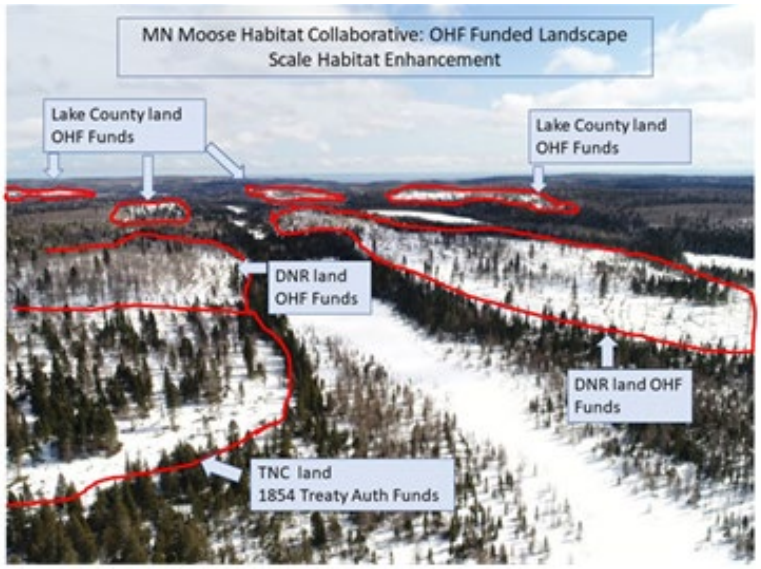
Minnesota Moose Habitat Collaborative
LSOHC - FY22 Phase IV grant

Summary

As a result of the Minnesota Moose Advisory Committee Report (2009) and related Minnesota Moose Research and Management Plan (Moose Plan, 2011), a group of federal, state, and county land administrators as well as tribal, university, and non-governmental organizations formed a Moose Habitat Collaborative in 2012. Primary purpose of that effort has been to coordinate the planning, assessment, and management of moose habitat in NE Minnesota on a landscape/site scale, and to seek additional funding sources for that effort. That has led to the Collaborative successfully securing Outdoor Heritage Funds through LSOHC's grant process for a Phase I grant (FY13, 2,049 acres, $914,100), Phase II grant (FY14, 5,164 acres, $1,996,400), and a Phase III grant (FY19, 11,466 acres, $1,920,000).

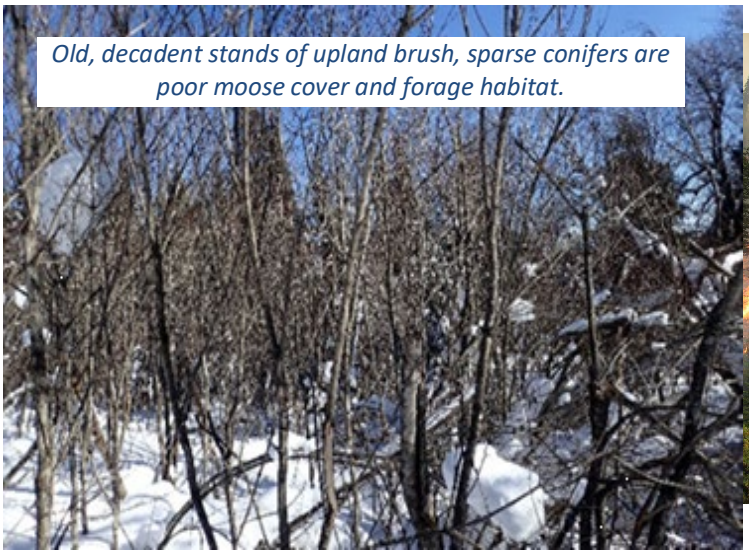
While there are several factors that may be contributing to the recent decline in Minnesota's moose population, adequate habitat is the primary base that serves to sustain and hopefully increase that population. To build on the ~17,440 acres of enhanced moose habitat that has been completed to date under Phase I-III grants, Moose Habitat Collaborative partners proposed and were authorized a Phase IV grant for $1,809,000 from the Outdoor Heritage Fund to enhance/treat an additional ~8,800 acres of moose winter/summer cover and foraging habitats in northeast Minnesota. As with previous Phase I-III grants, this efforts goal is to increase forest stand complexity and production while also maintaining thermal (moose cover) components of the landscape with variable density planting methods. The back side of this handout notes photo examples of decadent moose habitat; grant use of prescribed fire as a method to naturally regenerate moose cover and forage habitat; and grant use to establish mixed forest stands, enhance moose habitat when/where prescribed fire is not an option (i.e. site prep, hand planting, browse protection, and release efforts). These methods will be used in conjunction with non-grant timber sales to increase occurrence and size of early successional forest patches for moose and other wildlife.



Collaborative Partners

Federal: Superior National Forest (SNF)
State: Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Division of Forestry & Division of Fish and Wildlife
Counties: Cook, Lake; St. Louis
Tribal: 1854 Treaty Authority; Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa
University: University of Minnesota Duluth, Natural Resources Research Institute (UMD, NRRI)
Non-government organizations (NGOs): Ruffed Grouse Society, The Nature Conservancy, Minnesota Deer Hunters Association

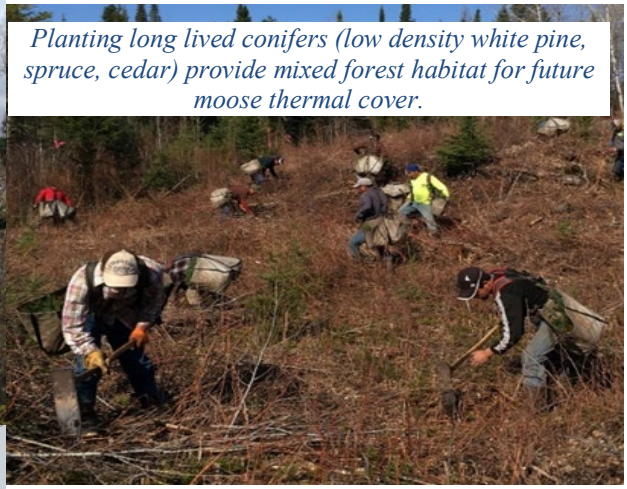
If we build it, they will come!



Old, decadent stands of upland brush, sparse conifers are poor moose cover and forage habitat.

Prescribed fire provides a natural mix of moose cover and forage.

Site prep through brush mowing, winter shearing regenerate high quality browse; site for mixed conifer establishment.



Planting long lived conifers (low density white pine, spruce, cedar) provide mixed forest habitat for future moose thermal cover.

Bud capping provides deer browse protection.

Brush saw release provides an additional flush of browse regeneration, increases conifer survival.