

**** Moose Overwintering Habitat Use on Monument Ridge, Wyoming (Poster)**

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It is important to investigate the effects of management on non-target species which may be detrimentally affected by management for other species. The Bridger-Teton National Forest is conducting thinning and prescribed burning of forest stands on Monument Ridge in western Wyoming to promote aspen regeneration for mule deer and elk fawning and calving habitat and to reduce the risk of wildfire near urban areas. As a significant remaining patch of mixed conifer forest after the 2018 Roosevelt Fire, which burned nearly 65,000 acres, Monument Ridge is thought to be an important location for wintering moose. However, the effects of this management on moose in the area are unknown. Conifer removal may be detrimental to overwintering moose since conifer cover reduces snow depth and decreases energetic costs of movement across a landscape. Increased cover may also create a warmer microclimate in one of the coldest places in the continental United States, and subalpine fir may be an important food source for moose populations which do not winter in riparian willow habitat. We used photos from 24 motion-triggered camera traps to assess moose utilization of thinned and wildfire burned sites relative to untreated areas over the 2021-2022 winter, from October 1 to April 30. We hypothesize that moose occupancy will be positively related to conifer cover and negatively related to burned areas.