

Mr. Greg Farrant  
Manager, Government Affairs & Policy  
Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters

Dear Mr. Farrant:

Attached is the Conservative Party of Canada's response to the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters 2015 Federal Election Questionnaire. We have a strong track record of supporting Canada's heritage activities and a re-elected Conservative Government will continue to support hunting, trapping and fishing.

Sincerely,

**Jenni Byrne**  
National Campaign Manager  
Conservative Party of Canada

**Question 1: What is your party's position on fishing, hunting, and trapping?**

The Conservative Party of Canada fully recognises the contribution of Canada's hunters and anglers to Canadian history and society as well as to our environment, and our economy. We know that fishing, hunting, and trapping are more than recreational activities – they are key economic drivers in many communities across the country. Our party also fundamentally shares the commitment hunters and anglers have to conservation. As the Prime Minister has said: "A Conservative is a conservationist...we have a duty to make Canada better by conserving and adding to what our ancestors have built for us." We have enshrined this view in law and look forward to celebrating Canada's first ever National, Trapping, Fishing, and Heritage Day on September 15th, 2015.

**Question 2: If elected, will your government end all funding for cervid (deer and elk) farm industry and commit to banning cervid farms, the primary vector for the spread of Chronic Wasting Disease, with compensation for the owners?**

A re-elected Conservative Government will continue to recognise the threat posed by Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) to both farmed and wild cervid populations in Canada. The Canadian Food Inspection Agency has robust surveillance regime and testing is required in the Prairie Provinces and the Yukon. The Agency will take action if any animal tests positive for CWD or if an animal is at high risk of exposure.

In December of last year, our Conservative Government announced a combined investment of \$1.16 million from the federal and Saskatchewan governments to Pan-Provincial Vaccine Enterprise (PREVENT) to help develop a new vaccine against Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD). This vaccine will help revitalise herds ravaged by the disease.

A re-elected Conservative Government will continue to take action against CWD.

**Question 3: If you form the next Government, will you commit to increasing the Canadian funding envelope for the Great Lakes Fishery Commission Sea Lamprey Control Program to the same level provided by the US?**

and

**Question 11: If you form the next government, will you commit to establishing a permanent and dedicated funding program to fight the threat of invasive species?**

Our Government has committed over \$14 million annually to combat aquatic invasive species across Canada, including the Sea Lamprey Control Program in the Great Lakes. Through sustained efforts, Canada and the U.S. have reduced the populations of Sea Lamprey in the Great Lakes by 90 percent, and have stopped any further spread of this invasive species.

Our Conservative Government recently passed the Aquatic Invasive Species Regulations to safeguard Canada's waterways from the spread of aquatic invasive species. The

regulations are designed to help prevent the entry and control the spread and establishment of aquatic invasive species in Canadian waters, including Asian carp, Zebra and Quagga mussels as well as Sea Lamprey.

Earlier this year our Conservative Minister of the Environment hosted the Federal-Provincial-Territorial Ministers' Meeting on Conservation, Wildlife and Biodiversity. One outcome was an agreement to establish a representative federal-provincial-territorial task force to support future collaborative efforts to fight against invasive alien species in Canada.

A re-elected Conservative Government would continue to take action against invasive alien species that pose a risk to the Canadian economy and environment.

**Question 4: If you form the next Government, will you work with OFAH and other stakeholders across the country to explore ways to ensure that Canadians have continued access to our lakes, river, and streams?**

The public right of navigation is protected in Canada, regardless of whether the waterway in question is a scheduled body under the *Navigation Protection Act*. A re-elected Conservative Government will work with OFAH and other stakeholders to ensure they have continued access to our lakes, rivers, and streams.

**Question 5: If elected, will your government commit to supporting the Hunting and Angling Advisory Panel (HAAP) and the work of the panel to protect, enhance and support the sustainable use of fish and wildlife across Canada?**

Prime Minister Stephen Harper announced the creation of the Hunting and Angling Advisory Panel (HAAP), which ensures that your group, and the people you represent, get direct input into government policies. A re-elected Conservative Government will continue to support the vital role played by the Hunting and Angling Advisory Panel.

So far the HAAP meetings have resulted in productive discussions on a variety of issues, such as Migratory Bird and aquaculture regulations, invasive species, the Recreational Fisheries Conservation Partnerships Program (RFCPP), and promoting hunting and fishing in Canada.

In fact the panel played an important role in meeting our 2013 Speech from the Throne commitment to protect Canada's rich natural heritage through the creation of a National Conservation Plan. The National Conservation Plan was announced by Prime Minister Stephen Harper and invests \$252 million to conserve, restore, and promote Canada's natural environment for present and future generations.

**Question 6: If you form the next government, will you work with the OFAH and other stakeholders to ensure sustainable fishing and hunting opportunities remain in the Marine Protected Areas and are enhanced in the National Parks and National Wildlife Areas?**

A re-elected Conservative Government will work with OFHA and other stakeholders through the Hunting and Angling Advisory Panel to further explore the issue of sustainable harvesting in our National Parks, Marine Protected Areas, and National Wildlife Areas.

**Question 7: If you form the next government, will you continue funding for the RFCPP (Recreational Fisheries Conservation Partnerships Program) and create a dedicated program to support wildlife habitat and enhancement in Canada?**

A re-elected Conservative Government would continue to support the restoration of recreational fishing habitat. The RFCPP was first announced in Budget 2013 and provided \$10 million. After its early success and high demand, it was supplemented in Budget 2014 with an additional \$15 million. To date, approximately 300 recreational fisheries habitat restoration projects across Canada and nearly 150 proponents have received support from this program. Our \$18 million investment has been leveraged to produce restoration projects valued at more than \$34 million.

Budget 2015 renewed the Recreational Fishery Conservation Partnership Program at \$10M for three years. A re-elected Conservative Government would also support wildlife habitat enhancement in Canada as recently announced.

**Question 8: If elected, will you commit to ensuring that stakeholders and the public have an opportunity to provide meaningful input into discussions around land claims that affect them, and establish a funding envelope to allow non-Aboriginal groups and individuals to access funds to assist them in representing their interest during the claims process?**

Our Government believes that the best way to resolve outstanding Aboriginal rights and title claims is through negotiated settlements that balance the interests of all Canadians, including the interests of hunters, fishers and anglers. A re-elected Conservative Government will continue to work with stakeholders to resolve land claims with an aim to creating a positive investment climate and creating potential for economic development, jobs and growth.

**Question 9: If you form the next government, will you commit to not restoring a long gun registry for non-restricted rifles and shotguns, and work with stakeholder groups representing law-abiding firearms owners to continue firearms reforms that recognize the legitimate ownership and use of legal firearms in Canada?**

The Conservative Government under Prime Minister Stephen Harper abolished the long-gun registry and we will never bring it back. It was ineffective in protecting public safety, illegitimately targeted legal and law-abiding firearms owners and cost billions of dollars to implement. It was bad public policy which poisoned the relationship between the federal government and rural Canada while having no impact on the criminal use of firearms.

Our Government's approach has been to pursue initiatives which target the criminal use of firearms, such as imposing mandatory minimum sentencing for firearms related offences,

while reducing unnecessary burdens on lawful firearms owners. Toward that end we have enacted the *Common Sense Firearms Licensing Act* which:

- Creates a six-month grace period at the end of the five-year licence period to stop people from immediately becoming criminalized for paperwork delays around license renewals;
- Eliminates the Possession Only Licence (POL) and converts all existing POLs to Possession and Acquisition Licences (PALs);
- Makes Authorizations to Transport a condition of a licence for certain routine and lawful activities such as target shooting; taking a firearm home after a transfer; going to a gunsmith, gun show, or a Canadian port of exit; or to a peace officer or a Chief Firearms Officer (CFO) for verification, registration or disposal;
- Facilitates the sharing of firearms import information when restricted and prohibited firearms are imported into Canada by businesses;
- Makes classroom participation in firearms safety courses mandatory for first-time licence applicants;
- Provides for the discretionary authority of Chief Firearms Officers (CFOs) to be subject to the regulations;
- Strengthens *Criminal Code* provisions relating to orders prohibiting the possession of firearms where a person is convicted of an offence involving domestic violence; and
- Provides the Governor-in-Council with the authority to prescribe firearms to be non-restricted or restricted (such prescribing will be informed by independent expert advice).

As we have in the past, a re-elected Conservative Government is committed to working closely and cooperatively with hunting, trapping, angling and conservation organizations to continue to develop sensible conservation and firearms policies which, while maintaining public safety, protect the rights of Canada's law-abiding firearm owners and ensure that Canadians of future generations have the opportunity to experience and enjoy our Great Canadian Outdoors.

**Question 10: If elected, will your government provide a dedicated funding source for non-government organisations to acquire lands that will remain available for public use, particularly heritage activities?**

Our Government has made substantial investments to support the acquisition of lands by non-profit organisations for the purposes of conservation. As part of our National Conservation Plan, which was developed with significant input from the Hunting and Angling Advisory Panel, our Conservative Government invested another \$100M in the Natural Areas Conservation Program with the Nature Conservancy of Canada. Most of the lands acquired by the Nature Conservancy of Canada are open to the public, including for hunting and fishing. A re-elected Conservative Government would continue these investments and ensure, as much as possible, that acquired lands remain available for public use, including for heritage activities.