

### 2016-2017 PROJECT PLAN SUMMARY

<b>Project Name:</b>	<b>B1-1-2 Core Ungulate Monitoring</b>
<b>Type of Project:</b>	Long term
<b>Delivery Agent:</b>	Alberta Environment and Parks
<b>Project Contact:</b>	Simon Slater (AEP) <a href="mailto:simon.slater@gov.ab.ca">simon.slater@gov.ab.ca</a>
<b>Budget:</b>	\$ 380,000

#### **Project Description:**

Alberta Environment and Parks (AEP) is committed to delivering the enhanced aerial ungulate (moose and deer) monitoring component of the Oil Sands Monitoring Initiative and the Lower Athabasca Regional Plan land-use framework. The enhanced moose and deer monitoring component involves increasing the number of aerial ungulate surveys within the oil sands region. Aerial surveys provide critical information to assess the population size, distribution and trends in addition to examining the impacts of harvesting, predation or other disturbances related to land use on ungulate populations.

#### **Project Objectives:**

The objective of this OSM program is to increase the sampling frequency to five year regular intervals to better understand ungulate population trends within the oil sands regions. The surveys are designed to estimate the population size and density of moose and deer in Wildlife Management Units (WMUs); this is used to determine age, sex ratios and antler classification of moose and deer where possible.

#### **Key Outcomes:**

- Provide essential information for Lower Athabasca Regional Plan biodiversity indicators and performance measures
- Contribute to future state of the environment reporting
- Inform Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) and subsequent monitoring requirements of industrial approval holders
- Deliver population estimates necessary for allocation decisions on deer and moose.

As these surveys continue, the project team will quantify the relations between variation in population trends and habitat conditions. Data collected from the program can support reporting on an indicator for moose currently being developed for the Lower Athabasca Region (LAR) Biodiversity Management Framework (BMF).

#### **Geographic Scope:**

Ungulate monitoring will occur in the Lower Athabasca Region, Upper Athabasca Region, Lower Peace Region and the North Saskatchewan Region. Specific WMUs to be surveyed will be scoped during the summer, but are subject to change due to snow conditions and availability of required air transport.

#### **Associated Data and Reports:**

All survey data are submitted to the AEMERA/AEP Data Library and the AEP Fish and Wildlife Management Information System (FWMIS). Wildlife Management Unit (WMU) reports for 2015-2016 will be provided.