

## NDP Response: Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters

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

**NDP Response:** New Democrats support and encourage Canadians to spend time enjoying Canada's great outdoors. We see it as a privilege that Canada's vast unspoilt wilderness allows Canadians to continue these traditional activities.

New Democrats recognize and salute the fact that hunters and trappers continue to play an important role in the conservation of wildlife habitat— one that complements the vital and significant work carried out by government agencies through regulation, enforcement, research and environmental monitoring and protection. It is with this responsibility of ensuring a sustainable environment that the federal government can play its most important role. Almost eight million Canadians trap, hunt or fish — valuable activities that contribute close to \$15 billion to Canada's economy every year.

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

**NDP Response:** Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) is a threat to not only farmed animals, but also to wild species. Disease from farms can spread to wild populations through a number of means, including escapes. The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) has the responsibility to monitor and research CWD in farmed animals but cuts made by the Conservative government, resulting in fired scientists and reduced research capacity, have made it impossible for the CFIA to carry out its mandate properly. As a result, the likelihood of a spread from farmed populations to wild ones has increased.

A New Democrat government would invest in researchers to ensure CFIA decisions would be based on thorough scientific review. The NDP would consult with stakeholders, prior to any decision on the future of commercial practices.

*Question 3. If you form the next government, will you commit to increasing the Canadian funding envelope for the GLFC Sea Lamprey Control Program to the same level provided by the U.S.?*

**NDP Response:** For more than 50 years, Canada and the US have collaborated through the Great Lakes Fishery Commission to conduct the world's largest ongoing invasive species control program which is aimed at suppressing sea lamprey in the Great Lakes. The program has contributed to a restoration and the support of both commercial and recreational fisheries in the Great Lakes. Although the program is not cheap, these activities have contributed \$1.2 billion to the Canadian economy alone. Canada must do its fair share to maintain this worthwhile program.

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

**NDP Response:** The right to navigation is one of the oldest and most fundamental principles of common law, supporting the ideal of the public trust in Canada. The Conservative government's changes to the Navigable

Waters Protection Act (NWPA), however, mean now only 62 rivers and canals, and 97 lakes are deemed worthy of federal protection under the new “Navigation Protection Act”. That leaves thousands of waterways not covered, meaning fewer environmental reviews and no guarantee of access or navigation. Of Canada’s 37 designated Canadian Heritage Rivers, only 10 are now covered by law.

A New Democrat government would reverse the changes made to the NWPA, and restore protection and navigation rights to waterways in Canada.

*Question 5. If elected, will your government commit to supporting HAAP and work with the panel to protect, enhance and support the sustainable use of fish and wildlife across Canada?*

**NDP Response:** New Democrats are committed to the sustainable use of our resources, and in promoting best practices in ecosystem and wildlife management. We believe public participation in decision making is essential, and will consult with key stakeholders and welcome the recommendations of advisory panels like the Hunting and Angling Advisory Panel on enhancing fish and wildlife populations in Canada.

*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 Marine Protected Areas, and are enhanced in National Parks and National Wildlife Areas?*

**NDP Response:** Canada’s National Parks belong to all Canadians, and represent our natural heritage. The National Parks Act currently puts restrictions on a number of activities within Park boundaries, including hunting. The NDP has no plans to change those restrictions at this time.

*Question 7. If you form the next government, will you continue funding for the RFCPP and create a dedicated program to support wildlife habitat enhancement in Canada?*

**NDP Response:** The NDP recognizes the value of community based conservation programs, both in involving citizens and local groups in improving their local communities, and in delivering measurable environmental benefits.

A NDP government would be committed to continuing the existing funding for local conservation projects.

*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 interests during the claims process?*

**NDP Response:** The resolution of outstanding land claims in Canada has been a long process, and one which demands attention and action. New Democrats are committed to ensuring fair and open negotiations, government to government, on land claims. We are open to and would welcome input from all interested stakeholders.

*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?*

**NDP Response:** The NDP has been clear: we have absolutely no plan to bring back the failed Liberal long gun registry. We all know this was an initiative that divided Canadians and we will not be turning back the clock.

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

**NDP Response:** Government funding for the purchase of private lands for conservation is currently provided to organizations that raise funds to help pay a share of the cost of that land. If elected, the NDP would evaluate these programs, like others, to ensure that they benefit all stakeholders.

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

**NDP Response:** Invasive species pose a grave risk to Canada's biodiversity and our economy. Addressing the issue requires the resources to monitor, research solutions, and assess the effectiveness of actions to control or combat the invasive species. Regrettably, the Conservative government has made drastic cuts to staffing and science capacity in Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO), leaving it with limited resources and making it more difficult to monitor and fight invasive species.

An NDP government would invest in research, and would make the threats posed by invasive species an urgent priority.