hunters we have observed hunting on Moosehorn in recent years, and those hunting as a result of these expanded opportunities, comprise a small fraction of the refuge's total annual visitation. Hunting could negatively affect vegetation by trampling or creating footpaths, although we anticipate this effect would be minimal. We have not observed any adverse effects on refuge vegetation due to hunting and do not anticipate that opening the additional acreage will create any significant increase in hunting pressure. The physical effects on refuge vegetation from hunting are expected to be minimal based on anticipated levels of use.

Negative impacts of recreational hunting often include the temporary trampling of vegetation and light soil erosion. Most hunting activities occur during the fall, and impacts are expected to be minimal. Some hunt seasons extend into winter when plants are dormant and the ground is frozen and/or covered in snow. Hunters would have minimal impacts on plants during this period. For these reasons, hunting is expected to have minimal adverse effects on vegetation.

### *Soils*

It is anticipated that hunting on the refuge will have minor impacts to soils. The hunt program has the potential to cause some compaction and/or erosion because off-trail foot travel will

occur. However, with a limited number of hunters dispersed across the refuge during the hunting season, impacts would be minimal. At the anticipated levels of use, hunting is expected to have minimal adverse effects on soils.

#### *Hydrology (Water Resources and Wetlands)*

Hydrology impacts from hunting would be minimal and only result from the use of roads and trails. Unsurfaced trails are susceptible to a variety of impacts including vegetation loss and compositional changes, soil compaction, erosion and muddiness, exposure of plant roots, trail widening, and the proliferation of visitor created side trails (Marion and Leung 2001). However, hunters are generally dispersed; therefore, hunting is expected to have minimal adverse effects on hydrology, wetlands or soils.

#### *Other Wildlife*

Hunting can impact both target and non-target species. These impacts include direct mortality of individual animals, changes in wildlife behavior, changes in wildlife population structure, dynamics, and distribution patterns, and disturbance from noise and hunters walking on- and off-trail (Cole and Knight 1990, Cole 1990, Bell and Austin 1985). However, under the anticipated levels of use on Moosehorn NWR, these impacts are expected to be minimal. We anticipate that hunters will likely focus their efforts to the areas surrounding existing public use roads and trails, and therefore large areas of refuge land will remain undisturbed by hunters.

#### *White-Tailed Deer*

All of the refuge properties open to white-tailed deer hunting are located within MDIFW Wildlife Management Districts (WMD) 27 and 28. In 2019, hunters harvested 28,323 deer in Maine with 68 harvested in the towns that include refuge lands (0.2 percent of total Maine harvest, MDIFW 2020). MDIFW estimates there is an average harvest of 95 deer per 100 square miles of habitat in WMD 27. Within Maine, the number of deer harvested ranges from 5 to 562 deer per 100 square miles of habitat (MDIFW 2018). Given the low number of deer harvested in this region of the State, we do not anticipate that continuing to allow hunting or the opening of the additional 645 acres to hunting will have any significant effect on the number of deer harvested, or impact local or regional deer populations.

#### *Moose*

Moose populations in this region of the State are generally thought to be relatively low and, in 2019, only two moose were harvested in the towns that include refuge lands, and only three have been harvested in the same area over the past 5 years. Given the low number of moose harvested in this region of the State, we do not anticipate that continuing to allow hunting will have any significant effect on the number of moose harvested, or local or regional moose populations.

#### *Black Bear*

Black bear hunting on the refuge during the firearm season for white-tailed deer will not have any significant effect on the local or regional black bear population. In 2015, MDIFW estimated the Maine black bear population to be at least 36,000 bears. In 2019, hunters harvested 2,370 bears in Maine, with only 24 harvested by stalking and 12 harvested during the deer hunting season. Most bears harvested in Maine are taken over bait, but no baiting is allowed on refuges

in the continental U.S. so this method is not permitted at Moosehorn NWR. In particular, hunters in WMDs 27 and 28 harvested 3 bears during the 2019 firearms bear seasons (MDIFW 2020). Another 50 bears were taken with the use of trailing dogs in WMDs 27 and 28 in 2019.

#### *Turkey*

Hunting would not have a significant impact on local resident turkey populations or local, regional, or statewide turkey populations. The percentage of turkey taken on the refuge, though possibly additive, would measure a fraction of a percent of the estimated statewide turkey populations. The refuge does not provide significant amounts of huntable turkey habitat, and hunters are only likely to pursue turkey incidental to existing fall archery deer hunting opportunities. Very few hunters utilize the refuge for any species open to hunting during the archery only seasons.

#### *Small Game*

Disturbance to small game species on the refuge will occur during the hunting season, although the disturbance is considered negligible as the number of anticipated hunters is thought to be very small. Potential impacts to target species include direct mortality, injury, and changes in wildlife behavior. We anticipate that hunting pressure for small game species on the refuge will be minimal. In addition, the refuge has limited the season length and methods of take for some small game species to minimize conflicts with other users and species of conservation concern. To mitigate potential adverse impacts and to protect resident and migratory birds from accidental lead consumption, Moosehorn NWR prohibits the use of toxic ammunition for small game hunting.

#### *Upland and Migratory Game Birds and Waterfowl*

Hunting would not have a significant impact on local resident game bird populations or local, regional, or Atlantic Flyway migratory game birds or waterfowl populations. The percentage of migratory game birds or waterfowl taken on the refuge, though possibly additive, would measure a fraction of a percent of the estimated migratory game birds populations. Nat Smith Marsh, Bill's Hill Ponds and Fields are known to support locally important numbers of waterfowl during fall migration, and these areas will remain closed to waterfowl hunting. Potential impacts to target migratory game bird species include direct mortality or injury, and changes in behavior. In addition to direct mortality, hunting could result in some short-term redistribution due to disturbance. To mitigate additional adverse impacts, Moosehorn NWR prohibits the use of toxic ammunition for migratory game bird and waterfowl hunting and upland game bird hunting, to protect birds and other wildlife from accidental lead consumption. On refuges including Moosehorn, that were originally established as inviolate sanctuaries, no more than 40 percent of the area may be open to the hunting of migratory birds.

#### *Other Visitors and Users*

Under the proposed action, Moosehorn NWR would continue to be open to priority public uses including wildlife observation, environmental education, interpretation, photography, and hunting. Even with the addition of fall archery turkey hunting, there is not expected to be an increase in conflicts among user groups. The majority of our non-hunting public use during the hunting season occurs within the designated Safety Zone or on Sundays when hunting is not permitted per State regulations.

Hunting provides game meat and recreation for hunters. Hunters who come from outside the

local area also contribute to the local economy by staying at local hotels and eating in local restaurants. By providing quality-hunting opportunities on the refuge, we are helping to preserve the cultural heritage of eastern Maine where people have hunted and fished for generations.

#### *Threatened and Endangered Species*

Two federally listed species occur on, or near Moosehorn NWR: the Atlantic salmon (endangered) and the Northern long-eared bat (threatened).

The salmon listing applies to the population segment in the Dennys River. The refuge does not own any land adjacent to the river but does have lands that border Dennys Bay and Meddybemps Lake, which are within the Dennys River Watershed.

The Northern long-eared bat has been detected by acoustic monitoring at several locations on the Baring Division and Edmunds Division. This species is usually only present during the spring and summer months and moves to hibernacula in early fall. They are also usually only active from dusk to dawn and are unlikely to be seen or impacted by hunters. Only a few individuals have been detected on the refuge over the past 5 years.

Lead shot can be used on parts of the refuge for big game as detailed in the Hunting Plan, in accordance with State and refuge-specific regulations. The amount of lead introduced to the environment as a result of refuge hunting activities, however, is negligible. Lead shot may only be used for hunting big game in designated areas during the appropriate season (usually October to January). We require the use of non-toxic shot while hunting upland game and migratory game birds with a shotgun. The above listed species could not be exposed to lead shot, as they are generally not present on the refuge during the hunting seasons. The majority of big game hunters on the refuge use rifles with single lead projectiles instead of buckshot or other lead shot that has the potential to introduce numerous lead projectiles into the environment. Furthermore, many participants in the hunt will choose non-lead methods of take such as archery. We also encourage use of non-toxic alternatives, and will educate hunters and the public to the potential adverse impacts of lead.

The addition of turkey as a species available for hunting is not expected to result in any increased impacts to threatened or endangered species on and around the refuge. No new species would be exposed to the hunting program as a result of expansion. Thus, hunting activities are unlikely to adversely affect any of the above listed species.

#### **PUBLIC REVIEW AND COMMENT:**

This Compatibility Determination (CD) is part of the Moosehorn NWR Hunting Plan and the accompanying Environmental Assessment (EA). The proposal has been thoroughly coordinated with all interested and/or affected parties. Public notification and review of this CD included an 83-day comment period, from April 14 to July 6, 2021. We informed the public through local venues, the refuge website and social media. Two comment letters were received from the public. Any comments and our responses can be found in the Finding of No Significant Impact (Appendix D). No substantive modifications were incorporated into the final plan and decision documents.

**DETERMINATION (CHECK ONE BELOW):**

Use is not compatible

Use is compatible with the following stipulations

**STIPULATIONS NECESSARY TO ENSURE COMPATIBILITY:**

Moosehorn NWR will manage the hunt program in accordance with Federal and State regulations and review it annually to ensure wildlife and habitat goals are achieved and that the program is providing a safe, high quality hunting experience for participants. To ensure compatibility with refuge purposes and the mission of the Refuge System, hunting will occur on the Moosehorn NWR under the refuge-specific regulations shown below:

- We allow hunters to enter the refuge 1 hour before legal shooting hours in the morning and they must exit the refuge by 1 hour past legal shooting hours in the evening.
- We only allow portable or temporary stands, blinds, and decoys. Any tree stand, blind, or ladder left on the refuge overnight must be labelled with your name, address, phone number and hunting license number.
- Tree stands may not be set up prior to the first day of the archery deer season and may not be placed within 50 yards of a road open to motorized vehicles. Stand(s), blind(s), and/or ladder(s) must be removed from the refuge on the last day of the muzzleloader deer season.
- Migratory game bird hunters are required to remove portable or temporary blinds and decoys from the refuge following each day's hunt.
- We allow the use of dogs consistent with State regulations, except hunters pursuing bears, raccoons and/or coyotes with dogs must register with the refuge.
- The hunter must retrieve all species harvested on the refuge.
- We allow eastern coyote, red squirrel, and woodchuck hunting only from October 1 to March 31.
- Coyote may only be hunted with muzzleloaders during the deer muzzleloader season on the Baring Division east of Route 191.
- We require the use of non-toxic shot while hunting upland game and migratory game birds with a shotgun.
- We prohibit motorized or mechanized vehicles and equipment in designated Wilderness Areas. This includes all vehicles and items such as winches, pulleys, and wheeled game carriers. Animals harvested within the Wilderness Areas MUST be removed by hand

without the aid of mechanical equipment of any type.

We will continue to maintain a safe hunt by enforcing Safety/No Hunt zones around refuge residences, buildings, and popular public use trails. During the hunting season, we will provide a law enforcement presence to ensure safety and compliance.

**JUSTIFICATION:**

Hunting is a priority wildlife-dependent use for the Refuge System through which the public can develop an appreciation for fish and wildlife. Service policy is to provide expanded opportunities for wildlife-dependent uses when compatible and consistent with sound fish and wildlife management and ensure that they receive enhanced attention during planning and management.

Hunting satisfies a recreational need, but hunting on national wildlife refuges can also be an important, proactive management action that can prevent overpopulation and the deterioration of habitat. Disturbance to other species would occur, but this disturbance is generally short-term. Suitable habitat exists on refuge lands to support hunting as proposed.

This activity would not conflict with any of the other priority public uses or adversely impact biological resources. Therefore, through this CD process, we have determined that hunting on Moosehorn NWR, in accordance with the stipulations provided above, is a compatible use that will not materially interfere with, or detract from, the fulfillment of the Refuge System mission or the purpose(s) of the refuge.

**SIGNATURE:**

Refuge Manager:



(Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_

(Date)

**CONCURRENCE:**

Regional Chief:



(Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_

(Date)

**MANDATORY 15-YEAR RE-EVALUATION DATE:**

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