2014 - JCR Evaluation Form

SPECIES: Moose

PERIOD: 6/1/2014 - 5/31/2015

HERD: MO201 - ABSAROKA

HUNT AREAS: 8-9, 11

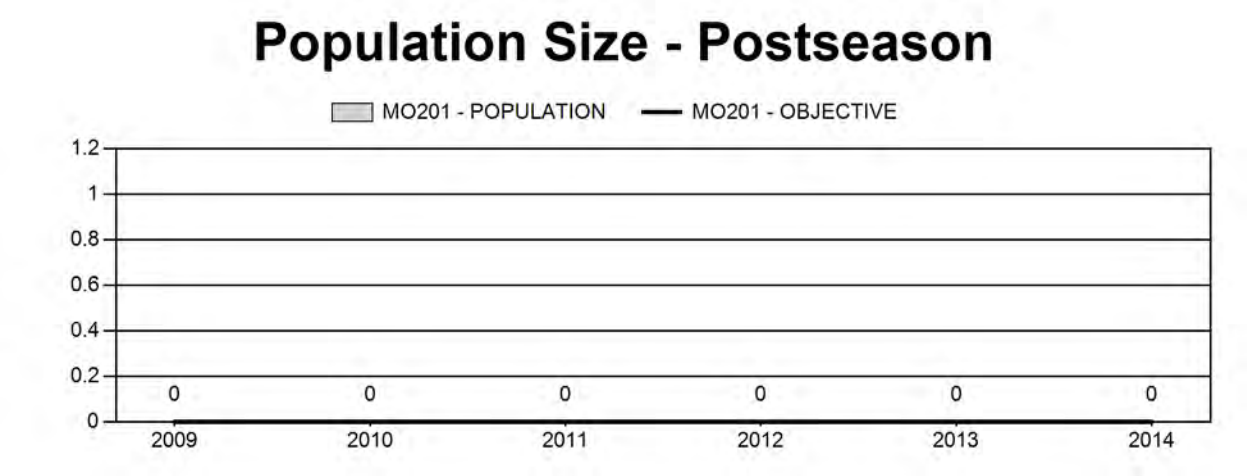
PREPARED BY: DOUG MCWHIRTER

	2009 - 2013 Average	2014	2015 Proposed
Population:	0	N/A	N/A
Harvest:	9	10	10
Hunters:	10	11	10
Hunter Success:	90%	91%	100 %
Active Licenses:	10	11	10
Active License Success:	90%	91%	100 %
Recreation Days:	75	102	90
Days Per Animal:	8.3	10.2	9
Males per 100 Females	0	0	
Juveniles per 100 Females	0	0	

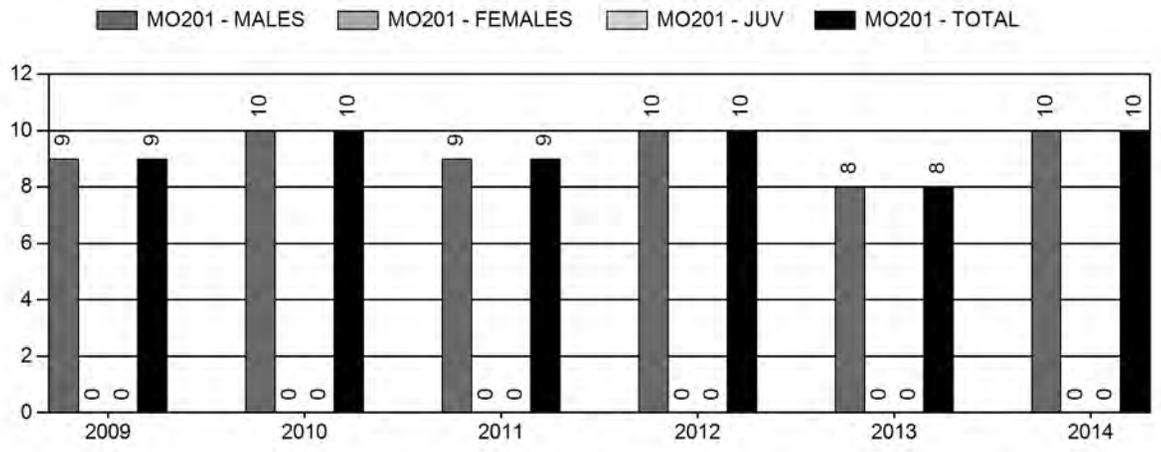
Population Objective (± 20%) :	0 (0 - 0)
Management Strategy:	Special
Percent population is above (+) or below (-) objective:	N/A%
Number of years population has been + or - objective in recent trend:	0
Model Date:	None

Proposed harvest rates (percent of pre-season estimate for each sex/age group):

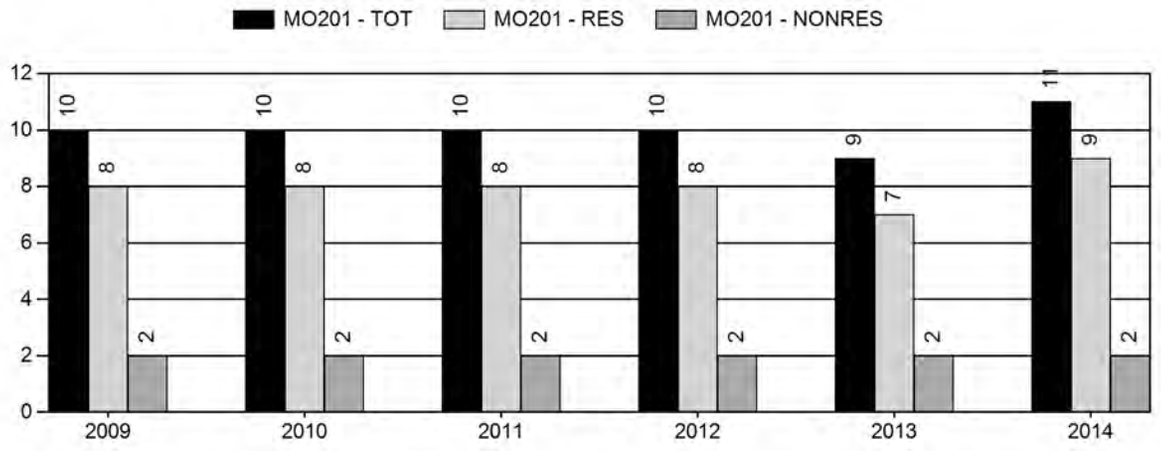
	JCR Year	Proposed
Females ≥ 1 year old:	N/A%	N/A%
Males ≥ 1 year old:	N/A%	N/A%
Juveniles (< 1 year old):	N/A%	N/A%
Total:	N/A%	N/A%
Proposed change in post-season population:	N/A%	N/A%



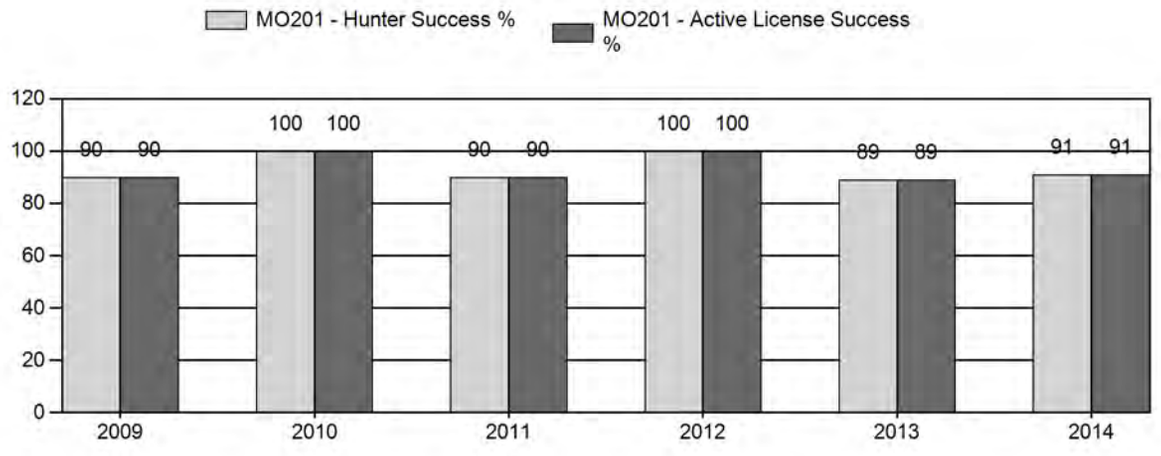
Harvest



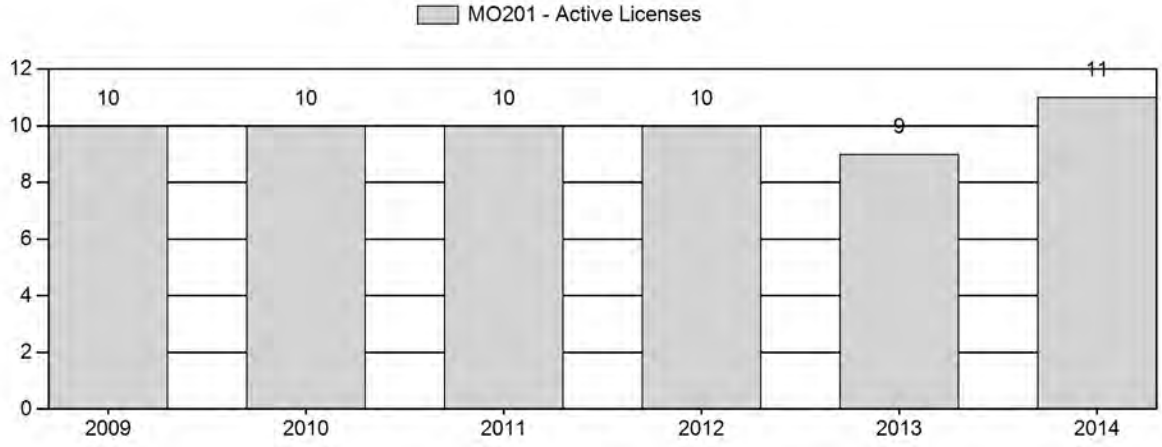
Number of Hunters



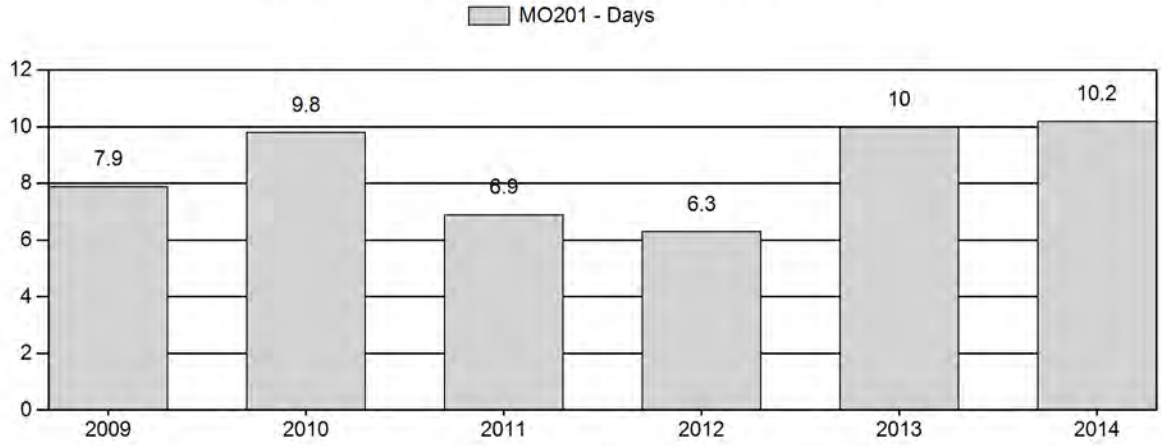
Harvest Success



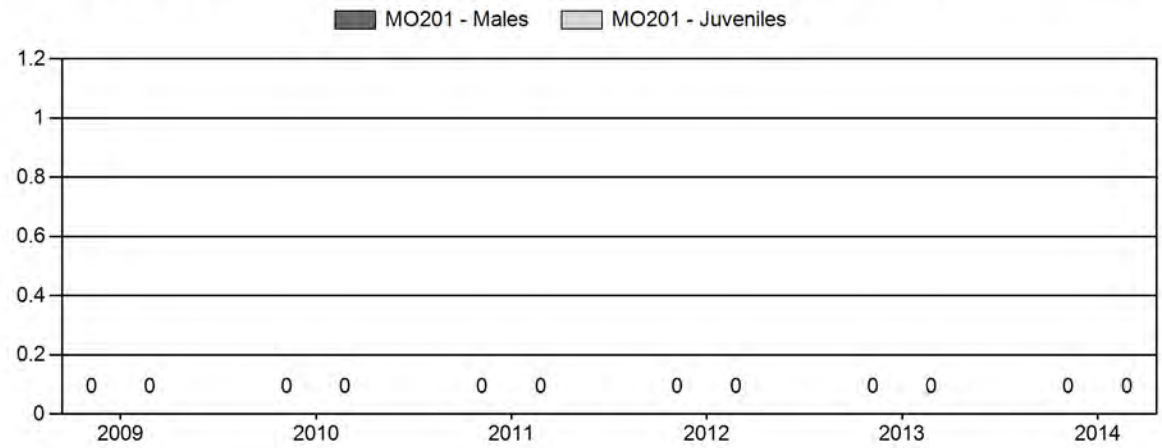
Active Licenses



Days per Animal Harvested



Postseason Animals per 100 Females



2015 HUNTING SEASONS
ABSAROKA MOOSE HERD (MO201)

Hunt Area	Type	Dates of Seasons Opens	Closes	Quota	Limitations
8		CLOSED			
9	1	Oct. 1	Oct. 31	5	Limited quota; antlered moose
11	1	Sep. 10	Nov. 10	5	Limited quota; antlered moose
Archery					
9		Sep. 1	Sep. 30		Refer to Section 3 of this Chapter
11		Sep. 1	Sep. 9		Refer to Section 3 of this Chapter

Hunt Area	Type	Quota change from 2014
		No Change
Total		**No Change**

Management Evaluation
Current Median Age Objective: ≥ 4.5 years
Current Hunter Effort Objective: ≤ 12 days
Current Secondary Median Age Objective: 40% ≥ 5 years
Management Strategy: Special
Most Recent 5-Year Running Average Median Age: 5.5 years
Most Recent 5-Year Running Average Hunter Effort: 10.2 days
Most Recent 5-Year Running Average % ≥ 5 Years: 60%

Herd Unit Issues. Due to very low moose densities and the resulting lack of population data, there is no postseason population estimate for this herd unit. Six previously existing moose herd units (Thorofare, Crandall, Sunlight, North Fork, South Fork, Greybull/Gooseberry) were combined in 2003 to create the Absaroka Moose Herd Unit. In 2008 Hunt Areas 11, 12, 13, and 31 were combined to form the current Hunt Area 11. Hunt Area 9 (Greybull River and Gooseberry Creek drainages) and Hunt Area 8 (Thorofare, which has been closed since 2006) represent the remaining hunt areas in this herd unit. Management direction at the current time is to allow some moose hunting opportunity while encouraging moose numbers to grow, or at least be maintained.

Weather. The influence of weather on moose population dynamics in the Absaroka and Beartooth Mountains is unknown. Most areas occupied by moose in this herd unit do not experience significant snow depths, and when and where that does occur, movement to more favorable areas is possible. On the other hand, because good moose habitats are so limited in this herd unit, weather conditions that negatively impact these habitats may have a significant role.

Habitat. No habitat monitoring data is collected in this herd unit. Moose habitats throughout the Absaroka Mountains vary widely from expansive, willow-covered flood plains and remote wilderness setting of the Thorofare, to rather narrow ribbons of riparian habitats along the Absaroka Front. Lack of expansive willow-

riparian habitats along most of this herd unit has made increased use of spruce-fir forest types a necessity for moose compared to other areas. Major portions of this herd unit burned in 1988 and effects of significant habitat changes from these fires on this habitat type specifically have generally been detrimental to moose. Recent drought has presumably had a negative effect on moose survival and recruitment, as have increasing numbers of large predators. It is suspected that the combination of habitat loss, drought, and predation has negatively influenced moose in most portions of this herd unit.

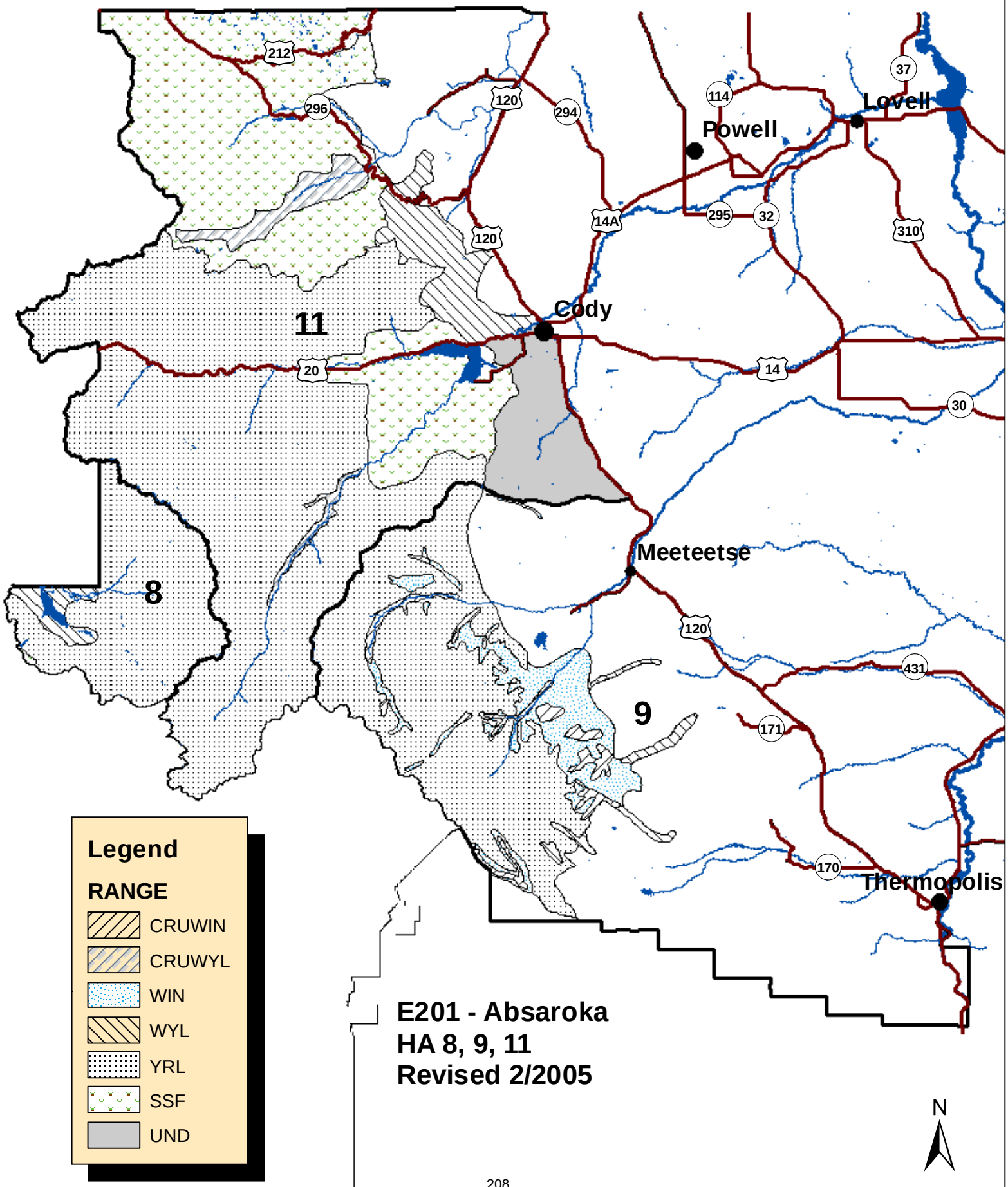
Field Data. None exists for this herd unit. Because moose exist at such low densities in this herd unit, collection of classification and trend information is essentially impossible. The last comprehensive effort was in 2004, when 9.3 hours of helicopter survey time was spent to survey the entire herd unit and only 32 moose were observed.

Harvest Data. Management of moose in the Absaroka Moose Herd Unit since its creation in 2003 has remained similar, with 5 permits issued in Hunt Area 9 and 5 permits issued in Area 11. An average of 8-10 bulls/year are taken by hunters, and hunter effort usually ranges from 8-10 days per moose harvested. Moose hunters generally observe an average of 8-12 moose during their hunt.

In 2014, hunter success was 83% (5/6) in Area 9 and 100% (5/5) in Area 11. There were 6 hunters in Area 9 due to a medical carry-over from 2013. Aged animals from Area 9 included a 6.5 bull and a 7.5 year bull, while aged animals from Area 11 included a 3.5, a 4.5, and a 5.5 year old bull. Hunter effort was 11.2 days/moose harvested in Area 9 and 9.2 days/harvested moose in Area 11. Hunter in 2014 saw an average of 11.0 moose during their hunt.

Population. Because the collection of survey data is difficult, if not impossible to collect, both population estimate and trend count based objectives are not possible. Therefore, herd unit objectives based on median age of harvested bulls and a running average of hunter effort were adopted in 2014. The objective for median age of harvested bulls is $\geq$ 4.5 years, while the 5-year running average (2009-2014) is 5.5 years of age. A secondary median age objective is to have $\geq$ 40% of harvested bulls be at least 5 year old, while the 5-year running average (2009-2014) is 60%. The hunter effort objective is to have less than 12 days per moose harvested, while the 5-year running average (2009-2014) is 10.2 days.

The current season structures in Hunt Areas 9 and 11 are addressing moose management goals. Therefore, 5 permits will be issued for Hunt Area 9 and 5 permits for Hunt Area 11 for 2015, which should result in the harvest of 9-10 bull moose.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Legend
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E201 - Absaroka
HA 8, 9, 11
Revised 2/2005
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