

ONTARIO FEDERATION OF ANGLERS & HUNTERS



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Ontario Federation of Anglers & Hunters

OFAH FILE: 412/409
April 26, 2012

*Faxed
04/26/12*

Public Input Coordinator
Ministry of Natural Resources
Biodiversity Branch
Wildlife Policy Section
300 Water Street
PO Box 7000
Peterborough, Ontario
K9J 8M5

Dear Public Input Coordinator:

Subject: EBR Registry Number 011-5799: Amendment of Ontario Regulation 665/98 (Hunting) made under the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act to allow the use of leashed dogs to track and retrieve wounded big game animals in areas where hunting with dogs is not permitted

On behalf of the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters (OFAH), its 100,000 members, subscribers and supporters, and 675 member clubs, we would like to commend the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) on their proposal to amend Ontario Regulation 665/98 (Hunting) to allow for the use of leashed dogs to track and recover big game (e.g. deer, moose, elk, and bear) in areas where hunting with dogs is not permitted.

The use of tracking dogs to recover big game has a long conservation history in Europe, where it was first formalized in law in the 19th century and has since been mandated throughout most of continental Europe. In North America, the use of tracking dogs is legally recognized in two provinces (BC and Quebec), and in several U.S. states (e.g. Michigan, Illinois, Wisconsin, and Ohio).

In Ontario, the beneficial use of tracking dogs for locating big game is currently allowed only in those WMU's where dogs are allowed for hunting big game. Permitting the use of leashed dogs to track and recover big game throughout Ontario would be beneficial for wildlife conservation.

The vast majority of big game harvested by Ontario trained and licensed hunters are quickly dispatched and retrieved. However, some big game can be lost despite a hunter's best effort. No responsible hunter abandons the pursuit of an animal as long as there is a trail that can be followed.

The ability to recover big game in a reasonable time is invaluable. The OFAH strongly agrees that the use of a leashed dog for tracking would increase the likelihood of retrieving big game.

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In addition, we believe the proposal will also provide optimal wildlife conservation benefit by further minimizing the loss and/or spoilage of valued big game.

In closing, the OFAH fully supports the amendment of Ontario Regulation 665/98 (Hunting) made under the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act to allow the use of leashed dogs to track and recover big game animals in areas where hunting with dogs is not permitted.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments.

Yours in Conservation,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "D Sucee".

Dawn Sucee
Fish and Wildlife Biologist

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cc: OFAH Board of Directors
OFAH Big Game Advisory Committee
OFAH Sporting Dog/Small Game Advisory Committee
Angelo Lombardo, OFAH Executive Manager
Dr. Terry Quinney, OFAH Provincial Manager of Fish and Wildlife Services
Matt DeMille, OFAH Assistant Manager of Fish and Wildlife Services
Mark Ryckman, OFAH Senior Wildlife Biologist