

OFAH FILE: 453
May 15, 2013

Ms. Deb Stetson
Ministry of Natural Resources
Wildlife Policy Section
Peterborough, Ontario
K9J

Dear Ms. Stetson:

Subject: Ontario Youth Wild Turkey Heritage Day

The Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters (OFAH) has a long-history of supporting youth outreach programs including, OFAH's national award winning Get Outdoors, which encourages youth participation in a variety of conservation-based activities that promote interest in fishing and hunting.

Recognizing the need to promote hunting activities for the next generation, the OFAH on behalf of its 100,000 members, subscribers and supporters, and 670 member clubs committed to conservation, recommends that the Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS) designate either the Saturday or Sunday before the regular opening of the waterfowl hunt as Ontario Youth Waterfowl Heritage Day.

Youth Wild Turkey Hunts are presently in effect in a number of provinces across Canada to enhance youth hunting opportunities; likewise, we believe there are substantial benefits to initiating a *Youth Wild Turkey Hunt* in the province of Ontario.

Rationale:

- Promotes Youth Hunting Heritage: Encourages the involvement of young people in wild turkey hunting to help ensure the future of hunting for generations to come.
- Recreational: The proposal would provide additional sustainable waterfowl hunting opportunities to young hunters in Ontario.
- Wetland Conservation: Young people introduced to waterfowl hunting at an early age, will develop a greater understanding and appreciation of wetland conservation.
- Safety: Helps ensure safety and a quality waterfowl hunting experience for new young hunters.
- Aligns with Ontario Biodiversity Strategy, Action – Children's Outdoor Charter.....
- SPA revenue

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Ontario:

- Open 1 week prior to regular season in the spring and continues throughout the regular season
- A fall youth season runs the same time as the regular season
- Apprenticeship 12-17 – completion/pass of wild turkey exam
- Apprentice hunts under mentors license/tag

At your earliest convenience, we welcome the opportunity to discuss our recommendation with you further.

Yours in Conservation,

Dawn Sucee
Fish and Wildlife Biologist

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cc: OFAH Board of Directors
OFAH Sporting Dogs/Small Game Advisory Committee
Angelo Lombardo, OFAH Executive Director
Dr. Terry Quinney, OFAH Provincial Manager, Fish and Wildlife Services