

We have put together answers to the questions we were given during the presentation we did to the Zone F OFAH members on March 2, 2023. Sorry for the delay in responding, but we had to reach out to some of our Science and Policy folks to obtain answers.

1. What are the deer density levels in the CEZ's that are used for allocations?
 - WMU/CEZ-level deer densities are not available or used in harvest management planning. In accordance with the White-tailed Deer Population Objective Setting and Harvest Management Planning Guidelines (<https://www.ontario.ca/page/white-tailed-deer-population-objective-setting-and-harvest-management-guidelines>), indices of abundance such as trends in deer seen per hunter day relative to historic levels and those in adjacent WMUs/Cervid Ecological zones are primarily used in deer harvest allocations. Other information such as winter severity, harvest and success levels, agricultural and human-wildlife conflict reports are also considered.
2. What is the timing for setting deer antlerless tag allocations this year?
 - Deer harvest planning discussions will occur over the month of April with final quotas in place the first week of May.
3. Are the harvest numbers posted on the website?
 - Yes, harvest information is available through the Ontario data catalogue (<https://data.ontario.ca/>), search deer, select white-tailed deer hunting activity and harvest file and filter by WMU of interest. Other species (moose, black bear, turkey, elk) are also posted here.
4. How many points are needed in WMU 65 for a bull tag?
 - In 2022 you needed 7 points for a bull tag and 2 points for a cow/calf tag
5. Can the fisheries research paper be provided?

- This paper was sent to Kerry Coleman by Joff after the meeting

6. Where are the depot locations for CWD?

- These are determined by Wildlife Research Branch, they have not been identified for 2023 yet, they will be posted on the CWD web-site <https://www.ontario.ca/page/chronic-wasting-disease> closer to hunting seasons.

7. Has there been consideration to restricting the use of bait, licks to prevent spread of CWD?

- The use of bait by deer hunters during any open deer hunting seasons to lure deer for harvest continues to be permitted in Ontario; however, the Ontario Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act (FWCA) prohibits a person from using or possessing natural attractants and lures made from cervids (i.e. a product that contains the faeces, urine, blood, gland oil, saliva or other bodily fluids of a cervid) as a CWD prevention approach.
- While CWD is not known to be found in the wild in Ontario, the MNRF has the authority to order a ban on baiting/feeding in the event of an emerging disease situation as described in the [Chronic Wasting Disease Prevention and Response Plan](#).
- Please note that some municipalities may have by-laws that prohibit people from feeding wildlife, regardless of hunting season. We recommend contacting your local municipality to see if there are any by-laws in place surrounding feeding wildlife in your area.

8. What is the status of ticks?

- Local public health units would be best source of information on tick occurrence for a specific location.

9. Are there plans to restrict firearms in more urban areas in WMU63?

- This is would be up to local municipalities for these types of urban restrictions

10. Does the ministry have a strategy to control Spotted Lantern Fly – risk to maple trees? Direction from Forest Policy Branch

- There is no Emergency Program at this time, MNRF is working closely with other Provincial ministries (OMAFRA) and Federal agencies (CFIA) on this issue.
- This information was provided on spotted lantern-fly:

What is Spotted Lanternfly ?

Spotted Lanternfly is an invasive insect, native to Asia. It is not yet known to be present in Canada (or Ontario). It was first detected in the U.S. in Pennsylvania (2014), and has since been reported in several other U.S. states, and poses a high risk of spreading into Canada.

Is it a threat? What is the damage to biodiversity/ native plants?

Spotted lanternfly adults prefer to feed and lay eggs on tree of heaven (a non-native tree), but can complete their life cycle on more than 100 native and non-native trees, shrubs and plants. The impacts are greatest in agricultural industries, where large infestations of spotted lanternfly can reduce grape, apple, stonefruit (e.g. peaches) and hop yields.

Spotted lanternfly can damage economically important hardwood trees such as maple, black walnut, cherry and birch, however it is generally not known to kill the host tree. The degree of ecological impacts on forests is uncertain, because spotted lanternfly has only recently been found in North America. However, the wide range of plant hosts is a reason for concern, and the combination of invasive forest pests, and other stressors like climate change, disturbance, can impact forest health.

What can people do?

- Spotted lanternfly was added to the federally regulated plant pest list in 2018 by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, to help prevent its introduction from infested areas.
- Although it can disperse short distances by walking or flying, it is most likely to be moved long distances by people. The egg masses can be laid on vehicles, bricks, stones, plant material and then transported to new places, and the adults/juveniles can also hitchhike on these materials as well.

- If you are travelling, or going camping in infested areas of the U.S., it is important to inspect your vehicles, and equipment, to ensure that you do not accidentally transport Spotted Lanternfly into Canada
- Early detection of spotted lantern fly is important - if members of the public believe they have found spotted lanternfly or egg masses in Canada, place them in a sealable container, and notify the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, or report sightings to the Invading Species Hotline, at 1800-563-7711, www.eddmaps.org/ontario
- More information can be found at www.invasivespeciescentre.ca/

<https://www.invasivespeciescentre.ca/invasive-species/meet-the-species/invasive-insects/spotted-lanternfly/>

11. Is there a recovery plan for Ash trees? This is Information provided from our Forest Policy Branch

- As for black ash and the insidious Emerald Ash Borer (EAB), Ministry of Environment Conservation and Parks (MECP) finalized a recovery strategy in Sept. 2022.
- COSSARO classified black ash endangered January 2021
 - The classification is based on an 80 year projection
 - There are currently an estimated 83 million black ash in Ontario
 - EAB is the main threat
- Black ash is regulated on Species At Risk Ontario (SARO) list January 2022 (regulation under the ESA)
- MECP - Minister's order for the temporary suspension of protections for black ash until January 2024
 - allows time for MECP to develop an approach to support black ash suspension and recovery
- MECP is currently working on a government response statement (due June 2023)
- Actions Taken
 - see <https://www.invasivespeciescentre.ca/invasive-species/meet-the-species/invasive-insects/>.
 - Injectable insecticides (e.g. treeazin) are available but are an expensive treatment that could be used on individual trees (\$400 - \$1000), this treatment must be repeated periodically
 - There have been attempts made to deal with EAB since it was first detected in southwestern Ontario (Windsor/Sarnia area) in 2002

- Harvesting large swaths of Black Ash ahead of EAB moving across the south
- CFIA instituted zones where Black Ash could not be moved outside of (e.g. firewood etc.) – that zone has gotten increasingly large over the years
- Work with the feds - parasitoid wasps – there have been trials with the release of wasp species to attempt to address the control of EAB.
- Given the amendment to the Crown Forest Sustainability Act, we are contemplating our approach to black ash. The amendment does exempt forest operations from s. 9 and s. 10 of the Endangered Species Act as long as operations are conducted under an approved forest management plan, however it does not allow for black ash to be harvested and taken to a mill. The amendment does not allow forest industry to profit from a SAR.

12. As Ontario is the only province that does not restrict non-resident hunting access, are there any plans to restrict non-residents with drawing for big game licenses (deer and bear specifically)?

- There are some areas in the province where non-resident hunting is restricted as well as conditions on big game draws for non-residents. For example, in northwestern Ontario, non-resident deer hunters must hunt with a licensed guide in the Territorial District of Rainy River. There are other non-resident conditions such as camping permit requirements for Crown Land in northern Ontario and conservation reserves anywhere in Ontario. Non-resident hunters may not apply to the antlerless deer draw or controlled deer hunts; they are generally limited to hunting antlered deer (there are a small number of WMUs where non-residents may purchase an additional deer seal). For moose and bear, non-residents must hunt through a tourist outfitter, which is an important economic activity in many areas of central and northern Ontario. Note there is no non-resident moose season in WMUs within southern region.

13. With the growing suburbanization and growth of urban areas to the west of Ottawa and other urban centers within the zone, is there any intention to make changes to limit firearms to muzzleloaders or shotguns instead for rifles.

- Same Q's #9 above for WMU 63, Firearm restrictions in urban area would be up to local municipalities (ie discharge bylaws)

14. As access to properties for hunting is a growing issue, does MNR have any intentions of creating a program that would link willing landowners with vetted hunters, ie: Block Management Programs that are prevalent in the US.

- Not that we are aware of; permission to access private property for hunting purposes is left up to individual hunters and landowners.

I hope the Zone F OFAH council finds the answers to these questions useful. Thank you for hosting us on March 2 and hopefully we can do another session soon.

Regards,

John

John Boos

District Supervisor

Kemptville District MNRF

Kemptville.MNRF@ontario.ca

613-285-5421

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