

Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters **ANNUAL REPORT 2010**



The VOICE of Anglers & Hunters

*Fisheries Management • Wildlife Management • Membership • Advocacy
O.F.A.H. Zone Reports • Advisory Committee Reports • HOTLINE Editorials*

Our Mission

As the voice of anglers and hunters, and as a leader in fish and wildlife conservation in the Province of Ontario, the OFAH will:

- strive to ensure the protection of our hunting and fishing heritage and the enhancement of hunting and fishing opportunities;*
- encourage safe and responsible participation; and*
- champion the conservation of Ontario's fish and wildlife resources, which so enrich our lives.*





Table of Contents

Messages from the President and Executive Director	2
OFAH Board of Directors	3
OFAH Head Office Staff	5
Fisheries Management	7
Lake Ontario Atlantic Salmon Restoration Program.....	7
Community Stream Steward Program.....	16
Invading Species Awareness Program.....	17
Wildlife Management	20
Ontario Invasive Plant Council.....	29
Land Use Management and Access	30
Ontario Hunter Education Program	34
Ontario Wild Turkey Hunter Education Program	35
Education and Outreach	36
OFAH/Mario Cortellucci Hunting & Fishing Heritage Centre	36
Membership	39
Strategic Planning.....	40
82nd OFAH Annual General Meeting and Fish & Wildlife Conference	40
Fundraising	41
Advocacy	42
Communications	48
Ontario OUT OF DOORS	49
Angler & Hunter Television.....	49
Auditors' 2010 Financial Report	50
OFAH President's Report	52
OFAH Zone Reports	53
OFAH Advisory Committee Reports	61
Hotline Editorials	73

Annual Report Notice:

This publication is subject to errors and omissions.
For direct inquiries, please contact OFAH head office:

P.O. Box 2800, 4601 Guthrie Drive
Peterborough, Ontario K9J 8L5
Tel 705-748-6324 Fax 705-748-9577
Email ofah@ofah.org

A message from the President and Executive Director



This Federation has a proud history and a promising future, and never has that been more evident than during our recent strategic planning exercise. After many hours and much thoughtful discussion, the strategic plan is now complete and is guiding your Federation forward. I am confident that our new

vision and mission will provide a focus for our efforts today, and for years to come. Many thanks to the directors and staff who took on the challenge of creating this important road map.

We would be hard pressed to achieve a fraction of what we do on the conservation front without the support of our partners. Once again in 2010 we were privileged to work with dozens of public and private partners in putting our conservation mandate into action.

In May, with the help of the Ministry of Natural Resources, Banrock Station Wines, the LCBO, and 50 other partners, we stocked our two millionth Atlantic Salmon, another important milestone in our bid to bring back a self-sustaining population of this once-thriving fish to Lake Ontario.

In July, we welcomed Ontario Power Generation as the new title sponsor of the OFAH TackleShare program. Thanks to their support, this outreach program helped thousands of novice anglers try fishing for the first time at over one hundred locations around Ontario.

Environment Canada's Lake Simcoe Fund enabled our Invading Species Awareness and Community Stream Steward programs to deliver stewardship, monitoring, and outreach projects on Lake Simcoe, Ontario's fourth largest water body, and a major year-round fishing destination.

I am grateful for the enormous contributions of our OFAH Board, staff and volunteers. From the club that runs the volunteer hatchery, to the director who guides policy, to the staff who work the membership desk, we are a highly effective team that embraces change while staying true to our roots.

Each one of us can be proud of our Federation—proud of the legacy we inherited and the one we're passing on.

Yours in Conservation,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rob Hare".

Rob Hare
OFAH President



What a historic year 2010 was for our hunting and fishing heritage! The opening of the OFAH | Mario Cortellucci Hunting & Fishing Heritage Centre in April marked the realization of a long-held OFAH dream; a place to celebrate the significant contributions of anglers and hunters and to educate

others about the importance of fish and wildlife conservation. Mr. Mario Cortellucci, for whom the centre is named, gave us the resources to build this incredible centre, and our industry partners and OFAH clubs and individuals gave us the means to fill it with interactive displays and artifacts that are engaging visitors of all ages and backgrounds. What a legacy!

Your Federation is always working to increase hunting and fishing opportunities where they are consistent with sound conservation management, and in 2010 we scored many wins. Kawartha Lakes anglers gained a year round panfish season and waterfowlers across Ontario enjoyed increased possession limits. We successfully advocated for Sunday gun hunting in several new southern Ontario municipalities, bringing the tally to 142 communities that have recognized the recreational benefits and economic boost an extra day in the field offers.

Our efforts to bring back Atlantic Salmon to Lake Ontario and tributaries continued to show great promise, and with our partners, we celebrated the stocking of our two millionth fish.

Hunters and firearms owners across the country were deeply disappointed when, despite the best efforts of the Federation and many of our affiliates, the bill to repeal the long gun registry was narrowly defeated. The OFAH has not and will not, give up on scrapping the long gun registry, which penalizes law abiding firearms owners while doing nothing to prevent violent crime.

Whether we are working to conserve our fish and wildlife, or fighting to save our rights to fish and hunt, we are always serving our members, our most important asset.

Yours in Conservation,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mike Reader".

Mike Reader
OFAH Executive Director



OFAH Board of Directors



** denotes Director*

Executive Committee

* President	Rob Hare	Keswick
* 1st Vice President	Bill Blackwell	Port Elgin
2nd Vice President	Glenn Rivard	Thunder Bay
* Treasurer	Frank Wick	Ajax
Executive Director	Mike Reader	Peterborough
* Past President	John Ford	Tara

Zone A

* Chair	Bruce Hamilton	Fort Frances
* 1st Vice Chair	Jeremy Funk	Sioux Lookout
2nd Vice Chair & Alternate Director	Jan Loman	Ear Falls
* Secretary/Treasurer	Roy DeCorte	Atikokan
2nd Alternate Director	Erwin Burgstaler	Dryden

Zone B

* Chair	Glenn Rivard	Thunder Bay
* 1st Vice Chair	Debbie Rivard	Thunder Bay
2nd Vice Chair & Alt. Director	Gilles Dumais	Thunder Bay
* Secretary/Treasurer	Alice Villa	Thunder Bay
2nd Alternate Director	Rick Tomiak	Thunder Bay

Zone C

* Chair	Peter Sword	New Liskeard
* 1st Vice Chair	David Allen	Larder Lake
2nd Vice Chair & Alternate Director	Robert Bartlett	Kapuskasing
Secretary/Treasurer & 2nd Alternate Director	Eugene O'Beirn	Haileybury
* Director	Richard Mongeon	New Liskeard

Zone D

* Chair	Roy Polsky	Val Caron
* 1st Vice Chair	Felix Delongchamp	Lively
2nd Vice Chair & Alternate Director	Roy Warriner	Trout Creek
Secretary/Treasurer & 2nd Alternate Director	Debbie Halverson	Copper Cliff
* Director	Dan Polsky	Sturgeon Falls

Zone E

* Chair	Brian Sheppard	Port Hope
* 1st Vice Chair	Eric Smith	Arnprior
2nd Vice Chair & Alternate Director	Ron Parker	Marmora
Secretary/Treasurer & 2nd Alternate Director	Alan Fennell	Cannington
* Director	Gordon Trylinski	Pembroke

OFAH Board of Directors continued...

OFAH Board of Directors (continued)



Zone F

* Chair	Ed Giffin	Inverary
* 1st Vice Chair	Kerry Coleman	Oxford Mills
2nd Vice Chair & Alternate Director	Mike MacDonald	Yarker
* Secretary/Treasurer	Len Dickinson	Lanark
2nd Alternate Director	George Perrin	North Augusta

Zone G

* Chair	David Dixon	Port Perry
* 1st Vice Chair	Mirko Manojlovic	Mississauga
2nd Vice Chair & Alternate Director	Stephen Huntley	Beeton
* Secretary/Treasurer	Beverley Dixon	Port Perry
2nd Alternate Director	Clark Boyd	Lisle

Zone H

* Chair	Wayne Forgrave	Midhurst
* 1st Vice Chair	Jack Doherty	Owen Sound
2nd Vice Chair & Alternate Director	Michael Evers	Innisfil
* Secretary/Treasurer	Wally Motz	Kincardine
2nd Alternate Director	Glenn Meads	Priceville

Zone J

* Chair	Tony Jackson	St. Pauls Station
* 1st Vice Chair	Jim Greenwood	Simcoe
2nd Vice Chair & Alternate Director	Brian Moore	Courtright
* Secretary/Treasurer	Kathy Moore	Brantford
2nd Alternate Director	Bruno Vanden Berghe	Windsor

Directors-at-Large

* Director-at-Large	Jim Magee	Drumbo
* Director-at-Large	Doug Ogston	Lively
* Director-at-Large	Scott Petrie	Simcoe
* Director-at-Large	Paul Steckle	Zurich

Provincial Directors-at-Large

* Provincial Director-at-Large	Wes Brown	Keswick
* Provincial Director-at-Large	Fred Geberdt	Owen Sound
* Provincial Director-at-Large	Gerry Haarmeyer	Mactier
* Provincial Director-at-Large	Jack Osadzuk	Owen Sound
* Provincial Director-at-Large	John Sullivan	Mount Brydges

OFAH Head Office Staff



Administration

Executive Director

Executive Manager

Administrative Assistant to the Executive Director

Administration Liaison

Angler & Hunter Television Host

Angler & Hunter Radio Host

Special Advisor - Conservation Issues

Mike Reader
Angelo Lombardo
Nancy Cator
Jane Beggs
Cam Brownson
Tom Otto
Craig Selby

Finance & Accounting

Chief Financial Officer

Accounting Manager

Accounting Services Representative

Accounting Clerk

Human Resources Assistant

Sue MacCallum
Steve Doris
Diane McGrath
Shauna Giles
Julie Rodgers

Government Affairs

Manager of Government Affairs and Policy

Greg Farrant

Communications

Manager of Communications

Web Developer

Assistant Web Developer

Lezlie Goodwin
Jay Callaghan
Tim Gane

Hunter Education

Hunter Education Program Manager

Wild Turkey Hunter Education Program Coordinator

Wild Turkey Processing Clerk

Wild Turkey Processing Clerk

Hunter Education Program Administrative Assistant

Dave Pind
Randy Jennings
Justin Post
Karla Lloyd
Giselle Hatton

Fish & Wildlife Services

Provincial Manager of Fish & Wildlife Services

Senior Wildlife Biologist

Atlantic Salmon Restoration Program Coordinator

Atlantic Salmon Habitat Technician

Fish & Wildlife Biologist

Land Use Specialist

Ringwood Fish Hatchery Coordinator

Community Stream Steward Program Coordinator

Stream Steward Technician

Species at Risk Intern

Stream Restoration Intern

Invading Species Awareness Program Coordinator

Aquatic Invasive Species Outreach Liaison

Terrestrial Invasive Species Outreach Liaison

GIS Specialist (Invasive Species)

Invasive Species Education Liaison

Ontario Invasive Plant Council Coordinator

Terry Quinney
Ed Reid
Chris Robinson
Matt Burley
Dawn Sucee
Matt Demille
Andy Rubaszek
Andrea Hicks
Lauren Sharkey
Deborah Silver
Ellen Fanning
Sophie Bull
Matt Smith
Fraser Smith
Philip Shaw
Meribeth Stott
Hayley Anderson

OFAH staff continued...

OFAH Head Office Staff (continued)



Member Services & Corporate Relations

Manager of Member Services and Corporate Relations

Graphic Artist

Conservation Education Representative

Conservation Education Liaison

Outreach Programs Coordinator

Membership Marketing & Conservation Education Intern

Robert Pye

Tracy Smith

Jenn Bush

Meribeth Stott

Alesha Caldwell

Paul Carter

Member Services - Marketing & Purchasing

Member Services - Marketing & Club Membership Manager

Member Services Marketing & Purchasing Coordinator

Member Services/Special Events Liaison/A&H TV

Member Program Processing Clerk

Merchandise Clerk

Data Entry Processing Clerk

Brian McRae

Peter Wadsworth

Hailey Tufts

Cathy MacKay

Candice Hiland

Vanessa Angevaere

Membership Processing

Information Technology Manager

Membership Services Coordinator

Individual Membership Clerk

Membership Processing Clerk

Membership Processing Clerk

Membership Processing Clerk

Membership Processing Clerk

Mike McGrath

Kimberly Staples

Mary Ellen Hickson

Gail Anderson

Linda Hatton

Nicole Dentinger

Melissa Taylor

Office Services

Office Services Manager

Conservation Centre Maintenance

Conservation Centre Maintenance

Denise Hetherington

Dave Bonner

Chris Prince

Ontario OUT OF DOORS

Publisher

Associate Publisher

Circulation/Financial Manager

Production Coordinator/Conference Coordinator

Subscriptions Clerk

Classified Sales Representative

Editor-in-Chief

Associate Editor

Art Director

National Sales Director

Sales Representative

Sales Representative

Mike Reader

Angelo Lombardo

Sheila Prophet

Mark Cousins

Janet Neale

Vera Mainguy

John Kerr

Ray Blades

Tamas Pal

Stephen Bates

Cam Brownson

Linda Chick

Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters

PO Box 2800, 4601 Guthrie Drive

Peterborough, ON K9J 8L5

Phone 705-748-6324

Fax 705-748-9577

Email ofah@ofah.org

www.ofah.org



Fisheries Management

Ontario fisheries support recreation, industry and tourism. Working in partnership with all levels of government, nongovernment organizations and OFAH member clubs and individuals, the OFAH strives to sustain and grow our vital fisheries.

Lake Ontario Atlantic Salmon Restoration Program



It was another busy year for the program, with over 870,000 fish stocked, 16 habitat projects completed, 46 classroom hatchery programs delivered, and three field crews running from May to December. We also began the transition from Phase I (2006-2010) to Phase II (2011-15) as the year drew to a close.

Partnership Development

In March, we received a signed copy of our Stewardship Agreement with the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) under the provincial *Endangered Species Act (ESA)*, allowing the OFAH and partners to continue working on the species. This Stewardship Agreement is the first under the new ESA.

Also in March, the OFAH received the C.D. “Buzz” Besadny Award for Fostering Great Lakes Partnerships from the Great Lakes Fisheries Commission. The award came with a \$10,000 contribution from the Great Lakes Fishery Commission (GLFC) for the program.

OFAH senior managers and Atlantic Salmon program staff worked to secure new sponsors throughout 2010, and identified several hopeful prospects. In May, the LCBO announced its commitment to another five years of the program. Banrock Station may also remain a partner at some level for Phase II, but there was no firm commitment from them as of year end.

In June we learned the Fish For Ever Foundation, which had been sponsoring Fleming College’s involvement in the program, was ceasing operations immediately. Fortunately, for at least one year, Fleming College will fund their students’ involvement in the program, and we are assisting them in finding new sponsors.

Fish Production and Stocking

Approximately 1.9 million green eggs were collected from the LaHave River broodstock for 2010 production. We also had some egg production from Sebago Lake 3-year-olds, the first generation of production fish to be reared in Ontario. In mid-March, yearling stocking began, and over the course of March and April, 98,000 Atlantic Salmon yearlings from the Normandale Fish Culture Station, Credit River Anglers Association, and Fleming College were stocked into the three target tributaries. High school and elementary students from Cobourg and Peterborough stocked 1,000 of these as part of the fourth annual Earth Day clean-up of Cobourg Brook.

In May, approximately 540,000 fry were stocked from Normandale, Harwood Fish Culture Station, and Fleming College, with an earlier 35,000 having been stocked by the Belfountain Hatchery. The Credit River received just over half of the fish, with Duffins Creek and Cobourg Brook splitting the remainder. This effort required 16 days of stocking and we will be looking at alternate stocking methods for 2011. The first day of stocking was combined with a unique media opportunity. The Institutes for Journalism and Natural Resources brought 14 journalists from around North America to help stock 12,000 fry in Cobourg Brook. The journalists had previously toured Harwood FCS and were wrapping up 9 days on Lake Ontario.

The OFAH worked with 46 classroom hatcheries in 2010 which stocked their fry during May and June. Toronto Zoo’s Aqualinks Program and Let’s Talk Science (McMaster University) each supervised six classrooms, while the OFAH administered 34 classroom hatcheries. During the second annual Bronte Creek classroom hatchery stocking event with Pioneer Petroleum, the OFAH, Let’s Talk Science, and Trout Unlimited Canada received significant print, online and television coverage.

In October and November, approximately 200,000 fall fingerlings were stocked from the Normandale Fish Culture Station (MNR), Fleming College and the Pine Valley Springs Hatchery. Half of the fish were released into the Credit River and the remainder were split evenly between Duffins Creek and Cobourg Brook. Included in the total were surplus Lac St. Jean strain fish (8,700), from the 2009 broodstock collection.

Production planning for 2010 egg collection occurred in early September. Approximately 2.9 million green eggs were projected from the LaHave River and Sebago Lake broodstock, and over 3

million eggs were eventually collected. The total capacity of all rearing facilities is 1.9 million green eggs (equaling 1.3 million eyed eggs), so egg stocking of the surplus eggs was scheduled for early 2011. Full Sebago Lake strain production was achieved in 2010, although only 4 year-old fish were available. Normandale received half of the Sebagos, with the remainder going to Fleming College, Belfountain Community Hatchery, Pine Valley Springs Hatchery, and Islington's Sportmen's Club. In total, the combined facilities have a production target of 657,000 fry, 190,000 fall fingerlings, and 90,000 yearlings, including allocations for schools and smaller partner facilities.

The fry stocking plan for 2011 is Credit River - 237,000 fry, Duffins Creek - 127,000 fry, Cobourg Brook - 128,000 fry and Humber River - 165,000 fry. The fall stocking will be similarly broken down. Ontario Streams is coordinating this for the program.

The Ministry of Natural Resources undertook a significant rebuild of the Normandale Fish Culture Station in 2010, beginning with the sub-station. The rebuild is expected to be completed by 2012, at a cost of approximately \$14 million. The facility will subsequently house all of Lake Ontario's Atlantic and chinook salmon production.

Water Quality and Habitat Protection and Enhancement

2010 Cobourg Brook Projects

We planted a total of 2,825 trees and 538 shrubs on Cobourg Brook in 2010, encompassing 39,590m² of enhanced habitat, and 924m of restored shoreline.

Projects: 7

Volunteers: 202

Hours: 685

- Laurie Lawson Outdoor Education Centre live shrub staking
- Baker Road headwaters reforestation planting
- Cobourg Conservation Area riparian buffer planting
- Holmes property pastureland reforestation planting
- Holmes property forest maintenance poplar planting
- Hie property pond-to-stream interface reconstruction
- Hie property pond shading and bank stabilization planting

2010 Duffins Creek Projects

A total of 995 trees and 2,363 shrubs were planted in 2010 on Duffins Creek, resulting in 32,844m² of habitat planted. Combined, these projects helped restore 888m of shoreline.

Projects: 9

Volunteers: 339

Hours: 922

- Greenwood Conservation Area (5 projects):
- Failed foot-bridge removal/bank stabilization
- Hydro corridor root wad placement bank stabilization
- Hydro corridor boulder placement
- South area riparian planting
- North hydro corridor riparian shrub planting
- Transport Canada Pickering Lands (3 projects)
- Old farm cedar planting
- Lower Barkey headwaters bank stabilization planting
- Upper Barkey pastureland reforestation planting
- Uxbridge-Pickering Townline Barkey cattle exclusion fencing

The Atlantic Salmon Habitat Working Group (ASHWG) was formed in the spring and had its first meeting in June. ASHWG developed and finalized a Terms of Reference to guide the group, and collected background material to support Atlantic Salmon habitat restoration. They also discussed projects that were planned underway or completed on the Phase I tributaries. The habitat project planning process was also started for the Phase II tributaries - Humber River and Bronte Creek. ASHWG is made up of representatives from partner organizations on the five Phase I and II watersheds:

- Credit Valley Conservation (CVC)
- Halton Region Conservation Authority (HRCA)
- Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA)
- Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority (GRCA)
- Ontario Streams
- Credit River Anglers Association (CRAA)
- Trout Unlimited Canada (TUC)
- Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR)
- OFAH

ASHWG developed a Watershed Based Action Team (WBAT) for each Atlantic Salmon stream to facilitate communication between themselves and on-the-ground watershed stakeholders.

The Lake Ontario Atlantic Salmon Restoration Program worked with Transport Canada and other local agencies to identify Atlantic Salmon habitat restoration opportunities on the Pickering Lands. The working group strategically focused their restoration efforts on a single section of Duffins Creek within the Transport Canada property, and compiled a list of potential projects, some of which were completed in 2010.

Research and Assessment

The Science Team met in June to review results from fall and winter work, and to review 2010 plans. DFO confirmed successful spawning (egg fertilization) on the Credit River in 2009, and there were good survival rates from the redds, both from wild fish and surplus broodstock. Thiamine levels in the eggs were also up to six times above the minimum level.

In September, fall field crews electrofished Roger's Creek, where returning adults had been moved in 2009. They documented the first recorded wild-born Atlantic Salmon in those waters since the 1860's. Atlantic Salmon parr were also found in Duffins Creek sites where adult broodstock and eggs were released in 2009 (broodstock) and 2010 (eggs), demonstrating successful reproduction in both tributaries.

Smolt assessment crews began work in May on Cobourg Brook and Duffins Creek, with funding from Human Resources Skills Development Corporation (HRSDC), as well as a grant of \$42,019



from the Species-at-Risk Stewardship Fund. On a trial basis, smolt assessment on the Credit River was conducted using a fyke net.

Reports of significant angler catches of Atlantic Salmon from the south side of Lake Ontario began in April and continued through the year, including fish weighing over 20lbs. New York's creel program observed a greater number of Atlantics than in 2009, and they collected data and tissue samples (for genetic analysis) for us.

Reports of catches from the north side of Lake Ontario were also up over the previous year, and 10 open-water anglers/charter operators collected data and tissue in a project led by the MNR, with permits granted under our Stewardship Agreement under the *Endangered Species Act*.

In early August, summer student smolt crews began to switch over to adult assessment. A grant of \$87,480 was received from the Species-at-Risk Stewardship Fund to help with adult assessment through the fall, with additional support coming from the TRCA. Three field crews were hired to assess returning adults and spawning success on the three tributaries. The Cobourg and Duffins crews built weirs to trap and hold migrating fish. The Credit River crew used the Streetsville fishway, supplemented by electrofishing during the chinook and coho egg collections. The crews also walked the stream to speak with anglers when possible.

Stream angler volunteers were not used in the monitoring process in 2010, as they had been in 2009. Without that data, returns were modest, and expectations were further reduced as significant portions of the returns would have been from the 2007 and 2008 year-classes. Both of these classes were drastically limited by losses at the Normandale Fish Culture Station in those years. These sampling methods do not reveal if the fish are using other tributaries or sub-tributaries (reports of Atlantic Salmon have come from the Humber River, Wilmot Creek, Bowmanville Creek), or are finding suitable spawning habitat below our weirs. Anecdotal angler reports of catches were high in all three target tributaries in 2010, with some fish reportedly up to 15lbs.

In the fall, an MNR crew, working with the Credit River and CVC crews, electrofished that river's spring stocking sites to assess in-stream survival and growth rates. They also marked the parr to assess survival to spring 2011, when the fish should be observed passing through the rotary screw trap being built into the river. This work was funded through Canada-Ontario Agreement monies acquired by the Lake Ontario Management Unit.

Russ Bobrowski's M.Sc. thesis on Atlantic Salmon smolts was defended in May and has since been published. This graduate project was funded by the Lake Ontario Atlantic Salmon Program in conjunction with a Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada Industrial Research Grant.

Education and Outreach

Thirty-one classes and three outdoor education centres reared Atlantic Salmon in classroom hatcheries under OFAH head office guidance, down from 66 units in 2009. The geographic range is again from Fort Erie to Kingston. An additional six units are administered by the Toronto Zoo, five at schools and one at the zoo itself, and McMaster University's Let's Talk Science node oversaw another six. The Ministry of Natural Resources (Aurora District) had nine units underway. Thanks to contributions from the MNR, Quinte Wildlife Conservation, and the Oakville and District Rod and Gun Club, most schools replaced their older



cooler systems with chillers. Pioneer Petroleum again subsidized school bus costs to transport students to their release sites.

The classroom hatchery program continued without funding for dedicated staff, but did receive support for 14 new units from the Species-at-Risk Stewardship Fund. Approximately 4 of these units replaced older models in current schools and the other 10 went to new schools. The Toronto Zoo acquired five new units for their expanded program.

Program presentations were given to students participating in the classroom hatchery program, Colborne Probus Club, Great Lakes Maritime Museum (Kingston), Banrock Station Wines' sales team, and the 2010 Eco-Health Conference hosted by Fleming College. We also worked in partnership with Port Hope High School on the Environmental and Resource Studies Specialist High Skills Program to complete a Habitat Restoration Certification with 35 students. The certification included a Lake Ontario Atlantic Salmon Restoration Program overview and habitat restoration presentation, a day of field work, and a written exam.

Last winter we were invited to sit on a committee preparing a book on fish in the Toronto area, to be entitled "*Fishes of Toronto*," part of the city's biodiversity series. The books in this series will be freely available at public libraries and city offices. Along with Atlantic Salmon, the book covers fishing opportunities in the city, including introduced species in Lake Ontario, threats to fish, invasive species, and a history of the shoreline and streams around the city.

In April, Toronto and Region Conservation Authority held a fundraising dinner, which profiled the program and raised funds for habitat work and adult assessment.

The Great Lakes Fishery Commission (GLFC) purchased booth space at the 2010 Tall Ships Festival at the Toronto Harbourfront, and invited the OFAH to attend. Both the Atlantic Salmon and invading species programs had table displays, with live sea lampreys from the GLFC. The festival ran from June 30 to July 4, and thanks to an excellent location, tens of thousands of residents and visitors came by the booth.

The media covered a number of stocking days, including the two millionth Atlantic Salmon event, and CBC Toronto, Rogers TV/CP 24, CHCH (Hamilton), CHEX-TV, and several local newspapers profiled the salmon program throughout the year.

The MNR secured a Bring Back the Salmon ad for the 2011 Fishing Regulations Summary, and an LCBO video production celebrating the release of the two millionth fish was posted on YouTube (www.youtube.com/watch?v=-zjzkiQe1q0)

Fisheries Management Zone (FMZ) Advisory Councils

The Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) implemented a new Fisheries Management Zone (FMZ) Advisory Council in FMZ 5, this year. While we anticipated FMZs 8 and 15 would also form in 2010, these councils will likely roll out in 2011 along with FMZ 7.

The MNR is still working on an approach for FMZ 16 and it remains unclear how FMZs 1, 2, and 3 will operate. They will not likely follow the existing template, but could be included, in some way, with other far north planning exercises.

In April, OFAH staff hosted a one-day workshop in Peterborough focused on providing representatives with the tools and networking resources necessary to effectively represent the OFAH at FMZ council meetings. In conjunction with the workshop, staff developed an orientation package, which included roles and responsibilities as well as OFAH fisheries policies. There were approximately 30 participants, including the chair persons of many OFAH zones.

OFAH zone executives have been encouraged to compile a list of potential candidates in anticipation of the need for future representatives, especially for those councils which will form in 2011. We fully expect that it will be necessary to seek individuals outside of OFAH zone executives.

FMZ 4

The FMZ 4 Advisory Council spent a considerable amount of time this year reviewing and discussing the Background Information Document: Fisheries Management Plan for FMZ 4. The document along with current fisheries data (e.g. the Board Scale Monitoring) will be used to assist the MNR and the FMZ Council through the process of developing a Fisheries Management Plan, specific to FMZ 4 and its various stakeholder/user groups. One of the challenges identified in the zone is that the current slot size prevents harvesting Northern Pike of a reasonable size for shore lunches. The FMZ 4 Advisory Council is in the process of working with the MNR to draft a new regulation.

FMZ 5

Preliminary meetings for FMZ 5 Advisory Council have been held. The MNR has indicated that they are under financial constraints and advised that the majority of meetings will be hosted via teleconference or webcast to cut down on travel costs.

FMZ 6/FMZ 9

Earlier this year the FMZ 9 Advisory Council was asked to select a preferred option for the restoration of the native fisheries in Black Bay (particularly Walleye) – either leave the Camp 43 dam in place and add a fish trap and sort system, or remove the dam and expand the costly applications of Lampricide, as required.

The OFAH Fisheries Advisory Committee suggested that the MNR assess upstream habitat suitability rather than pressing ahead with either option. There is no sufficient biological information to determine whether either option is a valid investment that will produce more Walleye.

The FMZ 6 Advisory Council met this summer, to discuss the Black Sturgeon River issue. Following a presentation by the MNR and a lengthy debate, the FMZ 6 Advisory Council agreed to support FMZ 9's recommendation to put forward both Option # 3 (Camp 1 as the preferred option) and Option # 4 (Trap and Sort, with the inclusion of the caveats and considerations as summarized in

the Rationale Document) for public consultation under a formal Environmental Assessment process.

FMZ 10

There has been some discussion with respect to increasing protection for Smallmouth Bass. Bass interest groups within the zone would like to see a closed season on bass from September to the end of June and a catch and release approach. We recognize that, although they are not native to the FMZ, they have become a desired species; therefore, the OFAH supports the current regulation of no size limits and six-fish year-round possession limits to reduce impacts on other species, without eradicating the Smallmouth Bass fishery.

The OFAH Fisheries Advisory Committee also supports northern FMZs in an education effort to prevent unauthorized introductions.

FMZ 11/FMZ 12

Although initial steps were taken in 2009 to form FMZ advisory councils 11 and 12, preliminary meetings did not occur until 2010. Challenges have been identified with each council.

FMZ 13/14

Councils have been asked to review *A Revised Lake Trout Rehabilitation Plan for Ontario Water of Lake Huron*. OFAH representatives and staff reviewed the plan and although we support the rehabilitation of Lake Trout, we do not want to see other stocking programs (e.g. Chinook, Rainbow Trout) compromised in the process.



Photo: Mark Majchrowski

FMZ 17

FMZ 17 implemented new regulations as of January 1, 2010. The changes include a year-round season for Yellow Perch, Black Crappie, Northern Pike, and sunfish; a limit of 300 sunfish per angler for a sport license, (30 of which may be greater than 18 cm) and a limit of 15 sunfish per angler for a conservation license. These significant changes provided ice fishing opportunities for the first time in many of the Kawartha Lakes, which the OFAH actively supported through the media and a presentation to Peterborough County Council.

FMZ 17 reviewed coldwater fisheries in the Zone, beginning with an overview of salmon and trout stocking in Lake Ontario, provided by the Lake Ontario Management Unit. The zone has reviewed stakeholder impressions of the state of the coldwater fisheries, and whether any changes to seasons were desired. The OFAH suggested a review of the locations of the "Extended



Season” and “Open All Year” boundaries on tributaries, in order to better rationalize them, rather than using Highway 2 and rail lines. The council also reviewed other regulations on coldwater fisheries; discussed Watershed-based Fisheries Management Plans; consultations on Cobourg Creek and Ganaraska River; as well as the current regulatory framework for coldwater species, including monitoring and assessment, outreach, education and awareness.

FMZ 18

In 2010, the council spent a considerable amount of time reviewing and discussing options for managing Walleye. The MNR is seeking input from the council with respect to achieving a “Walleye management goal” for FMZ 18.

The MNR provided an overview and conclusions from the Southern Region Walleye Stocking Review. The objective of the review was to address concerns with regard to inconsistent stocking practices and identify additional Walleye stocking opportunities in the southern region (e.g. Walleye stocking partnership with the OFAH to enhance the production of fingerlings for Put-Grow-Take).

FMZ 19 (Lake Erie)

Winter meetings of the FMZ 19 Advisory Council focused primarily around Total Allowable Catch (TAC) on Lake Erie for Walleye and Yellow Perch for the commercial fishery. At the annual lake committee meeting, TAC was announced for Walleye at 2.450 million fish, of which Ontario receives 1.055 million; and Yellow Perch was set at a total of 12.012 million fish.

Historical winter Pike spearing seasons continued to be discussed. The MNR Director of Fish and Wildlife Branch provided a series of biological concerns rationalizing maintaining the closure.

There is a growing concern for proposals for wind “farms” on the near shore waters of Lake Erie. Considered as “green energy,” concerns include the disturbance of sediment, closed access to anglers, esthetics, navigational hazards, and oil pollution.

In 2010, the MNR proposed a new perch possession limit of 100, which doubled the existing limit. This was previously requested by the OFAH, and was endorsed by the FMZ 19 Council. According to MNR sources, this new regulation will take effect in January 2012.

The Rainbow Smelt fish kill in late spring was determined to be lake-wide, although most of the mortalities were found on the New York side of the lake in the east basin. Since no pathogen or toxins were detected and only dead smelt were found, it was attributed to a combination of spawning stress, thermal shock, and high winds.

Baitfish continued to be a topic of discussion, since commercial and recreational anglers need to be educated. Most Lake Erie bait dealer operators have not had the Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) training, and could not identify an invading species or species at risk. The council is concerned that, unless something improves, bait will be obtainable in limited quantities, bait dealers will be out of business, and license sales will drop.



With reference to commercial fishing, the MNR’s Lake Erie Enforcement found more by-catch this year than was being recorded, as well as a discrepancy between daily catch reports. The question of what to do with by-catch continued to be raised. As with angling, various possession limits have resulted in occasions where anglers have had to release caught fish in a poor state; however, catching ripe female Yellow Perch, when targeting another species still remains a serious issue. Council members would like to see a better by-catch policy to achieve wiser use. Increased enforcement was scheduled for the summer and fall.

FMZ 20 (Lake Ontario)

In 2010, the FMZ 20 Council was divided into eastern and western sub-committees. This was welcomed, as it gave each sub-committee the opportunity to focus on issues in their area, and greatly reduced travel times.

The western sub-committee discussed the effectiveness of stocking exercises in various locations in the western basin. Most sites have done very well, with the exception of the Barcovan site, where a die-off occurred and will likely not be used as a future stocking location. Salmon head collection opportunities during the angling season were also discussed, which will allow further data to be collected from anglers, and provide more information related to the presence of native and stocked fish. The western sub-committee also began discussions related to the communication between FMZ 20 and FMZ 17, as these two zones will need to work together to meet fish community objectives.

The eastern sub-committee continued to discuss Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence River fish community objectives, which include nearshore goals such as maintaining existing healthy populations, and protecting, restoring, and sustaining native species and their habitats. The offshore goals include maintaining

the offshore pelagic fish community characterized by a diversity of trout and salmon species, including Chinook Salmon, Coho Salmon, Rainbow Trout, Brown Trout and Atlantic Salmon, in balance with prey fish populations and lower trophic levels. The committee also discussed a proposed regulation change to allow two lines for Carp fishing. There have been many challenges to this proposal, including how it will be enforced, fishing locations, and accidental catch of other species.

In October, a proposal to change the Rainbow Trout harvest limits was brought forward to the western basin sub-committee, by the Lake Ontario Management Unit (LOMU). The MNR provided associated material to FMZ council members for their recommendations, and OFAH staff presented LOMU's proposal to our Fisheries Advisory Committee for their input. Further to this, the FMZ council will host a Lake Ontario (western basin) symposium on trout and salmon in 2011.

The MNR is also proposing a hold on changes to the stocking targets and net pens for 2011. Current net pen locations include: Port Dalhousie, Port Credit, Bluffer's Park, Whitby Harbour, Oshawa Harbour, Port Darlington, Barcovan (or alternate) and Wellington.

LAKE SIMCOE

The Lake Simcoe Fisheries Stakeholder Committee (LSFSC) met on a regular basis to discuss the development of fish community objectives. A draft of the Lake Simcoe Fish Community Objectives and corresponding Background Document was presented to the LSFSC for review prior to public consultation. The OFAH provided initial comments and recommendations for the two Lake Simcoe Fish Community Objectives documents. Based on a follow-up discussion with MNR staff in December, we are planning to submit a more thorough list of comments and recommendations in January 2011.

There was also significant discussion regarding the potential of reopening the Lake Simcoe recreational Lake Herring fishery. The fishery closed in 2001 to protect the low abundance of Lake Herring in Lake Simcoe; however, recent MNR data shows the presence of at least one strong year-class. This data, coupled with a recent increase in incidental angler catch of Lake Herring has resulted in considerable pressure to reopen the fishery. The MNR remained hesitant to reopen the fishery due to a concern regarding the sustainability of Lake Herring populations limited to one or two year-classes. The LSFSC will continue to discuss a potential recreational fishery, and the OFAH will continue to advocate for its return in Lake Simcoe.

The LSFSC also discussed the perch fishery, muskie restoration, Whitefish and Lake Trout seasons, as well as ideas and options for a Lake Simcoe bait regulation.

Black Bay and Black Sturgeon River

The Black Bay and Black Sturgeon River Native Fisheries Rehabilitation Options Evaluation document did not provide enough biological information prior to finalizing a decision for the future of the Black Sturgeon dam. We sent a letter to the MNR Lake Superior manager requesting that further scientific information be collected and the data be made available to the FMZ 9 Council and the OFAH for review, to which the MNR responded that the information provided was sufficient. The OFAH determined that the response from the MNR was not satisfactory, and a second

letter will be written, indicating that there is a need for spawning studies to gather data. The study should involve document spawning and specific habitat association below the dam, and should take that habitat data above the dam in order to determine what could potentially be available there. The study should be based on several years of data prior to a final decision being made.

Namakan River Hydro Development Project

In 2009, a draft Environmental Report was released regarding the Namakan River Hydro Development Project. We were one of many stakeholders who wrote to the President of Ojibway Power and Energy stating our concerns related to fish, fish habitat, and water management. In the late spring, we were provided with access to the submissions written by the MNR, the Ministry of Environment (MOE), and the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) for review.

To further understand the objectives of future hydro development projects in Ontario, we met with MNR Renewable Energy Section staff in Peterborough, and secured maps of Ontario's water management interests in each FMZ. These maps outline the current water control structures and waterpower-generating stations, to further identify possible hydro development projects in Ontario.

North Bala Falls Small Hydro Project

Based on conclusions from the Environmental Review Report, we wrote to the MNR regarding the negative impacts on fisheries values and sought more detailed information in order to further evaluate this hydro development project. Specifically, our concern with this small hydro project was the net negative impact on Lake Sturgeon and Walleye. Both species have great historical, current, and future value in Ontario, and cultural, recreational, socio-economic, and ecologic value in the Moon River.

From a fisheries conservation perspective, this development project will result in negative impacts to fish and fish habitat, specifically lake sturgeon and Walleye. We requested additional information be provided to us for review; however, by year end had not had a response.

Saugeen Ojibway Native Reserve Agreement Update

The OFAH met via teleconference with MNR staff, and local club representatives regarding negotiations for a new fish harvest agreement with the local Saugeen Ojibway Nation. It was the MNR's goal to have a new agreement in place by the end of September; however, if various challenges arise, this deadline may not be met. Topics of discussion that will be addressed in future negotiations include more defined enforcement and what Conservation Officers are capable of enforcing, solutions to by-catch, clear identifications of native nets and locations, possibilities of alternative netting techniques, and illegal sale of fish.

A main concern regarding the new agreement, which was expressed by several individuals, is that it should be made available to the public. It was stated that due to previous agreements not being made available to the public, a level of mistrust has been created between the natives, anglers, and the MNR. In the future, it is unlikely that the entire agreement will be made public; however, even if certain details were published, it would bring back areas of trust between these parties.

Aquaculture Sediment Policy

Various stakeholders and MNR staff hosted a meeting in June to develop a policy for aquaculture sediment. Some of the goals discussed were maintaining a healthy environment, demonstrating social responsibility, complying with legislative requirements, establishing a clear set of goals and objectives for the industry, and complying with the Ontario Water Resources Act (OWRA) and the Environmental Protection Act (EPA), which regulate sources of water pollution. Existing information and further science needs to be shared and researched to provide more information related to areas of interest and concern. The OFAH will continue to monitor this concern as policies develop.

Lake Sturgeon Management

After notification that Lake Sturgeon had been classified by the Committee on the Status of Species at Risk in Ontario (COSSARO) as threatened in two of three defined areas in the province, we wrote to the MNR's Species at Risk Manager requesting an exemption regulation, and permission to be included on the Recovery Team Committee. This request would allow angling for sturgeon on populations that are considered threatened and would also enable the recovery team to focus on the development of programs to engage anglers in data collection and management efforts.

The MNR responded that an exemption regulation would not be issued at that time, and that the recovery committee had not yet been determined.



Bait

There is growing concern regarding the status of the bait industry in Ontario. Issues such as viral hemorrhagic septicemia (VHS), transportation of bait, and invading species have many anglers and bait dealers concerned about the future use of live bait. At the April OFAH Fisheries Advisory Committee meeting, an MNR aquatic ecologist reported on the current status of bait in Ontario. A bait advisory committee will be developed to provide advice from various stakeholders. It has not yet been determined who will be on this committee, or when it will actually form.

Ringwood Fish Culture Station



OFAH host club, Metro East Anglers (MEA), under the supervision of the Ringwood Fish Hatchery Coordinator operated the hatchery as it entered its fifth and final production cycle under

OFAH management.

Over 650,000 Chinook were successfully raised. In preparation

for transfer to pen rearing locations, 85,000 Chinook were hand clipped in March, and upon receiving favorable results from MNR disease testing, were immediately released to the pen sites in Wellington, Barcovan, and Whitby.

In addition, 24,000 Coho were stocked as fall fingerlings and approximately 22,000 Rainbow Trout will be stocked next spring. Chinook salmon marking with the autofish sampler from the United States was completed more quickly than anticipated due to the larger and more uniform size of the fish than in previous years; and the skill of the autofish operator (the hourly throughput was higher than the previous two years). The hatchery had great support from volunteers from the Metro East Anglers (MEA), the OFAH, Fleming College, and many others.

Chinook and Coho Egg Collection Fish Health Sampling Protocol (developed by the MNR with input from OFAH staff) was finalized and used for 2010 egg collections. 2010 protocol advised 100% sampling target (i.e. sampling from all adults used). All samples were sent to the Fish Health Lab at the University of Guelph.

OFAH/MNR Memorandum of Understanding

The OFAH/MNR Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) expires in September, 2011, and the MNR has confirmed that it will not be renewing or extending the MOU for the operation of the Ringwood Fish Culture Station. The MNR has indicated that this decision will not impact the Chinook production resulting from the fall 2010 egg collection, as those fish can be stocked out in early spring. The Coho production however, will have to be stocked prior to the expiration of the MOU (a few weeks earlier than usual).

The MNR officially informed us that Chinook production will be transferred to the MNR Normandale Fish Culture Station, and equipment from Ringwood will also be transferred. A major rebuild and expansion of Normandale is now underway (over \$12 million). Normandale will also continue its role as the major production facility for the Lake Ontario Atlantic Salmon Restoration Program.

Pembroke Outdoor Sportsman's Club Walleye Rearing Ponds

We are pleased to report that the Pembroke Outdoor Sportsman's Club, with financial support from the OFAH, has completed the renovations of their Walleye rearing ponds.

Lake Ontario Coastal Wetlands and Lake Level Regulation

Water levels on Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence River have been artificially regulated since the 1960's under a regulation plan overseen by the International Joint Commission (IJC). Over the past number of years the IJC has looked at amending the plan to allow for a more "equal distribution of impacts and benefits to the ecological, social and economic features", above and below the dam at Cornwall.

The bi-national Lake Ontario-St. Lawrence River (LOSLR) Working Group has been working with the IJC, to evaluate the merits of a new environmental regulation plan (i.e. with the goal of returning the system to a more "natural hydrologic regime" to allow for more periodic flooding or drawdown of coastal wetlands. As part of the LOSLR Working Group, the MNR has committed to developing a primer, illustrating the relationship between Lake

Ontario wetlands and water level regulation. The primer is to be used as a consultation tool in discussions with the IJC. The OFAH was invited to review and provide input on the primer. OFAH comments were provided to the MNR Great Lakes and Water Policy Section, emphasizing that the MNR, prior to submitting the primer to the Working Group, should acquire and further demonstrate the socio-economic importance/values associated with wetlands (e.g. recreation, heritage/culture, biodiversity, etc.) to drive home the importance of maintaining wetland functions and values.

Man-Made Dams

Many early settlement dams have become obsolete and no longer serve their original societal purpose (e.g. power generation, flood control and recreational opportunities). The rationale for maintaining or upgrading obsolete dams is often based on historical and/or social significance (e.g. recreational impoundments); rather than, what is best for the watershed they are located in. Unfortunately, many of these dams continue to cause negative ecological effects (e.g. obstruction of fish movement, degraded water quality, etc.) and should be removed or decommissioned to restore the natural water regime and improve fish migration.

Springbank Dam

Located on the Thames River, the Springbank dam, constructed in 1929 has provided a reservoir/head pond for recreational opportunities in the City of London, however it serves no benefit to local residents for flood control. It has been a topic of debate for years over its negative impacts to fish passage and water quality.

The dam is nonoperational following an unsuccessful and controversial attempt to repair and upgrade it. The City of London is claiming damages and breach of contract by the engineers hired to undertake the project, and proposes to repair the failed dam, thereby continuing a process which has resulted in the harmful alteration of fish migration and reportedly cost taxpayers millions.

In 2010, OFAH staff prepared a petition requesting that the City of London take immediate action to remove the dam, based on its ineffectiveness, cost and negative environmental effects. OFAH Zone J, the Thames River Anglers Association (TRAA), and many other local stakeholder groups were active in obtaining signatures and keeping the issue in the public eye. TRAA was also instrumental in communicating the issue to the City of London's electoral candidates as well as surveying their position on the dam, prior to the fall elections. Many candidates were in favor of cutting losses or engaging in further conversation on the matter.

OFAH Zone J, in partnership with TRAA, will be compiling signatures and preparing a formal submission to Council in 2011.

Misner Dam

The Misner dam, located on the Lynn River, was built in the 1850's as a power source for a mill, and has provided an impoundment of water also known as Silver Lake mill pond in the heart of Port Dover. Norfolk council is proposing a \$1.1 million repair of the deteriorating structure without considering fish passage to maintain the mill pond/reservoir.

OFAH Zone J and the Simcoe Game and Fish Association have been actively urging the Municipal Council to decommission and renaturalize the Misner dam site. The project has been put on hold by the Ministry of Natural Resources and the Ministry of Environment for further investigating.

OFAH Club Survey – CFWIP

In March, OFAH staff prepared a survey to obtain an inventory of the projects our clubs are conducting with financial assistance from the Community Fish and Wildlife Involvement Program (CFWIP). The OFAH is largely responsible for the Ministry of Natural Resources continuing to maintain the CFWIP to fund fish and wildlife projects. The results of the survey will allow us to gauge the response and impact the CFWIP has on OFAH clubs, and their ability to deliver projects in their area. Only 112 (15%) surveys were returned. Results of the survey were presented at the September OFAH Board of Directors meeting, which were that:

- 75 percent of responding clubs had received CFWIP funds for fisheries, waterfowl or wildlife enhancement projects at one time;
- the majority of responding clubs indicated that CFWIP funding was a priority for projects to be accomplished
- Of the 12 clubs that responded, 11 indicated that CFWIP funding alone does not adequately cover hatchery costs; and
- over half indicated that their reliance on CFWIP for their hatchery's overall budget is low.

Lake Huron Biodiversity Conservation Strategy

In late November, the Lake Huron Biodiversity Conservation Strategy "*The Sweetwater Sea: Strategies for Conserving Lake Huron*" was released. OFAH staff provided input throughout the process, specifically with regard to the identifying and ranking of threats (e.g. invasive species). The report is available online at <http://lakehuron.ca/uploads/pdf/Lake-Huron-Biodiversity-Strategy-2010.pdf>

Regional Municipality of York—Proposal for an Intra-basin Transfer with Return Flow

The Regional Municipality of York is seeking to increase their existing intra-basin transfer from Lake Ontario to Lake Huron watershed communities with the provision of return flow to Lake Ontario as treated effluent to meet their projected growth.

In April 2010 the MNR initiated prior notice and consultation (PNC) with Great Lakes jurisdictions under the 1985 Great Lakes Charter (which remains in force until all jurisdictions have measures in place to implement the new Great Lakes Charter and the Great Lakes Sustainable Water Resources Agreement).

As a member of the Great Lakes – St. Lawrence River Basin Sustainable Water Resources Agreement Advisory Panel (AAP), the OFAH was involved in the initial review. OFAH staff submitted comments and recommendations to the MNR, Great Lakes and Water Policy Section in June. The OFAH recognizes York Region's need to ensure continued and uninterrupted water supply to existing residents and to secure future capacity based on population and infrastructure projections for the area (Places to Grow Act, 2005, Master Plans). However, in keeping with the "spirit and intent of all agreements regarding Great Lakes waters" we are concerned that the proposal falls short of maintaining the "biological integrity" of Lake Ontario. For example, the proposal does not identify thresholds and/or assign stress levels for the water reserve in protection of fish habitat and ecological functions.

The OFAH also requested additional clarification to York Region's response to the AAP with respect to its Environmental Assessment and the conclusion that there would be no adverse

harmful impacts to fish habitat or fish in Lake Ontario.

In October, an MNR-MOE letter was issued to the Municipality of York Region indicating successful completion of the PNC process and outlining conditions approved by York Region. The need for developing a common framework for assessing cumulative impacts for future proposals was also acknowledged.



Photo: Ian Deslauriers



Service Canada Summer Jobs Program

2010 was another successful year for providing 28 university and college students with summer employment through Service Canada, an initiative of the federal government. OFAH students worked over 8,900 hours and earned more than \$90,000 in wages. The following lists the locations and programs of our 2010 summer crew.

Location	Program
Aurora	ISAP
Chute a Blondeau	ISAP
Dorset	ISAP
Dorset	ISAP
Espanola	ISAP
Finch	ISAP
Kenora	ISAP
Kirkland Lake	ISAP
Lanark-Hwy. 511	ISAP
Lanark-Plenty Lane	ISAP
Manotick	ISAP
Mississauga	ISAP
Newmarket	Atlantic Salmon
Newmarket	Atlantic Salmon
Nipigon	ISAP
Orillia	ISAP
Oshawa	ISAP
Pembroke	ISAP
Peterborough	CSSP
Peterborough	Heritage Centre
Peterborough	Atlantic Salmon
Peterborough	ISAP
Peterborough	Heritage Centre
Sault Ste. Marie	ISAP
Thunder Bay	ISAP
Trenton	ISAP
Utopia	ISAP
Windsor	ISAP



Community Stream Steward Program



The Community Stream Steward Program (CSSP) is an OFAH hosted, multi-partner conservation and stewardship initiative. With the aim of engaging landowners and communities, the program works to build a network of leaders in stream conservation, restoration, and stewardship across central Ontario.

CSSP provides landowners and community members with the advice, support, and tools required to conduct coordinated stewardship activities along stream reaches within their neighborhoods. The CSSP provides tangible, visible and lasting benefits to the people of Ontario because it empowers local citizens to make positive changes to their environment.

Stream Habitat Restoration and Creation

Projects completed in 2010 were targeted to improving water quality, enhancing riparian and in-stream habitat, and restoring stream and fish habitat to its natural state. Over 60 projects were completed this year, including 27 planting sites, 3 stream crossings for farm equipment or livestock, 12 fencing projects to exclude cattle from streams, and 6 bank stabilizations using live crib-walls, cedar bundles, or erosion control mats. Volunteers participated in almost every project and their involvement in the program allows for projects to be completed quickly and cost effectively: 4,800 trees and shrubs don't plant themselves! These projects all have direct benefits to the 7,600m of stream they protect, and to the surrounding land, by increasing natural cover, shading the water, decreasing contaminants to the water, and providing habitats for fish.

With funding from Lake Simcoe Clean-Up Fund, CSSP staff were busy with site visits and projects in the Lake Simcoe Watershed. A number of shoreline stabilizations, erosion control, and riparian planting projects were completed during the year. Pefferlaw River landowners were very receptive to outreach and stewardship activities and the CSSP, in partnership with the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR), and other program partners, hosted several workshops and completed a number of projects in the area.

In 2010, the CSSP expanded its habitat stewardship focus to include wetlands and ponds adjacent to stream and river systems. This was made possible through funding support from Wildlife Habitat Canada and the Species at Risk Stewardship Fund (MNR). Exciting new projects included pond enhancement and creation for waterfowl, wetland fencing to provide protected nesting habitats, and turtle nesting site creation. These projects were well received by our funder and the participating landowners.

Free site visits continue to be the program's primary means of engaging landowners, disseminating program materials, and identifying project sites. Referrals from partners, community events, and word of mouth have been effective means of reaching new and interested persons. Over 90 site visits were conducted during the year for landowners with stream or wetland features.

Program Partners

The CSSP was fortunate to receive support and funding from a variety of sources in 2010, including the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters, Lake Simcoe Clean-Up Fund, Wildlife Habitat Canada, the MNR Species at Risk Stewardship Fund



and Community Fisheries and Wildlife Involvement Program, Pioneer Petroleum, Ontario Wildlife Foundation, Environment Canada, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, and Northumberland, Peterborough, Victoria and Durham Ontario Stewardship Councils. Collaborations with the Atlantic Salmon Program, Ducks Unlimited, and the Environmental Farm Plan made several projects possible.

Building and creating partnerships within the Lake Simcoe watershed was a priority in 2010. By working cooperatively with the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority, Maskinonge River Recovery Project, Kids for Turtles, and Lake Simcoe Community Stewardship Program, the CSSP has achieved its objective to implement stewardship projects and activities within that watershed. We hope to obtain funding in the final round of the Lake Simcoe Clean-Up Fund so that we can continue this work.

Outreach and Training

In order to increase landowner contact and build partnerships, CSSP staff attended events and made presentations within the program range, and increased its exposure through media sources. In 2010, staff attended the East Central Farm Show, Lindsay Woodlot Conference, Peterborough Children's Water Festival, and the Healthy Lands for Healthy Horses workshop. In the spring, CSSP hosted a partnership meeting to reconnect with other conservation and stewardship organizations in the area. Two landowner workshops were hosted in the fall, two for landowners in Campbellford and Ashburn. Both were cohosted by Ontario Stewardship and the local Conservation Authority. Stream Steward Training, a three-day training session for volunteers and members of local organizations, was held in Cannington. The training was well attended and partners including Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority and Ontario Stewardship assisted with the delivery of material. The participants spent two evenings in a classroom setting and a full Saturday in the field sampling streams and visiting potential restoration projects.

Program Sustainability

The CSSP is funded through a variety of sources, and actively seeks new funding opportunities every year. With successful grant applications last year, the program was able to expand its on-the-ground efforts and increase staff. Applications submitted for 2011 include Wildlife Habitat Canada, Environment Canada Habitat Stewardship, and the Lake Simcoe Clean-Up Fund.



Keep All Our Lakes Great!

You can stop invading species

Invading Species Awareness Program

The Invading Species Awareness Program (ISAP) has been a joint partnership initiative of the OFAH and the MNR since 1992; focusing on preventing invasive species introductions to Ontario's forests and waters. In 2010, in collaboration with hundreds of community groups, nongovernment organizations and all levels of government, the ISAP reached millions of Ontarians and engaged their participation in prevention. Hundreds of citizen scientists and professional field staff from numerous agencies participated in our monitoring and reporting programs.

The ISAP made valuable contributions to early detection and rapid response initiatives for invasive species that are threatening Ontario's biodiversity such as Asian Carp, Giant Hogweed, European water chestnut, and water soldier. The ISAP made significant contributions to provincial, national and international initiatives including the Ontario Invasive Plant Council, the U.S. Great Lakes Panel on Aquatic Nuisance Species and the Canadian Aquatic Invasive Species Network, and the development of the bi-national Lake Superior Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention Plan.

Partnerships

In 2010, the OFAH and the MNR continued the successful joint delivery of the ISAP, with OFAH staff working collaboratively with staff from MNR's Biodiversity branch, as well as numerous district offices around the province.

Federally, funding contributions were made by Environment Canada's Great Lakes Management and Reporting Section, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Human Resources Development Canada's Summer Jobs Program and Eco-Canada.

Numerous additional organizations made valuable in-kind and financial contributions to the ISAP in 2010. These included: Ontario Wildlife Foundation, Ontario Stewardship Opportunities Fund, Community Fish and Wildlife Involvement Program, Lake of the Woods District Property Owners' Association, OFAH Zone A, Fort Frances Sportsmen's Club, Thunder Bay Stewardship Council, OFAH Zone B, Nipigon Watershed Advisory Council, East Algoma Stewardship Council, OFAH Zone C, Manitoulin Area Stewardship Council, Manitoulin Streams, Manitoulin Tourism Association, Ontario Streams, Kids for Turtles Environmental Education, Nottawasaga, Lake Simcoe, Central Lake Ontario, Credit Valley, Rideau Valley, South Nation, Lower Trent, Mississippi Valley conservation authorities, Ministry of Environment's Dorset Environmental Centre, York University, University of Windsor, Bancroft Area Stewardship Council, Prince Edward Stewardship Council, Hastings Stewardship Council, Halton/Peel Stewardship Council, Victoria Land and Water Stewardship Council, Plenty Canada, Voyageurs Provincial Park, Federation of Ontario Cottagers' Associations, Canadian Power and Sail Squadron and Ontario Marine Operators Association.



Invading Species Communications

2010 was a record year for media interest in the ISAP, with close to 100 interviews in radio, television and newsprint reaching over five million people. Highlights included feature articles in the Toronto Star, Associated Press, Globe and Mail, Thunder Bay Chronicle Journal, Kingston Whig Standard, London Free Press, Peterborough Examiner, and Windsor Star. Radio interviews included provincial programs such as CBC Radio's Ontario Morning, as well as regional programs on CBC Thunder Bay, Sudbury, and Windsor. Television interviews included CTV National News, Thunder Bay NewsWatch, and CHEX TV (three times) in Peterborough, and CHEX TV in Oshawa, and a feature story on Asian Carp for CBC Television's *Decouverte*. Programming also included spots on the Aboriginal People's Television Network's *This is Turtle Island*.

Our summer staff were also featured in numerous stories around the province; many staff were invited to write weekly articles on invasive species issues for local newspapers such as the Orillia Packet and Times, Thunder Bay Chronicle Journal and Manitoulin Mid-North Monitor.

Public Service Announcements

Our radio campaign was extremely successful in 2010, with over 54 stations airing our public service announcements (PSAs) featuring the six-part radio series "Adventures of the Green Family" and an ice fishing segment. The ads received over 5,880 plays across the province. Our television PSAs were aired on *Angler and Hunter Television*, and WILD TV included the PSAs in the regular rotation of their outdoor programs nationwide.

Print PSA's were published in Ontario Parks' visitor tabloids, tourism guides such as *Discover the Trent Severn*, Rideau and Georgian Bay publications, and *Ontario OUT OF DOORS*. In partnership with the MNR, bumper stickers featuring the message "Don't Give Invasive Species A Free Ride!" were distributed in Ontario Outdoor Card renewal notices, which were sent directly to 613,200 anglers and hunters in French and English.

Program Outreach Overview

The ISAP conducted outreach to a broad audience in 2010, including anglers, hunters, gardeners, ATV drivers, aquarium hobbyists, schools, bait harvesters and technical field professionals. Staff attended more than 180 events, including the Toronto and Ottawa Sportsmen's Shows, Toronto Boat Show, Canada Blooms, Landscape Congress, Cottage Life Show, Central Canada Outdoor Show, and the International Conference on Aquatic Invasive Species, reaching over 303,780 people. Numerous workshops and presentations were also organized, focusing on a variety of topics for bait harvesters, lake associations, garden clubs, landowner groups, tournament organizers, and angling

clubs. These ventures were always collaborative in nature, working with over 170 organizations including stewardship councils, conservation authorities, nongovernment organizations, and community groups. As a result of these initiatives, 672,231 educational materials were distributed provincewide, and program staff fielded direct requests from over 1,300 people to the Invading Species Hotline.

Aquatic Invasive Species Workshops for Technical Professionals

In 2010, technical workshops were delivered specifically for professionals in the resource/environment field. The half-day workshops focused on aquatic invasive species identification, field equipment decontamination and reporting procedures. Four workshops were delivered at Lakehead University, Seneca College, Sir Sandford Fleming College and in Peterborough at the OFAH/Mario Cortellucci Hunting and Fishing Heritage to over 150 field staff from conservation authorities, MNR district offices and academic institutions.

Aquatic Invasive Species – HACCP Workshops for Bait Harvesters

In 2010, ISAP staff worked with the MNR to develop a mechanism to deliver the HACCP courses remotely via webinars to new bait harvesters as they come online.

Invading Species Hit Squad

The Invading Species Hit Squad hit the ground running again, with a record 23 students working to educate and engage their communities in invasive species prevention, monitoring and control activities. Staff worked with local partners in Kenora, Thunder Bay, Nipigon, Sault Ste. Marie, Windsor, Kirkland Lake, Manitoulin, Dorset, Orillia, Alliston, Aurora, Oshawa, Mississauga, Peterborough, Trenton, Picton, Finch, Lanark (2), Ottawa, Pembroke and Hawkesbury. The Hit Squad participated in over 100 events, provided presentations and displays and watercraft inspections at boat launches, and conducted campsite surveys at provincial parks. A continued partnership with Ontario Parks enabled students to attend 33 provincial parks and assist with interpretive programs. Students also engaged numerous volunteers to monitor 102 lakes, and worked hard to attract media attention to invasive species issues, writing articles for local papers and doing media interviews. These initiatives were made possible through funding from local partners, OFAH Zone C and the Canada Summer Jobs program.

Landscape, Nursery and Aquarium Outreach Project

Working with Ontario Streams, the Ontario Invasive Plant Council's Horticulture Outreach Collaborative and Aurora District MNR, significant outreach was conducted; including visits and interviews with over 150 nursery and aquarium retailers to share educational materials and encourage participation in prevention programs. Partners developed a *Garden Smart* brochure and display profiling key invasive species that may be unwittingly utilized in gardens or landscaping.

International Day of Biological Diversity, and Victoria Day Campaign

Celebrating the United Nations' International Day of Biological Diversity's 2010 theme of Biodiversity, the ISAP coordinated two community volunteer events focused on garlic mustard monitoring and control in partnership with the Biodiversity

Education and Awareness Network in May. In association with this effort, the program also launched an awareness campaign with the Ontario Invasive Plant Council, focused on the Victoria Day long weekend, promoting public awareness of invasive species in association with travelling to holiday destinations (i.e. the cottage, the lake, etc.) at Bass Pro Shops in Vaughn. The program attracted media including CHEX and CKWS TV in Oshawa, Peterborough, and Kingston.

Educational Materials

New educational materials were produced in 2010, including: a Garden Smart! brochure and new additions to the Field Guide To Aquatic Invasive Species. Our Grade 4 *Making Waves!* curriculum continues to be popular, and our Grade 6 unit *Invasive Species! A Biodiversity Challenge* was completed and preparations were underway for a provincewide launch in 2011. The curriculum was promoted in classrooms, university preservice teacher programs, as well as at conferences such as the Science Teachers' Association of Ontario annual meeting, and the Environmental Educators of Ontario annual conference.

Highway and Boat Launch Signage

Billboards providing the message "Stop Invasive Species! Inspect Clean Drain", continued to be erected on highways around the province. New billboards were placed in Thunder Bay, Sault Ste. Marie, Temagami, and Bancroft with the assistance of the Ontario Wildlife Foundation, Thunder Bay Stewardship Council, OFAH Zone C, and the Temagami Anglers and Hunters, Invasive Species Research Centre, and the Bancroft Stewardship Council. A reprint of 2,000 Stop Invasive Species boat launch signs were also produced with assistance from the Ontario Wildlife Foundation.



Invading Species Website

The Invading Species website continues to be extremely popular, with over 74,000 visitors in 2010. We anticipate increased traffic in 2011, with the launching of a new website design, and enhanced linkages with the MNR's new invasive species website.

Lake Simcoe-Invasive Species Outreach for the Ice Fishery

A series of activities were organized to promote awareness of invasive species on Lake Simcoe during the winter and summer. Outreach activities during the winter included the placement of billboards for the "ice highway", an invasive species wrap for the MNR snowmobile trailer, and surveys of ice anglers to share information about invasive species. A radio PSA was also distributed specifically directed at ice anglers.

Provincial Angler and Boater Survey

In partnership with Fisheries and Oceans Canada and the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources Program staff distributed a provincial survey of 6,000 anglers directed at learning more about their knowledge and participation in invasive species prevention. Focus groups were also conducted at the Toronto Sportsmen's Show. The results of the surveys are very promising, showing significant positive changes in angler behavior as a result of our outreach efforts over the past decade.

Lake Superior Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention Plan

New partnerships with Environment Canada, the MNR and OFAH Zone B were formed to assist in the implementation of the binational Lake Superior Aquatic Invasive Species-Prevention Plan. A project coordinator was hired in November to assist with invasive species outreach on the North Shore of Lake Superior.

Program Monitoring

In 2010, the Invading Species Awareness Program received over 2,000 reports of invasive species; 1,100 of which were confirmed. New species detections included numerous reports of Giant Hogweed throughout southern Ontario, the expansion of rusty crayfish, round goby and tubenose goby in the Thunder Bay area, and detections of a variety of terrestrial invasive plants throughout southern Ontario.

The Invading Species Watch program engaged volunteers and community groups to monitor 112 lakes in 2010, contributing vital information on the presence and absence of spiny water flea and zebra mussels in Ontario lakes.

Invasive Tracking System

The Invasive Tracking System, an online tracking system for invasive species enabling citizens and agencies to enter invasive reports utilizing satellite imagery was launched in 2010 following its pilot development in the Lake Simcoe watershed in 2009. Partners involved include the MNR, Lake Simcoe Conservation Authority, Ontario Invasive Plant Council, Couchiching Conservancy, Kids for Turtles Environmental Education, and the Community-Based Mapping Project. Funding for the project was provided by Environment Canada's Lake Simcoe Clean-Up Fund.

Invasive Species Road Rallies

ISAP staff launched a new initiative called "Invasive Road Rallies." Rallies were coordinated in Uxbridge, Wolfe Island, Town of Georgina, Brock Township and in the Municipality of Trent Hills. The rallies engaged volunteers and community groups in locally tracking the spread of invasive plants on roads and highways. Partners included Lower Trent Conservation, the Town of Trent Hills, Aurora District MNR, Georgina Sportsmen Alliance, the Friends of Big Sandy Bay and the Beaverton Sportsmen Club. Over 200 invasive plant records were collected during the five rallies. The results were provided to the respective town councils, as a starting point for the development of invasive plant management plans.

Control

Two major control efforts continued in 2010 for the aquatic European water chestnut and water soldier. In the Ottawa River, the ISAP contributed staff and equipment to the summer-long effort to mechanically remove a million European water chestnut from the vicinity of Voyageurs Provincial Park.

The ISAP also contributed to efforts to eradicate water soldier from

the Trent Severn Waterway, near Havelock, in September utilizing the aquatic herbicide known as Reward. The ISAP coordinated community awareness of the project, engaged volunteers in river monitoring, and conducted presentations. Preliminary results indicate that it was successful at removing the majority of the population, however follow up monitoring will be required. Partners included Lower Trent Conservation, North Seymour Ratepayers Association, and Parks Canada.

Giant Hogweed Management Strategy

Program staff contributed to the development of a Giant Hogweed Management Strategy for Ontario, being led by the MNR and the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs. This project will compile all existing literature on the biology, ecology, distribution and control measures for this invasive plant.



Invasive Plants-Landowner Control Workshop

ISAP staff, in partnership with Credit Valley Conservation (CVC), Halton Peel Stewardship Council, Ontario Invasive Plant Council and the MNR, developed a provincial template for workshops for landowners to teach them how to develop invasive plant management plans for their woodlots.

Asian Carp Management and Control

Efforts to prevent the spread of Asian Carp to the Great Lakes continued in earnest in 2010. The detection of DNA and one individual fish beyond the barrier elevated the issue to the highest levels within the United States, with President Obama's commitment of millions of dollars to the implementation of an Asian Carp Control Strategy Framework. Fisheries and Oceans Canada announced \$415,000 to conduct a comprehensive risk assessment of Asian Carp within the Great Lakes, which will be facilitated by the Great Lakes Fishery Commission. The assessment will establish the likelihood of Asian Carp survival in the Great Lakes and identify locations which are vulnerable to invasion. The MNR is leading the development of a rapid response protocol for Asian Carp, engaging all of the key agencies (DFO, MOE, etc.) and organizations such as the OFAH, that may play a role in detection and management/control measures.



Wildlife Management

Conservation is the primary goal of the OFAH. On behalf of our members, we work to ensure that wildlife is protected, restored and managed to yield the greatest sustainable benefits today, while maintaining the potential to meet the needs of future generations.

Big Game

Moose Management

Moose Population Objectives Setting

Moose population targets have a significant bearing on hunting opportunities in the short and long term.

As a result of the Moose Review Phase I, and the subsequent approval of the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) new moose policy and management guidelines, the MNR began reviewing individual moose population objectives for each WMU in late 2009. These moose population objectives have not been reviewed since 2001.

In March 2010, the OFAH submitted comprehensive comments and recommendations to the MNR, for all 60 moose WMUs, on this first phase of the population objective review (which is limited to the ecological/biological capacity of the forest habitat to support moose).

Using 25+ years of moose population, harvest, and recruitment trends, OFAH staff submitted recommendations for each of 60+ WMU moose population objectives and posted them on the OFAH website. Some highlights from the OFAH submission include the following:

- the OFAH rejects a view expressed within the MNR Forest Management/ Landscape Stand & Site simulation model that suggests the boreal forest cannot support more than 40 moose per 100 sq km;
- the OFAH has provided the evidence-based science that suggests Ontario forest habitat would be able to sustain more than 100 moose per 100 sq km, were it not for the effects of black bear and wolf predation combined;
- the OFAH has implored the MNR to clearly distinguish between realistic forest habitat capacity, and the more limiting role of predation in its models. The MNR needs to be much more clear about the relative importance of forest habitat and predation in order to effectively manage forests for wildlife;

- where we see moose populations that have been allowed to grow to historic highs *and* where there is a corresponding reduction of recruitment, we have recommended that the MNR use adaptive management to test the hypothesis that if moose populations are reduced in some WMUs, productivity (and adult moose tags) will actually increase.

After the MNR has drafted new moose population objectives based on ecological capacity (i.e. answers “this is how many moose we can grow and sustain”) it will consult with the public about refining those objectives based on the socio-economic (i.e. ask the question “within that range, how many moose do you want us to grow/sustain?”). The OFAH will assist local members with their own submissions, at that stage.

2010 Moose Harvest Plan Review

Through our representation on the MNR provincial Big Game Management Advisory Committee (BGMAC), the OFAH is annually provided with an opportunity to review and comment on draft moose harvest plans and resident tag quota allocations.

In 2010, OFAH staff received the draft harvest plans in mid-March



Photo: Randy Therrien

and in a short timeframe, reviewed and drafted comments on the harvest plans for each of the 60+ moose management WMUs. This information was shared with our representatives attending the BGMAC moose allocation review meeting.

OFAH representatives are seeing our annual efforts positively reflected through BGMAC in many moose harvest plans. Highlights from the 2010 review include the following:

- southern Ontario moose populations continue to prove to be very productive, compared to the northern range;
- southern range moose are supporting high levels of harvest, sustained growth, and good calf recruitment;
- northwestern Ontario continues to support the greatest abundance and densities of moose, but there have been some significant declines in some areas due to factors other than regulated hunting;
- 2010 moose aerial inventories, though limited due to poor snow conditions, have generally revealed some rebound of calf recruitment rates – not to 1990's levels, but an improvement (where the proportion of calves in many populations have been at all-time lows in the last decade);
- concerns exist about high levels of aboriginal harvest and effects of increased predation by wolves and black bears on moose (particularly calves) in some northwest and northeast WMUs;
- previously expressed MNR concerns about the possibility of cows not being bred do not seem well-founded;
- the Northeastern MNR study of cow pregnancy rates does not reveal problems with productivity with current bull:cow ratios;
- Some MNR biologists (e.g. Wawa area) continue to be overly restrictive with moose harvest planning (the OFAH has repeatedly urged some districts to increase harvest to test hypothesis that productivity/recruitment will increase in some WMUs);
- The tourism industry harvest in 2009 was, provincially, 10.2 percent of the total planned harvest, an improvement over several years ago. MNR policy calls for 10 percent tourism allocation;
- Of 8,559 moose planned for harvest in 2009, only 6,074 were harvested by licensed hunters. This represents a significant underharvest (that reflects both conservative planning in some units, but also Metis harvest, and lower recruitment rates in recent years);
- OFAH identified another source of “over-protection” in harvest planning, with regards to the way calf harvests were being projected in 2010;
- Eastern Ontario moose management continued to be highly conservative (moose populations have recovered back to target populations, but the MNR continues to impose low percentage harvest and restrictive calf tag quotas in WMUs 48, 55A, 55B and 57; and
- the OFAH continued to ask for increased transparency and integrity in plans, which we are seeing in many WMUs, but planned and actual harvest should be aligning better.

Proposed Changes to Moose Tag Transfer Policy

In July, we indicated our support for the proposed changes to the provincial Moose Tag Transfer Policy (EBR #011-0111). Under the proposed policy, beginning in 2012, no moose tag group applicant would be allowed to transfer a second tag until he/she accepts one in their own name. The number of tag transfers has been increasing annually, and this is a reasonable step to discourage “padding” of group applications with applicants who do not actually intend to hunt.

On December 30, the decision to adopt the new moose tag transfer policy was posted. This decision was driven in part by feedback from hunters participating in the Moose Program Review of 2009. The OFAH submission can be found at www.ofah.org.

White-tailed Deer Management

Enhanced White-tail Management & Harvest Planning – A New Priority

When provincial deer harvests began to level off and decline for the first time in three decades, the OFAH expressed concern about potential deer overharvest and the need for better WMU-specific population assessment and harvest planning (early 2008). Provincial deer harvests in 2009 declined some 5 to 20% throughout much of the Great Lakes Basin area (on both sides of the border) and accounts from hunters suggest that the 2010 harvest will also have declined in most WMUs in central and eastern parts of southern region.

Questions and theories abound about why – and to what degree the population declines reflect changing weather; planned and/or unintentional overharvest; and/or increased predation by eastern coyotes, which most hunters agree were at all-time highs by 2009. Most agree that the winter of 2007/08 corresponds with the beginning of the new declining trend. Biologists will not have a better picture until the 2010 postcard surveys are summarized. OFAH will scrutinize the 2010 harvest closely.

2010 Antlerless and Additional Tag Reductions

OFAH member representatives on the Eastern Ontario Deer Management Stakeholders Committee were well informed of declining Kemptville MNR District deer population trends and were fully supportive of proactive reductions proposed for 2010 antlerless deer tags. We encourage other districts in southern region to approach deer population assessment and modeling with the same rigour and transparency as Kemptville MNR demonstrated in 2010.

In November 2010, OFAH staff met with MNR Wildlife Policy section staff to urge that deer management, including assessment and harvest planning, receive higher priority in the wake of the recent population changes and declines.



Photo: Ian Deslauriers

Winter Severity Monitoring

Winter 2009/10 was a relatively easy one for Ontario white-tails, with no MNR regions declaring any winter severity that would trigger a need for emergency winter feeding.

Hamilton Region Conservation – Deer Management Advisory Committee

Early in 2010, the OFAH accepted an invitation to participate on a Hamilton Region Conservation (HRC) Deer Management Advisory Committee (DMAC) on the strengths of the (then) clear terms of reference provided in advance, which included:

- HRC acknowledgement of a deer overabundance problem in conservation lands of the Dundas Valley- Ancaster area, based on 2009 MNR assessment of unsustainably high deer densities (up to 100+ per sq km in some CAs);
- the understanding that the committee would be made up of diverse stakeholders, would be technical in nature, and make science-based recommendations for effective deer management to the HRC Board.

Unfortunately, the scope of the DMAC mandate was soon reduced to only one conservation area, Iroquoia Heights, and even after several meetings, the committee could not even reach consensus on the deer over-abundance problem. As a result, the OFAH withdrew from the ineffective process.

The event that compelled HRC to create the DMAC was a 2009 unplanned and municipally noncompliant deer harvest in the urban Iroquoia Heights Conservation Area by members of the Grand River Haudenosaunee First Nations. In December 2010, the aboriginal hunters took their harvest to a different area in the Dundas Valley, which was beyond the mandate of the DMAC. The MNR estimated deer densities in that area to be 6 to 10 times what is known to be ecologically sustainable.

Elk Restoration & Management

Elk Management Plan & Implementation

The OFAH applauded the Minister of Natural Resources for approving the provincial Elk Management Plan for Ontario in early 2010. The Elk Management Plan lays the foundation for transitioning from elk restoration to science-based elk management and regulated hunting, area by area, as elk population growth becomes self-sustaining.

The OFAH had made recommendations for a sound science-based Ontario-made elk harvest management approach that we felt were well reflected in the five elk management policies and guidelines. Positive progress was made in 2010 toward the creation of Ontario's first modern day regulated elk hunt.

The proposed provincial policies included draft guidelines for:

- Elk Harvest Allocation System (EBR #011-0741)
- Elk Harvest Management planning (EBR #011-0744)
- Elk Population Objective Setting (EBR #011-0743)

The OFAH fully supported the direction included within these three provincial elk management policy pieces, on the basis of their strengths, which included:

- quantitative elk population objective setting that reflects both ecological capacity of the land, and social-economic considerations;
- elk population assessment, objective setting, harvest management, and allocation at a fine scale (sub-WMU level to facilitate more optimal management and better achievement of multiple elk management goals);



Photo: Jim Markou

- guidelines provide clear, logical and adaptive directions to district biologists (without being overly prescriptive; i.e. encourages informed professional judgement);
- encourages transparent harvest planning and consultation with affected stakeholders;
- includes mandatory hunt reporting;

As a result of further discussions at the request of the MNR, the OFAH anticipates some modification to the proposed elk lottery/application procedure. We expect:

- the cost for entering the lottery will remain low, and the cost of a license will remain comparable to a resident white-tail or moose hunting license;
- lottery draws will be WMU-specific; i.e. hunters will not be 'assigned' to a WMU that they did not identify on their application;
- the MNR will structure the application such that hunters either apply as individuals or as groups of 2 to 4, but that individuals will not be allowed to apply for more than one group (a significant departure from what was proposed);
- elk seal transfers will probably be allowed within the group, similar to moose tag transfers.

Also included in the MNR elk proposals were **Elk Population Objectives for the Bancroft-North Hastings Area Herd** (EBR #011-0742)

The OFAH has raised concerns that the draft population objective for the Bancroft-North Hastings herd falls short of the expectation/direction within the provincial elk population objective setting guidelines. Specifically we believe that the population objective of 500 +/- 100 elk is adequate for 2011 harvest planning, but we strongly recommend this be reviewed after the first harvest year. (The OFAH has suggested that a population objective of 700 +/- for 2015 including more detailed herd-specific population targets and herd-specific bull:cow ratio objectives. the OFAH believes, based on current population estimates, this higher population objective could be easily met with an annual harvest of approximately 7 to 8 percent or more).

Subsequent discussions with MNR district and wildlife policy

staff have increased our confidence that elk population objectives for the Bancroft herds will be reviewed and detailed to the sub-WMU level, based on the most current elk population assessment. Also included in the MNR elk proposals was the Draft Policy for Protecting Agricultural Property from Elk (EBR # 011-0745); The OFAH is not necessarily opposed to the proposed elk harassment and removal authorization policy, providing it is strictly adhered to, and is used sparingly and wisely at the district level. It has been the implementation of the Deer Removal Authorization (DRA) policy, not the policy itself, that has caused OFAH concern about DRAs.

The elk removal authorization is tighter than the deer removal authorizations. For implementation:

- there needs to be demonstration of ineffective use of preventative techniques before issuing harassment authorizations. No-kill permits unless preventative methods and harassment have not worked;
- the MNR should investigate the feasibility, costs and benefits of relocation of elk from farm conflict areas;
- damage assessment needs to be quantified and significant (a higher standard for tolerance of elk damage is expected);
- there is an assurance that ERAs will not be used to manage elk populations (and recognition in the policy that elk management is achieved through fine-scale harvest planning and hunt management);
- we must be assured that elk heads and antlers from ERA-killed elk must be forfeited to the MNR;

The OFAH has sought additional assurances, beyond what has been proposed. We expect some modification of agent criteria to ensure that agents are reasonably local.

Our hope is that the MNR uses the elk harvest management policies and tools they are creating to demonstrate to farmers that elk and public elk hunting can be a valuable natural asset. At the same time, we have encouraged the Ministry to earmark some of the elk license revenues for elk habitat and damage prevention demonstration sites.

The sixth proposal in the Elk Management suite included the Draft Elk Hunting Regulations (under the FWCA) EBR #011-0746).

The OFAH supports the proposed amendments, which include the following recommendations:

- restrict elk hunting to licensed Ontario resident hunters only;
- require elk hunters on private land to carry written landowner permission;
- make reporting mandatory for each hunter who receives an elk seal;
- allow elk hunters to use rifles, shotguns, muzzle-loaders or bows.

This is history in the making—the first regulated hunt in almost a hundred years for a new big game species!

OFAH Support for Bancroft-North Hastings Elk Population Research & Monitoring

The OFAH provided its third of three \$10,000 OFAH Provincial Fish & Wildlife Fund contributions to the Bancroft-North Hastings elk population monitoring and research project in 2010. The results of the monitoring project will have a direct application to the first elk harvest plan.



Photo: Randy Therrien

Black Bear Management

Enhanced Black Bear Management Framework – 2010 Implementation & Outreach

The OFAH supported the development and approval of the new (2009) Enhanced Black Bear Management Framework, because it lays the foundation for: a) improved black bear population management at the WMU level; and b) increased community input into black bear population targets and management.

Based on previous discussions with the MNR, and our understanding of the first step in implementing the approved Black Bear Enhanced Management Framework, the OFAH had anticipated that each MNR district in bear range would produce and distribute a series of Black Bear Resource Reports for each WMU, with a notice requesting stakeholder input into black bear population densities/objectives. This did not happen, however, as the MNR advised us that they were making slower-than-expected progress in implementation and outreach. We look forward to being more engaged in local black bear management discussions with the MNR in 2011. OFAH staff and the OFAH Big Game Advisory Committee, we are working toward developing a comprehensive proposal to the MNR on hunt camp party hunting for black bears during moose and deer gun seasons.

OFAH Resolution – Proposed Black Bear Camp License

A preliminary discussion between the OFAH and the MNR regarding the feasibility and benefit of a new type of group black bear hunting license helped the OFAH frame the details that need to be considered and included in such a proposal.

Fish & Wildlife Conservation Act & Regulation Changes

Bill 212 (Omnibus Bill/Fish & Wildlife Conservation Act)

New amendments to the *Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act* provide the MNR with new regulatory abilities in two areas: ministerial authority to regulate wildlife feeding, and ministerial ability to issue Elk Harassment, Capture and Removal authorizations for protection of property.

Wildlife Feeding: Regulation Development

Bill 212 gives the Minister the ability to regulate the feeding of wildlife. This is not to be confused with baiting for the purposes of hunting, which the Lieutenant Governor in Council has had the ability to regulate for many years; i.e. through the *Fish & Wildlife Conservation Act*.

The OFAH sees MNR priorities for wildlife feeding regulations limited to:

- Regulating the supplemental feeding of elk (including prohibition) to reduce disease potential, and to prevent the creation of “nuisance elk” conditioned to hay and humans;
- Regulating the supplemental feeding of white-tailed deer in winter, as part of CWD prevention;

“Wildlife Feeding” for the purposes of regulation, should not include planted croplands, residues, wildlife lure crops, wildlife food plots, or baiting for the purpose of hunting. No immediate changes are anticipated.

OFAH Response to Proposed FWCA Hunting Regulations (EBR #011-1052)

In November, OFAH staff responded to a number of proposed amendments to the Ontario hunting regulations, under the *Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act*. Several of the proposed changes were supported by the OFAH, including:

Muzzleloader Definition:

- updated definition of ‘muzzleloader’ to include modern in-line and electronic muzzleloaders. We also anticipate clarification of the definition of what is unloaded (e.g. percussion cap removed, battery removed.) The effect of this proposal is to make muzzleloaders legal for hunting

Muzzle energy .22 rimfire vs .220 Swift:

- updating of wording from unquantifiable ‘projectile power’ to quantifiable “muzzle energy,” measured in ft/lbs, the industry standard. The effect of this proposed change will be to clarify for enforcement, the regulation limiting rifles used for small game hunting during big game hunting seasons to .22 rimfire

Offense to overharvest snapping turtles and/or bullfrogs:

- Proposal to correct oversight and make it an offence to give effect to harvest limits on snapping turtles and bullfrogs

“Residency:”

- clarifies that Canadian armed forces members stationed overseas does not lose ‘residency’ status for hunting and fishing;

Long Point Provincial Park – Game Possession:

- proposal allows for possession of game harvested in a special hunting area in Long Point Provincial Park.

One proposal was not supported by the OFAH.

Hunter Orange for Pop-up Ground Blinds:

- proposal requires hunter orange on manufactured ground blinds (e.g. camouflage pop-up tents). The OFAH is not convinced of the safety need or benefit, and has urged education and promotion of common sense instead of regulation.

Deer & Elk Farming

Farmed Deer – Escapes

North Bay Red Deer

Early in 2010, the OFAH was very concerned to learn about a prolonged and ongoing escape of farmed red deer in the North Bay/Nosbonsing. We immediately met with MNR district staff

seeking a satisfactory explanation and MNR plan of action to cull the threat. We agreed to give the MNR the time needed to do the job, but early attempts to cull out the exotic red deer proved disappointing.

As part of their action plan, North Bay District MNR contacted landowners, local hunt clubs, and the Ontario Hunt Camp Association about the red deer escape situation. By late 2010, the MNR was baiting what they believe to be the bulk of the red deer with the aim of a more successful removal effort. The MNR does not know the numbers or age structure of the escaped herd, but has asked local cooperators to report any killed. The MNR says it has “no indication” that the escaped red deer are “in close proximity” to the restored French River elk, but it is somewhat concerned about the potential of the public shooting elk instead of red deer. The MNR needs to address this problem this winter.

Other Escapes

The OFAH learned of three other likely incidents of escaped farmed deer in the last several months, including an elk in Essex, reported to Chatham MNR in July; the alleged ongoing escape of fallow deer from a farm in the Cambridge area; and an escaped bull elk in Noelville. There are also unconfirmed reports of a persistent population of escaped/feral hogs in Beverley Swamp/Flamborough.

Our knowledge of escapes from Ontario deer farms since 2003 is far from complete, but we are aware of at least 67 escape incidents, and an unknown number of game farm animals which remain unrecovered and unaccounted for.

Coyotes & Wolves

Nuisance Coyote Issues

Throughout 2010, high coyote sightings were reported in many rural and urban communities. Hunters, farmers and others reported very high numbers of coyotes, and bold coyotes, based on community knowledge, which is supported by record high livestock predation compensation payments from Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA).

As a result, OFAH members and head office were engaged with farmers, trappers, houndsmen, and their associations in 2010, to help find and promote effective community-based solutions.

The OFAH advocates a two-pronged approach to the problem of livestock predation: give trappers and farmers better tools and means of targeting those coyotes that have become livestock killers; and promote general hunting and chase of coyotes to keep them wary of people and our facilities/habitat.



Great Lakes Basin Wolf Stewards Symposium

The OFAH received a rare and welcome invitation to attend the Annual Northeastern North American Wolf Stewards symposium hosted by state and provincial wildlife management agencies, including Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba, and New York, Michigan, Minnesota and Wisconsin. Some helpful case studies and research were presented about canids, including coyotes, eastern wolves, grey wolves, and the mixed breed that is evolving. To generalize, many American state biologists envy Ontario's unendangered wolf status and comparatively open hunting and trapping regulations. The states that have succeeded in reintroducing wolves, and have met population objectives which should have allowed delisting and management through hunting and trapping, have been less successful at transitioning from species restoration to regulated wolf management because of on-going animal rights challenges.

Algonquin area wolf/coyote hunting & trapping ban

Neither the OFAH nor the Algonquin Wolf Advisory Group supported the political 2002 decision to ban wolf/coyote hunting and trapping in the townships around Algonquin Park. We know the ban is counter-productive and should be lifted. At a minimum, the ban should have been lifted when the provincial wolf management plan was put in place in 2005. We continue to urge government to review this poor decision.

Provincial Wolf Management Plan

The OFAH remains skeptical of the 'conservation value' of the provincial wolf management plan, including the northern harvest limit and license requirement. In 2010, we urged the MNR to summarize wolf hunter harvest and effort data, with the view to better understanding the potential impact on wildlife, however the MNR has not yet reviewed the conservation impact of the management plan.

Coyote/Wolf hunting License Availability

Acting on the request of members who have difficulty purchasing coyote-wolf hunting licenses because of limited license availability among issuers, the OFAH urged the MNR to make these licenses more widely available in 2010.

OFAH Draft Discussion Paper: Coyote Population Biology & Management Brief

OFAH staff began work on a draft coyote population biology and management discussion paper to help inform OFAH policy development. We are continuing to review the best scientific and evidence-based literature to help determine the relative effectiveness of selective removal of livestock killers; nonselective hunting and trapping; 'bounties' and other incentives, and the possible effects of increasing coyote numbers on white-tailed deer populations. We know that general hunting of coyotes is effective at preventing coyote-human conflicts because it keeps coyotes wary of people and our facilities/farm enterprises. What is far less clear is whether coyote populations can be effectively reduced by levels of hunting and trapping higher than what currently occurs in Ontario.

The OFAH paper will have a strong focus on hunting, trapping, predation management, and coyote-human conflict reduction to help inform policy and programs.

Falconry

Falconry – Proposal for Regulated Use of Wild Raptors

The OFAH responded to a letter from the MNR to reiterate our full support for the recommendation of the Provincial Falconry Advisory Committee for the Regulated Collection and Use of Wild Raptors by Falconers in Ontario.

The regulated capture and training of wild birds of prey for use in falconry is a goal that the OFAH member club, the Ontario Hawking Club (OHC), has been patiently seeking for several years. We have encouraged the Minister of Natural Resources to move forward with changes that would allow licensed falconers to collect and use approximately 25 individual birds from the most common species of raptors.

The Provincial Falconry Advisory Committee met in October 2010 to address any concerns with this modest proposal. It is fully consistent with the goals and objectives of Ontario's Biodiversity Strategy, and Ontario is currently one of the last jurisdictions in North America that does not permit the regulated collection and use of wild birds of prey in falconry.

Small Game Hunting and Conservation Issues

Provincial Small Game Policy and Program Review

The OFAH reviewed and updated its small game policies in 2010 to prepare our members and staff to provide the Ministry with constructive advice and recommendations when the province undertakes a review of its many outdated regulations, and identifiable policy and program gaps. Due to more pressing priorities within the MNR Wildlife Policy Section, however, we were informed that the provincial small game program and policy review has been put on hold.

Wild Turkey

Additional Opportunities for Fall Turkey Hunting

With two years of harvest data collected, confirming that the fall hunt will not negatively impact wild turkey numbers, and considering the annual harvest reporting results for the fall turkey hunt where fall harvest totals were 427 in 2008 and only 370 in 2009, we believe that the next logical steps should include additional fall hunting seasons to enhance opportunities, improve turkey management and better distribute fall harvest.

As a result, the OFAH provided the following recommendations "next steps" to the MNR in April, reiterating OFAH's 2008 position on the proposed amendments to implement a fall wild turkey hunting season:

• Additional Fall Hunting Seasons

- Add a second week of wild turkey gun hunting in the week prior to Thanksgiving; or add a second week in the third week of November, after the deer gun hunt;
- Add a bowhunting-only season - either three or five weeks in addition to the two-week open firearm season (opportunity for hunters to harvest wild turkey concurrent with the deer bowhunting season).

• Additional Fall Wildlife Management Units

- Add WMUs 70, 71, 72 and 95 to the existing list of seasons

The MNR Wildlife Policy Section has indicated that they will consider proposing changes to the list of open WMUs for 2011 based on the outcome of this year's spring season hunt (following Ontario's Wild Turkey Management Plan criteria for



determining where/when fall hunting seasons might be opened) and input from MNR field staff. In addition to their internal review, the MNR indicated that they'd be reviewing the analysis and recommendations OFAH provided and welcomed any opportunity to further discuss possible season changes with us.

There were no WMUs or season changes in 2010. Spring reported harvest was down again this year (9,086). Fall harvest also declined slightly from 2009 (361).

Ontario Wild Turkey Working Group

The Ontario Wild Turkey Working Group, which includes representation from the MNR, the National Wild Turkey Federation and the OFAH, met in November for the first time since the release of the Wild Turkey Management Plan in 2007.

The group reviewed wild turkey-related program activities since completion of the plan, as well as seasons and harvest results for this year. The OFAH submission to the MNR requesting additional opportunities for fall turkey hunting was also discussed with the group and was well received overall. The OFAH applauds the MNR for reconvening the working group after a long hiatus.

Wild Turkey Proposal for Manitoulin Island

The MNR is considering the OFAH proposal to make the spring opening date for wild turkey earlier and we hope that this will occur for 2012. The MNR is also still examining our recommendation for changes to the fall hunting seasons (eg. more locations).

We have no new information on the MNR's proposal of more than a year ago, that an Environmental Assessment (EA) be conducted regarding the proposal to place more wild turkeys and ring-necked pheasants on Manitoulin Island. We've inquired about the status of the proposal and the MNR has responded that it is in the hands of the Ministry of the Environment, which has responsibility for EAs.

MNR Proposal for Shortened Pheasant Clean-up Hunts for Pelee Island (EBR #011-1087)

The OFAH looked to the Pelee Island Sportsmen Association (PISA) for direction in our response to a November proposal to eliminate two of four late season 'clean-up' hunts on the island, and further, eliminate Saturday hunting from the remaining two clean-up hunts. The OFAH opposed the proposal on the basis of PISA's response, which believes the rationale is flawed and the results would be counterproductive.

Migratory Game Birds

Waterfowl

In 2010, changes were made to the Migratory Birds Hunting Regulations, to increase the possession limit to "3 times the daily bag limit for all migratory game birds that do not currently have a possession limit equal to or higher than 3 times the daily bag." The changes were implemented to increase hunting opportunities for waterfowlers across Ontario.

Mourning Doves – Request for Ontario Hunt

In October, OFAH staff wrote to the Canadian Wildlife Service with strong biological and social rationale for opening a mourning dove hunting season in southern agricultural Ontario.

Sandhill Crane Research

In 2010, the OFAH provided a significant financial contribution to the Long Point Waterfowl research project titled "Population Size, Productivity, and Migratory Habitats of Sandhill Cranes Staging and Breeding along the North Shore of Lake Huron, Ontario". The OFAH remains highly supportive of this research.

Greater Snow Geese Hunting – Eastern Ontario

With support from the OFAH, CWS issued a notice of intent that, beginning in March 2012, special conservation measures to permit the taking of Snow Geese by hunters in spring be put in place in eastern Ontario. The measures will be limited to Wildlife Management Unit 65 where recent surveys have shown that approximately 5 to 10 percent of the Greater Snow Goose population now stages during the spring, and are intended to help provide additional management through hunting. These measures have been in effect in Quebec since 1999.

Agriculture & Wildlife Issues

Agricultural Wildlife Damage Assessment Manual

The advice and knowledge of Ontario wildlife and agricultural specialists was tapped into in 2010 to produce a draft Agricultural Wildlife Damage Assessment Manual. The manual will help producers, wildlife and conservation agency staff, agricultural specialists, hunters, and others better identify what species are the site-specific cause(s) of wildlife damage of crops, orchards and livestock, and help distinguish wildlife damage from other natural causes of yield reduction.

The manual will be distributed in early 2011 and will fill a need that has been identified by provincial wildlife and agriculture agencies/organizations. Funding assistance for this project was provided by the Victoria MNR Stewardship Council.

Ontario's New Provincial Animal Health Act (OMAFRA Decision March 2010 EBR 010-0696)

The provincial *Animal Health Act* was passed in 2010, and is expected to be the new legislative/regulatory tool that Ontario needs in order to regulate deer and elk farming issues, as they relate to livestock and wildlife health and disease prevention. The OFAH provided comments on the discussion paper, and we hope to be engaged in future discussions concerning the protection of wildlife from disease and additional regulation of deer and elk farming.

Agricultural Elk 'Kill Permits'

When talk of agricultural elk 'kill permits' emerged in June, the OFAH acted quickly to secure regulated hunting, authorized

elk harassment, regulated elk feeding and other more effective alternatives.

In the wake of discussions between OFAH and Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA) representatives, and subsequent discussions with MNR Wildlife Policy staff, the OFAH developed and submitted an alternative to issuing agricultural elk removal authorizations to the MNR. The subsequent MNR elk management and harvest plan for a 2011 regulated hunt is a far better resource management and conflict prevention strategy.

Livestock-Wildlife Damage Compensation Discussion Paper

The OFAH responded to an Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food & Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) discussion paper on proposed changes to the Livestock-Wildlife Damage Compensation Program.

The OFA has been seeking changes and a general updating of the provincial *Livestock & Honey Bee Damage Compensation Act* and compensation schedule for many years. The proposed changes reflect some OFA interests, but certainly not all.



Photo: Jody Sheffield

The OFAH supports the farm community in most of the proposed changes, including expansion of some kinds of livestock predation as 'eligible', but we oppose extending compensation to farmed deer and elk. If there is predation of farmed deer or elk happening to any degree in Ontario, this represents a much bigger problem. That issue would need to be addressed through strict regulations to eliminate the chance of predators or scavengers from potentially spreading CWD or TB from deer or elk farms.

Other proposed changes are generally positive, including awareness that hunting and trapping are effective wildlife management tools for reducing wildlife damage. The province is proposing best management practice workshops as part of its new program. We encouraged future OFAH involvement in the development of predator hunting workshops.

Human-Wildlife Conflict Advisory Group

The OFAH has been represented at each of the eight meetings of the provincial Human-Wildlife Conflict Advisory Group since its first meeting in June 2009. It is a diverse group of representatives from the hunting, trapping, farming, municipal, academic, animal welfare and animal rights sectors. The group was established to advise the interprovincial steering committee on preventing and reducing human-wildlife conflicts.



Photo: Mark Majchrowski

Species At Risk (Provincial & Federal)

OFAH Submission to Committee on the Status of Species at Risk in Ontario - Snapping Turtle (Provincial)

Early in 2010, the OFAH wrote to the Director of the Species at Risk Branch (MNR), to express our concern over the recent listing of the snapping turtle as "Special Concern" under the *Endangered Species Act (ESA)* by the Committee on the Status of Species at Risk in Ontario (COSSARO). Snapping turtles are a common sight in Ontario, especially to anglers and hunters south of the Boreal forest. We heard from many members who questioned the listing.

Under COSSARO's own assessment criteria at the time of the assessment, the listing is highly questionable. A species may be designated "special concern" if it occurs in 50 or fewer locations in Ontario; occurs in no more than 75 locations and has experienced a 'noncyclical' decline of more than 25%; or is imperiled in at least 25% of its northeastern North American range. This is not a species that is in any immediate risk in northeastern North America. No other eastern province or state considers them imperiled, and Ontario has, by all accounts, an abundant and wide-spread snapping turtle population through virtually every watershed within its natural southern and central Ontario range.

A federal assessment of snapping turtles suggests they may be at risk in the prairies, where they are much less common.

Bobolink classified as "threatened species" (Provincial)

The 2010 COSSARO listing of Bobolink as a provincially "threatened" species has significant counterproductive and economically disastrous implications for hay producers in Ontario. Ontario farmland supports a healthy population of 400,000 breeding pairs distributed over four million acres of primarily hay production fields. This is not a reasonable or helpful classification for a species so relatively common. The OFAH believes that this assessment is scientifically unjustified and that the Minister should send it back to COSSARO for reassessment and delisting to, at most, "special concern."

This flawed listing and the challenges it will present to MNR staff and to landowner-producers, and the damage it may ultimately do to wildlife habitat, demonstrates why we did not support the *Endangered Species Act*, as worded, in 2007.

OFAH Submission – Cerulean Warbler Recovery Strategy (Federal)

In December, the OFAH submitted comments in response to the draft Recovery Strategy for Cerulean Warbler, a federal Species-at-Risk consultation.

The OFAH noted that the draft Recovery Strategy was deficient insofar as it did not recognize that white-tailed deer overabundance, as occurs in many so-called “protected areas” of southern Ontario, is one of the most concrete and demonstrated stressors of Cerulean Warbler nesting habitat. Deer overabundance results in loss of forest diversity, loss of forest tree regeneration, and eventually loss and degradation of intermediate canopy and forest bird nesting and feeding habitats.

Woodland Caribou Recovery Strategy (Federal)

OFAH staff attended the first of four federal stakeholder workshops concerning the National Woodland Caribou Conservation Plan in March, and staff in turn briefed OFAH members who attended subsequent workshops.

The national strategy follows the federal designation of boreal woodland caribou as “threatened species,” although the mandate of the federal government in Ontario is limited to federal lands.

The national strategy, however, could have some bearing on the implementation of the provincial Woodland Caribou Conservation Plan, which is of greater concern to the OFAH

Woodland Caribou Conservation Plan (Provincial)

At issue in both the national and provincial plan is scientific uncertainty about what distinguishes boreal forest-dwelling woodland caribou from tundra-dwelling woodland caribou; what constitutes Ontario woodland caribou habitat and current population range; what the relative risks are of various human and natural mortality factors, including unregulated harvest; and how will implementation of the provincial Woodland Caribou Conservation Plan impact on northern forest management, moose management, and northern communities and economies.

Woodland Caribou Conservation Plan – Implications for Moose Habitat and Population Management

In April, MNR staff gave a preliminary presentation on the implications of moose habitat and population management on the woodland caribou conservation plan. Subsequent to that meeting, the OFAH submitted a lengthy list of questions to the MNR for further discussion and clarification.

This was followed by a meeting of the OFAH and the MNR, intended to increase our understanding of how the MNR will manage for both woodland caribou protection and moose, where the ranges overlap. Not all OFAH questions were addressed, however, we were pleased to hear that the MNR will be making staff available to attend OFAH zone and club meetings to provide greater clarity in the near future.

Conservation Land Tax Reduction Program

The OFAH supports provincial stewardship tax incentive programs such as the Conservation Land Tax Reduction Program (CLTIP) and the Managed Forest Tax Incentive Program (MFTIP).

Conservation Land Tax Incentive Program (CLTIP) – MNR Policy Proposal

In response to a 2010 EBR request for input into proposed changes to the MNR’s policy for the Conservation Land Tax Incentive Program (CLTIP), the OFAH submitted a number of policy-specific comments, and the following key recommendations:

- Expand CLTIP eligibility to include the habitat of Endangered and Threatened species;
- The CLTIP model should be reviewed with a view to more effective delivery, much like the Managed Forest Tax

Incentive Program (MFTIP). Eligible landowners in MFTIP are required to take stock of the natural features and general health/condition/threats; and learn about and commit to a 10-year stewardship/management plan that will meet their land conservation objectives;

- Under the current CLTIP program, landowners who own parts of endangered species habitat, provincially-significant wetlands, or a life-science Area of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSI) can receive a 100% tax reduction through the CLTIP without actually engaging in the stewardship/management of the natural heritage feature of concern;
- The OFAH supports the CLTIP in principle, but has additional concerns about the proposed prescriptive approach of specific land use, including permitted activities, activities that may be permitted with MNR approval, and activities not permitted, and how that would be efficiently administered.

Although many of our recommendations were beyond the scope of this review, the OFAH has invited more dialogue with the MNR on this issue, as we believe that there is a more efficient and effective way for the MNR to achieve its CLTIP objectives.

Hats for Hides Steering Committee

The OFAH and its members are proud supporters of the Hats for Hides program, which has expanded in the last year to see more hunter-harvested deer and moose hides shipped to James Bay aboriginal communities for craft and commerce, as well as more hunter-harvested hides being distributed among southern Ontario First Nations for use by community artisans, craftworkers, powwows and healing circles. See <http://hatsforhides.com/>

Hats for Hides is a unique partnership between hunters, First Nations, federal and provincial governments and the private sector which receives support from the Canada Ontario Resource Development Agreement.



Ontario’s Biodiversity Strategy

Ontario’s Biodiversity Strategy (OBS) is up for renewal at the end of 2010. The Ontario Biodiversity Council has been tasked with leading a review of the strategy and its implementation, and the preparation of an updated strategy (OBS Action 8). The Biodiversity Council is made up of a broad membership, which includes OFAH representation. The development of OBS 2010-2015 (based on 2004/05 process) should begin this winter (2011) with Public Consultation (EBR) sometime in late February/early March. Release planned for late spring (May 22, 2011). A subcommittee has been formed (OBS Renewal Team) to initiate the renewal of the OBS.

Ontario Invasive Plant Council



Invasive plant species have become one of the most pressing biodiversity issues of our time, and have been recognized as one of the greatest

threats to biodiversity, second only to habitat loss. Ontario has the highest number of invasive plants in Canada causing significant impact to our economy and environment.

The Ontario Invasive Plant Council (OIPC) is a coalition of government, nongovernment, First Nations, academic institutions, and other organizations working to develop a coordinated approach to the threat posed by invasive plants. The OIPC works through its four committees: Policy, Communications, Research/Control, and Horticultural Outreach.

The OFAH has taken a lead role in the development of the OIPC by providing housing and administration for the council coordinator, as well as contributing a council board representative. In 2010, the OIPC finalized its terms of reference and elected two members-at-large. The council moved from an interim board to an official board and an executive committee was elected, consisting of a chair, vice-chair and treasurer.

“Look before you leave” campaign

This campaign was targeted to members of the public who travel to cottages and other summer destinations, and explained how invasive species can unknowingly be transported across the province. The campaign was launched on the Victoria Day long weekend and included a media release, radio, and television coverage, as well as a “Look before you leave!” poster which was posted at Ontario provincial parks.

Giant Hogweed

In 2010, much media attention was brought to Giant Hogweed and invasive plants in general, and the OIPC gave several radio, television, and newspaper interviews regarding invasive plants. OIPC worked with the National Invasive Species Working Group to find an effective way to manage Giant Hogweed in Ontario, and across Canada. The MNR approached the OIPC to write the components of a Giant Hogweed Best Management Practices document, which will be posted on the EBR when complete. The OIPC, along with partners, also developed a survey of companies conducting Giant Hogweed removal, and will be posting this information on the OIPC website.

Landowner workshops

The OIPC worked with partners to develop a workshop template. The format was structured to inform landowners about how to assess their property and prioritize actions to control invasive plants. A manual to accompany the workshops is in production.

Fourth OIPC Annual General Meeting

The annual meeting, held in London, was a great success with over 120 people attending over two days in October. The first day consisted of well-attended workshops and field tours, and the second day featured speaker sessions on research and control, education and outreach, policy, and horticulture.



Volunteer field work

The OIPC participated in a variety of field projects including the Invading Species Awareness Program (ISAP) garlic mustard pull events, water soldier reconnaissance, and the Alderville First Nation invasive plant pull. The OIPC also took part in all of the invasive species road rallies hosted by the ISAP. These events were attended by partners from the MNR, Lower Trent Conservation, Brock Township and Beaverton Sportsmen’s Club.

Media and Horticultural Industry Invasive Plant Tours

The OIPC Horticultural Outreach Collaborative held two invasive plant tours, one for members of the horticulture industry and the other for media in the landscape industry. Each participant received an invasive plant kit with information developed by the OIPC and its partners. Both tours were well attended.

Presentations/Events

The OIPC conducted presentations at a variety of events, including the 2010 Weeds Across Borders Conference, the Midwest Invasive Plant Network Annual General Meeting, the National Invasive Alien Species Forum, the Niagara Escarpment Parks and Open Space Systems council meeting, and several Master Gardeners club meetings. Media interviews were conducted with *Ontario Nature Magazine*, CBC Radio, the Canadian Press and CHEX TV.

Website/Newsletter/Educational Materials

The OIPC website (www.ontarioinvasiveplants.ca) continued to provide a range of council materials, including information, educational materials, strategic documents, links to other invasive plant sites, Board activity notes, and more. We also distributed monthly updates to over 600 individuals. The OIPC and its partners have printed, and continue to distribute, a variety of educational material, including fact sheets, a “GardenSmart! in Ontario” brochure, an ID guide and invasive plant trailhead signs.

Leadership and Coordination

The OIPC is committed to working with a variety of partners; therefore, it is part of the National Invasive Species Working Group, which is comprised of various invasive species committees and working groups across Canada. As well, the OIPC is on the board of the Midwest Invasive Plant Network, a group formed by a number of Great Lake states and Ontario.

The OIPC works hard to ensure that information on invasive plants is readily available to the public and those working in the industry, and that the policy makers are well aware of the issues caused by these plants. It will continue to grow and pursue its goals of dealing with invasive plants in a collaborative and effective manner.



Land Use Management & Access

Routes and access points to Crown land are increasingly being closed or restricted in Ontario, and as a result, traditional activities such as fishing, hunting and trapping are being prohibited on lands that belong to all of us. The OFAH is a strong advocate for fair access, determined through science-based conservation management of our natural resources.

FOREST MANAGEMENT PLANNING

Impacts of Caribou Conservation Plan

The long overdue release of the Boreal Landscape Guide and Endangered Species Act (2007) Habitat Regulation for Woodland Caribou are expected to provide guidance for caribou habitat management. In the interim, the Caribou Conservation Plan (CCP) provides the majority of policy direction for caribou habitat management and is implemented through the forest management planning process. Caribou habitat management has the potential to drastically alter fish and wildlife values, as well as the accessibility of hunting and fishing opportunities within the caribou recovery zone.

Caribou habitat management is associated with a number of concerns regarding the ecological and economic sustainability of forest resources. Management focuses on creating large tracts of even-aged conifer dominated stands that will provide a continuous supply of habitat through time and space (a strategy commonly referred to as the caribou mosaic). The connectivity of these forests makes them more susceptible to natural disturbances (eg. forest fires, insect infestations, etc.). This becomes even more troubling when you consider that natural disturbances are projected to increase in number and severity due to the effects of climate change. In addition, the regeneration of the desired forest compositions needed to create caribou habitat often requires significant post-harvest treatments (and associated resource investments).

Caribou habitat management also influences access to hunting and fishing opportunities through road use management strategies. Forest management planning is used to meet caribou habitat management objectives by reducing road densities and decommissioning roads immediately following the completion of forestry operations. This is important because roads built for

forestry purposes often provide the primary access point for Crown lands. Hunting, fishing, trapping, camping, berry picking, fuelwood collection and many other activities occur in Crown forests. The public accessibility of Crown lands is fundamentally important in providing many social, economic and cultural benefits of forest resources to local communities.

The OFAH continues to review forest management plans with potential caribou implications to provide comments, concerns and questions related to the impacts of caribou habitat management on the sustainability of the ecological, social, economic and cultural values of Crown forests. Concurrently, we continue to seek answers from the MNR to our questions regarding the impact of provincial caribou policies on wildlife habitat and harvest management for other species (particularly for moose). The OFAH is closely monitoring the implications of new and existing caribou policies to ensure that they do not compromise the quality or accessibility of fish and wildlife values or hunting and fishing traditions in Ontario.

Lac Seul Forest, Forest Management Plan 2011-2021 (OFAH Zone A)

In October, the OFAH provided a submission outlining questions and concerns regarding the draft 2011 – 2021 Lac Seul Forest Management Plan (FMP) that was posted to the EBR. The caribou recovery zone now covers 89% of the Lac Seul Forest under the 2011 FMP (up from 72% in 2006). Many of our concerns were related to the potential ecological and socioeconomic implications of woodland caribou management on other important forest values such as moose habitat. In particular, the OFAH does not support the southward expansion of the caribou recovery zone in the Lac Seul Forest, especially into areas that are not currently occupied by woodland caribou and/or support a productive moose population. Additionally, the OFAH did not support the scheduled abandonment of forest access roads immediately following the completion of forestry operations. The OFAH recommended that roads should be retained for at least 20-40 years in order to provide the ecological, social and economic benefits associated with forest access. In particular, road access would facilitate moose harvest and assist in the management of moose densities (and their associated predators), which is believed to be an important factor in woodland caribou recovery.

Black Spruce Forest, Forest Management Plan 2011 - 2021 (OFAH Zone B)

In November, the OFAH provided a submission outlining questions and concerns regarding the draft 2011 – 2021 Black Spruce Forest Management Plan that had been posted to the EBR. Similar to the Lac Seul Forest, the OFAH does not support the southward expansion of the caribou recovery zone in the 2011 FMP; however, we were encouraged by the fact that some road networks in southern blocks of the caribou zone of the Black Spruce Forest were retained as a method of maintaining moose harvest and providing a buffer to higher density moose, deer and wolf populations. We were also encouraged to see that there was an emphasis on moose management throughout the entire noncaribou zone (i.e. not limited to small areas of emphasis). Although we were encouraged by the obvious attempts to provide multi-cervid management, it is not clear why only a select number of road networks were chosen as opposed to the entire southern boundary of the caribou zone. Similar to the Lac Seul Forest, the OFAH emphasized the importance of maintaining forest road access after forestry operations have ceased, particularly for moose harvest. The Black Spruce Forest also has a discontinuous caribou zone that is intended to provide connectivity between continuous caribou zones. The OFAH requested biological rationale to support caribou management in discontinuous zones where no resident caribou populations currently exist.

Sudbury Forest, Forest Management Plan 2010 - 2020 (OFAH Zone D)

We successfully addressed the access restriction on the Spanish Arm Road during the Issue Resolution with the District Manager in December 2009. This stemmed from the installation of a gate at Frog Creek restricting all public access on the road. In early 2010, other interest groups representing cottagers, remote tourism and the forest industry, appealed this decision and requested Issue Resolution with the Regional Director.

As part of the Issue Resolution process, we met with the Regional Director in late January and stated our rationale for removing the gate, while employing localized restrictions to either preserve remote values or protect lake trout Areas of Concern (AOC). The Regional Director's decision was received in March and was generally supportive of the District Manager and our recommendations. The gate would be removed and localized restrictions would be enacted on lakes that had either remote tourism values or lake trout AOC's.



Pineland Forest, Forest Management Plan 2011 – 2021 (OFAH Zone D)

In December, the OFAH provided a submission outlining questions and concerns related to the draft 2011 – 2021 Pineland Forest Management Plan that had been posted to the EBR. The OFAH had a number of concerns with the draft that were mostly related to road access management. We were concerned that the commitment afforded to the resource-based tourism industry may compromise the accessibility and quality of public fishing and hunting opportunities within the Pineland Forest. The OFAH reiterated its position on maintaining a balance of opportunities for all forest users.

In recent years, there have been declining moose populations in the Pineland Forest, despite a large supply of preferred moose habitat. The 2011 – 2021 draft FMP proposes the use of Moose Emphasis Areas (MEA) to manage habitat and human access to benefit moose. The proposed MEAs are based on relatively new direction provided by the Stand and Site Guide (2010). Based on the limited knowledge on MEAs, the OFAH questioned their specific intentions, rationale and objectives on the Pineland Forest. We are particularly concerned with the potential for this type of management strategy to effect hunting and fishing access.

Bancroft Minden, Forest Management Plan 2011 – 2021 (OFAH Zones E/F)

In December, the OFAH provided a submission outlining questions and concerns related to the draft 2011 – 2021 Bancroft Minden Forest Management Plan that had been posted to the EBR. The OFAH was primarily concerned with proposed road access management. Almost 180km of primary and branch roads are planned for decommissioning during the term of this plan. We believe that this is a complete misuse of public funds used to establish and/or maintain these roads through the Ministry of Northern Development, Mines and Forestry (MNDMF) Provincial Roads Funding Program. In addition to road decommissioning, there is no new road construction scheduled during this plan, which results in significant loss of forest access. We are concerned with the significant loss of forest access and asked a number of questions related to the rationale for road access management strategies used on the Pineland Forest and their potential implications.

Crown Land Use Area Harmonization Project

The Crown Land Use Area Harmonization (CLUAH) project has been underway for several years in the Wawa area. From the beginning, the O.F.A.H. has actively worked with the MNR and other stakeholders, and in January we participated in a focus group session pertaining to the overall management direction of land use prescriptions for General Use Areas, Recreational Enhanced Management Areas and Wildland Areas. The OFAH advocated for a more balanced approach that avoids unnecessary access restrictions to the public, in favor of remote-based tourism. We also recommended that the unique Moose Management Areas be removed, and instead, the existing tag system be utilized. There was no further activity through the duration of the year.

Northumberland County Forest

In November 2009, County staff proposed that hunting in the Northumberland County Forest be restricted to the lands east of the County Road 45 and further, be limited to deer hunting only.

The OFAH immediately requested that County staff provide us with the empirical evidence to support their proposed restrictions on hunting in the Northumberland County Forest. Their position was based on public safety concerns and the findings of a survey that identified deer as the primary game species in the forest, despite the fact that it was only administered during the two-week gun season for deer.

The OFAH recommended that hunting activities should remain status quo in the forest, which would have resulted in all tracts remaining open for all game species as they have been in the past (under the regulation of the *Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act*). In addition, we requested that motor vehicle use for the purpose of hunting be the same as for provincial Conservation Reserves which allow off-trail retrieval of big game species with ATVs. Despite our concerns with the proposed hunting restrictions and our request to maintain status quo, in mid-February the County Council agreed to the recommendations proposed by County staff.

Nature Conservancy of Canada

The Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC) is in possession of a considerable area of land in Ontario. Hunting access is restricted on some NCC lands due to public safety concerns, ecological values and the wishes of financial or land donors; however, hunting is currently permitted on the majority of NCC lands in accordance with existing laws and regulations (and with NCC's conservation goals). In November, the OFAH met with the NCC to discuss hunting access on some of their Ontario properties, and is further planning to meet with OFAH zones to discuss the potential of partnering with OFAH zones or member clubs to assist with the facilitation of hunting on NCC lands.

Brighton Provincial Wildlife Area

An EBR posting in early March sought public comment on the Issues and Options document for the Brighton Provincial Wildlife Area (BPWA). The document provided direction for the draft management plan, which is currently being prepared by the MNR. It is expected that the BPWA draft management plan will be completed by the spring of 2011, after which it will be reviewed by MNR staff, the BPWA Advisory Committee, then posted to the EBR for public consultation. OFAH Zone E represented the OFAH on the BPWA Advisory Committee.

National Marine Conservation Area - Lake Superior

In December 2009, the OFAH sent a letter to the Nipigon District Manager, requesting representation on the Interim Management Advisory Board for the National Marine Conservation Area (NMCA) - Lake Superior. As per the 2001 document, "*Recommendations for a Lake Superior National Marine Conservation Area*," we also requested that a few of the islands exceeding 100 hectares be excluded from the NMCA, because the values used for rationalizing their inclusion were either not unique or no longer present. The OFAH also emphasized the need to maintain traditional hunting and fishing opportunities within the NMCA. We were told that the Interim Management Advisory Board was the responsibility of Parks Canada and our request for representation would be forwarded. As of year end, the OFAH is not represented on the Interim Management Advisory Board, but we continued to pursue this issue with Parks Canada.

In March, the OFAH had an additional opportunity to reiterate its objections to the inclusion of these islands via an EBR posting regarding the transfer of Crown land to the Lake Superior NMCA. We also reemphasized the importance of maintaining traditional hunting and fishing opportunities in the NMCA.

RENEWABLE ENERGY DEVELOPMENT

Birds and Bird Habitats: Guidelines for Wind Power Projects

The OFAH submitted a response to the Birds and Bird Habitats Guidelines posted to the EBR. These guidelines (along with the Natural Heritage Assessment Guide for Renewable Energy Projects) provide the criteria and procedural guidance to prepare and/or evaluate natural heritage assessments as it relates to birds and bird habitats. We had some serious concerns with the preconstruction monitoring requirements outlined in these guidelines for the assessment, identification and evaluation of bird habitats during the Renewable Energy Approval process. We were also concerned that these guidelines provide inadequate postconstruction monitoring requirements for the identification and mitigation of impacts to birds caused by windpower projects. The Natural Heritage Assessment Guide for Renewable Energy Projects was posted to the EBR in December.

For more on wind power, see Advocacy.

Lakes and Rivers Improvement Act Technical Guidelines

The OFAH responded to an EBR posting of the Technical Guidelines and Requirements for Approval under the provincial *Lakes and Rivers Improvement Act*. Upon a review of these documents, the OFAH identified concerns regarding the section on fish passage. In particular, the OFAH was concerned with the apparent transfer of responsibility to Fisheries and Oceans Canada for implementing fish passage requirements. The *Lakes and Rivers Improvement Act (LRIA)* exists to assist in the protection of fish and fisheries, providing a fundamental tool for the province to do so. It was emphasized in our response that the OFAH strongly opposes any proposal like this that would ultimately weaken the use of the *LRIA* to protect and enhance our fish and fisheries.

Provincial Policy Statement

The OFAH submitted comments to a recent EBR posting for a review of the Provincial Policy Statement, 2005 (PPS). The PPS provides policy direction for land use planning and development (mostly within municipalities) that is of provincial interest. Our review determined that natural heritage policies under the PPS were inadequate to provide sufficient protection for fish and wildlife values. In particular, we were concerned with the terminology and definitions used in the PPS, which ultimately exposes all natural heritage features (i.e. provincially significant wetlands, significant wildlife habitat, etc.) to a 'no net loss' approach. In other words, development and site alteration can occur as long as mitigation efforts result in no net loss of the natural heritage features. We reiterated our strong opposition to the hypothesis that mitigation is an appropriate replacement for natural heritage protection. We also recommended that Adjacent Lands under the PPS should incorporate a more precautionary and dynamic buffer around natural heritage features or areas.

Southeast Leamington Sustainable Management Strategy

Essex Region Conservation Authority (ERCA) commissioned a study to develop a sustainable management strategy to address the long-standing socio-economic concerns associated with the flood and erosion prone areas of Southeast Leamington.

In January, the OFAH Zone J Executive and OFAH staff reviewed the strategy and provided comments. The OFAH supports habitat restoration and the naturalization of the proposed area as long as public access and long-standing traditional activities, such as hunting and fishing, are maintained throughout the process.

Due to significant interest by various stakeholders, in April, ERCA held a special meeting to discuss the issues relating to Southeast Leamington, which the OFAH attended. The decision was made by the municipality of Leamington to continue with the status quo, which allows fishing and hunting.

PROVINCIAL PARKS

Quetico Provincial Park

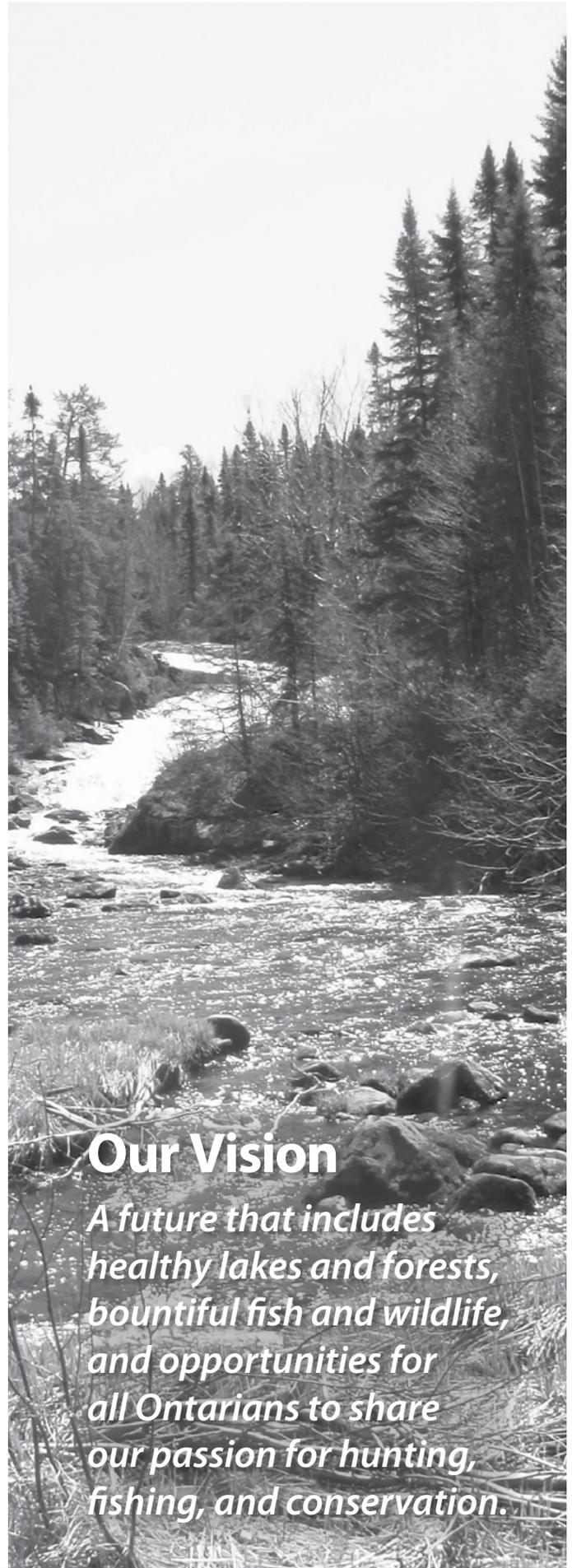
The OFAH submitted comments and recommendations regarding the proposed Management Options for Quetico Provincial Park that were posted to the EBR. We were disappointed to learn that active wildlife management had not been included as a potential management option for the park. In our response, we recommended that active wildlife management must be considered as a strategy in the forthcoming Preliminary Park Management Plan. Although hunting is not a typical recreational activity in wilderness class provincial parks, there is strategic direction outlined in the Living Legacy Land Use Strategy (1999) that states it will be considered in the park planning process if there is demonstrated local support. The OFAH has advocated for hunting opportunities for various wildlife species in Quetico Provincial Park; however, our recommendation focuses on the management of an overabundant white-tailed deer population that threatens the overall ecological integrity of the park.

Kawartha Highlands Signature Site Park

In a meeting of the Stakeholder Groups of the Kawartha Highlands, attended by the former Park Superintendent and Acting Park Superintendent, we were encouraged to hear that hunting and fishing activities are alive and well within the Kawartha Highlands Signature Site Park. We continue to monitor initiatives in the park, especially those relating to hunting and fishing. The current focus is on finalizing the existing road and trail network, and establishing permitting programs for boat caching and ATV use within the park.

Presqu'ile Provincial Park

In 2009, Ontario Parks released the Presqu'ile Resource Management Implementation Plan (High Bluff and Gull Islands) that outlined strategies for cormorant management. The preferred alternative proposed in this plan was to employ the full suite of management activities, including culling. The plan was scheduled for implementation starting in 2010; however, no active cormorant management activities occurred. Previous management activities (2003-2006) resulted in the decline of nests to 2,500, but have since increased to 6,000 (well above the carrying capacity of 1,500-2,000 nests). The OFAH submitted a letter to Presqu'ile Provincial Park to request an explanation of why cormorant management did not occur in 2010, but had not received a reply by year end.



Our Vision

A future that includes healthy lakes and forests, bountiful fish and wildlife, and opportunities for all Ontarians to share our passion for hunting, fishing, and conservation.



Ontario Hunter Education Program

Ontario hunters have one of the best safety records anywhere. Mandatory hunter education was introduced in Ontario at the urging of the OFAH in 1960, and since then, more than a million people have been trained to think “safety first” when taking part in the hunt. Working under the direction of the Ministry of Natural Resources, the OFAH administers this important program.

20 new instructors took training in the winter to become certified. Most of these new instructors have already put on their first course and are well on their way to becoming excellent instructors.

Applications are, as always, being accepted for future instructor training, and there are a few areas in the province where there is a shortage of instructors; an example is eastern Ontario in the Cornwall area, where there are currently no instructors. The Toronto area is also a priority for new instructors, given its large population, number of inquiries and distance students are driving to take a course.

Ontario Hunter Education Course registration has risen every year for the last nine years:			
2002	10,799 students	2006	13,638 students
2003	10,830 students	2007	15,592 students
2004	11,449 students	2008	17,330 students
2005	12,355 students	2009	17,410 students
		2010	17,645 students

New Agreement

In March, we signed a new four-year agreement with the Province of Ontario, which includes the administration of the Ontario Hunter Education Program (OHEP) and the Wild Turkey Hunter Education Program. There are many new aspects to this agreement, especially in the reporting of revenue and expenses.

Hunter Education by the numbers

- # of instructors: 313
- Courses run: 1,586
- One-stop courses: 1,219
- Stand-alone courses: 582
- Average # students per class: 10.8
- Average # courses per instructor: 5.5
- 2010 students 17,645

Assessment Audits

OHEP staff have been developing hunter education course audits as part of an ongoing effort to improve program delivery. The course audit consists of two parts, an instructor knowledge assessment and an anonymous student evaluation of the course delivery. For the student evaluation portion, an online survey program will be utilized which will take approximately five minutes to complete. The survey will provide meaningful data that will be a benefit to the program. MNR approval of the student portion was nearing completion by year end.

Safety First

Ontario’s more than 441,000 licensed hunters have a long record of safe hunting. Unfortunately, there was one fatal hunting accident and four nonfatal incidents reported in 2010. The fatal accident occurred when the hunter fell and accidentally discharged his firearm, resulting in a self-inflicted wound.

Hunter Education Conference

The 19th Annual OFAH Hunter Education Instructors Conference was held in London in April. A committee of hard working instructor volunteers from the London area ensured everything went well. The conference welcomed 72 instructors, and 130

Instructor Training

In 2010, we worked with the MNR to develop a criteria for selecting individuals to receive hunter education instructor training from a pool of applicants. Those chosen for training needed to reside in the geographic areas of the province identified as having a shortage of hunter education instructors; namely Bancroft, Toronto, Cornwall and Windsor.



people attended the Saturday evening banquet. Conference speakers addressed a range of topics such as celebrating 50 years of mandatory hunter education in the province, youth hunting initiatives in southwestern Ontario, and proper field care in wildlife taxidermy.

Oliver Barriault of Val Caron was presented with the Hall of Fame Award in recognition of 46 years of service in making Ontario hunters safe, responsible hunters.

Celebrating 50 Years!

2010 marked 50 years of mandatory hunter education in Ontario. In 1957, fish and game clubs began voluntary training of new hunters. In 1960, training for all first-time hunters became mandatory, and today well over one million people have successfully completed a hunter education course. In April, we issued a press release and an article was written for the *Angler & Hunter HOTLINE* celebrating 50 years of mandatory hunter education. The 50th anniversary was also celebrated at the Hunter Education Conference in London.

Youth Hunter Education Scholarship (YHES)



In 2010, the YHES fund celebrated its 10-year anniversary. Since its inception, we have received 481 applications; 362 scholarships were awarded and 319 recipients have graduated.

In total, the YHES fund has provided \$53,290 in scholarship support. Many thanks go to OFAH Zones F, H, J for their donations, OFAH clubs, Safari Club International Ontario Chapter and the Ottawa Valley Chapter, and the Hunter Education Conference Committee in London for their support.

Through YHES, young people between the ages of 12 and 17 can apply for financial assistance to help cover the cost of the hunter education course. YHES ensures that financial barriers do not prevent youth from pursuing their interest in becoming a hunter. Single family, low-income homes are the priority recipients, but other factors are also considered. It is worth noting that many instructors generously discounted and even waived course fees for those in need in 2010.

Through YHES, clubs, groups and individuals can help ensure a bright future for hunting. Visit www.ohep.net to apply for assistance, to make a donation to YHES, or to learn more.



Ontario Wild Turkey Hunter Education

Wild Turkey Hunter Education seminars continued to be a resounding success in 2010. The new standardized half-day course received praise from this year's attendees. The seminars were held in the spring and fall. During the spring sessions, 8,100 registrants took part in courses which were held in 46 locations from Thunder Bay, to Ottawa, to Windsor. Seminars at the Toronto Sportsmen's Show were a huge success, with all three show seminars filled to near capacity. Over 650 new turkey hunters were successfully trained during these three courses!

We also ran seminars in seven locations in the fall and over 700 people participated.

Judging by the fact that several seminars sold out, interest in hunting wild turkeys in Ontario is still strong, and frequent sightings of these birds throughout southern Ontario is quite possibly a strong incentive to take up the hunt.

We introduced a continuous improvement report in 2010 which is completed after each seminar to assist in identifying any areas for improvement. Input from staff, instructors, and attendees will help further improve delivery of these presentations.

We worked directly with the MNR on the development of a Wild Turkey Hunter Education home-study DVD course curriculum, which is slated for launch in 2011. The new version of the course will enable students to complete the learning portion of the course in the comfort of their own home, while the exam portion of the course will continue to be done under the direct supervision of a Hunter Education Instructor. To learn more, visit www.ofah.org/seminars.

Many thanks to supporters of the Ontario Hunter Education Program

The Ontario Hunter Education Program gratefully acknowledges the support of Excalibur Crossbow, Stoeger Canada, Zeiss Optics, Savage Arms and Winchester. Their contributions are invaluable to the success of the program.



Outreach and Education

With support from our partners, members and member clubs, the OFAH hosts a wide range of outreach and education initiatives because we know that engaging youth, women, and families in outdoor conservation activities is the very best way to continue our outdoor heritage and create tomorrow's conservationists.

OFAH|Mario Cortellucci Hunting & Fishing Heritage Centre



As soon as the ribbon was cut at the opening of the OFAH|Mario Cortellucci Hunting & Fishing Heritage Centre, we began delivering the kind of public day

tours, youth programs and special functions that the OFAH has always dreamed about. The expression on people's faces as they walk through the Heritage Centre doors reminds us every day about the importance of this conservation education facility. With the help of local media attention and advertising, articles in *Ontario OUT OF DOORS* magazine and word of mouth referrals, the OFAH|Mario Cortellucci Hunting & Fishing Heritage Centre welcomed an average of 300 to 400 visitors every week during its first summer.

In addition to daily tours and special group bookings, the Heritage Centre also featured a special speakers series and neighborhood evenings. As part of a special outreach initiative, the OFAH|Mario



Cortellucci Hunting & Fishing Heritage Centre, launched a two-week summer Get Outdoors Day Camp program. The camps provide a great opportunity for kids to learn about various conservation issues and take part in activities such as fishing and archery.

In September, the Heritage Centre welcomed its very first class field trip. Curriculum-linked programs focused on the Life Systems strand of the Ontario Curriculum for grades one through eight proved a great draw for educators. In a 16-week timeframe, the Heritage Centre hosted over 35 class visits and reached out to more than 1,000 students. Testimonials such as "*an amazing facility, fabulous presenters*" lead us to believe the Heritage Centre is already fulfilling its mandate to provide conservation education.

Shimano Fishing Pond

The Shimano Fishing Pond is now operated as a program of the OFAH/Mario Cortellucci Hunting & Fishing Heritage Centre. Summer staff were very busy with weekly fishing bookings from various community groups including day cares, retirement homes and special care agencies. We are appreciative of the many great comments received in person and in writing about the pond, the centre, and the professional and friendly service of centre staff.



Ontario Family Fishing Events



Twice a year, during February and July, the province declares licence-free fishing days aimed at encouraging families to try fishing. During these designated days, Canadian residents don't need to buy the otherwise mandatory fishing version Outdoors card.

Ontario Family Fishing Events (formerly Ontario Family Fishing Weekend) has two objectives: to get children and their families outdoors and discovering the fun of fishing, and to instill in participants a love and respect for our natural resources.

The winter weekend is held in February and runs for three days, including the provincial Family Day holiday. In 2010, the province expanded the long running summer event from two days to nine days, encompassing two full weekends. The new summer dates run concurrently with the Canadian Sportfishing Foundation's National Fishing Week, providing even better cross-promotional opportunities for these of two outreach initiatives.

In 2010, event hosts included many OFAH clubs, community groups, service groups and other agencies. The number of Ontario Family Fishing events grew, with the summer program reaching over 70 communities and the winter program topping a dozen.



The OFAH heads the steering committee, which is comprised of the Ministry of Natural Resources, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, and the Canadian Sportfishing Industry Association.

The OFAH provides planning, promotion and materials, such as children's participation certificates and activities. We also host the website (www.familyfishingweekend.com).

OFAH TackleShare



The OFAH TackleShare program introduces youth and their families to fishing all over Ontario. For more than a decade, this program has provided rods, reels, and tackle supplies to OFAH TackleShare loaner hosts, such as public libraries and parks, who in turn loan the supplies to novice anglers. Through OFAH TackleShare, thousands of children and families have borrowed gear and experienced the thrill of fishing. Last summer, Ontario Power Generation signed on as the program's lead sponsor, which enabled us to host events such



as the Toronto Island Family Fishing Day in July, which had a terrific turnout. Ontario Power Generation's "Stay Clear Stay Safe" message is now being delivered to OFAH TackleShare users throughout Ontario. Canadian National Sportsmen's Shows, Bass Pro Shops, Shimano, Lucky Strike, and Berkley, also provided support for this important program. Visit www.tackleshare.com to learn more.

Ontario Angler Awards



The OFAH Ontario Angler Awards (OAA) is a province-wide program that promotes and recognizes recreational fishing efforts by resident and nonresident anglers.

OAA entries are showcased online, and thousands visited the website (www.ontarioanglerawards.com) in 2010, generating tremendous profile for the OFAH and program sponsors including Cabela's, Canadian National Sportsmen's Shows, Shimano, *Ontario OUT OF DOORS*, G-Loomis and the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources.



Women's Outdoor Weekend



For the past 16 years, the OFAH has been actively supporting women's growing interest in fishing and hunting through our Women's Outdoor Weekend. This annual event is based at the Kinark Outdoor Centre near Minden, and over 100 participants and volunteers converge at the centre for a full weekend of fishing, skeet shooting, fly-tying, archery and outdoor survival workshops. Cabin style accommodation, delicious meals, and entertainment make for a memorable experience for all.



OFAH Get Outdoors

Summer Leadership Camp



Once again, great kids, hard working staff and AMAZING VOLUNTEERS made the OFAH Get Outdoors Summer Leadership Camp a program that should be the envy of conservation-minded organizations around the world. The four-day experience for OFAH youth members combines leadership, team building, conservation education and outdoor exploration including fishing, target shooting and archery. No other summer camp delivers so much programming for such great value. This year marked the Get Outdoors Camps' 9th anniversary and to meet the demand for program registration we added a third camp. We appreciate all the great volunteers who give up their personal family vacation time to help OFAH staff with every aspect of camp.

Youth Leadership Conference

For nearly a decade, the OFAH Get Outdoors Program has welcomed youth to its Leadership Conference, held in conjunction with the OFAH Annual General Meeting and Fish & Wildlife Conference. In 2010 the conference welcomed an enthusiastic group of participants. The program included trips to the Boulderz Climbing Centre for rock climbing and the Toronto Sportsmen's Show (TSS), as well as a visit from "Sciensational Ssnakes" which provided a hands-on lesson about Ontario's native reptiles, and Greg Balch, who presented a wildlife management workshop.



OFAH Wild Turkey Registry

The OFAH Wild Turkey Registry continued to provide a public showcase for successful wild turkey hunters in Ontario in 2010. A giant 29-plus pounder was registered in the spring hunt, once again confirming this province's world class turkey hunting opportunities. Historically, hunters have learned from each other's experiences, and the OFAH Wild Turkey Registry is an electronic extension of this practice. Participants enjoy reporting their first turkey, a giant bird, a bird with multiple beards, or the call they used. This program attracts the young and not so young alike to our fold each year.

For a small fee, hunters of all ages may submit their harvest information for inclusion in the registry. They enjoy collecting a different OFAH turkey pin every year, which becomes a memento of their turkey hunting experience. In 2010, we accepted 140 entries to the OFAH Wild Turkey Registry.

Thanks to the generosity of sponsors such as Walmart, this program will continue to grow for years to come.



OFAH Record Fish Registry

The OFAH Record Fish Registry is the official scoreboard for recreational anglers who dream of some day landing the "big one." In 2010, two new records were set. Rob Jackson of Ashton reeled in a record Longnose Gar on the Ottawa River that weighed in at 15.79 pounds, and Mike Martin of Belleville caught a 21.53 pound Freshwater Drum in the Bay of Quinte. Each record setter will receive a beautifully crafted, hand painted, fiberglass replica of their fish created by internationally acclaimed Advanced Taxidermy & Wildlife Design. Visit www.ofah.org/fishresources



OFAH Membership

Members are the lifeblood of the OFAH. The Federation was formed by conservation-minded anglers and hunters more than 80 years ago, and remains strong to this day through the loyalty and dedication of its members.

Membership Growth

Few membership organizations in Canada can boast record-breaking membership retention and growth rates as experienced by the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters.

This 2010 OFAH Annual Report is the third consecutive annual report that announces another all-time historic OFAH membership record. In April of 2010, the OFAH reached 83,953 members breaking the previous record of 83,547 in 2009 and formerly the record of 83,040 that was reached in 2008. At year end, OFAH membership is 83,557—the strongest we have ever held for the month going into a new fiscal year.

As always, our success in membership retention and growth is a reflection of a solid team effort by OFAH staff and members who work diligently to remind fellow anglers and hunters about the importance of OFAH membership. Constant dialogue with non-OFAH members about the importance of standing up for conservation is critical step in membership campaign success.

In 2010, the OFAH developed a record number of membership offers that were presented via a combination of print advertising, television advertising, direct mail, trade show sales and web campaigns. The exposure provided through these campaigns not only resulted in hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of impressions for the OFAH, it also generated our best individual campaign results. Through product and advertising opportunities, we continued to present timely membership offers to key outdoor markets and interests.

Member Services

Monthly Giving

Through the OFAH Monthly Giving program, 2,597 OFAH members contributed to conservation in Ontario in 2010, with total contributions in excess of \$260,000. In addition to the convenience of automatically donating a fixed amount monthly, Monthly Giving members receive a tax receipt for their donation, less the cost of their membership.



Life Members

Our Life Member numbers climbed again in 2010, to 528 members and the life member couples also rose. OFAH Life Members are among the most dedicated and loyal supporters of our conservation work. Over the next 20 to 30 years, the OFAH stands to benefit from this form of generosity, as long as we ensure that our members are aware of the opportunity to include the OFAH in their wills.

Club Growth

At the close of 2010, our membership count stood at 670 clubs, a slight increase over 2009. The OFAH welcomed new clubs that recognized the advantages of our insurance offer, even as other insurers were declining coverage to clubs that use firearms or have remote hunt camps.

Member Benefits

Great North Wildlife Affiliates (GNWA) – public liability insurance

No changes were made to the coverage provided by the GNWA or the insurance rate of the policy for 2010. There are, however, many improvements that will become effective in 2011. The outdoor federations of British Columbia and Manitoba showed interest in joining the Great North Wildlife Affiliates.

Club Liability Insurance/Membership

We continued to remind our clubs that they must maintain 100 percent membership in the OFAH to enjoy the club liability insurance benefit. Court decisions have forced the insurance industry to require that 100 percent of an organization's members contribute to their insurance benefit. Failure to do so will result

in the expulsion from liability insurance coverage. Our members value the liability insurance benefit highly, so it is essential that every club member maintains their OFAH membership.

Angler and Hunter Insurance (Canada Brokerlink)

Many OFAH members took advantage of great rates on home, auto, ATV, and snowmobile insurance needs through Angler and Hunter Insurance, a valuable membership benefit.

ALL Insurance

Our members have the peace of mind of \$4,000 of accidental death or dismemberment insurance, thanks to our partnership with AIL Canada. AIL offered in-person appointments with AIL agents to selected OFAH members who were contacted by mail.

Bank of Montreal MasterCard

A new five-year agreement was signed with the Bank of Montreal in 2010, which included some new and exciting promotions designed to increase the profile of the card, and uptake from our members. The regular and strong presence of the Bank of Montreal credit card offer on our website (www.ofah.org) was effective in generating applications from members throughout the year.

Motel 6

Motel 6 is known for reasonable rates across Canada and throughout the United States. In 2009, Motel 6 became the first hotel chain to offer a discounted rate to OFAH members (using the OFAH corporate ID number). We encourage all members to consider supporting Motel 6 when travelling. Reserve online, by calling the hotels directly, or by calling 1-800-4-MOTEL 6 (1-800-466-8356).

Mark's Work Wearhouse

The annual donation by Mark's Work Wearhouse was comparable to that of recent years. Regular priced items purchased by OFAH members showing their card receive a 10 percent discount. Even though sale items don't qualify for the discount, be sure to show your membership card so that the OFAH will receive a donation.

The Brick

Throughout 2010, our members enjoyed savings of 10 to 40 percent on the purchase of home appliances, televisions and furniture at The Brick. Need a card? Call us and we will send you one.

Sustaining Members

Gold: AIL Canada, Allen Insurance Group, Bass Pro Shops, Big Foot Shoe Clinic, BoaterExam.com/HunterExam.com, Bushnell Outdoor Products, Cabela's, Canada Brokerlink/Anglers & Hunters Insurance Brokers, Cedar Valley Hunting Supply, DT Powersports, Edgar Enterprises, etfs, Excalibur Crossbow Inc., Fox 40 International Inc., Graywood Sporting Group Inc., Imagewear, Johnson Outdoors Canada Inc., Ontario Stewardship, Realstar Hospitality, Shimano Canada Limited, Stoeger Canada Ltd., The Brick, Toronto and Region Conservation Authority, Toronto Sportsmen's Show, TSC Stores, Zeiss Sports Optics

Silver: Northern Ontario Aquaculture Association

Bronze: Commercial Press & Design Inc., Idris Insurance Brokers Ltd., Long Point Region Conservation Authority, Long Point Waterfowl, Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority, Office Connection, Ontario Drive and Gear Ltd., Peterborough Midas, Pro Maxx Sports, The Vincent Press Ltd., W.I. Villager Ltd.

OFAH Strategic Planning



Setting goals and working strategically to achieve them is what the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunter has always done best. For over 80 years, our forward-thinking attitude and strategic approach to

planning and resolving issues has resulted in a long list of achievements for anglers, hunters and conservation.

Four years ago, the OFAH embarked upon a major strategic planning exercise that will ultimately help the OFAH set more goals and achieve more results in the years ahead.

The OFAH Strategic Planning Committee consisting of staff and Board members have invested hundreds of hours of work to develop ten fundamental strategic planning documents including Vision and Mission Statements, OFAH key strategies and core values, as well as Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT).

In 2010, that strategic plan was officially presented to the OFAH Board of Directors and all OFAH staff, and the OFAH Board ratified the strategic plan at its September 2010 Board meeting.

82nd OFAH Annual General Meeting and Fish & Wildlife Conference



The 82nd OFAH Annual General Meeting and Fish & Wildlife Conference welcomed over 400 delegates to the Delta Meadowvale Resort and Conference Centre in Mississauga in March. In addition to the annual general meeting, this three-day event

featured a variety of speakers on a range of outdoor related topics, award presentations, delicious food, and great entertainment.

The Honourable Linda Jeffrey, Minister of Natural Resources, gave the traditional Friday morning presentation, and keynote speaker, Manitoba MP Candice Hoepfner, delivered a compelling case for scrapping the federal long gun registry at the gala banquet on Saturday night.

At the same time as the main conference was running, a throng of enthusiastic youth were enjoying the OFAH Get Outdoors Youth Leadership Conference. Just a short shuttle bus ride away in downtown Toronto, the Toronto Sportsmen's Show was debuting at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre, where delegates took advantage of free Saturday admission. The 82nd Annual Fish and Wildlife Conference offered a memorable outdoor-themed opportunity for the entire family.

To learn more, visit www.ofah.org/conference



Fundraising

OFAH members and member clubs help raise funds that make fish and wildlife conservation initiatives possible.

36th Annual OFAH Conservation Lottery

Once again, a big “thank you” goes out to everyone who supported the 36th Annual OFAH Conservation Lottery. An amazing 41,380 books of lottery tickets, up from the previous year, were sold during our largest fundraiser.



Proceeds from the 36th annual lottery supported OFAH initiatives across the province, including working for better fish and wildlife management, reintroduction programs and habitat enhancement, and youth education and outreach.

The line-up of prizes totaled almost \$300,000, thanks to terrific sponsors. Dodge (Chrysler Canada) stepped up again as the major vehicle sponsor, Lund provided boats, and Yamaha continued their sponsorship with ATV's and outboard motors.

Anyone selling more than five books of tickets was eligible to order the limited edition lottery print, “The River Run - Wolves” by Trevor Tennant, and an impressive 1,800 members did so! In addition, 230 members took up the offer to have their print framed for an exceptional price.

Lottery winners were posted on the OFAH website and printed in the August issue of *HOTLINE*. Major prize winners hailed from Sharbot Lake, Massey, Marathon, Toronto and Listowel.

Top 5 outstanding ticket sales by OFAH member clubs:

1. Georgian Bay Hunters & Anglers Inc. 751 books
2. Sudbury Game & Fish Protective Assoc. 691 books
3. South Central Ontario Fish & Wildlife Assoc. Inc... 688 books
4. NDHQ Fish & Game Club 639 books
5. Ontario Hunt Camps Assoc. Inc. 448 books

Clubs don't have to apply for licenses or pay any fees in order to sell O.F.A.H. conservation lottery tickets. Clubs are rebated \$6 for every book sold, with the funds to be used for projects in their home town. What a great way to support the OFAH and conservation!

OFAH Ontario Wildlife Calendar and Christmas Cards

The 2011 OFAH calendar was mailed out the end of September and included a record 18 member photographs, six as featured months. Calendar donations continued to be generous, with the average donation up slightly from 2009 at \$17.59, and a couple of donors sent in an incredible \$500 each for their copy.



2010 Christmas card sales brought in approximately \$23,000.

Merchandise

Our members continue to show their dedication to the OFAH by purchasing merchandise and proudly wearing OFAH branded apparel. Promotions were run throughout the year, including ads and multi-page flyers in several issues of *Ontario OUT OF DOORS*, and a 4-page insert in the 2010 Ontario Wildlife Calendar.

Nevada Lottery

In 2010, we received a two-year term for our break open ticket lottery licence, which will make the application and reporting processes less onerous for staff. We had approximately 25 locations open across the province. Our average net income per complete box sold was \$191.35, making our net income nearly \$62,000. The Alcohol & Gaming Commission again approved expenditures to support fish and wildlife conservation and education initiatives.

Conservation Dinners

The OFAH Conservation Dinner program brings outdoor enthusiasts together to celebrate conservation and raise funds for local and provincial fish and wildlife projects. In 2010, the OFAH assisted with six fundraising dinners that together generated over \$100,000, of which 85 percent was returned to participating committees to support local conservation projects.



Advocacy



Government Affairs & Policy provides support for a wide range of OFAH programs, policies and departments at the local, provincial and federal level. This includes appearing before municipal councils, provincial and federal standing committees; membership on key advisory groups; working with clubs, zones, provincial, national and international partners in the outdoor community; and providing advice to OFAH members on a variety of issues.

Federal Firearms Legislation – Bill C-391

As a result of meetings with the Prime Minister's staff, MP Candice Hoepfner and MP Garry Breitkreuz, the OFAH worked with Dr. Gary Mauser, Simon Fraser University and senior staff in the Minister's office in early 2010 to develop a comprehensive response to Members of Parliament regarding misinformation being distributed on the issue of the long gun registry.

In March, as part of the National Outdoor Network, the OFAH sent a copy of that rebuttal to every MP across Canada, with each affiliate being responsible for the Members of Parliament in their respective jurisdictions.

Hearings on Bill C-391 took place on May 13, 25, 26 and 27, for two hours per day. On May 26, 2010, the OFAH appeared before the House of Commons Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security in support of the bill. Also appearing that day was Toronto Police Chief Bill Blair, Priscilla de Villiers, founder of Victims against Violence and Sergeant Murray Grismer, Major Crimes Unit, Saskatoon Police Service. Also appearing in support of the bill over the three days of hearings was the Quebec Federation of Anglers and Hunters, the Canadian Shooting Sports Association (CSSA), Chief of Police from Calgary, several individual police officers, and Dr. Gary Mauser, Simon Fraser University.

In addition to Chief Blair and Ms. de Villiers, those opposing included the Coalition for Gun Control and the Quebec Justice Minister.

Clause by clause occurred on June 1 and 3 and the bill was reported back to the House. During this time, Liberal critic Mark Holland, MP Pickering-Ajax, introduced a motion asking the Committee and House to stop proceedings on the bill on the grounds that it would "dismantle a tool that promotes and enhances public security and the safety of Canadian police officers." With the

opposition having a majority on the Committee, the motion passed by a vote of 7 to 6. Although the bill was referred back to the House for Third Reading, a debate on the motion, which occurred on September 21st and 22nd preceded a vote on the bill.

Throughout the summer and early fall, members of the National Outdoor Network across the country, and OFAH zones, clubs and members across Ontario, continued to pressure opposition MPs in their area to either continue supporting the bill, or to convince opposition members to support the bill when it returned for Third Reading and vote against the Holland motion. Candice Hoepfner spent the summer attending events in many of the ridings across the country represented by opposition members who supported the bill at Second Reading. In Ontario, several OFAH member clubs in northern Ontario hosted public meetings in opposition ridings, where Ms. Hoepfner appeared and spoke.

Leading up to the debate in the House, the eight Liberal members who supported the bill at Second Reading were told to change their vote by their leader and support the motion to kill the bill. The 12 NDPs who supported the bill at Second reading were also pressured, but not ordered, to change their vote. With Liberals being forced to vote in favor of the motion, all 12 NDP members were needed to vote against the motion to defeat it.



Throughout the summer, the OFAH appeared on many media panel discussions to debate the merits of the bill, and led a concerted effort to shore up support among NDP members. Until the last minute, it appeared that enough opposition votes would be in place to defeat the motion, but a sudden defection by the NDP member for Sackville, Nova Scotia tipped the scales. As a result, with only 6 of the 12 original NDP members continuing to support the bill, (including the two Thunder Bay MPs) Mark Holland's motion to abandon Bill C-391 was passed by a vote of 153 – 151. This was not accidental. Quite clearly, the NDP, without 'ordering' their members to vote in a particular direction, made sure that enough pressure was exerted to ensure that the motion would be passed, without having to publicly acknowledge that they had 'whipped' the vote.

Parliamentary rules prohibit the government from introducing another bill to scrap the long gun registry during this Parliament. The government has committed that they will reintroduce a new bill after the next election, and that scrapping of the long gun registry will continue to be part of their national platform.

Municipal Sunday Gun Hunting and Discharge Bylaws

Kingston City Council held public meetings on Sunday gun hunting where the OFAH was well represented with staff from head office, the zone, local clubs and individual members. After much delay, Council approved Sunday gun hunting by a vote of 10 to 1 in March. This was used as leverage to pursue Sunday gun hunting in Loyalist Township and South Frontenac before the fall municipal election.

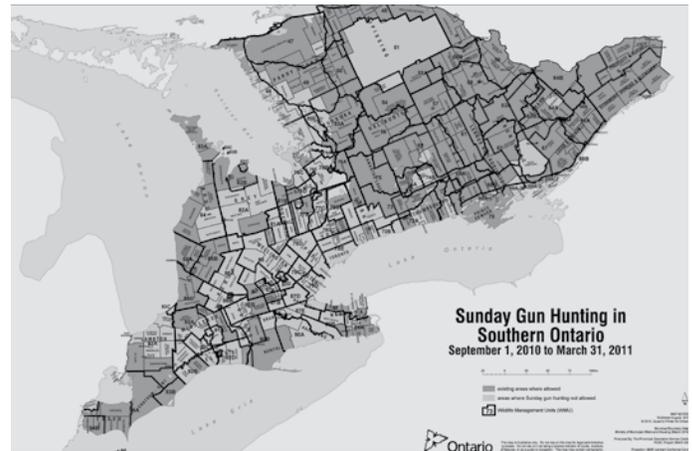
The Township of Muskoka Lakes passed an updated discharge bylaw and have since been inundated with complaints from local firearms owners. The township's CAO contacted the OFAH for assistance in reviewing the bylaw, but nothing of substance occurred in 2010.

In late 2009, the OFAH was notified by the Town of Halton Hills of pending changes to their local no discharge bylaw. We wrote to the Mayor and Council to indicate our concern over the proposed changes. Council scheduled a public meeting to discuss the proposed changes in December, with the OFAH making a deputation. Local OFAH clubs and members were also notified; however, given the extensive pressure that was brought to bear by firearms owners in the area, Council cancelled the meeting and announced that the status quo would continue; a clear victory for area hunters and recreational sport shooters.

In November of 2009, the Township of Dutton Dunwich held a public meeting of Council to discuss Sunday gun hunting. We provided information and updated maps to local hunters, who made presentations to Council, and we emailed 500 OFAH members in the London, St. Thomas, and Strathroy area, urging them to attend and make their support known. In March, Council voted in favor of Sunday gun hunting.

For several months, Wilmot Township undertook consultations around the issue of Sunday gun hunting. In March, they voted in support of Sunday gun hunting, in large part due to the excellent work of OFAH Zone J.

In early 2010, the Town of Pickering announced that they would be making changes to their no discharge bylaw. We contacted municipal staff and were promised an opportunity to comment on the draft bylaw. The OFAH worked with the Pickering Rod &



Gun Club, local hunters, the Ontario Federation of Agriculture, and the MNR in the development of a response to the draft bylaw, which was due March 21, 2010. The proposed changes are not supported by the OFAH, the MNR and others, particularly since they are clearly in response to concerns expressed by only one Councillor, and one nonresident antihunter. The OFAH, the Pickering Rod & Gun Club and others appeared before Council on May 10, 2010. The item was sent back for further work at the staff level, and did not reappear during 2010.

The Township of Zorra has indicated that they intend to amend their noise bylaw, which dates to 1987. This is apparently based upon complaints from a local resident opposed to hunting, and opposed to the 'noise' created by the Tavistock Rod & Gun Club.

The current bylaw already includes a clause under the heading of 'unusual noises, or noises likely to disturb any other inhabitant' that refers to the discharge of any gun or other firearm, provided that this does not apply to peace officers in the performance of their duties. The OFAH, through its Zone J Chair, has continued to provide input in support of the club's position. It would appear that either the local resident or the Council itself may pursue this in court.

The Town of Springwater and other local municipalities were contacted in 2010 by the City of Barrie asking them to consider no discharge bylaws; amendments to current no discharge bylaws or noise bylaws to focus on firearms related activities. This appeared to be targeting the Barrie District Hunter & Angler Club (an OFAH member clubs) and the Barrie Rod and Gun Club (a non-OFAH club). On June 16, 2010, OFAH, CSSA, the two local gun clubs and other stakeholders appeared at a well-attended public meeting before Council, to object to the proposed changes and propose alternatives that would not negatively impact on the club or local hunters and recreational shooters. The municipal solicitor admitted that the bylaw contained several errors, and it was withdrawn for amendment and reintroduction at a future date. The bylaw did not reappear before Council prior to last fall's municipal election.

The bylaws are particularly alarming for two reasons: the two bylaws appear contradictory – while the discharge bylaw reduces the ability to use firearms for hunting or recreational shooting considerably, the noise bylaw prohibits noise caused by the discharge of a firearm; and the bylaw, unlike those in other municipalities, would be a blanket bylaw, not just applying to the residential areas, but to the entire municipality regardless of location.

The Town of Uxbridge intends to update its no discharge bylaw, and has asked the OFAH, the Pickering Rod and Gun Club, the MNR, and others to review and comment.

The City of Thunder Bay has been holding discussions with the OFAH, the MNR, and Thunder Bay Police Service (TBPS) regarding an OFAH request to allow for the expansion of the area for bowhunting only within the city limits. The City of Thunder Bay includes an extensive amount of land within the municipal boundaries that is currently not zoned for future development, but where hunting is currently not allowed and should be. OFAH Zone B has spent months working on this issue, and has spearheaded the push for additional hunting opportunities. Several meetings, conversations, and letters have been exchanged with the Chief of TBPS, and he has generally agreed to the expansion of the area for bowhunting, with certain conditions that are still under discussion. Once all of the issues have been resolved to the satisfaction of the Chief, hopefully City Council will be in a position to formally ratify the new boundaries, and provide initially for additional bowhunting opportunities.

The County of Brant proposed changes to its discharge bylaws in the fall of 2010. The staff report was provided to OFAH which proposed extensive changes to the draft bylaw, which was poorly worded and did not appear to understand the concepts of hunting. As a result, a new draft bylaw was circulated, with some of the OFAH requested amendments included, but other changes were not made. A public meeting was slated to take place on December 13, 2010, but was delayed at the OFAH's request.

Once new municipal councils have had an opportunity to be sworn in and undertake new business, the three remaining councils in eastern Ontario where Sunday gun hunting has not been approved will be approached to revisit the issue..

National Outdoors Caucus

The National Outdoors Caucus met on March 31, 2010 to discuss a number of 'go-forward' positions on issues previously identified by the outdoor community. The OFAH made a presentation on Bill C-465, The National Hunting, Trapping and Fishing Heritage Day Act, which seeks to recognize the contribution that hunting, trapping and fishing have made to our national heritage, and to designate the third Saturday in September as a day to recognize these activities. OFAH was also asked to speak on invasive species, (National Strategy and the need for additional funding to conduct risk assessments), and to Bill C-391, An Act to amend the Criminal Code and Firearms Act (repeal of long gun registry).

Algonquin Land Claim/Fisheries/Harvest Allocation Focus Groups

At the December 2009 meeting of the Committee of External Advisors for the Algonquin Land Claim, of which the OFAH is a member, three focus groups were established that would examine in-depth specific proposals associated with the claim that would impact on land use, fisheries (with particular focus on Algonquin Park), and harvest allocations. OFAH is represented on the latter two. Membership on the land use focus group is composed almost exclusively of representatives from local municipalities within the claim area. The fisheries focus group met in January 2010, and a meeting of both the fisheries and harvest allocation focus groups took place in Bancroft early in March 2010. OFAH offered significant input into the draft proposals put before the focus

groups, and at the time, anticipated that several more meetings would be held as the process unfolds.

The Committee of External Advisors, which has been paired with the Municipal Advisory Group (composed of affected municipalities in the claim area), will meet again on April 8 in Pembroke. This was intended to be the last joint meeting of these advisory groups, with them being split to hold meetings on their own, related to the issues impacting separately on each. Subsequent events have proven that this is not the case.

There have been no meetings of the Fisheries or Harvest Allocation focus groups since the March 2010 meeting in Bancroft. A report on the April meeting of the Committee of External Advisors and Municipal Advisory Group was submitted to the OFAH Native Affairs Advisory Committee at the April Board meeting. This resulted in several "go-forward" items for staff, which included:

- What percentage of Algonquin must ratify the agreement for it to be binding;
- An update package of all current land claims in Ontario;
- Letters to the provincial and federal Ministers responsible for aboriginal affairs regarding funding for nonaboriginal groups to participate in the process; and
- Meeting with the provincial Ministers regarding allocation, based upon Sparrow.

A report on progress with these items and an update from the September meeting of the two main advisories bodies was presented to the OFAH Native Affairs Advisory Committee at the September Board meeting.

The Province of Ontario made it clear that they wanted an Agreement in Principle (AIP) on the land claim in place by no later than May, 2011 and was pushing ahead with an extremely ambitious agenda. The OFAH was concerned that we, and others, would be marginalized with regard to nonaboriginal interests in the claim area.

In order to head off a premature AIP, the OFAH met with the federal Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs and the provincial Minister of Aboriginal Affairs in November. The federal government has already indicated that they do not agree with the province's timeline, and appear sympathetic to our requests for a slowdown in the process. The provincial Minister of Aboriginal Affairs was presented with extensive documentation at the November meeting, outlining the OFAH's position on fair sharing, cooperative management of resources, fisheries, access and other issues. The Minister committed to a follow up meeting. The September meeting of the Committee of External Advisors in Pembroke produced little of consequence.

The OFAH continued to meet with MNR staff from the Aboriginal claims section and the provincial and federal negotiators throughout the year, and has developed a comprehensive action plan around the land claim.

MNR/Saugeen/Cape Croker Commercial Fishing Agreement

The commercial fishing agreement between the province, the Chippewas of Nawash (Cape Croker) Unceded First Nation, and the Saugeen First Nation expired in 2010. Given the concerns raised by the OFAH, Sydenham Sportsmen's Association, Bruce Peninsula Sportsmen's Association, and the Lake Huron Fishing Club over the previous agreement, the OFAH secured a commitment from the former Minister of Natural Resources to

seek public input related to the renewal of the agreement. However, since that time, little has occurred, and no formal consultation has been scheduled, although MNR staff met with local clubs in August to provide a brief update on the progress of negotiations. No information about the finalization of any agreement had been forthcoming by the end of 2010.

Windpower Development



The increased incentives afforded to renewable energy projects through the *Green Energy and Green Economy Act* has resulted in a major push to implement the policy and regulations needed to facilitate windpower development. In 2010, the OFAH received many calls from individuals and organizations expressing concern with windpower development throughout the province. OFAH staff met with Ontario's energy minister, as well as staff from the MNR's Renewable Energy program to discuss the potential impacts of existing and proposed renewable energy policies on fish and wildlife values in Ontario. In addition, we reviewed and provided comments for a number of windpower-related EBR postings related to windpower policies and regulations.

The OFAH provided comments to an EBR posting by the MOE regarding the Renewable Energy Approval (REA) Requirements for offshore windpower development. The new REA system is a streamlined process that has resulted from increased pressure for the development of 'green energy.' The OFAH is concerned that the new accelerated process will prioritize mitigation measures without adequate assessment or concern for fish and wildlife values. One major concern is that the proposed REA requirements only focus on site-specific impacts and do not adequately address the cumulative effects of offshore wind development. We believe that this is especially important, given that the MOE has proposed a 5km shoreline exclusion zone that will concentrate offshore development beyond the current economic viability restrictions of construction (water depth) and energy production (wind speeds).

The OFAH recommended that REA requirements include an assessment of how fishery quality, as well as changes to the access and use of prime fishing areas could impact socioeconomic values. Additionally, we made a number of recommendations for specific considerations to be included in impact assessment studies for fish and wildlife species, particularly for migratory waterfowl.

The OFAH also provided comments to an EBR posting by the MNR regarding the Crown Land Use Application for offshore wind development. First and foremost, the OFAH recommended that Crown land access to natural resources through activities such as hunting and fishing must be given specific consideration due to

their relative socioeconomic importance. The OFAH supported the use of specific areas (Point Pelee and Long Point in Lake Erie) as a coarse-filter, but also recommended that a supplemental criteria-based approach is necessary to provide a more rigorous and standardized restriction of Crown land for offshore wind development. The OFAH recommended that the Crown Land Use Application process should incorporate geographical limitations on the number, proximity and orientation of wind turbines to minimize the potential for cumulative effects. We also suggested that an explicit set of criteria should be developed and included in the application process to determine if and how potential impacts associated with offshore wind facilities will be mitigated.

The goal of this posting was for the MNR to receive input on where and how Crown land should be unavailable for offshore wind development. The ultimate goal is to use this information during the development of a draft policy procedure and direction for offshore wind development. The OFAH will continue to monitor the development of this policy and provide input at every available opportunity.

Chronic Wasting Disease

Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) continues to spread in Northeast North America. Prevention is clearly the only effective strategy for keeping CWD out of Ontario.

In early 2010, the MNR took additional steps to prevent the spread of CWD to Ontario through activities associated with hunting. These steps included the following:

Prohibiting use of products that contain deer urine, blood, glands for the purpose of hunting (EBR 011-7724)

On the basis of new scientific evidence demonstrating that CWD can be spread through deer urine and other body fluids collected from farmed deer and used in urine-based attractants, the OFAH expressed support for prohibiting the use of deer urine based attractants in hunting. We do not, however, agree with prohibiting the use of Ontario hunter harvested tarsal glands in hunting, which the Ministry included in the regulation.

The OFAH also encouraged the Province of Ontario to take further steps to prohibit the importation and retail of deer urine-based attractants, and also to give retailers a full year to adapt to the new proposed regulation.

Prohibiting possession of specific moose and caribou parts harvested in other jurisdictions (EBR 011-7726)

On the basis of new scientific evidence that moose and caribou are also susceptible to CWD, and potential vectors for transmission, the OFAH supports adding moose and caribou to the regulation that previously applied to the importation of white-tails and elk carcasses harvested by hunters in other jurisdictions. Against O.F.A.H advice, the new regulation applies to caribou harvested anywhere outside Ontario, including Quebec, even though there is no reason to believe that eastern hunted caribou populations would have come into any contact with CWD.

Prohibiting importation of live captive deer, elk, moose or caribou, unless authorized, to help minimize the risk of entry of CWD into Ontario (EBR 011-8244)

The OFAH supports the new MNR regulations prohibiting the importation of live captive deer, elk, moose or caribou. They are a significant step in controlling the potential importation and spread of CWD in farmed cervids, however our over-arching advice to

the province is that this does not go far enough. Importation of any potential cervid CWD vector should be prohibited and the captive breeding (game farming) phased out.

In July, the OFAH met with staff from the Canadian Wildlife Federation (CWF) to discuss collaboration around the issue of Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) in Ontario and beyond. As a result, a number of action items were developed, which are being split between the two organizations. Another meeting is planned to discuss next steps. The OFAH also sought to meet with the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA), but was not able to do so in 2010.

Freedom of Information Requests

The OFAH filed several Freedom of Information (FOI) requests with the MNR in 2010, prompted by less than satisfactory responses to requests for information through the normal channels. These requests included:

- the Bearwise report, public comments, questions asked, how they were developed, and associated files;
- information on the printing firm, quotes received from all prospective bidders for the contract, and the amount of ad revenue generated by the publication of the 2010 Hunting Regulations Summary; and
- the 2000-2001 cormorant study authored by Dr. John Casselman on eating habits and damage caused to plants and fish populations.

Pending the receipt of the 2008-2009 and 2009-2010 versions of the Special Purpose Account Annual Report, the OFAH will file an FOI requesting these reports. As a result of a question asked in the legislature earlier in 2010, the reports for 1999-2000 through to 2007-2008 were finally filed with the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly.

U.S. Wildlife and Hunting Conservation Council

The U.S. Secretary of the Interior appointed eight senior members of various prominent conservation organizations to serve on a newly created Wildlife and Hunting Conservation Council. This included representatives from Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Ducks Unlimited, the Wildlife Management Institute and the Boone and Crockett Club.

The OFAH has written to Peterborough MP Dean del Mastro, to suggest that the government create a similar body in Canada, to be known as the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Council; this request was subsequently relayed to the Prime Minister. The mandate of the Council would be similar to that of the U.S. Council, which is considered an official advisory body under the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA). It would advise the government on fish and wildlife issues, and the promotion of Canada's fishing and hunting heritage for future generations.

Federal Firearms Legislation – Bill C-580

On October 8, Charlie Angus, the NDP Member for Timmins-James Bay, introduced Bill C-580, *An Act to amend the Criminal Code, the Firearms Act and the Contraventions Act (long guns)*.

Mr. Angus, one of the NDP members who flipped their vote on Bill C-391, introduced the bill to fulfill a commitment by NDP Leader, Jack Layton, to introduce a bill that would not scrap the long gun registry, but which would supposedly “decriminalize”

the failure to register a nonrestricted long gun.

Essentially, the bill proposes to eliminate the fee for registration and licensing (which was already done by the current government), and to eliminate the first-time offense of possession of a firearm (nonrestricted) without having registered that firearm under the Criminal Code. This would create a summary offense instead of a criminal code charge (which already exists, but is seldom used by police).

The OFAH does not support Bill C-580, which clearly does not address the need to scrap the long gun registry, and provides little, if any, relief from the system that has plagued firearms owners for over a decade. Questions have been raised about the legality of the bill, and whether the legislation is even constitutional.

Bill C-465 – An Act Respecting a National Hunting, Trapping and Fishing Heritage Day

Bill C-465 was introduced by Conservative MP Rick Norlock, Northumberland-Quinte West. After receiving Second Reading earlier in 2010, the bill was referred to the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage, which met in October, 2010. Witnesses included the OFAH, the Nova Scotia Federation of Anglers and Hunters, Delta Waterfowl, Ducks Unlimited, and the Credit River Anglers Association.

The bill was amended slightly and sent back to the House of Commons for Third Reading, which it received. The bill was then sent to the Senate.

OSPCA Resolution/Amendments to Provincial Animal Welfare Act

On June 1, 2010, Frank Klees, Conservative MPP Newmarket-Aurora, tabled a resolution in the Legislature seeking to bring the OSPCA under provincial oversight, something the OFAH and others encouraged the government to do during the debate around Bill 50, Amendments to the Provincial Welfare Act, 2008. The resolution was debated and voted on November 18, 2010.

When Bill 50 was before the Legislature, the OFAH appeared before the Standing Committee on Justice Policy representing ourselves, Delta Waterfowl, the Canadian Sportfishing Industry Association, and Wye Marsh Wildlife Centre. At that time, the OFAH recommended that the bill be amended to provide for more oversight by the government of the actions, training and conduct of the OSPCA. Bill 50 gave the OSPCA considerable additional powers, including those of warrantless search, seizure and the laying of charges. What was missing was any form of governmental oversight or control of the Association. Equally disturbing was the fact that a registered charity, which could raise money for its work, would also be the enforcer of animal cruelty laws in Ontario.

The government ignored the recommendations made by the OFAH, Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA), Ontario Farm Animal Council (OFAC) and others, insisting that the OSPCA was an “arms length” agency, and that the government had no authority to oversee its activities, despite the fact that we presented a number of other jurisdictions in Canada where this oversight by government existed and was working well.

Mr. Klees’ resolution sought to reopen the issue and force the government to introduce controls over the OSPCA, in light of recent high profile mistakes by the Society.

Fifty-five members of the Legislature read petitions into the record in support of the resolution, and the OFAH issued a press release in support of the resolution, but the government, with few notable exceptions among its members, voted as a block to defeat the resolution.

Hatchery Fees Paid by Volunteer Organizations

For several years, the OFAH has been pursuing the issue of fees assessed against volunteer fish hatcheries under the Ministry of Environment Certificate of Approval process. According to Ministry criteria, these hatcheries, by virtue of the high concentration of nutrients in this type of “waste water,” are being classified the same as industrial polluters, which has resulted in their being charged exorbitant fees for the privilege of operating.

The OFAH has pursued this issue with a succession of Ministers of the Environment, with no success. To try to resolve this matter once and for all, the OFAH has requested a meeting with the Minister of Environment. The Minister of Natural Resources and senior MNR staff are engaged in support of OFAH’s position.

Amendments to Reg. 316/03 of Highway Traffic Act regarding ATV Use

For some years, the OFAH has been trying to correct an oversight that occurred in 2003 when the province last amended the *Highway Traffic Act* with respect to the use of All Terrain Vehicles (ATV’s) on certain provincial highways.

At the time, the MNR advised the Ministry of Transportation (MOT) that there was no need to include Crown and forest access roads in the regulation; however, this was found to be incorrect. The OPP advised the OFAH that under the Act, access roads are considered to be highways, and without being designated as such under the amendments, cannot be used by ATV riders without the possibility of being charged. For several years, the OPP has looked the other way while the OFAH has worked with a succession of ministers, at the MNR and the MTO, to try to resolve this “simple” issue by way of an amendment at Cabinet. Earlier this year, the issue was raised with Minister Jeffrey. Peterborough MPP Jeff Leal also wrote to Minister Jeffrey about this, asking for her assistance in resolving the issue. Despite the Minister’s response that the MTO and not the MNR has the authority to resolve the issue, the Minister’s office and senior MNR staff have become more engaged in seeking a resolution. A letter requesting a meeting with Transportation Minister, Kathleen Wynne, was also sent, but no response was received before year’s end.

National Fish and Wildlife Conservation Congress (NFWCC)

The OFAH, in cooperation with Shane Mahoney and a number of major stakeholders across Canada and the US is the lead organization behind the creation and hosting of a May 2012 National Fish and Wildlife Congress in Ottawa. “Hold these Dates” cards have been circulated on both sides of the border, including at the Midwest Fish and Wildlife Conference in Minneapolis, which distributed 600 of these cards to delegates at their December 2010 conference. The Wildlife Institute, in addition to being a major sponsor of the NFWCC, is using its 3,000 contacts to spread the word, as is the U.S. Fish & Wildlife

Agencies based in Washington DC. The Canadian Wildlife Federation, Ducks Unlimited, Wildlife Habitat Canada and other Canadian partners are working with contacts in both Canada and US to raise awareness of this upcoming event.

Ten core sponsors have committed to full sponsorships at \$25,000. Several others have committed smaller amounts, and letters to dozens of other potential sponsors, including the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, Canadian Wildlife Service (Environment Canada) and other government agencies have been sent. Talks are ongoing with potential private and public sector nongovernment partners. Shane Mahoney is working with the National Wild Turkey Federation and other major outdoor groups in the US to bring them on board as sponsors, and late in the year, Boone and Crockett, a world renowned hunting and conservation organization agreed to join the congress as a core sponsor.

A Congress website (www.nfwcc.com) is up and running. A Steering Committee has been struck and has already met. Topics for the agenda are being prepared for consideration of the Committee, and a Technical Committee will be established in the new year. The Congress promises to attract 700 – 900 biologists, scientists, conservationists, MPs, MPPs, local, provincial, and national agencies and outdoor stakeholders. This national conference will look at the future conservation of our natural resources; government policies and programs that impact on natural resources; hunting and fishing; and increased cooperation between governments and the outdoor community in support of sustainable use on both sides of the border.

National Firearms Summit

The OFAH received an invitation to attend the National Firearms Summit in December in Vancouver, to be hosted by the National Firearms Association. The OFAH declined the invitation to attend on the following grounds:

- The NFA promotes conceal carry and the use of firearms for self-defense;
- The NFA was notably absent from the effort to support Bill C-391;
- The agenda for the summit contained some issues and speakers of serious concern to us (eg. ‘The role of firearms and personal protection’ and speaker Alan Gottlieb from the Second Amendment Foundation);
- The NFA has been largely absent in major issues affecting the firearms community; and
- The timing, particularly for a summit of this type, with the issues they have identified, is highly inappropriate and would serve to enhance the type of anti-firearms rhetoric that emerged during the debate on Bill C-391.

The Canadian Shooting Sports Association (CSSA) declined to respond to the invitation until they heard what the OFAH was doing. Once we declined, so did the CSSA. A random survey by the OFAH indicated that our affiliates in Quebec, Nova Scotia and Saskatchewan were not attending, nor were the Hunting for Tomorrow Foundation or the Fur Institute, all for similar reasons. On November 7th, the NFA announced that the summit was cancelled.



Communications

The OFAH uses a wide range of media tools to reach a broad audience with positive hunting, fishing and conservation messaging. We share the latest news and views with the outdoor community through media releases, PSAs and print materials, the Internet, Ontario OUT OF DOORS magazine and Angler & Hunter Television show. Federation members and member clubs also play an important role as OFAH ambassadors in their communities.

Communications

Angler & Hunter HOTLINE

Hunting, fishing, conservation, firearms issues, fish and wildlife management, hunter education, OFAH member club and zone news—it's all in the pages of *Angler & Hunter HOTLINE*. OFAH members receive the 16-page insert with every issue of the industry-leading *Ontario OUT OF DOORS* magazine.



Media Releases

The OFAH distributed 50 media releases across the newswire in 2010, as part of its mandate to promote hunting and fishing and the conservation of our fish and wildlife resources. Our efforts attracted coverage from local, regional and even national television, radio, print and online media. In addition, we sent another 30 locally-based releases via email to targeted media sources.

Commanding national media attention for a good part of the year was the long gun registry and MP Candice Hoepfner's Bill C-391, which, was narrowly defeated in the fall. Asian carp, coyote hunting incentives, and escalating human/bear conflicts also drew high online reader interest.

Once again, the OFAH partnered with a variety of organizations on communications efforts, including the Ontario Conservation Officers Association and Toronto Region Conservation Authority. These efforts provide mutual benefits to the participants through the expanded reach that is achieved.

In February, the OFAH provided communications support for the first annual Bridgenorth Winter Panfish Festival, which was held on Chemong Lake in the Kawarthas in celebration of the first winter fishing season in FMZ 17 in almost 80 years. The event coincided with Ontario Family Fishing Weekend and was sponsored by the OFAH TackleShare program, with OFAH communications providing advance and onsite promotional services. Attendance was estimated at between 600 and 1,000 people, and was well covered by the media. We have committed to participate in the festival for at least one more year.

Summer students working with the Invading Species Awareness Program (ISAP) attracted considerable media attention for their cause during the busy summer season. The students received media training at OFAH head office during their orientation to prepare them for media inquiries, and the majority did use their training to represent their program and host organizations very well. More than 100 stories were produced via TV, radio and in newspapers (print and online versions) in more than 20 communities across Ontario. This is invaluable exposure for both the Invading Species Awareness Program and the OFAH.

Public Service Announcements

Public Service Announcements (PSAs) provide nonprofit organizations such as the OFAH with free radio, TV and print exposure. With the recent downturn in the media industry, free ad space has become somewhat less available, however, the OFAH was able to obtain considerable TV and radio play for ice safety, boating safety, responsible hunting, and ISAP messaging during 2010, which we would not otherwise have been able to purchase. In 2010, we produced a 30 second TV PSA on safe firearms handling, in cooperation with the Ontario Chief Firearms Office.

Motivational DVD

Dr. Randall Eaton was a featured speaker at the 82nd OFAH Fish & Wildlife Conference. In order to share his powerful message on the importance of hunting with a larger audience, the OFAH made DVD copies of his presentation available for a nominal fee. The DVD provides an economical feature for club meetings and community events.

Internet Presence

OFAH Internet activity continued to grow in 2010. The main OFAH site received a minor update and we expanded our

social networking efforts further through YouTube, Facebook and Twitter. These venues provide highly timely and flexible communications opportunities and enable us to reach a younger audience using their preferred communications formats.

OFAH web staff also manage the *Ontario OUT OF DOORS* website (www.ontariooutofdoors.com) and its very busy forum, with the assistance of hard working volunteer moderators. The forum enables registered users to exchange ideas about all things related to fishing and hunting.

The OFAH was proud to be chosen to promote hunting and fishing within the Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership Corporation's Northern Ontario tourism website (www.northernontario.travel) for a second year. Member and nonmember anglers and hunters are invited to share their memorable experiences, photos, and testimonials of northern Ontario outdoors experiences by contacting the OFAH web team.

Several OFAH program websites were updated over the course of 2010, including the Ontario Family Fishing Weekend website (www.familyfishingweekend.com) and the OFAH TackleShare program (www.tackleshare.com).

OFAH zone websites were moved to a new template format in 2010 and are now partially administered by zone executive volunteers, who are able to populate the sites with upcoming meetings, events, photos and more. OFAH Zones C, F, G, H, and J each host a website and have launched under the new format. All zones are invited to host a website under the www.ofah.org domain at no cost.

Communications Outreach

The OFAH recognizes the importance of supporting cultural diversity in attracting new enthusiasts to fishing and hunting. In 2010, we reached out to engage new Canadian citizens by working in partnership with the Institute for Canadian Citizenship (ICC), an initiative of former Governor General Adrienne Clarkson. In October, OFAH staff and volunteers welcomed 75 enthusiastic and appreciative guests, including many children, for a full day of outdoor related activities at the OFAH/Mario Cortellucci Hunting & Fishing Heritage Centre. Guests enjoyed tours of the centre, fishing at the onsite Shimano pond, virtual laser shot, a movie in the amphitheatre and a complimentary BBQ. The feedback was overwhelmingly positive and the ICC has expressed interest in working with us on future initiatives.

Ontario OUT OF DOORS

**Ontario
OUT OF
DOORS**

2010 was a very successful year for the OFAH-owned *Ontario OUT OF DOORS* magazine. Despite a difficult climate for the publishing industry, we increased advertising sales and subscriber numbers, while maintaining the same unbeatable publication.

Ontario OUT OF DOORS subscriber growth is an important part of the overall OFAH business model. Subscribers add value to our organization in many ways, not the least of which is an expanded audience for the entire outdoors industry that relies heavily on our publication.



In 2010, our subscription renewal rates surpassed magazine industry standards. The OFAH was not afraid to test a variety of product incentives and discount offers that helped shape our marketing plans.

In addition to our subscription marketing successes, 2010 marked the start of a province-wide branding campaign.

Named "THIS IS *Ontario OUT OF DOORS* COUNTRY," loyal readers and potential readers were exposed to our organization's name brand magazine in communities throughout Ontario. The branding campaign got underway in late 2010, with various forms of outdoor advertising that pinpointed specific outdoor destinations such as Lake Simcoe, Peterborough and the Ottawa Valley.



Angler & Hunter Television



From the edge of the water to the edge of the trails, *Angler & Hunter Television* Host Cam Brownson led viewers on exciting hunting and fishing exploits throughout 2010. He also featured the OFAH's great conservation work.

The show built 16 episodes which were featured on Global National and stations in almost every province across the country, as well as on pay per view on WILD TV. *Angler & Hunter Television* was also available across Canada on Bell ExpressVu and Star Choice satellite systems. Visit www.ahtv.com for a current list of local air times and information on the shows.

Each original episode was repeated twice during the year, allowing viewers lots of opportunity to catch all of the action. Fans of the show can also purchase the 17th action-packed season in a DVD boxed set through the OFAH store, or online at www.shopofah.org

Angler & Hunter Television was proudly sponsored by Mercury Marine, Lund Boats, Browning Canada, Winchester Ammunition, Yamaha ATV's, Shimano Canada and the OFAH, with support from Berkley, Excalibur Crossbow, *Ontario OUT OF DOORS*, Minn Kota, Humminbird Electronics, G.Loomis, Burris Optics, J.J. Stewart Motors, DT Power Sports, Steiner Optics and Cannon Downriggers.



AUDITORS' REPORT

To the Members of The Ontario Federation of Anglers & Hunters Incorporated

The accompanying summary financial statements, which comprise the summary statement of financial position as at December 31, 2010, and the summary statement of operations for the year then ended, are derived from the audited financial statements of The Ontario Federation of Anglers & Hunters Incorporated for the year ended December 31, 2010. We expressed a qualified audit opinion on those financial statements in our report dated March 17, 2011 (see below).

The summary financial statements do not contain all the disclosures required by Canadian generally accepted accounting principles. Reading the summary financial statements, therefore, is not a substitute for reading the audited financial statements of The Ontario Federation of Anglers & Hunters Incorporated.

Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation of the summary financial statements based on the audited financial statements of The Ontario Federation of Anglers & Hunters Incorporated for the year ended December 31, 2010.

Auditors' Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the summary financial statements based on our procedures, which were conducted in accordance with Canadian Auditing Standard (CAS) 810, "Engagements to Report on Summary Financial Statements".

Opinion

In our opinion, the summary financial statements derived from the audited financial statements of The Ontario Federation of Anglers & Hunters Incorporated for the year ended December 31, 2010 are a fair summary of those financial statements. However, the summary financial statements are misstated to the equivalent extent as the audited financial statements of The Ontario Federation of Anglers & Hunters Incorporated for the year ended December 31, 2010.

The misstatement of the audited financial statements is described in our qualified audit opinion in our report dated March 17, 2011. Our qualified audit opinion is based on the fact that we were unable to satisfy ourselves concerning the completeness of certain revenues. Our qualified audit opinion states that, except for the effects of the described matter, those financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Federation as at December 31, 2010, and its financial performance and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles.

McColl Turner LLP

Licensed Public Accountants

Peterborough, Ontario
March 17, 2011

THE ONTARIO FEDERATION OF ANGLERS & HUNTERS INCORPORATED
Year Ended December 31, 2010

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

	2010	2009
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash	\$ 2,238,951	\$ 2,994,412
Investments	2,232,034	2,148,862
Accounts receivable	1,469,137	812,887
Inventory	238,014	209,066
Prepaid expenses	<u>383,215</u>	<u>214,406</u>
	6,561,351	6,379,633
TRADE NAME, LISTS AND CONTRACTS	100,000	200,000
LAND, BUILDINGS AND EQUIPMENT	<u>3,125,547</u>	<u>2,702,592</u>
	<u>\$ 9,786,898</u>	<u>\$ 9,282,225</u>

CURRENT LIABILITIES

Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$ 912,358	\$ 980,398
Deferred revenue	<u>1,859,068</u>	<u>1,564,879</u>
	<u>2,771,426</u>	<u>2,545,277</u>

NET ASSETS

Invested in land, buildings and equipment	3,125,542	2,702,587
Internally restricted	381,328	824,164
Unrestricted	<u>3,508,602</u>	<u>3,210,197</u>
	<u>7,015,472</u>	<u>6,736,948</u>

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS

	2010	2009
REVENUE		
Membership fees	\$ 3,149,433	\$ 2,957,762
Program fees	1,990,283	2,189,597
OOD magazine revenues	2,782,139	2,574,438
Sales	345,415	419,372
Fundraising, net	263,487	235,913
Donations	927,459	883,620
	<u>77,929</u>	<u>133,646</u>
Interest and investment income	<u>9,536,145</u>	<u>9,394,348</u>

EXPENDITURE

Salaries and employee costs	1,793,490	1,536,358
Membership	1,812,439	1,607,844
Programs, public information and education	1,886,577	2,123,808
OOD magazine expenses	2,376,298	2,273,370
Office, general and professional	705,959	663,984
Cost of sales	277,059	361,772
Legal/policy	4,514	43,039
Informational programs	57,425	46,500
Amortization	243,860	183,879
Amortization of OOD trademark, lists and contracts	<u>100,000</u>	<u>100,000</u>
	<u>9,257,621</u>	<u>8,940,554</u>

EXCESS OF REVENUE OVER EXPENDITURE

	<u>\$ 278,524</u>	<u>\$ 453,794</u>
--	-------------------	-------------------

President's Report



This past year has been extremely busy for your Federation, and I certainly could not list all of our 2010 accomplishments in this short report. Please take some time to review the entire report, and then pass it on to another OFAH member, or better still, to a nonmember, with an invitation to join our organization.

One of the year's most outstanding highlights for me was the opening of the OFAH/Mario Cortellucci Hunting and Fishing Heritage Centre. I greatly enjoyed participating in the opening ceremony events, including the ribbon cutting, and thanking Dr. Cortellucci on behalf of all of our members for his significant contribution.

OFAH staff have put together a tremendous education program at the Heritage Centre, and if you have not yet had the opportunity to visit, I invite you now to come as soon as you can – I know that you will be very proud.

As President, I was also able to participate in the release of the two-millionth Atlantic Salmon in Belfountain last May. We are very proud of the Lake Ontario Atlantic Salmon Restoration Program which is working to achieve a self-sustaining Atlantic Salmon population, an historic effort. As you know, your Federation has been involved in other restoration projects, such as wild turkey, and of course, elk, and we look forward to the Atlantic Salmon program being just as successful.

Also of importance to mention is that we are anticipating a Ministry of Natural Resources announcement early next year of an elk hunt in Ontario. We have worked very hard on this initiative, and I look forward to getting the go ahead and applying for an opportunity to participate in the hunt in the fall of 2011.

I would also like to thank Candice Hoepfner, MP, Portage - Lisgar, Manitoba, for her tireless efforts on her private member's bill, C-391, to abolish the long gun registry. We came very close, and look forward to another challenge in the future to get rid of the registry once and for all.

With Mike Reader's pending retirement, the OFAH Executive Committee undertook an extensive search for his successor and announced the successful candidate, Angelo Lombardo, in late summer. By bringing Angelo in a year ahead of his departure, Mike has ensured that the Federation will see a smooth transition when Angelo takes the reins at the end of March in 2012. Many of you already know Angelo, as he previously worked for the OFAH as our Special Events Coordinator and fundraiser. I know that Angelo will be a great addition to the organization and I encourage you to take a moment over the coming months to extend your best wishes to him as he prepares to lead our organization into the future.

This past June, I represented the OFAH at the Canadian Wildlife Federation annual conference in Quebec City. It was indeed an honor to be present as two of our young members, Victoria Edwards and Mike Evers Jr., were recognized with National Youth Conservation awards for their commitment to conservation.

Our strategic plan was finalized by the Board of Directors in September. You may recall that Past President Jack Hedman challenged the OFAH to develop a strategic plan, and the exercise was led by our Executive Director, Mike Reader. On behalf of our members, we have spent the last three-and-a-half years developing a plan, and the result is a product that clearly identifies the core business of our organization and plots a direction for the future.

I want to acknowledge the hard work and effort of our Board of Directors, who have done an excellent job with their responsibilities and commitments to their advisory committee work and with respect to their zones. Our head office staff have also delivered excellent service, in particular those who work closely with our Board at all of our meetings. My thanks go to Executive Director, Mike Reader, Chief Financial Officer, Sue McCallum, Manager of Government Affairs and Policy, Greg Farrant, and Provincial Manager of Fish and Wildlife Services, Dr. Terry Quinney, for their continuous commitment and diligence to their duties and responsibilities to our organization.

Finally, I would also like to thank all of those who have supported me over my term as President. I have enjoyed the opportunity immensely, and have learned a great deal about the responsibilities of chairing one of the largest and most relevant and significant conservation organizations in Canada.

Yours in Conservation,

OFAH President

OFAH Zone A Annual Report



OFAH Zone A Executive:

- Bruce Hamilton, Chair and Director
- Jeremy Funk, 1st Vice Chair and Director
- Jan Loman, 2nd Vice Chair and 1st Alternate Director
- Roy DeCorte, Secretary-Treasurer and Director
- Erwin Burgstaler, Alternate Director

OFAH Zone A held three meetings throughout 2010. The annual was held in January, and was hosted by the Atikokan Sportsmen's Conservation Club. Daryl Gaudry, Chief Operating Engineer of Ontario Power Generation's Atikokan Generating Station, was on hand to inform delegates of the progress in the transformation of their Atikokan and Thunder Bay plants from coal fired to biomass energy.

Our second meeting was hosted by the Northwoods Fish and Game Club in May. Although we had no guest speaker at this meeting, the club's wild game dinner was held the night before the meeting, and most of the delegates enjoyed this event very much.

The summer meeting was held at the Dryden District Conservation Club's clubhouse. No guest speakers were available at this meeting, as we were unsuccessful in getting a presentation on black bear. (It is anticipated that a presentation will be given at the zone's annual meeting in January 2011.)

In May, the MNR released the Resource Report – Black Bear on a WMU basis. Reports for WMU's 5 through 12B within the zone showed density and population figures to be extremely low. Only WMU's 5 and 8 (Dryden area) reached the target density for their habitat (20-40 bear/100 km²). WMU 10 (the farming area from Fort Frances to Rainy River) showed a density of only six bears/100 km² in a habitat expected to host 40-60 bears/100 km².

The Provincial Elk Recovery and Management Plan has been the center of much discussion within the zone. The Northwest Ontario Elk Restoration Coalition (NOERC) was very disappointed that after their many requests for relocation of problem elk from other areas of the province, the government passed legislation which would allow habitual nuisance elk to be killed via a MNR Authorized Removal Permit. They would also prefer to see cows and calves relocated to other areas, rather than hunted in the upcoming hunt.

To address a safety concern of many municipalities in the Rainy River District, the MNR posted EBR 011-1053 which closed November 8, 2010. This proposal will prohibit the possession of a loaded firearm in, or discharge a firearm across a right-of-way of public vehicular traffic. This is commonly referred to as "no discharge from a right-of-way." The new regulation will include all of WMU 10 and parts of WMU 9B; a small area near Kenora in WMU 7B will also be affected. After clarification that the encasement of firearms will not be necessary and that this regulation only applies during seasons of maintenance, and only during the open rifle season for deer, no objection to the new

regulations was filed by the zone.

The Canadian Wildlife Service hosted a meeting in Dryden on March 23, 2010 regarding a National Recovery Strategy for Boreal Caribou. Dennis Kristjanson and Bruce Hamilton attended, along with two members of the Sioux Lookout Anglers and Hunters. Other delegates came from municipal government, forest industry, fur trappers, and the MNR.

The Canadian Wildlife Service is taking a second look at their caribou recovery before posting their policy. Dissatisfaction with the Province of Ontario's policy on caribou was voiced loudly and repetitively. Socio-economic consideration for communities, both aboriginal and nonaboriginal, within the area of caribou occurrence was strongly supported. Without this socio-economic factor, buy-in by the public will be poor and success unlikely.

The socio-economic disconnect within the Provincial Caribou Policy is evident in the Lac Seul FMP (2011-2021). The continuous caribou line has moved south 70 kms and is now within two kms of the town of Sioux Lookout. This has created major problems regarding road use strategy and the removal of moose habitat within that continuous caribou area.

Quetico Provincial Park Management Plan Review of Management Options was finally released in September 2010. Although hunting (especially for deer) had been discussed during the background review, it was not in the Management Options. Hunting is still present in the Turtle River-White Otter Lake Provincial Park Management Plan, which was open for discussion in November.

Fisheries Management Zone (FMZ) Councils for FMZ 4 continued meeting throughout 2010, and the FMZ 5 Council started meeting in late 2010. OFAH Zone A is represented by Dennis Kristjanson on FMZ 4, while Richard Boileau sits on FMZ 5. Roy DeCorte sits on both councils for the zone.

Notice of inspection of the Environmental Report for the Namakan River Hydro Development Project ran from December 23, 2009 until February 26, 2010. The Rainy Lake Conservancy obtained the MNR's and MOE's response to the project through the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, and shared these with the OFAH. These documents, and that of the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency, were all very critical of the science produced by the proponent, the Ojibway Power and Energy Group. All three branches of government were just as critical of how concerns of stakeholders were addressed. There has been no advertised action on the project since the closing of the Environmental Report.

OFAH Zone B Annual Report



OFAH Zone B Executive:

- Glenn Rivard, Chair and Director
- Debbie Rivard, 1st Vice Chair and Director
- Gilles Dumais, 2nd Vice Chair and Alternate Director
- Alice Villa, Secretary/Treasurer and Director
- Rick Tomiak, 2nd Alternate Director

CFWIP Project

Again in 2010, OFAH Zone B applied for two clover seeding projects. We found out in July that our application had been accepted, but did not receive written confirmation from the MNR until September 2010. The seeding projects for 2010 have been completed. We would again like to thank Barry Tabor for volunteering to take charge of this project, as well as Rob Batson and Rory Manula for assisting him with the seeding. We intend to continue with this important wildlife enhancement project in 2011.

Fisheries Management Zone (FMZ) 6 and 9 Councils

The FMZ 9 Council has been meeting for almost two years with the sole issue being Walleye rehabilitation in Black Bay and the Black Sturgeon River dam. At this point in time, the council has a recommendation to move forward, which is:

“The FMZ 9 Advisory Council recommends that both Option #3 (Camp 1) and Option #4 (Trap and Sort) be put forward for public consultation under a formal Environmental Assessment process, with Camp 1 presented as the preferred option, and Trap and Sort presented as an alternate option, with the inclusion of the caveats and considerations as summarized in the Rationale Document.”

A Recommendation and Rationale Document has been produced, which covers all of the steps taken by the council, along with a summary of stakeholder involvement prior to May 2008, to show how the council arrived at this recommendation.

There has been no date set for another meeting, but it has been indicated that a meeting should take place toward the end of March 2011. The next topic of discussion will be Coaster Brook Trout. In 2004, a Coaster Brook Trout committee was formed to deal with the regulation. The end result saw a 2-inch increase from 20 inches to 22 inches, in the size of a Coaster Brook Trout the angler is allowed to keep. The MNR was to use the next five years to collect and analyze scientific data, and come back to the committee with the findings. As a result of this, the former members of that committee will also be invited to attend the next FMZ 9 Council meeting for a presentation on the MNR findings.

We would like to thank OFAH head office staff for their support on this complex issue.

The FMZ 6 Council met twice in 2010. At the meeting held in early March 2010, the FMZ 6 Council was updated on the progress to date by the MNR on the Black Sturgeon River dam. Management issues identified in the FMZ 6 management plan were also reviewed.

In August, the MNR made a presentation to the FMZ 6 Council regarding the recommendation from the FMZ 9 Council, who was also looking for support for the recommendation regarding

the Black Sturgeon River dam. After a lengthy discussion, FMZ 6 Council agreed to support the recommendation from FMZ 9.

The FMZ 6 Council has not had a meeting since August 2010. During the winter Lake Trout season, an aerial survey will take place, and the results of the winter monitoring will be presented to the FMZ 6 Council at a meeting in the spring, but no date has been set for this meeting.

Central Canada Outdoor Show

At the end of February 2010, the Thunder Bay Chamber of Commerce held the 6th Annual Central Canada Outdoor Show. In conjunction with the show, a Wild Turkey Hunter Education Course was held with 41 attending. Glenn Rivard is now certified to instruct the wild turkey course, which will simplify having the seminar in northwestern Ontario. Again in 2010, the OFAH was a supporter of this Thunder Bay Show.

We again saw an increase in the number of new and renewing members at the OFAH booth. The kids' moose calling contest is always a lot of fun, and every child walked away with some sort of a prize. In 2010, we also saw an OFAH Invasive Species Booth at the show, which generated much interest from people attending.

OFAH Zone B would like to thank OFAH head office for all of their help and support at the show.

Boreal Caribou

In March 2010, Debbie Rivard, Glenn Rivard, and Gilles Dumais attended a meeting regarding the Boreal (Woodland) Caribou's status in regard to the Species at Risk Act (SARA), and the development of a federal plan to manage Boreal Caribou.

Ontario has already developed and approved a management plan under SARA for Boreal Caribou, and is moving into the implementation stage. This issue has potentially grave consequences regarding biodiversity and access in this province. The new Forest Management Plans being developed in the affected areas include approved management practices to enhance habitat for Boreal Caribou. These practices will be detrimental to other wildlife species, including moose. The area included in the discontinuous areas extends from the east side of the Nipigon River to Wawa, and to the shores of Lake Superior, including islands. This area is core moose range.

Zone Sponsored Events

OFAH Zone B again co-sponsored the Lakehead Archers Hunter Round 3D Shoot, held on the long weekend in September, with Taos's Archery Service.

The “Kam River Reel In” was held on September 11, which is held to give youth in the area the opportunity to try fishing. OFAH Zone B was again the major sponsor for the “Reel In,” and would like to thank Neil Wiens and Barry Tabor for volunteering to work at this event.

Northwestern Ontario Trappers Convention

The trappers' convention was held on the first weekend in March 2010, and we again had a booth at this show. Although it is a small show, it is still good exposure for the zone, and the OFAH, in general.

We would like to thank all of our volunteers who came out to help

at the booths, including Rick Tomiak, Neil Wiens, Gilles Dumais, Roger Pinkowski, Joe Coghlan and Melanie Schoffer.

Greenwich Wind Farm - No Hunting Area

RES is a company building 43 wind turbines in the Dorian area. In early September, members of OFAH Zone B, Northwestern Ontario Sportsmen's Alliance (NOSA), the MNR, and RES held a meeting to discuss the no hunting area where construction is currently taking place. Our concern is that the road going through the construction site provides access to traditional hunting areas outside the no hunting area. After expressing our concerns and listening to the concerns of RES employees, it was agreed that RES would allow a travel corridor through the construction site to access these areas. Everyone is required to stop at the gate and obtain a pass to travel through. A second check-in gate was set up on Escape Lake Road at the beginning of the hunting season, but was closed at the end of October because little traffic was using that route.

Lake Superior National Marine Conservation Area

In early June 2010, an open house was held for the Lake Superior National Marine Conservation Area Interim Management Plan.

Glenn and Deb Rivard attended the open house, and OFAH Zone B submitted a response with additional comments and questions.

We continue to be frustrated in our efforts to participate in this process. The OFAH was not offered a seat on the NMCA Interim Advisory Board, and was not informed of the open house; we found out about it from a third party. We are actively trying to obtain a seat on the more permanent advisory board being set up.

Other Projects

Again in 2010, OFAH Zone B partnered with the North Shore Steelhead Association (NSSA) on the Fisherman's Park Project at the mouth of Current River, inside the City of Thunder Bay. This is a three-year project, with the NSSA taking the lead. After its completion, the City of Thunder Bay will assume responsibility for the park and its maintenance. We also partnered with NSSA on a project to stabilize a bank on McIntyre River inside the city of Thunder Bay.

OFAH Zone C Annual Report



OFAH Zone C Executive:

- Peter Sword, Chair and Director
- David Allen, 1st Vice Chair and Director
- Robert Bartlett, 2nd Vice Chair and Alternate Director
- Eugene O'Beirn, Secretary/Treasurer and 2nd Alternate Director
- Richard Mongeon, Director

OFAH Zone C meetings were held in April in New Liskeard, and in October in Kapuskasing. The guest speaker for the April meeting was MNR Regional Wildlife Biologist, Peter Davis, who spoke on moose and caribou; and the guest speaker for the October meeting was MNR Regional Fisheries Biologist, Greg Deyne, who spoke on Fisheries Management Zone (FMZ) Councils and hydro projects. Additional Zone Executive meetings were held in Englehart and Cochrane.

OFAH Zone C has direct representation on the Northeast Regional Advisory Committee, the Temagami Local Citizens Committee, the Kirkland Lake Fish and Wildlife Advisory Committee, and the FMZ 12 Council.

FMZ Councils have been formed in FMZ 11 and FMZ 12 this year;

however, Councils scheduled to be formed in FMZ's 7 and 8 have been delayed.

As a result of the Provincial Green Energy Act, a number of hydro projects are being proposed in the zone. Zone Directors have attended hydro project open houses in Kapuskasing, Chapleau, Foleyet, and Kirkland Lake, with many more to come. It is very difficult to learn when these hydro project open houses will take place, as they are only advertised in the newspaper, and not listed on the EBR registry. The Kapuskasing River will have a total of nine hydro dams on it if all of the projects are approved and built. There is also a solar and wind project being proposed.

Aerial moose surveys are on hold again this winter in certain parts of the zone, due to lack of snow.

OFAH Zone C has donated funding toward Sandhill Crane research, FMZ Council representative training, a Walleye Transfer Program by the Hearst Angler and Hunter Association, a yearly sign permit for an Invasive Species sign, and the Conservation Officer Youth Mentor Hunt.

To our knowledge, there have been no new developments on the Wawa Crown Land Use Harmonization Project, or the 10-year review of the Temagami Land Use Plan.

OFAH Zone D Annual Report



OFAH Zone D Executive:

- Roy Polsky, Chair and Director
- Felix Delongchamp, 1st Vice Chair and Director
- Roy Warriner, 2nd Vice Chair and 1st Alternate Director
- Debbie Halverson, Secretary/Treasurer and 2nd Alternate Director
- Dan Polsky, Director

2010 was a busy year for the OFAH Zone D Executive and its members. Many of the same issues never seem to go away, such as access restrictions, road closures and abandonment. New issues surface every year, such as the potential development of hydroelectric projects on the Vermilion River and the Wanapitei River, due to new provincial regulations for small projects.

We were fortunate again this year to have OFAH President Rob Hare attend our spring zone meeting, at which time we presented him with a cheque for \$2,500 to go toward the Enhancement of Recreational Fishing in the North Channel and Georgian Bay; we also had representation from head office at the meeting. The MNR North Bay Manager and personnel were invited to give us an update on the red deer that had escaped from captivity and were roaming the area.

The Sudbury Forest Management Plan for 2010 to 2020 was finally approved. Along with OFAH head office, we participated in issues resolutions at the district and regional levels, and were named a “party of interest” to any of the procedures. There have been five requests to the Ministry of the Environment for individual Environmental Assessments: one was for the Millerd-Burnt-Horseshoe Lake Road with respect to restricting access on the new road and calcium depletion in the lakes; and the other four were concerning the Spanish Arm Road with respect to removing the gate at Frog Creek to allow access. One of these EA’s was rejected outright, as it did not focus on a specific area or activity; the other three involved the Area of Concern (AOC) for Lake Trout lakes and tourism lakes, and the potential impact of increased access. The Director of the Ministry of the Environment rejected all EA requests; therefore, the decision of the Regional Director stands. The gate at Frog Creek was removed and signage will be erected indicating that the road can not be used to access the 12 lakes that are deemed sensitive Lake Trout lakes.

Again this year, we contributed \$2,000 toward the continuation of the Sandhill Crane study that is being carried out by Everett Hanna of the Long Point Waterfowl for the Algoma-North Shore-Manitoulin Island area. Research was carried out from July 2 to October 25; Sandhill Cranes were trapped, and some were equipped with GPS and leg bands, and then released.

In the spring, we had the MNR Project Manager for the

Manitoulin Island wild turkeys and pheasants Environmental Assessment explain to the zone the procedure involved. No notice of commencement has yet been issued by the Minister of Natural Resources. Zone members are starting to question the delays, so hopefully it will be forthcoming in the new year.

West Arm/French River wild turkeys are thriving and expanding, and the working group is collecting information in order to request a spring hunt in the near future.

The elk population in the Burwash area seems to be stable. Mortality and calf survival rate is still an ongoing factor to the herd increasing in size. An overpass is being built on the new four lanes to accommodate wildlife crossing the highway, and fencing is being erected along sections of the road to prevent collisions. The North Shore herd is doing well, and is on the increase.

The MNR has set up Advisory Councils for Fisheries Management Zones 11 and 14, which will advise the MNR on fishing limits and regulations for the area of concern.

Information sessions were held across the zone on Bill C-391, an act to repeal the long gun registry. Candice Hoepfner, M.P. Portage-Lisgar, author of the bill, attended meetings in North Bay, Cache Bay, Sudbury, Espanola, and Richard’s Landing on St. Joseph Island.

OFAH Zone D memberships have remained stable throughout the year, due in part to programs and promotions by head office.

We would like to congratulate area club, Manitoulin Streams Association, as they were presented with the Mary Pickford Award at the OFAH Annual Conference, and the Zone Conservation Club of the Year at the OFAH Zone D annual meeting.

The zone would like to take the opportunity to thank OFAH head office and staff for all of their assistance and direction that they provided during the course of the year.

OFAH Zone E Annual Report



OFAH Zone E Executive:

- Brian Sheppard, Chair and Director
- Eric Smith, 1st Vice Chair and Director
- Ron Parker, 2nd Vice Chair and Alternate Director
- Alan Fennell, Secretary/Treasurer and 2nd Alternate Director
- Gordon Trylinski, Director

It has been a busy year with four OFAH Zone E meetings, the first being on March 28, 2010 at the Pembroke Outdoor Sportsmen’s Club:

- the guest speaker was John Yakabuski, MPP and Energy Critic, who spoke about solar and wind power;
- OFAH Zone E elected to have a minimum of three meetings per year, which was approved and written into our supplemental bylaws; and
- there was much discussion about the Ontario Endangered Species Act.
- The second meeting took place on May 30, and was hosted by the Bancroft Fish and Game Protective Association;
- there was much discussion on the issuing of group bear tags to hunt clubs where anyone in the camp could shoot a bear (party

hunting);

- the Bancroft club confirmed the purchase of archery equipment, as well as the Pembroke Outdoor Sportsmen’s Club; the programs are doing well with youth;
- there was discussion on FMZ 17 public input regarding ice fishing and limits with tourist lodges against this proposal;
- aboriginal land claims greatly affect OFAH Zone E and OFAH Zone F;
- memberships and attendance at meetings were discussed; and
- a stolen OFAH Zone E boat from Darlington needed to be replaced prior to the fall hunt.

On August 22, OFAH Zone E held their meeting at the Haliburton Highlands Outdoors Club at their Haliburton fish hatchery:

- twenty-six people were in attendance;
- there was some discussion on the Darlington Fishing Day event, and what a success it was with over 100 children and parents taking part. There were free hot dogs and drinks for the participants, as well as prizes for biggest fish and most caught and released;
- discussion also took place on FMZ 17; Brighton Provincial Wildlife Area; HST; Algonquin land claim; green energy; Kendal; Atlantic Salmon; Darlington waterfowl hunt; and

- Normandale fish culture station;
- a new boat was purchased, and the generator repair was completed;
- Director, Gordon Tylinski, reported on the Ottawa hatchery;
- there is new archery at the Pembroke Outdoor Sportsmen's Club; and
- the POSC Kids' Fishing Day was a great success with the MNR, Valley Bass Trail, Bass Masters-Petawawa Chapter, and the OFAH

Funding Requests:

- OFAH Zone E requested a donation of \$6,000 to the Haliburton Highlands Outdoors Association toward their hatchery and fish rearing project; and
- OFAH Zone E donated to the Bancroft Area Stewardship Council to go toward Wonders of Wetlands Field Day, which was a great success.

On November 28, OFAH Zone E held their Annual General Meeting and Elections at the OFAH/Mario Cortellucci Hunting and Fishing Heritage Centre.

- this was the first time for many members to visit the Heritage Centre, so time was allotted for a tour;
- many commented on how well it looked, and some even mentioned that perhaps all OFAH Zone E meetings could be held there;
- guests were President Rob Hare, who ran the elections, and Dr.

- Scott Petrie who gave a PowerPoint presentation on waterfowl migration and wind turbines, and the effect they have on resources and human life;
- there was much discussion on the Chair's report regarding what is happening with Kendal and Darlington Provincial Park management plan. It was explained that in the first part of the new year there will be a meeting between MNR Aurora District, Ontario Parks, an MNR Biologist from Kingston, and Brian Sheppard to finalize where wood duck boxes, hen nests, and two new blinds on the lake front of Lake Ontario are going, and finally park fees for hunters;
- there was discussion on a reduction of the deer tag allocation for 2011;
- handouts were given with information regarding the major site plan amendment (aggregate permit #603441) to voice any concerns that have resulted from public notification during moose and deer hunting seasons;
- we explained the importance of getting professional help, or at least learning how to get rid of giant hogweed and other invasive species;
- there could be possible night hunting with hounds to reduce coyote numbers; and
- the proposal for a mourning dove hunter harvest in Ontario was discussed.

OFAH Zone F Annual Report



OFAH Zone F Executive:

- Ed Giffin, Chair and Director
- Kerry Coleman, 1st Vice Chair and Director
- Michael MacDonald, 2nd Vice Chair and Alternate Director
- Len Dickinson, Secretary/Treasurer and Director
- George Perrin, 2nd Alternate Director

OFAH Zone F held four meetings in 2010 at the Royal Canadian Legion in Perth. The winter meeting was held on March 14, and guest speakers included Rick Watchorn, Area Supervisor, and Scott Smithers, Area Biologist, Kemptville District, Ministry of Natural Resources, who provided updates on deer, turkey, and moose harvests in eastern Ontario. They also provided information on coyote concerns in eastern Ontario.

The spring meeting was held on May 16. OFAH Zone F Secretary/Treasurer, Len Dickinson, provided an excellent presentation on the "Economic, Social, and Ecological Benefits of Hunting." As well, copies of the OFAH Annual Report were also provided, and time was devoted to reviewing it, followed by questions and answers.

The summer meeting was held on August 21. OFAH Zone F Chair, Ed Giffin, gave a comprehensive report on "Walleye Stocking in Ontario."

The OFAH Zone F Annual Meeting and elections were held on November 21, and OFAH Zone F Chair, Ed Giffin, provided a report on "The Algonquin Hunt Management Plan for 2010-2011."

OFAH Zone F is represented on the following committees:

- OFAH Big Game Advisory Committee (Michael MacDonald and Len Dickinson)

- OFAH Bowhunting Advisory Committee (Len Dickinson)
- OFAH Fisheries Advisory Committee (Ed Giffin)
- OFAH Firearms/Recreational Shooting/Hunter Education Advisory Committee (Len Dickinson)
- OFAH Land Use/Access/Trails Advisory Committee (Kerry Coleman)
- OFAH Native Affairs Advisory Committee (Ed and Shirley Giffin)
- Bancroft District Elk Advisory Committee (Len Dickinson)
- Eastern Ontario Deer Management Council (Kerry Coleman and Len Dickinson)
- Fisheries Management Zone 12 Council (Pierre Boucher)
- Fisheries Management Zone 18 Council (Ed Giffin and Len Dickinson)
- Fisheries Management Zone 20 (East Basin) Mike Howe
- Lanark Stewardship Council (Wendell Crosbie)
- Local Citizens Committee – Lanark/Mazinaw Forest (Hans von Rosen)
- Mazinaw Area Fish & Wildlife Advisory Committee (Ed Giffin)
- Raisin River Advisory Committee (Glen Runions)
- South Nation River Advisory Council (Cyril Holmes)
- Standing Advisory Committee – Madawaska Land Use Plan (Doug Huddle)
- Standing Advisory Committee – Mississippi River Watershed Management Plan (Len Dickinson)

OFAH Zone F has six plot mules available to zone members, which are located in Brockville (Jack McNamee); Cloyne (Bob Yearwood); Cornwall (Glen Runions); Lanark (Len Dickinson); Osgoode (Gord Atkinson); and Sydenham (Darrel Campbell).

OFAH Zone F contributed \$11,450 in support of conservation

in 2010. The following received support for their respective conservation projects:

- Freshwater Research Centre, Queen's University;
- OFAH Annual General Meeting and Fish & Wildlife Conference;
- OFAH Fisheries Management Zone Workshops;
- Young Hunter Education Scholarship Fund;
- Mississippi/Tay Crimestoppers;
- Kingston & District Rod and Gun Club Annual Kids Perch Derby;
- NDHQ Annual Military Kids Fishing Derby;
- Lanark & District Fish & Game Club;
- Napanee & District Rod & Gun Club Annual Kids Fishing Derby;
- Grenville Fish & Game Club Trailer and Walking Trail;
- Ottawa Region Walleye League Kids Ice Fishing Derby;
- Osgoode Township Fish, Game, and Conservation Club Kids Fishing Derby;
- Westport and Area Outdoor Association Fish Hatchery Building Project;
- Eastern Ontario Deer Advisory Committee; and
- Greg Brown Benefit Dinner and Silent Auction.

OFAH Zone F initiated a strategic planning exercise in 2010, facilitated by 1st Vice Chair, Kerry Coleman. The purpose of this initiative is to improve the operation of the zone with succession planning, and improve services provided to OFAH clubs and members in OFAH Zone F through better communications.

OFAH Zone F Secretary/Treasurer, Len Dickinson, has taken on added responsibilities in managing the OFAH Zone F website and working with OFAH head office to link the sites for easier access by OFAH Zone F members and clubs. To date, several OFAH Zone F clubs have linked their sites with the zone's site. OFAH Zone F members will also be able to subscribe to the site to receive updates, bulletins, and the latest news and information on what is happening that is important to the zone.

On April 9, 10, and 11, OFAH Zone F again participated in the Valley Fishing Show in Carp. Wendell Crosbie, Cyril Holmes, George Perrin, Michael MacDonald, and Ed Giffin represented the OFAH at this annual, well-attended fishing show, where a total of 44 OFAH memberships were sold.

OFAH Zone F welcomed the following newly affiliated clubs:

- Humphries Camp;
- Whitetail Farms;
- Togo's Rest Hunting and Fishing Club;
- Wensley Hunt Club;
- Vernon Hunt Club;
- Gunnar's Club; and
- Capital Muskies Ottawa.

In 2010, two more municipalities in the zone approved Sunday gun hunting: The City of Kingston passed a bylaw to allow Sunday gun hunting in the rural portion of the city on March 23; and the Township of South Frontenac approved Sunday gun hunting on September 21. This leaves only three municipalities in all of OFAH Zone F to approve Sunday gun hunting.

OFAH Zone G Annual Report



OFAH Zone G Executive:

- David Dixon, Chair and Director
- Mirko Manojlovic, 1st Vice Chair and Director
- Stephen Huntley, 2nd Vice Chair and 1st Alternate Director
- Beverley Dixon, Secretary/Treasurer and Director
- Clark Boyd, 2nd Alternate Director

At the November 2010 OFAH Zone G Annual General Meeting, Jim Etherington and Peter Dickson announced that they would not be seeking reelection for 2011, so there were opportunities for some new blood to join the Zone Executive. Three zone members with past experience in zone affairs allowed their names to be put forward, and all were acclaimed into office. Jim and Peter were thanked for their years on the OFAH Zone G Executive, and hopefully, we will see them at zone meetings in 2011. When experienced members step down, it can be a challenge to find replacements. Fortunately, we did not encounter such a problem with the Zone Executive that has been elected for 2011.

As OFAH Zone G is a heavily urbanized zone with limited hunting and fishing opportunities in comparison to zones in the north, we do not deal with the same issues. Forestry plans and their impact on moose hunting, closing of public access roads to remote pristine lakes for fishing, construction of hydroelectric dams on coldwater streams used by spawning trout and salmon, are just a few examples of issues that our zones in the north are facing. With 80 clubs and almost 11,000 OFAH Zone G members, we use

our financial strength to focus on those projects and programs that support our fishing and hunting activities, and provide opportunities for our youth to participate in the same.

In 2010, we approved almost \$13,000 for such initiatives as:

\$4,300	OFAH Zone G Youth Camp
\$2,000	OFAH Zone G Wildlife Research Grant awarded to Everett Hanna for Sandhill Crane research
\$2,000	York Environmental Stewardship Ranger Program
\$2,000	Halton-Peel Woodlands & Wildlife Stewardship Council in support of the Butternut monitoring research program
\$1,200	Pefferlaw Winter and Summer Take-a-Kid-Fishing Days
\$ 745	Uxbridge Huck Finn Kids' Fishing Day
\$ 500	OFAH Zone G portion of OFAH Fish & Wildlife Fund for FMZ Workshop
\$ 200	Muskies Canada in support of the Dr. Ed Crossman Memorial Family Fishing Outing

Details of these projects/programs are being posted to the revitalized OFAH Zone G website now hosted on the main OFAH site. The website has been expanded from a simple newsletter issued three to four times per year in the past, to a more dynamic communications source. Zone meeting schedules with location maps, agendas, and minutes are posted for membership review, and copies of the business cases presented for financial support,

pictures of our youth activities, and links to other sites associated with the zone are being made available. Regular communications will be sent to OFAH Zone G members who have provided their email addresses to supplement information available in *Ontario OUT OF DOORS* and the main OFAH website.

The OFAH Zone G website is a vehicle for two-way communications. Member clubs that have websites or activities that are open to the public, or if they just want to show what their club is doing, will have a place on our website. If your club has a newsletter that it wants to share which would be of interest to membership, send it to us and we will post it on the site.

Please visit the site at <http://www.ofah.org/zoneg/> and let us know what you think. We have provided the means for you to submit comments or send emails from within the website, so that it is easy to tell us what your concerns are, or to add your support to a program or project. You will be able to download forms for

registering your son or daughter to attend the OFAH Zone G Youth Camp, or if you are involved with a program involving hunting, fishing, or some aspect of conservation, you will be able to access the form to request financial support from OFAH Zone G. Not all requests can be satisfied, but each will be evaluated by the Zone Executive, and reviewed with members at the zone quarterly meetings.

As the site is being developed by volunteers as opposed to contracted web designers, it will remain a work in progress. Comments and emails will be responded to as quickly as possible. If you have any suggested changes for the site, either in format or information, your input will certainly be welcomed. We look forward to hearing from our zone members in 2011, either in person at the quarterly meetings, or via the website.

OFAH Zone H Annual Report



OFAH Zone H Executive:

- Wayne Forgrave, Chair and Director
- Jack Doherty, 1st Vice Chair and Director
- Michael Evers, 2nd Vice Chair and 1st Alternate Director
- Wally Motz, Secretary/Treasurer and Director
- Glenn Meads, 2nd Alternate Director

In 2010, OFAH Zone H continued to fund conservation and education projects within the zone, including:

Sydenham Sportsmen's Association Water Project	\$1,700
OFAH TackleShare Program	\$1,000
Bursary to Stuart Loriman	\$1,000
Mike Evers, Junior	\$ 750
Bruce Resource Stewardship Network Envirothon	\$ 700
Grey Bruce Water Festival	\$ 700
OFAH Annual Conference	\$ 500
Lake Huron Fishing Club (trees)	\$ 500
Friends of Island Lake	\$ 500
Grey Bruce Forest Festival	\$ 500
OFAH YHES	\$ 400
Orillia Fish and Game Conservation Club	\$ 400
Friends of Hullett	\$ 250
Georgian Bay Hunters and Anglers	\$ 250
Grey County Stewardship	\$ 250
Luther Marsh Kids' Day	\$ 250
Rankin River Project	\$ 200

Mike Evers, Junior and Victoria Edwards, both active youth members in OFAH Zone H, were honored by the Canadian Wildlife Federation in Quebec for their outstanding conservation achievement. Mike was also selected as one of ten, from coast to coast, to attend the Ducks Unlimited (DU) Camp in Manitoba, and was selected as one of two participants from Canada to attend the DU camp in the State of Arkansas.

In August, the Barrie District Hunters & Anglers Conservation Club hosted the OFAH Zone H Annual Black Powder Shoot, with 19 shooters participating. The shoot is open to all OFAH members, and a fun time was had by all.

John Ford, Bill Blackwell and Fred Geberdt were presented with the Volunteer Service Award by the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Culture, in recognition of 30 years of volunteer service in conservation. Mike Evers, Junior was also awarded the Volunteer Service Youth Award for his contribution to conservation.

The OFAH has issued a reward of \$1,000 for the apprehension of the poacher(s) who shot and killed a valuable horse at night during the November deer season. OFAH Zone H, along with the Indian River Hunt Club, each added \$500 to bring the reward to \$2,000.

The Barrie District Hunters & Anglers Conservation Club did a clean-up project on Aunt Maggie's Creek to allow spawning trout access.

OFAH Zone J Annual Report



OFAH Zone J Executive:

- Tony Jackson, Chair and Director
- Jim Greenwood, 1st Vice Chair and Director
- Brian Moore, 2nd Vice Chair and 1st Alternate Director
- Kathy Moore, Secretary-Treasurer and Director
- Bruno Vanden Bergh, 2nd Alternate Director

We were certainly all feeling a little bit better in 2010 with the employment situation improving and with a slow economic recovery, but it is still a long way to go to get back to "normal." Through all of the economic challenges and sluggish recovery, members stood by the OFAH. Currently, OFAH Zone J membership is approximately 23,000.

As you will read throughout the various reports, there are many issues. At the same time, we continue to have success on many fronts working to create new or improved opportunities for anglers/hunters, and the protection of our natural resources. Our team would certainly encourage you to continue to attend, participate, and become involved with the many activities that support your clubs, your activities of choice, and the activities that hold our Federation in such high esteem within our communities. We will continue to work hard for you, and together, find ways to protect, promote, and hopefully, create new outdoors opportunities.

Getting young apprentice hunters into the outdoors should be a priority. With great excitement, we recognize the excellent work of local clubs with support of the Ontario Stewardship network. OFAH Zone J has been the area of focus for the youth pheasant hunts, which is now a six-year success story, having originated with Fingal and now taking place in several locations. There has been no better success story within our zone in the last few years, and this initiative is moving forward in leaps and bounds. Just volunteer and you will see the success that, as mentors, we can be proud. You can now find an excellent tool kit for initiating, planning, and implementing your own youth hunting event at www.youthhunting.ca. Zone members participated in the development of this information to share with all.

Land access continues to be one of the bigger issues within the zone. With much of the landscape privately owned, obtaining access is often a long and sometimes difficult process. Areas of public land within the southern and southwestern part of the province are few, and often the focus of high activity from a variety of user groups.

In 2010, the OFAH Zone J Executive met with the Chris Maher, Regional Vice President of the Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC), which was a very positive and educational meeting. Many have the perception that the NCC was somewhat nonsupportive of hunting and the hunting community with respect to allowing hunting and hunter access. The NCC does have a relationship with hunting organizations to allow hunting, and in many cases is not opposed to hunting on their lands. Several large tracts of land owned by the NCC are accessible in Ontario, and they are very willing to discuss options and opportunities for clubs to cooperate in creating and managing opportunities to hunt. As a result of our earlier discussions, OFAH Zone F is now engaged in discussions with the NCC.

Discharge and noise bylaws seem to be an ongoing activity, and certainly frustrating, as municipalities seem to adopt bylaw wording that exists in larger urban areas and apply the wording in their small rural municipal ridings without careful consideration of the implications. Once realized, many have worked toward fixing the wording, but it is much more difficult to change an adopted bylaw. Please keep aware of your municipality happenings, and advise us if you see anything in upcoming municipal activity that would suggest a change, or if they are introducing a discharge or noise bylaw.

Sunday gun hunting opportunities still exist, and several presentations were made in 2010. The progress will continue, but certainly at a slower pace than over the past several years.

Coyotes are receiving more attention than any other species in our zone. Oxford County created a coyote task force involving a multitude of stakeholders to develop an information and action plan specifically for residents in dealing with coyote issues. In many situations, we have been approached to assist with con-

necting landowners and hunters where the problems persist. Solar and wind turbine installations are now an added landscape issue changing rural landscapes. OFAH Zone J is especially aware of, and concerned about a multitude of onshore and offshore Industrial Wind Turbine (IWT) sites planned without due regard for their impact, not only on the landscape, but potentially impacting wildlife, waterfowl, and fisheries as well. Migration corridors of several species are directly impacted, and the IWT sites will also affect feeding habits.

We have been very active with fisheries management, land access, hunting issues, club meeting presentations, Municipal Council engagements, Springbank dam, and the Misner dam, to name a few. We will be engaged with the FMZ Councils affecting our zone. FMZ 16 is a complicated zone, and the FMZ Council has yet to become active.

Baitfish concerns have been raised several times at our meetings and through discussions. Having the VHS concern a couple of years ago, and what appears to be a fragmented baitfish industry, the question keeps circulating around access and the use of live baitfish in the zone, and throughout Ontario.

Concerns with respect to historical and ongoing fish rearing and fish stocking programs, and inconsistencies within FMZ 16 need to be addressed by the MNR, so that priorities are known and communicated. Perhaps we will see some clearer guidelines once the FMZ 16 Council is up and active.

Again this year, we would like to thank Bruno and Yolanda Vanden Berghe for their exceptional commitment and effort to attend events promoting our zone and Federation. Sales of merchandise are used to support many activities within the zone, which we proudly continue; the membership and the zone are well represented through their efforts.

OFAH Zone J membership concerns include:

- wind turbines;
- cormorants;
- municipal small game licenses;
- land access, restrictions, or fees for access;
- Hillman Marsh/Point Pelee;
- Grand River watershed issues;
- relationships with First Nations;
- changing whitetail deer populations;
- invasive species such as Emerald Ash Bore, Asian Carp, Kuduz Vine;
- Luther Marsh operating and future use;
- Brant County discharge bylaw;
- Zorra Township noise bylaws;
- Sunday gun hunting; and
- pushing forward with the decommissioning of the Misner and Springbank dams.

Please keep us informed. Several member clubs are now sending their Zone Executive meeting minutes and newsletters, which are an excellent vehicle to keep us informed of their club's activities. If you wish, we can post your upcoming events on the very successful OFAH Zone J website www.ofah.org/zonej. This also keeps others informed of club issues/events, and helps us keep current with club executive changes. Please contact Kathy Moore to put us on the mailing/contact list for your club newsletters and minutes.

Please have a safe and enjoyable 2011!

OFAH Agricultural Liaison Advisory Committee Annual Report



Chair – Jim Magee

The OFAH Agriculture Liaison Advisory Committee continues to work on issues that involve wildlife and the OFAH

As indicated in past reports, wildlife damage is continuing to be a major problem in Ontario. In a recent study, the George Morriss Centre at the University of Guelph put losses at \$41 million annually, which is probably a conservative estimate. Most of the species causing the damage are game or furbearing animals. In some cases, nonhunted species, such as song birds, cause fruit damage.

There is no compensation for crop damage, which make up most of the losses. The Agriculture community is pushing the government for action in this area.

For predation of livestock or honey bee colonies, there is some compensation, but it does not cover all losses. For example, small lambs may be carried away by predators, so the farmer can not prove a loss. Coyotes continue to be the main predator of livestock. The OFAH Board of Directors agreed to the snaring of coyotes in southern Ontario to assist the livestock industry. They asked that only nonlethal, relaxing snares be used, and that snaring of problem predators only be allowed between early April and October 15.

A significant number of coyotes are taken each winter by hound hunters, and there is an increasing number of people taking up the challenge of calling them.

We would like to encourage more hunters to take up this exciting activity during the winter, and have talked of holding coyote hunting workshops; however, as volunteers, there is only so much we can do. Perhaps there is an opportunity for the agriculture community, the MNR and the OFAH to work together to develop such initiatives.

OFAH head office, in conjunction with the Victoria Stewardship Council, is developing a manual to describe wildlife damage to crops and livestock in Ontario. This version was largely based on the Ohio Department of Natural Resources Wildlife Crop Damage Manual, and we would like to thank them for allowing us to use their material. We would also like to thank those who sent wildlife damage photos to OFAH head office.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the members of the OFAH Agriculture Liaison Advisory Committee, and head office staff, for their commitment in 2010.

OFAH Big Game Advisory Committee Annual Report



Chair – Doug Ogston

New Moose Tag Transfer Policy

In 2008/2009, the MNR conducted extensive consultation with hunters and the public as part of Ontario's Moose Program Review. As part of this review, hunters and the public were asked to share their ideas on how to improve the distribution of resident hunting opportunities.

This revised policy was developed in response to hunter feedback received during Moose Program Review consultations, which indicated that most hunters supported more strict conditions surrounding the transfer of moose validation tags.

Eligibility Criteria

The MNR shall transfer a hunter's tag only if all of the following eligibility criteria are met:

- the hunter who wishes to have the MNR transfer their tag had applied to the moose validation tag draw as a member of a group;
- the hunter did not request a transfer of their tag to another hunter the last time they received a tag. A hunter who has previously transferred a tag must accept a tag in his/her name before he/she is permitted to perform another transfer, as consecutive requests for tag transfers are not permitted;
- the hunter's group has not already requested a transfer that

year. The transfer of a tag can not be reversed to return the tag back to the original recipient; and

- the moose season for which the tag is valid has not yet opened.
- If a hunter does not meet eligibility criteria b), c) or d), they may be considered for a transfer only if one of the circumstances listed below applies to him/her (and to the original tag recipient, if they are not the same individual), and has occurred following his/her application to the moose tag draw. These circumstances are:

- injury, illness or death preventing participation in the hunt;
- injury, illness or death of an immediate relative; or
- change in employment or cancellation of vacation time.

The hunter(s) must provide supporting documentation with respect to the circumstances described above. In addition to the circumstances above, the tag transfer history of a hunter (and that of the original tag recipient, if they are not the same individual) will be considered. Hunters with a history of performing numerous tag transfers could have their transfer request denied.

Conditions of Tag Transfer

A moose validation tag can only be transferred to the designated alternate in the group;

- If the designated alternate was noncompliant with mandatory reporting in an applicable WMU the previous year, they are ineligible to receive a tag through a transfer. No other alternate

will be chosen and the hunter's group will not be able to perform a tag transfer;

- A moose validation tag can be transferred to a Pool 2 hunter, only if the tag is for a WMU where a Pool 2 hunter had a chance to receive a tag of the same type in the draw; and
- Hunters who receive a moose validation tag through a transfer will be placed in Pool 2 the following year. Hunters who have transferred a tag to another group member will remain in Pool 1 in the following year.

Please refer to the 2011 Hunting Regulations Summary for up-to-date details about the administrative process for transferring a tag (i.e. regarding the application form and fees).

Black Bear Enhanced Management

The MNR gave us an update on the progress of this much-welcomed plan to manage bears, not people, to reduce human/bear conflicts across Ontario.

We were told that many MNR Districts have completed mailings to stakeholders, such as tourist outfitters and trappers, to get feedback on the revised and updated WMU-specific black bear information.

Last June, MNR staff workshops were held to discuss Black Bear Ecological Zone considerations, bear population assessments across Ontario, the preparation of WMU black bear population estimates and objectives, and harvest workshops for a management manual.

Population estimating and monitoring using barbed wire hair traps and DNA analysis continues across the province on a seven-year cycle. WMU's last done in 2005 should be redone in 2012 to continually update the estimated population by WMU, as well as provincially. The first cycle of all WMU estimates is almost complete.

Based on local population and harvest strategies, bear outfitters will be notified of allocation adjustments for the 2012 season in June 2011. We expect to be consulted for input into WMU bear population objectives and management.

The Bear Management Area (BMA) Program will be modernized with a review of the current policies, procedures, BMA's and boundaries, assignments and licensing.

Through the Ontario Moose Bear Advisory Committee, the Ontario Big Game Management Advisory Committee, and OFAH representatives, we will be front and center on improvements being proposed by the MNR, and we welcome the opportunity to comment on them.

Hunt Camp Black Bear License Proposal

OFAH head office received a "resolution" and request for OFAH consideration and acceptance, and for presentation to the MNR from the Beaver Meadow Hunt Club for consideration.

After discussions with Mike Reader, a letter was sent to the Beaver Meadow Hunt Club advising them that the matter could be handled more efficiently outside of the resolution procedure by directing it to the OFAH Big Game Advisory Committee for consideration, as it could be covered under existing OFAH policy and placed on the April meeting agenda; subsequently, the club agreed to our suggestion.

We dealt with the recommendation and had preliminary discussions with the MNR at the OFAH Big Game Advisory Committee meeting; we then put forth the following recommendation to the OFAH Board of Directors for consideration at the April Board of

Directors' meeting, where it was carried:

"That the OFAH work with MNR staff to enact changes to the hunting regulations, permitting organized groups engaged in party hunting of moose or deer to share one or more black bear licenses among the members of the group to permit any hunter in the party to legally harvest a black bear."

Unfortunately, due to more pressing big game issues currently being addressed, only preliminary discussions between OFAH and MNR staff have taken place toward helping us formulate a proposal. OFAH staff will pursue the matter in the new year with OFAH members and the MNR.

Ontario Deer Management Updates

Based on feedback from deer hunters over the last couple of seasons, there appear to be reductions in deer harvests in some parts of Ontario. OFAH staff have been looking into the situation, and shortly, the OFAH Big Game Advisory Committee will be addressed on topics by MNR Regional Biologists from the Northwest, Northeast, and Southern Regions of Ontario.

A quick canvas of advisory committee members about observations they have made and had passed on from hunters, indicate that there are clear indications of reduced harvests and deer observed in some areas of the province. The "why" is open to various interpretations, from increased predation by coyotes and wolves, early agricultural crop removal, late rutting, etc. Hats for Hides collection centres are also reporting lower returns by hunters.

We will keep you posted as things develop. The question is: Does the MNR need to revise deer management practices to address the concern?

The 2010 deer harvest in southern and northeastern Ontario should shed some light on deer population trends and lead to improved management.

Elk Management Program

In June 2010, Ontario's Elk Management Plan, which provides a policy framework for elk management in Ontario, was approved. In August 2010, the MNR initiated consultation on proposed policies and regulations to implement several aspects of the Elk Management Plan. Consultation via the Environmental Registry ended October 14, and MNR Wildlife Policy staff have since reviewed input provided by stakeholders and the general public. The elk program includes the following policies, guidelines and regulations that were recently approved following consultation:

- Elk Population Objective Setting Guidelines, which outlines a process for determining an appropriate number of elk to inhabit an area, and is based on ecological, social and environmental factors;
- Elk Harvest Management Guidelines, which outlines a number of tools and a planning process for determining how an elk harvest could be conducted in areas where self-sustaining populations exist;
- Policy for Protecting Agricultural Property from Elk, which guides how authorizations to harass or remove elk in protection of agricultural property will be issued to farmers;
- Elk Harvest Allocation System, which outlines how elk hunting opportunities will be distributed; and
- Regulations to open an elk hunting season from September 19 to 25, 2011, in WMU's 60, 61, 62, 63A, 57 and 58 (Bancroft/North Hastings area), and specifying the conditions of a regulated hunt (e.g. hunter orange requirement, firearms, etc.)

Please refer to the 2011 Hunting Regulations Summary for up-to-

date details on the three-step application process for the random draw and license fees associated with it.

Woodland Caribou Conservation Plan

On September 10, OFAH staff gave us an update on recent meetings held with Rick Gollat, a retired moose biologist, and Glenn Rivard and Gilles Dumais of OFAH Zone B, on proposals associated with the Woodland Caribou Conservation Plan. Road closures and silviculture to replace mixed forest and confer (using herbicide treatment) are a major concern, due to their negative impact on moose habitat, populations, and hunter access in the future.

Hunters need to attend public forest management planning meetings and voice their concerns and opposition to the revisions being proposed that will significantly affect moose habitat, populations, and harvest opportunities. OFAH staff are readying to advise hunters, and will continue our analysis and specific opposition at whatever levels present themselves. This is not a new battle – we have been involved over the past decade or more at all levels, and will continue.

On December 3, the OFAH Big Game Advisory Committee was given the minutes of a lengthy video conference meeting between MNR and OFAH staff on wildlife and forestry implications of the Caribou Conservation Plan implementation. As mentioned earlier, the implications and impact on the moose resource and all of its facets “dictates” that this become a “number one” priority

within the OFAH. Our members, moose hunters, and tourist outfitters in the moose business need to become informed, and ready to stand up and be counted at forest management meetings that are forthcoming.

On January 5, OFAH staff contacted OFAH Zones A, B, C and D to identify dates and locations of upcoming meetings, so that they can arrange to have MNR staff attend and discuss the Caribou Conservation Plan.

In Summary

2010 was a busy, but exciting year with all of the various big game management plans we worked on.

The highlight came with the January 2011 announcement by the Minister of Natural Resources, Honourable Linda Jeffrey, that there will be an elk hunt this fall. Once again, we had MNR Wildlife Policy Advisors at all of our big game meetings, where open and frank discussions led to good recommendations from the OFAH which became key elements of policies, guidelines, and regulations that were approved. We thank them for their time and effort, and look forward to a new year of meetings and progress on wildlife issues of concern.

Special “thanks” go to OFAH Big Game Advisory Committee members and OFAH staff for their participation and assistance throughout the year.

OFAH Bowhunting Advisory Committee Annual Report



Chair – Len Dickinson

It has been another frustrating year for the OFAH Bowhunting Advisory Committee with respect to MNR's resistance to provide adequate mandatory bowhunter education for new hunters. The OFAH sent another letter to the MNR as a reminder of our commitment for an Ontario International Bowhunting Education Program that would provide the training needed to improve on hunter image, and to give students a better understanding of the complexity and skills required to become a good bowhunter.

If you only wish to bow hunt and receive an H2 Outdoors Card, you must take the minimum 90 minutes of bowhunter education within the Ontario Hunter Education Program, which only allows time for the instructors to show you the different types of bows,

arrows, and arrowheads. After taking this course, you are qualified to hunt and shoot big game animals with a bow; however, you are still required to take two hours of firearms training in order to do so. Students wanting to only bow hunt get more training on firearms than bows.

The MNR needs to realize that their obligation is to promote hunter image and provide the best education possible. We are behind most jurisdictions when it comes to bowhunter education. The OFAH has worked hard to ensure that we are all responsible and well educated hunters, and bowhunters need current knowledge and training to make appropriate decisions on shots, and know their limitation.

It is up to you to ask the MNR what they are going to do about this.

OFAH Firearms/Recreational Shooting/Hunter Education Advisory Committee Annual Report



Chair – Bill Blackwell

FIREARMS AND RECREATIONAL SHOOTING

Bill C391

It was a shame to lose this very important bill by one vote, particularly after all of the work done by the OFAH and the firearms community across the country. We will continue to work with the government on plans to introduce a government sponsored bill after the next election.

MNR EBR on CVA Electronic Muzzleloader

The MNR EBR posting #011-1052, which proposes to update the definition of a muzzleloader to include the CVA electronic ignition muzzleloader, was finally posted in the fall of 2010. The regulation giving effect to the posting should be approved by Cabinet early in 2011. It will provide for the use of electronic muzzleloaders during the muzzleloader-only deer and moose seasons, in addition to the percussion cap and flintlock muzzleloaders currently allowed.

Micro Stamping of Firearms

The Federal Minister of Justice is considering a number of options, including the application of a metal sticker to fulfill the marking requirements of the U.N. resolution. A final decision of this issue has been deferred to December 2012.

Canadian Firearm Safety Course (CFSC) Instructor Suspensions

Increasing reports of improper teaching and testing methods by some instructors has prompted the Chief Firearms Office (CFO) and Firearm Safety Education Service of Ontario (FSESO) to monitor courses and tests conducted by suspected or reported offenders. Investigators identified a few instructors not meeting the standards required for instruction and testing. In some cases, local police authorities have laid criminal charges against the instructors. The CFO has stopped the issuance of firearms licenses and processing of paperwork for participants who took courses from these individuals, because of questions about the validity of training received. These persons are allowed one free attempt to challenge the exam and practical test. If they pass, their paperwork is processed and they can apply for their PAL; if they fail, they can either challenge the test or retake the course and test at their own expense. It is estimated that at least 2,000 applications are being held, waiting for the people to re-take the test.

Canadian Firearms Centre (CFC) – Rewrite of CFSC and CRFSC Courses and Exams

A new manual that combines nonrestricted and restricted manuals into one version is supposed to be ready for April 2011. The CFC is also hoping to have new tests available at the same time.

Gravel Pits and Sighting in Rifles

Sighting in rifles at private or municipal gravel pits was a topic of discussion at the most recent meeting with the CFO. While the CFO has not received letters of complaint about this practice, there are concerns over public safety and liability issues.

High-Powered Pellet Rifles – Range Rules

The CFO has informed a couple of clubs that they can not shoot high-powered pellet rifles on ranges that are not certified or licensed for this use. Without proper berms and backstops, the use of these firearms can result in an accident for which the club will be liable. “Combat action” where shooters move from station to station, can not occur without backstops or overshoot areas which allow for lead pellets to fall on the range.

Status of Range Construction Guidelines Rewrite

The CFO is in the process of rewriting the range guidelines for Ontario, which will be based upon the Federal Guidelines for Ranges; however, the rewrite is on hold pending assistance from the RCMP.

“No Blue Sky” Requirements for Outdoor Ranges – Baffling Clarification

Clubs are asking for clarification on when baffling is needed so “no blue sky” is visible. The rules are for handgun ranges 50m or more, and rifle ranges 200m or more require baffles.

Ammunition Purchase Recording Requirements – Federal and Provincial

Stores such as Canadian Tire and TSC are still asking for a person’s driver’s license and recording names, addresses, etc., for ammunition purchases. These are the old provincial standards, which are now superseded by federal guidelines. All that is required is your POL or PAL, and the store only needs to record

the ammunition purchased along with the POL or PAL number. On October 8, 2010, the CFO sent a letter to all businesses selling ammunition to inform them of this change.

Home Inspections of Collectors

The CFO was going to undertake home storage inspection in 2011 for persons who have more than 200 firearms in their collection. The plan has now been abandoned.

Inheritance/Estate Clarification – Definition of “Reasonable Time”

If a person is inheriting firearms and needs a license to do so, or if you are acting as an executor of a will, “reasonable time” means that you are actively addressing the situation. The Crown also noted that under the Firearms Act, a person who is the executor of a will who is not licensed themselves is, by law, deemed to have the same firearms license status as the deceased person only while dealing with the disposition of firearms that are part of the estate.

Expired Firearms Licenses and Firearms Confiscations

In some areas, (e.g. Toronto, Hamilton and Sudbury), local police were going to the homes of firearms owners whose firearms licenses (POL’s/PAL’s) have expired, and seizing firearms. This is not a CFO initiative, but a city police initiative. Once a firearm license expires, the registration certificate for that firearm is also considered null and void. In these cases, police are not providing a grace period for the renewal of licenses, so please keep your license up to date.

Canadian Benchrest Shooting Team Sponsorship

Earlier this year, a Peterborough area couple, both OFAH members, represented Canada at a Benchrest Shooting competition in the United States, and won their respective categories. They will be representing Canada at the Benchrest World Championship competition in France in 2011. The OFAH Board of Directors has agreed to provide funding in the amount of \$6,000 to support the team. Additional support from companies such as Winchester and Stoeger will also be sought.

HUNTER EDUCATION

Hunter Education Program Continues to Grow

For the ninth year in a row, Ontario’s Hunter Education Program has experienced strong growth. The final numbers for students and courses taught in 2010 are:

Number of Students	17,645
Number of Instructors	313
Total Courses	1,586
One-stop Courses	1,219
Stand-Alone Courses	582
Average course/instructor	5.5
Average class size	10.8

Wild Turkey Seminars on DVD for “Home Study”

The MNR plans to have the home study DVD version of the Ontario Wild Turkey Hunter Education Seminar available in 2011. This will allow people living in remote places, out of the province, or who cannot get to a seminar the opportunity to purchase the DVD and do the course at home. Once completed, they will contact a certified Hunter Education Instructor, pay the \$10 fee, and write the test. Half-day onsite seminars will continue to be available.

International Hunter Education Association Meeting

In August, the IHEA Region 1 Canada held their annual meeting in Peterborough. Hunter Education coordinators were present from most provinces and the Northwest Territories. Guest speakers included Eric Bassaler from the RCMP, head of the CFSC program for Canada, and the Newfoundland/Labrador coordinator, who spoke about their coyote and bear hunter/trapper programs. Participants also visited the OFAH head office and toured the OFAH/Mario Cortellucci Hunting and Fishing Heritage Centre.

Hunter Orange on Helmets and Pop-Up Blinds

In the 2010 Hunting Regulations Summary, the MNR proposed that in seasons when hunter orange is required, they were considering the additional requirement of adding hunter orange on the outside of manufactured tents or pop-up ground blinds, and ATV or skidoo helmets. In the absence of factual evidence,

the OFAH reaffirmed its earlier opposition to the proposal. We understand that the MNR have now abandoned the idea.

Fall Training Courses

Each fall, instructors are busy teaching Firearms Safety and Hunter Education courses for persons who wait until the last minute. A hunting license can be issued on the same day a person passes their exam. The same is not true for a firearms license. The minimum time from passing the Canadian Firearms Safety Course until you have a license in hand is three months. Sharing a firearm with a licensed partner is the only recourse if the firearms license has not arrived prior to hunting season. If you plan to hunt with a gun in the fall, take your courses before August.

The waiting situation does not apply to bowhunting. A hunting license is all that is required because under the *Firearms Act*, a bow is not considered a "firearm."

OFAH Fisheries Advisory Committee Annual Report



Chair – Fred Geberdt

Throughout 2010, the following volunteer OFAH members have served on our OFAH Fisheries Advisory Committee, and have worked on and made numerous recommendations to our OFAH Board of Directors and head office staff regarding pressing fisheries issues occurring throughout Ontario:

- Roy DeCorte (OFAH Zone A);
- Debbie Rivard (OFAH Zone B);
- Peter Sword (OFAH Zone C);
- Dan Polsky and Rolly Frappier (OFAH Zone D);
- Ed Giffin (OFAH Zone F);
- Jack Osadzuk (OFAH Zone H);
- Felix Barbetti (OFAH Zone J);
- Dr. John Casselman;
- Dr. Harold Harvey; and
- Dr. Bruce Tufts

We would also like to give special thanks to our OFAH head office support staff for their assistance, guidance, and their follow through on fisheries issues occurring throughout our province.

The following is an overview of some of the fisheries issues that we dealt with, and in many cases, continue to work on.

Fisheries Management Zones (FMZ) Advisory Councils

Over the past year, our required attention and time spent on FMZ business increased tremendously. At OFAH Fisheries Advisory Committee meetings, we have been spending fifty percent of our time on the fisheries issues and reports brought forth from the operating FMZ Advisory Councils.

The following is a brief look at the ongoing development of the 20 FMZ's in the Province of Ontario:

- in 2007, pilot councils were established in FMZ's 6, 10, and 17;
- in 2008, councils were formed for FMZ's 18, 19 and 20;
- in 2009, FMZ's 4, 9, 11, 12, 13 and 14 took initial steps to form councils;
- in 2010, a council was formed in FMZ 5; and
- in 2011, councils are expected to be formed for FMZ's 7, 8, 15 and 16.

It is unclear how FMZ's 1, 2, and 3 will operate, but we expect that they will not follow the existing template, but possibly be included in some way with other far north planning exercises.

It is interesting to note that some FMZ's have divided their areas into two sections, and have set up sub-committees. Additionally, while the majority of the FMZ's operate successfully, a few have run into difficulties, having been faced with insufficient MNR funding, resulting in their activities being reduced.

This past year, the OFAH recognized the need to assist OFAH representatives on the FMZ Advisory Councils. With the financial assistance from OFAH zones, we were able to host a workshop for approximately 30 OFAH FMZ representatives, plus OFAH zone chairs in April. The workshop involved assistance regarding:

- roles and responsibilities;
- OFAH fisheries and water resources policies; and
- a working list of contacts.

Until recently, OFAH Board members or OFAH fisheries staff, have represented the OFAH on the FMZ Advisory Councils. In the near future, due to the development of future FMZ's and the attrition of our present OFAH FMZ representatives, we will face an increased demand for OFAH representation on the FMZ Advisory Councils. The following lists our present OFAH representatives, and reflects on our future needs for O.F.A.H representatives on the FMZ Advisory Councils:

FMZ 1, 2 & 3 future northern planning initiative

FMZ 4 Roy DeCorte, Dennis Kristjanson

FMZ 5 Roy DeCorte

FMZ 6 Deb Rivard, Neil Wiens, Rick Tomiak

FMZ 7 expected to form in 2011

FMZ 8 expected to form in 2011

FMZ 9 (east sub-committee)

FMZ 9 (west sub-committee) Deb Rivard, Neil Wiens, Rick Tomiak

FMZ 10 Rolly Frappier, Felix Delongchamp

FMZ 11 Dan Polsky

FMZ 12 Eugene O'Beirn, Doug Antler, Pierre Boucher, Don Pajot (alternate)
FMZ 13 Jack Osadzuk
FMZ 14 Rolly Frappier, Dennis Wiseman
FMZ 15 expected to form in 2011
FMZ 16 expected to form in 2011
FMZ 17 Chris Robinson, Dawn Sucee (alternate)
FMZ 18 Ed Giffin, Len Dickinson
FMZ 19 Felix Barbetti, Alf Marinelli, Charlie Ross (alternate), Tony Jackson (alternate)
FMZ 20 (west basin) Chris Robinson, Dawn Sucee (alternate)
FMZ 20 (east basin) Mike Howe
Lake Simcoe Jeremy Holden, Matt DeMille (alternate)

The FMZ Advisory Councils are slowly changing the way fisheries business is conducted across Ontario, and we continue to evolve along with the FMZ Advisory Councils. The OFAH Fisheries Advisory Committee is engaged with the MNR to improve the working process related to FMZ's, and is taking a lead role in the development of this process.

Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) and MNR Fish Habitat Protection Regarding Hydroelectric and Wind Power Generation Projects

Dan Thompson, DFO Habitat Team Leader, Southern Ontario District, provided the OFAH Fisheries Advisory Committee with information on DFO's regulatory mandate outlining Federal Fisheries Act provisions dealing with Section 20 - Fishways; Section 22 - Sufficient Flows; Section 30 - Safeguards/Screens; Section 32 - Destruction of Fish; and Section 35 - Harmful, Alteration, Destruction, Degradation (HADD).

We also engaged in discussions on the Species at Risk Act. It is important to note that once a species has been formally listed, it is unlawful to kill or harm them. Habitat protection comes into play with a required recovery strategy. This past fall, the recovery strategies for five minnow species within southern Ontario took effect, with the objective of no net loss of productive habitats.

We were disappointed to learn that DFO does not approve hydro dams or wind turbine initiatives; it is the responsibility of the Province of Ontario (MNR and MOE). The DFO has received a number of offshore wind proposals, but their review only includes assessment of the significance of direct habitat loss, and alteration of habitat. We were informed that several DFO guides are available on their website, including Practitioners Guide to Fish Passage and Risk Management Framework that outlines what projects do not require DFO approval, those that need risk assessments, and project denials which are based on risks.

The DFO did not engage in many of our concerns, and even suggested that some habitat might benefit from offshore wind turbine installations. The DFO has conducted an electromagnetic study, which the science shows no concern, and the structure can be insulated. We raised questions about vibrations. This study has not been done, and DFO is not sure who would be responsible for leading the study.

The OFAH recently completed a draft document regarding our wind power policy, and suggests that when reviewing the draft OFAH policy for wind power development, OFAH members involved in the wind power issue should read and keep in mind the

document, "The Importance of Fish Habitat to Ecosystem Health and Recreational Fisheries."

The OFAH asked the DFO if after 25 years in effect, whether an evaluation of the Federal Fisheries Act had been done. We referred to last year's Auditor General's report, which was critical of DFO's strong policy objectives, but questionable performance (no report card). They informed us that, on a national level, the DFO is working on this issue.

We also engaged discussions with MNR Energy Policy Branch, regarding water power projects. Water power projects need Lake and Rivers Improvement Act (LRIA) permits from the MNR. The MNR stated that all federal approvals are required before LRIA permits are issued. If the federal government says "no," concerning all data on fisheries management and flow requirements per DFO standards, then presume there will be no permit issued.

The Centre of Expertise on Hydropower Impacts on Fish and Fish Habitat was developed in 2006; its mandate is to assess and mitigate the impacts of hydroelectric power facilities and operation in order to protect the health and production of freshwater fish. The OFAH contends that many of these rules and guidelines are made by engineers, and fisheries issues are often at a disadvantage. We contend that the *Green Energy Act* is the most significant policy decision in a generation. We are currently facing 42 hydroelectric projects and numerous wind power proposals, which may have significant negative impacts on our fish and wildlife populations.

MNR Fisheries Policy Section

A number of informative sessions have been held between the MNR Fisheries Policy Section and the OFAH Fisheries Advisory Committee. A main topic at these sessions related to some of our concerns with inconsistencies and how some MNR District Offices were running the FMZ's. Resourcing and financial support is becoming a challenge for some MNR offices in this matter, and some FMZ's have lost members, due to the lack of action. The MNR has indicated that the last thing they want to do is waste people's time.

To address OFAH concerns, the MNR has placed Dan Taillon, MNR Fisheries Biologist, to work on FMZ matters. He will be checking with MNR Districts responsible for running FMZ Advisory Councils, and will be meeting with the OFAH Fisheries Advisory Committee a number of times in the near future.

On a more positive note, the MNR Fisheries Policy Section provided us with a preview of MNR's future online fisheries mapping tool. This is a web-based application using Google Maps to allow users to plan fishing trips by searching lakes, species, license issuers, launch sites, etc. Twenty-five destination lakes will have a one-page information sheet highlighting regulations. The MNR is hopeful that this communication tool will increase the promotion of our fisheries in Ontario.

MNR Fisheries Policy Section also provided us with an update regarding an MNR bait review. They are pulling together information and science that will enable them to provide a meaningful review, including terms of reference for a bait council, and defining a bait management plan. They are presently waiting for MNR approvals to move forward with this bait review.

Bamoos Lake Mining Tailings Proposal

Marathon Platinum Group Metals (PGM) proposed a precious-metal mine, a 2,371-acre open pit mine, with annual tailings projected to be 6.9 million cubic yards. The company offered two

options for the disposal of tailings:

North Option: dump tailings directly into nearby Bamoos Lake (a popular lake with a Brook Trout fishery) – this would destroy it as a coldwater lake; or

South Option: build a dozen dams to create an impoundment for tailings disposal – this would destroy 44 ponds and 30 streams.

After consultations with First Nations, government agencies, residents, and OFAH Zone B, Marathon PGM decided to withdraw the North Option from further consideration. The company requested a hiatus period in the federal environment assessment process to reevaluate what to do with the mine waste.

The OFAH noted that a series of amendments to the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act (CEAA)* came into force in July 2010. The CEAA will perform the duties and functions of the “responsible authority” for the Marathon PGM until their submission of the comprehensive study report is made to the Minister of the Environment. These amendments also require that the Agency provide the public with the opportunity to comment on the project and comprehensive study.

OFAH Fishing Tournament Policy

We revised the existing policy and it was approved by the OFAH Board of Directors. The previous existing policy was unclear or omitted support for catch and keep fishing derbies, such as the Great Ontario Salmon Derby, the Chantry Chinook Classic, the Owen Sound Salmon Spectacular, and many others throughout Ontario. Also tournament guidelines expressed in the policy are no longer distributed or widely used by the OFAH. We also had a concern that no references were mentioned concerning the possible threat of spreading invasive species during these events.

DFO Great Lakes Aquatic Protected Areas (APA's)

The Great Lakes Fishery Commission (GLFC) funded a study to look at APA's and assess how they are being used in the Great Lakes. The OFAH Fisheries Advisory Committee addressed this issue with Dr. Kevin Hedges, DFO, who is involved in marine and aquatic protected areas. The DFO has power to create APA's under the Fisheries and Oceans Act (Part 11); however, since lakes and rivers are under provincial jurisdiction, the DFO is only party to the formation of any future APA's.

APA's are becoming far more common globally; most of us are aware of the large APA in northwestern Lake Superior. Their benefits include the protection of ecosystems, biodiversity, conservation, resource management, and recreation.

DFO's inventoried data for existing seasonal and permanent APA's showed many protected areas around the Great Lakes (e.g. sanctuaries). It was found that habitat protection in these areas was not intentional, and the focus was on the protection of single species in their spawning areas, that the majority of these protected areas were outside of the Great Lakes proper (i.e. 96 sanctuaries which are all in tributaries), and that many of the APA's in southern Ontario are on private property. The study also found that most habitat protected areas and sanctuaries did not have a follow up assessment; therefore, their effectiveness was poorly measured. It was of interest to us that the survey results were only done on native species, and excluded Rainbow Trout, Brown Trout and Chinook Salmon.

We concluded that it is important to show scientific results before impacting stakeholder, commercial or sport fishing with the future development of more APA's. Many questions remain: Is

species diversity higher in APA's? Does healthy fish habitat make it harder for invasive species to become established? Are APA communities more resistant to invasion? The DFO found a lot of existing data, but most was from outside of the Great Lakes Basin, reflecting that most sampling was done in the United States, and all studies were limited to only native species. The OFAH Fisheries Advisory Committee remains cautious regarding the development of more APA's. We need transparency about threats and reasons for protection, and the amount needed.

Bait Resource Use and Management in Ontario

We have had several overviews and discussions regarding the live bait industry. Brenda Koenig, MNR, presented an in-depth review of the benefits, issues, and biological and coordination concerns related to this important resource sector. It is expected that to assist in the management requirements of this important industry, a baitfish FMZ might be the outcome, since it is unlikely that a baitfish association will form again. _

As anglers and those involved in the harvest and sale of bait, the following is a list of some ongoing concerns and present conditions that we are experiencing:

- transporting invasive bait species by baitfish operators and anglers;
- harvesting of species at risk;
- the OFAH and the MNR have partnered to facilitate awareness and training with baitfish operators and anglers;
- prohibition on transporting live baitfish does not apply to anglers;
- it is illegal to release live baitfish or empty contents of a bait bucket within 30 meters of any waters;
- localized restrictions are presently in place, such as park bans on live bait, and bait collection areas;
- other than suckers, anglers may trap for baitfish and possess a total of 120;
- name and address must be on the bait trap;
- to harvest and sell baitfish, a commercial baitfish license is needed;
- commercial bait harvesters and tourist bait harvesters have different licenses and fee structures;
- temporary licenses for tournaments are issued some times;
- there are 7,000 bait harvest areas mapped out in Ontario. The far northern large areas and southern areas of Ontario are allocated by the MNR according to a point system;
- bait harvesters were most affected by VHS positive waters, which effected their sale and movement of baitfish; and some small operators even went out of business;
- VHS zones have been identified, and the most recent mapping is current to 2010;
- VHS has shown up in Lake Superior;
- Lake Ontario, Lake Erie, Lake Huron, Georgian Bay, and several inland watersheds have been VHS infected; and
- U.S. jurisdictions and Ontario had different responses on VHS; Ontario is the least restrictive.

The OFAH Fisheries Advisory Committee continues to pursue up-to-date information on this issue.

Discussion and policy surrounding bait harvest and use needs to remain in the context of sustainable use. Challenges related to bait movement resulting in the transfer of invasive species and diseases are extremely important and require ongoing discussion. Anglers need to recognize that movement of bait, while not currently

regulated with anglers, should be discouraged. Public education should be the first tool utilized before a regulatory approach is set in place.

OFAH Community Fisheries and Wildlife Involvement Program (CFWIP) Survey

This past year, the OFAH completed a CFWIP survey with OFAH member clubs and had 120 responses returned. Data collected included:

- 20% of OFAH member clubs received CFWIP funding;
- 30% of funds received went to hatchery operations;
- 80% of our OFAH member clubs received other forms of assistance from the MNR; and
- 90% of OFAH member clubs felt CFWIP funding did not cover much of the costs in their projects.

North Ontario Aquaculture Association (NOAA)

During discussions at Queen's Park in April 2010, it was felt that the OFAH and NOAA should meet. The OFAH Fisheries Advisory Committee followed up on this preliminary contact, and arranged for a meeting in September.

The purpose for the meeting was to look at future partnerships between NOAA and the OFAH for wild fishery enhancements, especially in the Great Lakes. NOAA was invited to make comments and suggestions, and to provide up-to-date clarification to the OFAH policy on aquaculture. They were also requested to provide information on the history of their organization, as well as their best management practices to illustrate how they follow the OFAH policy on aquaculture.

The following are some points of interest presented by NOAA:

- NOAA cage aquaculture solely grows domestic strains of Rainbow Trout from captive stock;
- NOAA has nine licensed cage sites – Cold Water Fisheries Inc. (3), First Nations (3), Meeker's Aquaculture (1), Aqua-cage Fisheries Inc. (1), and North Wind Fisheries Inc.(1);
- there are many people (some from the MNR) who claim that the best Lake Trout recruitment and fishing in the North Channel is around cage aquaculture;
- DFO is presently carrying out a depositional modelling program that will help to predict the impacts of cage culture, with specific focus on the area where sediments (fish waste) will fall;
- there is presently a study underway that is investigating the distribution and survival of farmed trout escapees; trout are equipped with transmitters and then released;
- NOAA stated that there have not been any new cage culture farms since 1997, because of a legislation change that made it very difficult to get a licence. This seems to be a lesser issue for First Nations attempting to acquire a licence;
- cage culture operators require a new licence every five years, rather than a renewal for their cage aquaculture sites. Under this licensing regime, it is not worth making any new expensive investments, due to the uncertainty of future licensing; and
- Mike Meeker, President of NOAA, began a fish compost project 5-6 years ago, due to the high production of waste associated with aquaculture (55% yield from a fillet). He originated experiments, which eventually led to a research project in collaboration with a number of other organizations (e.g. DFO and MNR). Ultimately, this product became commercially viable and is known as "Meeker's Magic Mix." It is an all natural fish compost created by a mixture of aquaculture operational waste from processed waste food, discarded fish parts, fish mortality and sawdust.

A large number of additional topics and issues were discussed and investigated as possible areas of joint cooperation, including invasive species, cage releases of antibiotic treated fish, fish genetics, fish pathogens (VHS), and cormorants.

One particular area of interest was a discussion on baitfish aquaculture. NOAA discussed a previous research project carried out by the University of Guelph, which was not pursued because of the lack of money; they now feel there is a real opportunity here. Baitfish aquaculture occurs in the United States, but is generally pond culture. Not only is there a huge demand and market for baitfish in Ontario, but the OFAH is also looking at similar possibilities, because it may also help to reduce the spread of pathogens and invasive species. Mike Meeker has brought up the issue of baitfish aquaculture a multiple of times with the Ontario Sustainable Aquaculture Working Group.

The meeting between the OFAH and NOAA concluded with an open invitation to attend each other's meetings. NOAA was invited to attend a future OFAH Fisheries Advisory Committee meeting, keeping in mind our statement of purpose -- look at possibilities for partnerships between our two associations for wild fishery enhancements in the Great Lakes.

Since the meeting in September, a number of communications have taken place between NOAA and the OFAH

Regulation Changes to the Kawartha/Rice Lake Area

Fisheries regulations were changed in the Kawartha/Rice Lake area to allow a year-round season for Pike, Perch, Crappie and Sunfish. This enabled ice fishing for the first time in many years, and allows anglers to keep 300 Sunfish, of which only 30 can be larger than 7.1 inches.

The Rice Lake Tourism Association (RLTA) objected to these changes and criticized ice fishing. They favored a separate FMZ, recommending 500 panfish with no size limit. The OFAH opposed the RLTA position, due to the loss of fishing opportunities and negative impacts on future sunfish populations. Live bait dealers came onside with the OFAH when they experienced an increase in their business in the winter. Adjoining municipal councils and cottagers were split on their support of the RLTA proposal. The OFAH Fisheries Advisory Committee has one concern -- possible impacts on spawning stocks if ice fishing extends into the panfish spawning period.

Lake Simcoe

The large increase with Herring being caught in Lake Simcoe was discussed. The herring fishery was closed for the past 10 years, and now one- and two-year classes are showing up in good numbers. The MNR appears to be reluctant to reopen the herring fishery based only on these two-year classes, and if opened, might be for a short period of time. We were reminded that the recovery of Lake Trout would benefit more from herring than smelt. Herring populations are booming, resulting on major negative impacts on subsequent year classes; it might be prudent to harvest.

Whitefish and Walleye have been identified upstream from Pefferlaw Brook, and above the dam at Beaverton. As a result of Lake Simcoe Muskie stocking efforts, they should be showing up in index test netting in the near future.

The use of live bait in Lake Simcoe continues to be discussed at our meetings. There is a concern that future policies for the use of live bait in Lake Simcoe will have implications that would alter province-wide baitfish policies. The MNR has been asked to return

to the OFAH Fisheries Advisory Committee with a revised list that reflects their preferred best options for the use of live bait for Lake Simcoe. Presently, we were exposed to over 20 options, ranging from no live bait, to locally caught bait, to various combinations of different bait shops. The Lake Simcoe Fisheries Stakeholder Committee is currently working at putting forth the best options for the use of live bait in Lake Simcoe, and as mentioned, the MNR Fisheries Policy Section is working on a bait review as well.

Additional Topics and Issues Addressed

- ongoing review of the OFAH fisheries policy binder;
- Namakin River hydro development proposal;
- ongoing Thames River, Springbank dam issues;
- illegal stocking and movement of Smallmouth Bass into northern Ontario waters;
- Colpoy's Bay fish sanctuary proposals;
- Walleye stocking and management objectives for inland lakes;
- Lake Erie commercial fishing;
- Bala Falls water power proposal;
- Chinook Salmon proposals for the Nipigon River and Lake Superior;
- enforcement and concerns related to present boating regulations;
- ongoing issue on MOE's water taking/water treatment fees for

- volunteer OFAH hatcheries;
- concerns related to fish ingesting plastic baits;
- Maple Hill Private dam on the Saugeen River;
- the Black Sturgeon River dam/Walleye habitat issue, and the proposed options;
- Misner dam (Lynn River/Lake Erie) decommissioning proposal;
- live Asian Carp being transported across the border at Windsor;
- concerns about slot sizes causing mortality with Lake Trout being caught in northern Ontario;
- Rainbow Trout creel reduction proposal for Lake Ontario;
- MNR Lake Trout stocking proposals for Lake Huron;
- movement of Asian Carp through the Chicago Sanitary and Shipping Canal;
- Larder Lake hydro site proposals;
- Ringwood Fish Culture Station; and
- concerns with DFO's enforcement of fish habitat.

In closing, I would like to again thank the OFAH Fisheries Advisory Committee volunteer members and OFAH head office staff for their continued support in dealing with the fisheries issues and challenges this past year.

OFAH Land Use/Access/Trails Advisory Committee Annual Report



Co-Chairs – Dennis Kristjanson and Roy Polsky

As predicted at the end of 2009, many of the issues which this advisory committee was faced with at that time continued to require the attention of the OFAH throughout 2010. We extend our appreciation to OFAH head office staff who have worked hard to represent our concerns on these issues, and provide valuable guidance on the matters dealt with throughout the year. Through our efforts, we hope to continue to position ourselves to meet the challenges that our members expect. Access issues vary across the province, and a number of these issues, in some way, affect most of our members.

The OFAH responded to a number of postings on the Environmental Bill of Rights (EBR):

Conservation Land Tax Incentive Program – the OFAH response on the proposed policy and guidelines addressed broadening of the permitted land uses, enhancing and expanding management and stewardship activities, relaxing requirements for MNR approvals for permitted land uses, and improving delivery of the program;

Provincial Policy Statement, 2005 – concerns expressed related to natural heritage policies;

Forest Management Plans – we responded on the Lac Seul and Black Spruce plans. Caribou recovery policies are having major implications for access, as well as habitat requirements for moose and other species. Several plans are coming up for review in 2011, and the OFAH will comment on them. As OFAH members, you are encouraged to participate in the review of those plans that may affect you, and respond with your concerns. Please keep us informed on your efforts; we need to work together;

Park Plans – we continue to monitor and respond to a number

of outstanding issues on several park plans and policies. Our concerns and suggestions for changes to the Quetico Provincial Park plan were relayed; and

Wind Power – land use and access implications with respect to industrial wind turbine development are being reviewed in conjunction with fish, wildlife, habitat and public safety concerns.

The provincial caribou strategy will impact access, and in turn, hunting and fishing in the recovery area. Most of this will occur through the development of Forest Management Plans. Recently, the recovery area was expanded further south than originally proposed. Many Ontario residents, and our members, who live outside the recovery area, hunt and fish within the recovery area. Through forest management planning, once harvested, regeneration of cut areas will place preference on the development of caribou habitat, and increase the level and frequency of road deterioration and restrictions. This is a clear lack of vision on the part of the province for the value of the area for recreational uses, such as hunting and fishing.

A brief summary of other actions include:

- Northumberland County (OFAH Zone E) approved a new forest plan that restricts hunting opportunities; the OFAH will continue its efforts to amend the plan, where opportunities exist;
- in the Sudbury Forest (OFAH Zone D), the decision of the MNR Regional Director, Northeast Region, to support the removal of certain access restrictions on the Spanish Arm Road was well received;
- the OFAH provided comments on the initial stages of the Crown Land Use Area Harmonization Project (OFAH Zone C), and we expect this process to continue this year;
- there is ongoing monitoring and communication on Presqu'île,

Darlington, Kawartha Highlands Signature Site, and Quetico Provincial Parks; and

- the OFAH met with the Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC) regarding hunting opportunities. Most NCC properties permit hunting, and they are willing to discuss opportunities

for cooperation with OFAH zones to assist with the facilitation of hunting on NCC lands.

Trends, as they are, suggest that 2011 will see many land use and access challenges for our organization.

OFAH Native Affairs Advisory Committee Annual Report



Co-Chairs – Gerry Haarmeyer and John Ford

OFAH Native Affairs Advisory Committee members include Gerry Haarmeyer, John Ford, Ed Giffin, Jack Doherty, Wes Brown, John Sullivan, Shirley Giffin, as well as President Rob Hare, and Executive Director Mike Reader.

The OFAH Native Affairs Advisory Committee met in April (Peterborough), September (Mississauga), and December (Mississauga) 2010. Many topics, with much documentation, were discussed and reviewed.

Three main issues continue to take up much of our time:

- Algonquin Land Claim;
- Saugeen/Cape Croker native commercial fishing agreement; and
- Métis harvesting (in general and within Algonquin Land Claim).

Algonquin Land Claim

The Algonquin Land Claim continued to be a major area of concern throughout 2010. We met, and continue to meet, with provincial and federal government officials to discuss our concerns regarding this issue. We have also attended Committee of External Advisors meetings, and have met with the provincial and federal Ministers responsible for native affairs.

The provincial government is pushing for an Agreement in Principle (AIP) with the Algonquins by May 2011, and preferably earlier. The OFAH fails to see the rush. We contend that the AIP must be general in nature, speak only about broad philosophical issues, and not contain specifics, which would be more difficult, if not impossible, to change at a later date. The OFAH has received assurances from the federal Minister that they are not in sync with the province's timeline, and believe the issue requires more time and consultation before an AIP is signed. The general public in the claim area is aware that meetings are ongoing, but are not aware of

the effect that an agreement may have on their day-to-day hunting and fishing heritage opportunities. The OFAH has developed and is implementing a strategy plan to increase the public scrutiny of the process, and to point out the potential pitfalls of rushing to sign an AIP.

Saugeen/Cape Croker Native Commercial Fishing Agreement

The agreement between the MNR and the Saugeen/Cape Croker community has expired, and a new agreement is to be negotiated. The MNR has held two meetings with interested stakeholders to update them on the status of the negotiations.

The OFAH has asked if the MNR will seek public input for the process, and if there will be provisions that provide for inspection and enforcement of quotas and species caught. We also asked if there were considerations of extending boundaries.

To date, we have not received clear answers to the questions, and have written to the Minister of Natural Resources for clarification.

Métis Harvesting

Harvesting of game and fish by Métis is occurring in many areas of the province. The MNR/Métis Harvesting policy recognizes the test set out by the Supreme Court of Canada which must be satisfied for a Métis claimant to prove rights. Many of the locations have not demonstrated the existence of a Métis community in the harvesting area; however, the MNR is not enforcing their policy.

This is creating animosity among all harvesters in local areas, and a general disregard for established law enforcement. The OFAH has requested clarification from the MNR regarding this very important issue.

The OFAH Native Affairs Advisory Committee also reviewed a number of court cases from Ontario and other jurisdictions.

OFAH Past Presidents Advisory Committee Annual Report



Chair – John Ford

I am very pleased to be able to present to you with a very short Past Presidents Advisory Committee report for 2010.

It was a relatively quiet year for the Past Presidents, as we continued to work on the overall review of the OFAH Constitution and Bylaws.

As you are aware, the OFAH Constitution and Bylaws provides, what we believe are the guiding principles for this organization, and defines how we govern the business called the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters.

The final review of the document was done in mid-2010, and has been forwarded to our legal counsel for his review. That review

is still underway, as there are a number of other items that need to be considered within the context of developing a new OFAH Constitution and Bylaws.

There is new provincial legislation which governs not-for-profits, and there have been some recent changes that our legal counsel wants to be sure are incorporated in our Constitution and Bylaws.

We expect that the Constitution and Bylaws will be ready to review some time in mid-2011, and unless there are some other delays, will be rewritten in time to be adopted by our Board late in 2011, and be brought to the annual general meeting in 2012 for ratification.

OFAH Provincial Director-at-Large Nominating Committee Annual Report



Chair – John Ford

No report.

OFAH Resolutions Advisory Committee Annual Report



Chair – Bill Blackwell

No report.

OFAH Sporting Dogs/Small Game Advisory Committee Annual Report



Chair – Tony Jackson

OFAH SPORTING DOGS/SMALL GAME I would like to take this opportunity to thank the OFAH Sporting Dogs/Small Game Advisory Committee members, as well as OFAH head office staff, for their help and support over the past 12 months on sporting dogs and small game topics.

There has been ongoing work with respect to completing a comprehensive OFAH Sporting Dogs/Small Game policy, and we hope that in 2011, the MNR will have resources to finally move forward with a much needed, comprehensive, small game review. MNR priorities have been focused elsewhere.

Coyote issues continue to lead as the top human/wildlife issue in much of southern Ontario. Much public information and education is still needed to understand the dynamics at play, and in the creation of good coyote management strategies.

Small game has become an underutilized activity in many parts of Ontario. Young and first-time hunters seem to be focused on big game species with extended archery seasons rather than small game. Squirrel, cottontail, pheasant, and other such species can provide excellent opportunities, but the glamour of such activities does not seem to hit the airwaves. There are many reading this today that “cut their teeth,” so to speak, hunting cottontail busting out of a brush pile, or from under a roll of fence wire. This fast paced, often unsuccessful activity provides a lot of fun and many great days in the field.

Squirrel populations appear very strong, yet few take advantage of this small game species. An afternoon still hunting in a hardwood

bush can teach you more about patience and animal habits than most people realize.

We will continue to discuss these topics in 2011, as we need to find ways to engage hunters to let them know that small game is a prized and rewarding hunting experience.

Concern remains around the presence and population of Ruffed Grouse in many areas of southern Ontario; in some cases, hunters are reporting that the birds seem to be nonexistent. In the northeast and northwest regions, there are mixed opinions, but reports suggest there are more Spruce Grouse than Ruffed Grouse. Wild Turkey hunter training is evolving. Thanks to the hard work of OFAH head office staff, we can expect updates to the existing program in 2011. There have also been many comments made from out-of-province hunters wishing to target Wild Turkeys in Ontario, yet they find the process of doing the course and being certified to hunt in Ontario less than convenient. We expect that the changes in program delivery will address this issue as well.

A reoccurring issue coming from the hunting community is lost game in the field, and the inability of hunters to use dogs that are capable of locating downed game animals in certain areas of the province and in “no dog” seasons. It seems practical to revisit those restrictions with the MNR. A leashed dog can aid in the recovery and prevent lost and spoiled game. We will move forward with a sporting dogs/small game policy, and engage the MNR in more meaningful discussions with respect to seasons, harvest limits, increased opportunities, and use of dogs. Having an adopted policy will assist us in future meetings with MNR staff.

OFAH Wetlands/Migratory Birds Advisory Committee Annual Report



Chair – Dr. Scott Petrie

The OFAH Wetlands/Migratory Birds Advisory Committee consists of Scott Petrie, Clark Boyd, Jim Greenwood, John Sullivan, Ed Reid, and Dawn Sucee. We were involved with a number of migratory bird and wetland-related issues in 2010, and the following is a brief update pertaining to the more important issues.

The Ontario Waterfowl Advisory Committee (OWAC) consists of members designated by the Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS), the MNR, and the OFAH. They meet annually to make recommendations to the Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS), Ontario Region, regarding migratory bird regulations. The Chair of the OFAH Wetlands/Migratory Birds Advisory Committee is also an OWAC member, which ensures that the OFAH annually

contributes to waterfowl regulatory changes within the province. Thanks to the OWAC and the CWS, waterfowl hunters in Ontario have been provided with substantial increases in opportunity over the past four years (e.g. length of seasons and limits).

Removal of Current Restrictions on Canvasback and Redhead Limits

The OWAC reviewed the current bag and possession limit restrictions on Canvasbacks and Redheads in Ontario. After a review of current population size and trends, as well as harvest estimates for Ontario, other parts of Canada, and the United States, it was agreed that the harvest restrictions in place in Ontario are no longer needed. Based on this, it is anticipated that the CWS will remove these restrictions prior to the 2011 waterfowl season.

Spring Snow Goose Hunt

Greater Snow Geese have reached an overabundant status, and the Quebec Region has had a special spring conservation hunting season since 1998. Spring Snow Goose numbers in eastern Ontario have increased and now number about 80,000 birds. In order to support the international goal of population reduction and to reduce crop losses, the CWS has approved a spring conservation harvest for Greater Snow Geese in eastern Ontario (WMU 65) starting in 2012; the season will be from March 1 until May 31. Snow Goose hunting will only be permitted on farm land, and hunters will be permitted to use electronic calls, but can not use bait. This season will help address a conservation concern (Snow Goose overabundance), while also providing increased opportunities for waterfowl hunters in Ontario.

Sandhill Crane Research

The OFAH and the CWS continue to support the study of Sandhill Cranes on Manitoulin Island and the North Shore Region. This population has increased (by at least 9,000 birds) to the point that agricultural producers are complaining about crop losses. During the summer of 2010, Everett Hanna (M.Sc. candidate – Long Point Waterfowl) studied the habitat use and productivity of birds on Manitoulin Island. He attached solar powered satellite transmitters to nine birds to track local and migratory movements over the next few years. The CWS and Long Point Waterfowl plan to continue to monitor and conduct research on this population.

Possession Limits

The CWS recently increased the waterfowl possession limit to three times the daily bag limit. This serves to harmonize the regulation with western provinces, and also allows waterfowl hunters to legally travel with, and store more waterfowl for consumption.

Mourning Dove Harvest

Based on research conducted by Long Point Waterfowl, the OFAH recently wrote a letter to the CWS requesting that they open a fall season for Mourning Doves in Ontario. The OWAC agreed that, given the current size and increasing trend of the population of Mourning Doves in Ontario, there could be a sustainable harvest. In Canada, Mourning Doves are only harvested in British Columbia, but they are harvested in most states. The CWS is presently considering this proposal.

Wind Turbines Projects

Improperly placed wind turbines (on and offshore) have the potential to displace waterfowl from important movement corridors and foraging areas. Numerous wind turbine projects

have been constructed or are proposed to be developed along the shoreline of the lower Great Lakes. Certain developments have been cause for concern, because they are situated along important waterfowl migratory pathways, are too close to major staging/wintering areas, and/or they are located on important foraging areas. The OFAH is particularly concerned by the fact that the setback requirement from significant wildlife habitat is only 120 meters, and cumulative effects have not been taken into consideration. The OFAH Wetlands/Migratory Birds Advisory Committee is concerned that certain key waterfowl wintering and staging areas will be compromised, and will continue to lobby for adequate preconstruction monitoring of all potential developments, as well as adequate setback guidelines. Over the next two years, Long Point Waterfowl (Phil Wilson, M.Sc. candidate), in partnership with the CWS, will be implanting 40 Long-tailed Ducks with satellite transmitters. This work will be done on Lake Ontario with the intention of determining critical habitat areas for the species, and the potential impact of proposed industrial wind turbine developments.

Waterfowl Heritage Days

With the exception of Ontario and Saskatchewan, all other provinces in Canada have Waterfowl Heritage Days, which provide youth with the opportunity to hunt waterfowl with a mentor prior to the regular waterfowl season. Most provinces provide one day (Saturday before the opener), but a few provide two days, and one province provides an entire week. At the December 2010 OFAH Board of Directors' meeting, it was decided that the OFAH would propose to the CWS that Ontario establish Waterfowl Heritage Days during the Saturday and Sunday (where Sunday hunting is allowed) prior to the regular waterfowl opening season in each of the districts. Several other organizations (Long Point Waterfowl, Delta Waterfowl, Ducks Unlimited) have expressed support for this initiative, and will also be writing letters of support.

Delisting Mute Swans

Mute Swans are an exotic/invasive waterfowl species that competes with native waterfowl species for space and food. The southern Ontario Mute Swan population has been expanding since the 1980's. The issue of delisting Mute Swans from the list of species protected under the Migratory Birds Convention Act was discussed briefly by the OWAC. The OWAC Chair indicated that the CWS still had not made a decision on whether to delist the species. At the December OFAH Board of Directors' meeting, it was decided that OFAH head office staff would write a letter to the CWS urging them to delist Mute Swans.

During 2011, the OFAH Wetlands/Migratory Birds Advisory Committee will continue to promote the conservation and management of waterfowl and wetlands within the province. We will also continue to promote the expansion of hunting opportunities when/where it is considered to be ecologically sustainable.



Let's welcome back an old friend in a new role

Rob Hare

President

There is a saying that goes, "there is nothing more constant than change," and the O.F.A.H. is no exception to that truth. We are always striving to improve our conservation programs and the services we provide to O.F.A.H. members and clubs. We are proud of our history, but we know that we can't ever rest on our laurels. On behalf of your Board of Directors, I am pleased to share an important change.

After an extensive recruitment process, we welcomed a new member to the management team in October. Angelo Lombardo has accepted the position of Executive Manager, which he will hold while preparing to take over the role of Executive Director. The move will ensure a smooth transition for Angelo and the Federation when Mike Reader retires in late March, 2012, just over a year from now. Mike has served the O.F.A.H. superbly for over 20 years, the last ten as Executive Director, but about a year ago, Mike let the Executive and Board know that the time had come for him to leave the O.F.A.H. in order to enjoy more time with his family and the outdoor pursuits that he loves so much.



Your Board is delighted that Angelo has come on board, and I imagine that many of you are already aware of how lucky we are to have him. Angelo is well known to the fishing and hunting industry through his former role as District Business Manager with the Brunswick Corporation (more familiar to some of us as Lund Boats). For the past decade, Angelo has been managing a multi-million dollar budget with responsibility for all of Ontario. Long time members may recall that prior to his years at Brunswick, Angelo worked as the O.F.A.H. Special Events Representative, and through Lund, has continued to be involved with the O.F.A.H. Conservation Lottery and Angler & Hunter Television in a sponsorship role.

Angelo will be working closely with Mike and the management team over the coming months to get up to speed on all the many aspects of the Federation, while taking on some projects of his own. As a passionate angler and hunter, Angelo has a thorough understanding of the benefits and challenges of hunting and fishing today, which is an invaluable foundation for a job that entails representing outdoors enthusiasts to all levels of government, and a wide variety of public and private organizations and partners. I'm looking forward to working with Angelo as he brings his own unique strengths and his great sense of humor to the challenging role.

Angelo has told me that he considers it a privilege to be working for the Federation again. He commented that even though much has changed over the past decade, the people that represent the organization are as committed and passionate as ever. Well said, Angelo!

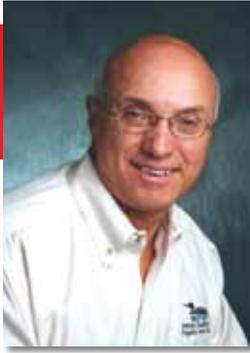
Already Angelo is accompanying Mike on engagements across the province. Soon, many of us will be gathered for our annual conference in Mississauga. I hope you will take the opportunity to introduce yourself, or to reconnect, with Angelo, who is looking forward to meeting and hearing from as many O.F.A.H. members as possible. Staff and volunteers alike, we count on your comments and feedback to help us serve you even better.

Once again, I extend my warmest O.F.A.H. welcome to Angelo and his family, and to all O.F.A.H. members and supporters, Merry Christmas and all the very best in 2011.

Angler & Hunter HOTLINE is produced exclusively for members of the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters.

It is available ten times per year. Please direct inquiries to:

Lezlie Goodwin, Manager of Communications, O.F.A.H., P.O. Box 2800, Peterborough, ON K9J 8L5
Phone 705-748-6324 Ext. 270 Fax 705-748-9577 Email ofah@ofah.org Visit www.ofah.org



Algonquin land claim - what's the rush?

Mike Reader

Executive Director

The Ontario government has instructed their negotiating team to work towards the signing of an Agreement-in-Principle (AIP) on the Algonquin land claim by spring 2011, despite the fact that no public consultation has occurred, nor seems likely to occur before the signing. Even stakeholders like the O.F.A.H. who have been involved through the Committee of External Advisors will have no idea of what is contained in the AIP until after it is signed. Since the claim has been in existence for almost twenty years, and serious negotiations only started in 2009, the question to the province is why the rush?

The Algonquin land claim, the only comprehensive land claim in Ontario, encompasses a massive area of 14,000 square miles, or 36,000 kilometers in eastern Ontario. Included in the claim area are 35 provincial parks, 18 operational and 17 non-operational. Living within the claim area are 7,000 to 10,000 Algonquin who will benefit from the AIP and eventual Treaty that it will help to create. Their negotiators are engaged in ongoing talks with the province, with the aim of having the details of an AIP worked out by no later than next June.

However, for the 1.4 million non-aboriginals who live and work in the claim area, the 150,000 licensed hunters, those with crown land leases, recreational camps or cottages on local lakes, municipalities, tourists and others who will be affected in some way by what the Treaty contains, who speaks for them?

In the interests of doing what's right, and in the interests of fairness, it is critically important that the government take a step back and take the necessary time to engage in a comprehensive and inclusive consultation process that provides the public with a chance to be informed, and more importantly, a chance to be heard BEFORE an AIP is signed.

There is little point in debating whether or not the claim itself is valid, that ship sailed long ago. What is important is that during the negotiation process, that the views, concerns and issues raised by non-aboriginals be considered. Issues like conservation of the resource; fair sharing of these resources between aboriginal and non-aboriginal; and the ability of residents in the claim area to access parks, lakes and other traditional areas for outdoor activities. If the government truly represents all residents of Ontario, and they are custodians of Crown lands on behalf of all Ontarians, it is incumbent on the government to take the time to inform, to listen, and to act in the interests of all affected by the claim.

On a positive note, in early March we will be launching Angler & Hunter Radio, a great extension to our already broad communications reach. This exciting new show will broadcast on Saturdays and Sundays from Windsor to the Ottawa Valley, and to Thunder Bay in the north. I hope you'll give it a listen. I promise you it will keep Ontario listeners up to date on current outdoors news and issues such as the Algonquin land claim, the upcoming elk hunt, and much more.

I thank each and every O.F.A.H. member, volunteer, partner and supporter for your invaluable loyalty and commitment in 2010, and wish you the very best as we move into the New Year. Happy holidays!



O.F.A.H. on board with Lake Simcoe efforts

Rob Hare

President

I've been connected to Lake Simcoe all my life. Growing up in Keswick, on the south eastern shore, the lake has had a huge influence on my passion for fishing and the outdoors, and I imagine there are countless people just like me, who love the water because they grew up on Lake Simcoe. With 232 kilometers of shoreline, it's the largest lake on the Trent Severn Waterway and the fourth largest lake wholly situated in Ontario. It generates hundreds of millions of dollars for the economy through tourism, provides drinking water to eight municipalities, and supports an abundance of fish and wildlife.

All this bounty, however, comes at a cost. There is a real environmental impact from the homes, farms and industry that use Lake Simcoe. Aging and faulty septic systems, shoreline erosion, agricultural and other runoff, pollution, invasive species - even the activities of anglers, boaters, and snowmobilers - all put enormous stress on the lake. Thankfully, over the past several years municipal, provincial and federal governments have made substantial funding available to help clean up Lake Simcoe, and are partnering with organizations, including the O.F.A.H., conservation authorities, businesses, and other groups to put restoration and conservation projects in play.

Your Federation is helping in several ways. O.F.A.H. staff and members are offering their expertise through the Lake Simcoe Fisheries Stakeholder Committee. The O.F.A.H./MNR Invading Species Awareness Program (ISAP) is actively pitching in, as is the O.F.A.H.-hosted Community Stream Steward Program (CSSP). Then there is the O.F.A.H. member Beaverton and District Conservation Club and the Pefferlaw Anglers, who each operate hugely successful hatcheries to stock Lake Simcoe with walleye. For the first time this past spring, the Beaverton Club was able to show the MNR that walleye are returning to the Beaver River. O.F.A.H. Zone G, Muskies Canada, and a number of other partners are releasing muskie fall fingerlings (500 per year) into selected sites around the lake, with promising signs that the muskie may be spawning. Many of our clubs participate in Project Purple, and various clean ups, and sit on stewardship committees and Regional Forest Advisory teams, all of which impact water quality.

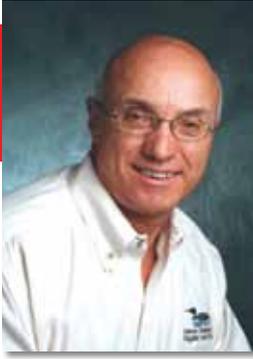
This fall, the CSSP was recognized by the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority (LSRCA) with a water conservation award for its efforts in the Bluff's Creek Assessment and Rehabilitation Program. Other initiatives include monitoring, bank stabilization, planting, debris removal, cattle fencing and alternate watering, and training workshops. CSSP has worked with landowners, co-op students, and several MNR stewardship rangers groups to complete projects in Orillia, Uxbridge, Pefferlaw, Innisfil, Leaksdale, and Brechin, and they have four new projects in the works.

The ISAP is also active on and around the lake. With assistance from Environment Canada's Lake Simcoe Clean Up Fund, and in partnership with the MNR, LSRCA, and others, we developed and piloted a state of the art, on-line tracking system for aquatic and terrestrial invasive species for Lake Simcoe, which will eventually go province-wide. Now anyone can report sightings of invasive species. To help build the system's database, the ISAP has been coordinating region-wide invasive plant road rallies in the Simcoe Basin. Volunteers are helping track the spread of invasive plants and the information collected is being shared with municipalities to help them prevent the accidental spread by road maintenance activities.

If you're one of 11,000 drivers who travel Highway 48 daily, you may have seen the "Stop Invasive Species" Highway signage which was produced in partnership with Ontario Wildlife Foundation, York Environmental Stewardship and the MNR. You may also have heard the ISAP public service announcements about the proper disposal of live bait that got lots of play throughout the region last winter. "Don't dump your bait" signs will be posted this winter along the lake's busy ice highway, and ISAP staff will be on the lake sharing information with anglers. Next spring and summer, staff will be visiting key boat launches and marinas within the basin to engage boaters in taking preventative measures to keep new invasive species out of the lake.

This past summer, some of the infamous "Hit Squad" (Invasive Species summer students) were based in Aurora, Orillia and Alliston. They attended community events, gave presentations and visited outdoor retailers to share information.

It gives me great pride to see and hear about the incredible work O.F.A.H. staff, clubs and individuals are doing across the province, but on a personal level, I am especially grateful for the efforts that are being made to restore Lake Simcoe to its full glory.



It's not over for the long gun owner

Mike Reader

Executive Director

Since the defeat of Bill C-391, the private member's bill that would have scrapped the long gun registry, I've heard a lot of flip flop jokes. There is nothing funny however, about the actions of six NDP MPs who disregarded the wishes of their constituents, (and according to at least 22 survey polls, the wishes of the majority of Canadians), and at the eleventh hour, flipped their vote from anti registry to pro registry.

The long gun registry is a long standing issue for firearms owners in this country, and certainly, it has been a major issue for your Federation since it was introduced by the Liberal government in 1995. Innocent lives had been taken by a madman and we all wanted something to be done. Yet, in their haste to assuage the grief and outrage of a nation, the government of the day chose to create a registry that tracks the law abiding – farmers, hunters, and target sports shooters instead of the violent criminal. We've been living with it ever since, and we've seen that, as we predicted, it has failed to live up to its promise.

Had the registry accomplished what it was designed to do, the shootings at Dawson College in 2006 would not have happened because the guns used in that tragedy were registered. Sadly, none of us is safer for the advent of the long gun registry, despite the money spent, and the anti-gun coalition's claims to the contrary. In fact, despite all the arguments by pro registry supporters, there is no definitive/factual evidence to demonstrate that the long gun registry has saved lives.

I understand a devastated parent wanting something to be done to curb gun crime, but our politicians can and must do better than the long gun registry.

Last November, in support of their constituents' wishes, twelve NDP MPs voted to repeal the long gun registry at Second Reading of Bill C-391 in Parliament, some even made strong public statements. Last month, six NDP MPs, five of whom hail from Northern Ontario, were free to vote with their constituents and chose not to do so. As a consequence of their actions, the long gun registry will stay in place - for now.

Your Federation has worked tirelessly over the past year and a half to support Conservative MP Candice Hoepfner's private members bill which would have scrapped the long gun registry. We launched an online petition that garnered 46,000 signatures and was presented in Parliament. (Thank you to the many O.F.A.H. members that took the time to gather pages of printed signatures as well.) We issued many media releases and championed the fight on a dozen TV and radio appearances. We wrote letters, and met repeatedly with politicians and other stakeholders. Several of our O.F.A.H. member clubs also pitched in to host town hall meetings in key NDP ridings in the final days. It was a lot, but it wasn't quite enough.

So, now what? Now your Federation stands by its commitment to you and to legal, law abiding firearms owners across the province. The O.F.A.H. is opposed to the long gun registry, a position that hasn't changed in fifteen years because in all that time, the registry hasn't been proven to work. We believe there are better ways to achieve greater public safety, fiscal responsibility and accountability, such as creating a prohibited offenders registry, more "Guns and Gangs" task forces, and improved border security to stop the flow of illegal firearms (mostly handguns) into Canada from the United States.

Whether it takes months or years, we will continue to fight for alternatives to the long gun registry. The sooner it's scrapped, the sooner we can put our energies to work creating legislation that works.

For an indepth look at what happened with the long gun registry and what is next, read our Q & A with Greg Farrant O.F.A.H. Manager, Government Affairs and Policy, on page 5.

Angler & Hunter HOTLINE is produced exclusively for members of the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters.

It is available ten times per year. Please direct inquiries to:

Lezlie Goodwin, Manager of Communications, O.F.A.H., P.O. Box 2800, Peterborough, ON K9J 8L5
Phone 705-748-6324 Ext. 270 Fax 705-748-9577 Email ofah@ofah.org Visit www.ofah.org



CWD: a ticking time bomb for Ontario wildlife

Rob Hare

President

For years now your Federation has pressed the government of Ontario to take definitive action to prevent Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) from entering Ontario. CWD is a fatal brain disease that attacks cervids, such as white-tailed deer, elk, mule deer, moose and potentially woodland caribou, and has already wreaked havoc on populations in Saskatchewan, Alberta and fifteen US states. Despite independent research showing that game farms are by far the most likely source of the disease, the provincial and federal ministries of agriculture have yet to create and enforce stringent regulations governing these operations, or even better, to implement a complete ban of farmed deer and elk with compensation for operators.

The O.F.A.H. supports regulation that has the ability to limit the introduction of CWD into the wild population. The Ministry of Natural Resources recently developed a regulation to prohibit the use of natural attractants, which are derived from game farm animals, largely raised in the US. Their original intention was to implement the regulation this year, despite O.F.A.H. concerns that retailers would not have an opportunity to access alternative products and be left with unsellable stock. An unforeseen delay in implementing the regulation has provided retailers with the necessary lead time that O.F.A.H. argued for in the first place, with the ban to likely take effect in 2011. Newer synthetic products that pose no risk to wildlife will replace natural attractants, which is something we support, as well as the continued ability to use the tarsal gland from a personally harvested deer.

The O.F.A.H. and Canadian Wildlife Federation recently met to coordinate efforts around CWD. Staff from both organizations will be working together in the months ahead to bring this issue to the attention of federal and provincial ministers to press for the elimination of game farms for deer and elk.

Since the 1990's, the O.F.A.H. has been urging the provincial government to take action to prevent the introduction of CWD into Ontario, with few tangible results. We have repeatedly pressed the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) to phase out game farms in this province, with full compensation for those farmers affected. As an interim measure only, we continue to advocate for double fencing around game farm perimeters to limit escape and prevent nose-to-nose contact, both of which can potentially spread the disease to wild populations. Neither measure has yet to be acted upon, despite the progression of the disease to new US states every year.

If governments care about our valuable wildlife populations, they need to step up and take action to address the threat posed by this disease, and the devastation it could wreak on our deer, elk and moose populations. Agriculture Minister Carol Mitchell and the provincial government will have much to answer for if CWD is found in Ontario on their watch. (It should be noted that the minister refused our request for a meeting.) How will they defend their failure to act when the primary vectors of the disease are known and have been for some time, preventative measures have been identified, and the consequences of CWD in Ontario are readily apparent from both an ecological and economic standpoint? The lives of tens of thousands of animals are at stake. Not only is the disease highly contagious and always fatal, but other means used to try to control the spread of the disease in affected jurisdictions have failed.

The recently passed Animal Health Act provides the basis for change, if the province chooses to use it.

To their credit, past MNR Minister David Ramsay prohibited "high fence hunting" on game farms and did his very best to get the attention of his counterpart in agriculture, Minister Leona Dombrowsky on this matter. Current MNR Minister Linda Jeffrey is poised to ban the use of natural attractants, a positive step, but we hope that she will also do her best to engage Minister Mitchell into acting on CWD. Although on the whole MNR staff may have done as much as they can to protect our wildlife within the limits of their jurisdiction, they failed to respond appropriately to the escape of farmed red deer in the North Bay area two years ago. CWD is a problem that can only be solved by eliminating game farms for deer and elk. The provincial government has done a lot of talking about protecting Ontario's biodiversity, but so far has only implemented band aid solutions.

On page 10, you'll find information about the MNR's 2010 CWD monitoring program. I urge all deer hunters in the designated Wildlife Management Areas to participate fully in the program, which involves providing a sample of harvested deer for testing. In the meantime, don't miss an opportunity to educate your local MPP about this issue.



Partners make it possible

Mike Reader

Executive Director

Summers around head office are always busy, and this one has been no exception. Unlike many businesses that slow down over the hottest months, we ramp it up. From early June to late August, the office is bursting with eager, hard working summer students who put in long hours counting Atlantic salmon, planting trees, monitoring invasive species, leading youngsters in outdoor camps and giving tours of our new O.F.A.H./Mario Cortellucci Hunting & Fishing Heritage Centre. Thankfully, their wages are subsidized through government grants and the generosity of project partners. On our own, we simply couldn't afford to staff so many seasonal positions, and that would be a great loss. In addition to helping the cause of conservation, these young people are gaining invaluable on-the-job experience, and as they are most certainly our future fish and wildlife managers, we all benefit.

Each and every one of our partners has my sincere respect and appreciation for supporting O.F.A.H. programs and projects. In today's society, which is increasingly disconnected from the outdoors and even further removed from the natural food chain, it isn't always easy to sponsor an organization that promotes hunting and fishing. I would like to recognize each and every one of our supporters, but I haven't the print space or the memory to capture them all. Instead, I encourage you to make note of the numerous sponsors mentioned throughout each issue of *HOTLINE*, in media releases and various publications, on our websites (www.ofah.org, www.bringbackthesalmon.ca, www.invadingspecies.com, www.hfhc.ca, www.ahtv.com and others), on *Angler & Hunter Television*, on our vehicles, at our Heritage Centre, and at the many O.F.A.H. displays and exhibits at events held throughout the year across the province. Our partners number in the hundreds, and each and every one makes a valuable contribution to our conservation efforts.

I simply must name our oldest and closest partner—the Ministry of Natural Resources. From our earliest days, 83 years ago, we have worked with the dedicated staff of the ministry (and its predecessors) to bring about important fish and wildlife policy and management improvements to this resource-rich province. On countless initiatives, we have supported, and been supported by, the province. Yes, over the years there have been issues on which we haven't seen eye to eye, and yes, I imagine there will be more in the future, but on balance the staff from both organizations have shared far more achievements than differences. I fully expect that we'll continue to work together to move the conservation yardsticks forward in the years to come.

Of course, no partner is more valuable than our O.F.A.H. members. Time and time again individuals, member clubs, and O.F.A.H. zones have stepped up to support our education, outreach and conservation work, and we are always mindful of how these dollars are spent. That said, we couldn't deliver the number or the scope of programs that we do without the funding support of outside sources. Various levels of government, nonprofit environmental organizations, philanthropic foundations, the outdoor industry and even unrelated businesses (including a more than one million dollar contribution from an Australian vintner) help ensure that important projects and programs get the backing they need.

Whether we're the lead partner or playing a supporting role, your Federation is proud to help further our mandate of fish and wildlife conservation. There will never be enough time, money, or capacity to address each and every conservation issue this province faces, but we will continue to partner with others who have similar goals and resolve to conserve and enhance our natural resources.

Angler & Hunter HOTLINE is produced exclusively for members of the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters.

It is available ten times per year. Please direct inquiries to:

Lezlie Goodwin, Manager of Communications, O.F.A.H., P.O. Box 2800, Peterborough, ON K9J 8L5

Phone 705-748-6324 Ext. 270 Fax 705-748-9577 Email ofah@ofah.org Visit www.ofah.org



Fishing is making a comeback!

Rob Hare

President

Maybe I am just imagining it, but it seems to me that fishing is showing up more and more in mainstream media these days. I've seen TV ads with anglers fly fishing in streams, families fishing off docks, and solitary souls happily anchored in the middle of their favorite lake. I couldn't tell you what they're selling - for me it's all about the fact that something I love to do is finally being pitched as a great outdoor activity. It's about time fishing made a comeback.

Hopefully, the ads I'm noticing are reflecting a general increased interest in recreational fishing. If more people take up fishing, they'll be connected with our lakes and rivers, and hopefully they'll become invested in the health of our waterways, and by extension our natural resources. We need to welcome these prospective anglers and do everything we can to help reverse the past decade's decline in Canadians who fish.

This summer has been a particularly good one for providing newcomers with opportunities to give fishing a try, or to welcome those who have strayed. After years of requests by the Ontario Family Fishing Weekend (OFFW) Committee, the province agreed to extend the OFFW initiative to nine days, and align it with National Fishing Week, July 3-11. This makes good sense, from a logistical and promotional perspective. Why not allow the marketing efforts of each of the campaigns to work double duty? The Canadian Sportfishing Industry Foundation does a great job promoting National Fishing Week across the country, and the OFFW steering committee, which is headed by O.F.A.H. staff, also works hard to get the word out.

For nine days, which included two weekends, anglers didn't need a license to venture out. Canadian residents could pick up a rod and reel and try their luck in any body of water in Ontario where fishing is allowed. Making it even easier were the more than 80 official OFFW events, held from Algonquin Park to Wheatley Harbour. I know that many hard working O.F.A.H. member clubs and individuals were involved in these events in their communities. Thank you all for a job well done. You provided thousands of kids and their families with the chance to do something fun and wholesome, and you may well have sparked the interest of a future avid angler.

As you'll read on page seven, the long-running O.F.A.H. TackleShare program is proud to welcome Ontario Power Generation (OPG) as its lead sponsor. What fantastic news for this rod and reel loaner program that stretches out across the province with a simple concept - take away the barriers to fishing by lending kids and adult novices the gear they need to give fishing a try. We are excited about OPG's support, and believe that their "stay clear stay safe" message works well with our conservation focus. More than 40 provincial parks are participating as loaner sites, so be sure to look for O.F.A.H. TackleShare signage if you visit a park on your travels this summer. There are lots of other loaner sites as well, so check out the TackleShare website (www.tackleshare.com) to find a participating library or community club near you.

For those of you already aware of the al"lure" of fishing, don't forget to submit your eligible entries to the Ontario Angler Awards website.

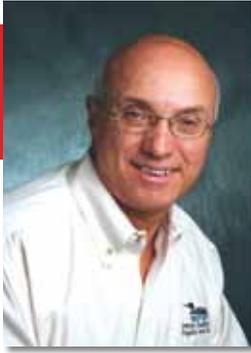
Whether you take part in O.F.A.H. activities, or just cast a line off the dock, I hope you'll take the opportunity to get a little fishing in this summer. It doesn't matter how big or small the catch; fishing connects us to the outdoors and to our natural bounty, and that is a great thing.

Friends, if you're in the neighborhood this month, don't bother dropping by the house. I've gone fishing.

Angler & Hunter HOTLINE is produced exclusively for members of the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters.

It is available ten times per year. Please direct inquiries to:

Lezlie Goodwin, Manager of Communications, O.F.A.H., P.O. Box 2800, Peterborough, ON K9J 8L5
Phone 705-748-6324 Ext. 270 Fax 705-748-9577 Email ofah@ofah.org Visit www.ofah.org



Successes offset by tax grab

Mike Reader

Executive Director

I've been an O.F.A.H. member for a long time, and an avid angler and hunter pretty much my entire life. I believe that hunting and fishing are a privilege. I understand that if we want to be able to continue fishing and hunting, and hope to pass those traditions on to our grandchildren, we must collectively respect our resources and practice wise management. I fully support provincial licensing fees and willingly pay for my tags as my contribution to fish and wildlife management, but I take great exception to the application of an additional eight per cent tax to Outdoor cards and fishing and hunting licenses simply to feed the general tax coffers.

Since 1995, revenue generated by provincial hunting and fishing licenses has gone exclusively to the Special Purpose Account (SPA) for fish and wildlife management. In fact, for too many years now, the funds from the SPA has paid for more than two thirds of that program's budget, instead of the equal sharing formula that was supposed to apply when the SPA was created. (The provincial Environmental Commissioner raised this inequity in his 2007 audit of the MNR.) Given the level of our contributions, the provincial government has wisely exempted licenses from the provincial retail tax—until now. Enter the HST and a hefty new tax that will provide no added benefit to the already underfunded management of our natural resources.

Drivers licenses are exempt, but hunters and anglers supporting crucial wildlife management must pay. Campsites are also now taxed. Our repeated attempts to get satisfactory answers for these highly questionable decisions have not been successful. Maybe your MPP will answer to you. Ask them why hunting and fishing licenses aren't exempt, and why the millions collected under the HST can't be directed to the Special Purpose Account when the federal government returns the funds through transfer payments to the province?

Taxes aside, there is good news on the elk restoration front. On June 25, the Ministry of Natural Resources posted the province's elk management plan (which I have often written about in this column) on the Environmental Bill of Rights Registry and it looks good. After much debate over what, in our opinion, was a misguided regulation to allow kill permits, we believe that together we have arrived at a workable solution. Discussions will continue in the coming months with the goal of a 2011 hunt, beginning in the North Hastings-Bancroft area where the elk have thrived and are causing isolated problems for farmers there.

Earlier this summer I visited Quebec to attend the annual meeting of our conservation affiliate, the Canadian Wildlife Federation (CWF). You should take great pride, as I do, in the fact that several individuals nominated by the O.F.A.H. for CWF national awards were chosen from among entries submitted from across the country. Phil Morlock of Shimano, a long-time friend of the Federation and Chair of the Outdoor Caucus Association of Canada, received the Roderick Haig-Brown Award for his contributions to the sport of angling and wise use of Canada's recreational fisheries. Two of our youngest members, Mike Evers Jr. of Innisfil and Tori Edwards of Victoria near Georgian Bay, were jointly honored with the Youth Conservation Award for their dedication to conservation.

Clear across the country in Whitehorse, Yukon, outdoor writers received National Communications Awards for several articles that appeared in our magazine, *Ontario OUT OF DOORS (OOD)*. The awards were presented during the annual conference of the Outdoor Writers of Canada in June. Magazine Column, Feature Fishing, Feature Hunting, and Feature Other all went to writers for work published in *OOD*. I know that you join me in congratulating John Kerr and his team for consistently setting the bar high and delivering an outstanding outdoors magazine.

August is approaching quickly, and the long hot days of fishing will soon give way to early morning waterfowl hunts and making plans for the annual deer or moose hunt. These are time-honored, treasured pastimes that we look forward to every year, and that with wise management and careful stewardship of our natural resources, we can enjoy for many years to come. Judging by the accolades O.F.A.H. members are receiving at the national level, our ongoing commitment to conservation is strong, and we consider it an honor to act as the voice of anglers and hunters.



Let's get back to focusing on fish and wildlife

Rob Hare

President

I have been a member of the O.F.A.H. for more than twenty years now, and during that time, I've seen lots of highs and lows in our dealings with the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR). Since the Ministry's realignment six months ago, and the appointment of a new minister, our relationship might be characterized as in a state of flux.

When the MNR introduced a new organizational chart, we made no secret of the fact that we were concerned by the loss of the Fish and Wildlife branch as we knew it, the part of the Ministry that anglers and hunters most identified with. We were assured, however, that the changes would be minor and would improve the delivery of services. So, in the spirit of cooperation, and in view of our many shared programs and partnerships, we decided to give the MNR time to prove that the changes would be as positive as promised. Unfortunately, we're still waiting.

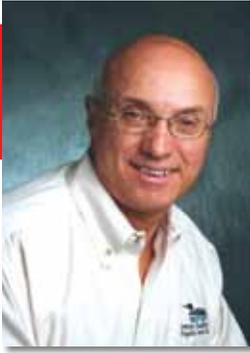
As the province's largest conservation-based organization and the voice of Ontario's anglers and hunters, the wise management of our fish and wildlife, forests and parks, and our access to those resources are our top priorities. Given the fact that fishing and hunting licenses and fees pay for two-thirds of fish and wildlife programs through the Special Purpose Account (SPA), and that we volunteer tens of thousands of hours to conservation projects every year, we deserve to be at the table on a wide range of resource-related issues. Our fish and wildlife staff are highly qualified to provide knowledgeable, informed opinion, and our advisory committees are field experienced and committed to conservation. The Ministry has been, and continues to be, well-served by our participation on many initiatives, and if we don't see eye to eye on every issue, we'll stick with it until we can find some common ground.

I understand that Minister Jeffrey has a broad portfolio, and that she and her staff must divide their time over a number of matters. That said, she has now spent the better part of her first six months in office dealing with two pieces of legislation, the first being the Far North Act, (which we were not invited to participate in as a stakeholder, but will continue to monitor in the interests of our members) and the second, the *Species At Risk Act* (SARA). To my mind, far too much of the MNR's human and financial resources have been dedicated to SARA, at a real cost to the Ministry's other programs, which have been compromised to balance the budget. What is even more frustrating is that the provincial legislation was not even necessary, given that we already have the federal Endangered Species Act. From the outset of the draft legislation, the O.F.A.H. argued that a provincial act would be redundant and would conflict with the federal act, and sure enough, we are already seeing that play out. The two levels of government have implemented contradictory regulations for species such as lake sturgeon and snapping turtle. I really hope that we can engage the Minister on this and other outstanding issues over the coming months.

On a positive note, I was delighted to attend the stocking of the two millionth Atlantic salmon into the Credit River at Belfountain in May, and was thrilled to hear Minister Jeffrey announce the rebuild of Normandale near Simcoe. I read it as a renewal of the Ministry's commitment to the province's fish culture program, something the O.F.A.H. has been pushing for, and a significant financial investment by the province. A modern facility at Normandale will provide great benefits to our shared initiative, the Lake Ontario Atlantic Salmon Restoration Program, which is arguably the most ambitious biodiversity project happening in this province today. Who can top the restoration of a species that has been locally extinct for over a hundred years?

Another positive announcement in the fisheries section is the extension of the summer Ontario Family Fishing Weekend to nine full days beginning this year. From July 3 through 11, Canadian citizens are free to fish without a license, which makes it a great time to take your spouse, a friend or neighbour out during one of the two available weekends, or even for an hour after work. If you belong to a club, or have a willing group, consider hosting an event in your community. I help out with the winter Pefferlaw OFFW event and it is truly one of the highlights of my year.

The O.F.A.H. represents 100,000 members, subscribers and supporters, and 670 member clubs, all of whom are passionate about the outdoors, about our natural resources and about their opportunities to spend time outside. I urge the Minister to see us as valuable and hardworking allies who are ready and willing to tackle the challenges that face us in the future.



The truth about the long gun registry

Mike Reader

Executive Director

Your Federation works hard on issues that threaten our heritage rights to fish and hunt. We aren't afraid to fight for what we believe is the right course of action, and we don't shy away from calling it like it is when it comes to bad policy or ineffective legislation. In the case of the long gun registry, we have done just that for more than a decade. We've repeatedly appealed to lawmakers, law enforcement agencies and politicians to reconsider their indefensible support of the ineffective and wasteful registry that has never been proven to save lives. Instead of the misinformation so often heard from the other side, we have provided *facts* to prove that there are far better ways to improve public safety and fight crime.

On May 26, we had the opportunity to present our case to the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security in support of Bill C-391, *An Act to amend the Criminal Code and the Firearms Act (repeal of long-gun registry)* authored by Manitoba M.P. Candice Hoepfner. Here are just a few of the facts we shared with the Standing Committee:

- A report co-authored by the Coalition for Gun Control states that two-thirds of the firearms in Canada, mostly handguns, are smuggled in from the US. In fact, the Vancouver Police Service has suggested that 97 percent of the firearms they encounter have been smuggled in to the country and do not reside in any database. Illegally obtained firearms will never be registered, nor will they be traceable until used in a crime, and they won't show up when a police officer checks the Canadian Firearms Registry On-Line (CFRO).
- The Firearms Act *does not require* that firearms be stored at the same address to which they have been registered. This is problematic for officers who rely on the registry when answering a call, and receive a report of "no firearms present." This would have been the case in Mayerthorpe, where four officers were tragically killed by a man who used three nonregistered and one borrowed registered firearm. Equally, in the case of Dawson College, all the firearms used by the criminal were registered but that did not prevent the appalling shooting.
- Police in several American states have found that a prohibited offenders registry (much like our sex offenders registry), has had more impact on reducing gun crime than chasing all firearms owners for paper infractions. With 400,000 similar offenders in Canada, including those on probation, a prohibited offenders registry that tracks those most likely to commit a gun crime is a better use of our financial resources.
- The suggestion that police consult the long gun registry 10,000 times a day is highly misleading. That number reflects *all hits* to the entire CFRO, including name, address and phone number checks and license verifications. Actual firearms registrations checks total no more than two dozen a day nationwide, according to information contained in the November, 2009 Report of the Firearms Commissioner. In 2003, registry specific inquiries represented 8.2 percent and by 2008 they accounted for only 2.4 percent of all inquiries.
- Claims that the registry has resulted in reductions in murders and suicides are not accurate. Mandatory long gun registration was introduced in 2003, yet spousal murders of all types had been decreasing since the 1970's. Homicide rates declined from the mid-1970's to 2002, then Statistics Canada reported that, despite the presence of the long gun registry, homicides with a firearm have escalated by 24 percent since 2002, reflecting the use of handguns and related gang activity.

The Standing Committee held three days of hearings, before deliberating on possible proposed changes to the bill. Despite having all of the information I've outlined here and much more, the Committee narrowly chose to send the bill back to the House of Commons with a negative recommendation. In other words, they refused to respect the wishes of the Canadian people to bring the bill back unamended and instead called for it to be dropped all together. This play, orchestrated by Liberal M.P. Mark Holland, Ajax-Pickering, and NDP M.P. Joe Comartin, Windsor-Tecumseh, was engineered to undermine a free and democratic vote on the Bill in the House of Commons. At the time of this writing, the outcome of the upcoming vote by our elected members of parliament is not known. Stay tuned.

Video coverage of the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security regarding Bill C-391 was posted on the CPAC website as we went to press.

To view the O.F.A.H. presentation by Greg Farrant, Manager of Government Affairs and Policy on May 26, go to www.cpac.ca and type "committee" in the search box of the "Video-on-Demand" section.

Angler & Hunter HOTLINE is produced exclusively for members of the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters.

It is available ten times per year. Please direct inquiries to:

Lezlie Goodwin, Manager of Communications, O.F.A.H., P.O. Box 2800, Peterborough, ON K9J 8L5
Phone 705-748-6324 Ext. 270 Fax 705-748-9577 Email ofah@ofah.org Visit www.ofah.org



Atlantic salmon program reaching another milestone

Rob Hare

President

On May 20th, we celebrated another major milestone in our effort to bring Atlantic salmon back to Lake Ontario. The Honourable Linda Jeffrey, Minister of Natural Resources accepted the invitation to release the ceremonial two millionth Atlantic salmon into the Credit River, and she was joined by many partners and supporters of the Lake Ontario Atlantic Salmon Restoration Program (LOASRP), including a group of enthusiastic school children.

If all goes according to plan, that ceremonial fish, along with more than 500,000 fry released this spring, will spend a year in the river before making their way to Lake Ontario to grow and mature. Eventually, the adult fish will return to the site of their release to spawn, and their young will start the cycle again. Over time, the goal is to create a self-sustaining population of Atlantic salmon in Lake Ontario and its tributaries. Spawning salmon have already been observed, an excellent indication that the effort is succeeding.

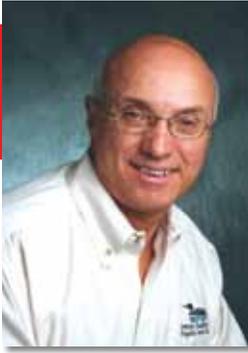
Since 2006, the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters (O.F.A.H.), the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) and more than 50 partners have been working to stock Atlantic salmon into three primary Lake Ontario tributaries; the Credit River, Duffins Creek and Cobourg Brook. The LOASRP is one of the largest fresh water conservation efforts in North America, with sponsors that have made news headlines for their environmental leadership. Australia's Banrock Station Wines, has contributed an amazing \$250,000 to the program annually, \$1.25 million dollars over five years. It is their largest environmental commitment outside Australia. Closer to home, the LCBO has contributed \$50,000 annually over five years.

The Fish For Ever Foundation (formerly Fishing Forever) has sponsored Fleming College to enable students in the fish and wildlife program to raise hundreds of thousands of Atlantic salmon at the college's hatchery in Lindsay. The Canadian Sportfishing Industry Association has also provided important industry support. Several Conservation Authorities have provided valuable in-kind support, and the Toronto Region Conservation Authority Foundation recently allocated part of the proceeds of a major Earth Day fundraising event in Pickering to the Atlantic salmon program. We couldn't ask for better partners.

Come 2011, the first phase of this 20-year initiative will conclude and we'll move into Phase two, which will bring exciting additions to the program. The province has committed to begin a significant rebuild of the Normandale Fish Culture Station, which will enhance its capability to provide Atlantic salmon production stock. New tributaries will be added, increasing not only the opportunity to stock salmon, but also the chance to engage the public in this historic conservation effort. The classroom hatchery program has the potential to reach thousands more children, and give them a better understanding of how they can help improve their environment.

It will take several more years of production, stocking, research and monitoring before the Atlantic salmon populations we are stocking today will be ready to take over on their own, but already, the program is showing impressive, measurable success.

The United Nations has declared 2010 the International Year of Biodiversity. It seems fitting that we make every effort to bring Atlantic salmon, once a common sight in Lake Ontario and its tributaries, back to our waters for this and future generations to enjoy.



Long gun registry on last legs?

Mike Reader

Executive Director

Throughout May, the O.F.A.H. and others are appearing before the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security on Bill C-391, an act to repeal the long gun registry. The Committee began hearing from witnesses on May 4, 2010, and will conclude that portion of the debate on May 27, 2010. In total, 33 witnesses will appear, roughly half in favor of the bill, the others opposed to the legislation.

To date, the Committee hearings have been extremely volatile, with opposition members on the Committee, none of whom voted in favor of the bill last fall, attempting to hijack the process, or at the very least, making things difficult for witnesses, including the bill's sponsor, Manitoba MP Candice Hoepfner. Witnesses still to be heard from include Greg Farrant, O.F.A.H. Manager, Government Relations, Canadian Shooting Sports Association, academic firearms expert Dr. Gary Mauser, and the Saskatchewan Federation of Police Officers, all who support the bill, and the Coalition for Gun Control and the Canadians Association of Chiefs of Police who oppose the bill.

Further complicating the hearings on the bill are recent decisions by Liberal leader Michael Ignatieff. Mr. Ignatieff has announced what he believes is a 'compromise', that among other things, would see the registry continue, but failure to register would no longer be a criminal offense. He claims that this would remove the main opposition to the registry by legal, law abiding firearms owners, and satisfy the concerns of rural Canada. Not only is the suggested compromise unacceptable to the O.F.A.H. and the majority of firearms owner in Canada, it has been found to be unconstitutional. So much for compromise.

The second step taken by Mr. Ignatieff was to announce that all members of the Liberal caucus will be expected to vote against the bill on Third Reading. In other words, the eight Liberal MP's who supported the bill last fall, are being told to vote with the party against the bill, or else. The loss of those eight votes, while problematic, will not give the opposition enough votes to kill the bill, as long as NDP leader Jack Layton sticks to his promise of allowing a free vote for his members.

It's fascinating to hear the argument from opposition members in committee that because the registry only costs taxpayers a few million a year now, as opposed to the almost \$2 billion in cumulative costs by 2012, it would be foolish to scrap it. How is that a measurable indicator of its success? The Auditor General of Canada found that the system neither saves lives nor enhances public safety. What sense does it make to continue using taxpayers money to prop up a failed system, no matter what the cost?

Despite the recent media attention afforded Toronto Police Chief Bill Blair in his rants against Bill C-391, many front line officers across Canada tell us that the registry doesn't work, and that they would not trust their lives to it, despite what Blair says. The registry is riddled with inconsistencies and errors, and any officer who believes the information provided to them from the long gun registry is placing their life at risk.

The O.F.A.H. supports licensing of individuals to own a firearm, mandatory firearms safety training, safe storage and transportation regulations, with the ability to refuse or revoke licenses if and when appropriate. Our fight is, and always has been, solely with the long gun registry that requires each long gun to be registered whenever it is purchased or traded. It is merely a list, which is riddled with errors and inconsistencies, and does nothing to protect the public. It targets law abiding citizens instead of lawbreakers and does nothing to help track the over 400,000 individuals who are prohibited from owning a firearm by virtue of past crimes and convictions.

A decade into this fight, one of the strongest critics of Bill C-391, the Coalition for Gun Control, continues to demonstrate that they still don't know the difference between licensing and registration, as evidenced in a recent article in the Hill Times where they suggested that the REGISTRATION system was responsible for refusing or revoking 23,000 licenses. The Coalition's fundamental misunderstanding is disturbing, given their continued support for a badly flawed system they don't even comprehend.

At press time, it is unclear when the bill will return to the House of Commons for Third Reading. If all goes well, it will be voted on in late June, but more likely, the opposition parties will stall the vote until early this fall. It is critical that if you support Bill C-391 that you contact your local MP, no matter which party they represent, and let them know that you expect them to vote their conscience and support the bill. The vote, whenever it occurs, will be close. After over a decade of fighting to rid ourselves of this noose around the necks of legal, law abiding firearms owners, hunters, farmers and recreational sport shooters, it is imperative that we not give up the fight with the finish line in sight.



Proud time to be an O.F.A.H. member

Rob Hare

President

More than 400 members attended the 82nd O.F.A.H. Annual General Meeting and Fish & Wildlife Conference this year, a great turnout for a terrific event. I came away with a better understanding of important issues, such as the Algonquin land claim negotiation, the listing of sturgeon as a species at risk, and the impact on anglers and hunters of the new organizational structure of the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR).

Candice Hoepfner, MP for Portage-Lisgar, Manitoba and author of Bill C-391, an act to repeal the long gun registry, was an engaging keynote speaker, as she walked us through the crucial next steps for her bill, which if passed, would finally relieve legal, law abiding firearms owners across Canada of the costly, inefficient and burdensome long gun registry. Firearms owners need to make sure that our MP's know that we support this bill and that we expect our political representatives to do the same.

It is a long-standing tradition to have the Minister of Natural Resources attend the conference to give a presentation, do a Question and Answer session, and present the MNR Youth Conservation Award. Linda Jeffrey, the new Minister, agreed to two of the three, but begged off the Q and A this year, with a commitment to return and answer questions next year. While she offered no new programs or financial support in her speech, Ms. Jeffrey did confirm that an Environmental Assessment for wild turkey will begin on Manitoulin in the coming months and that her ministry is aware that "moose hunters don't want to grow old waiting for a tag." Unfortunately, she also referenced the fact that farmers will shortly have an opportunity to apply for elk kill permits, an overreaction on the part of the Ministry that undercuts the elk restoration program that the O.F.A.H. and many others have worked long and hard to achieve. She also confirmed that the new Harmonized Sales Tax will, in fact, apply to outdoor licenses, (which means a price increase come July), but said that despite the extra tax, "the revenue from licences will continue to be directed into the Special Purpose Account".

Dr. Randall Eaton's talk, A Celebration of Hunting, was definitely a highlight for me, and judging by the warm reception he received, for everyone else in the room. Dr. Eaton's insights into the role of hunting as a right of male adolescent passage were powerful, as were his ideas for promoting hunting in an increasingly nonhunting culture, and his views on how we can increase recruitment. We will be looking to build on some of his ideas in the future.

I took in the Toronto Sportsmen's Show on Saturday afternoon, and I thoroughly enjoyed it. Attendance figures have proven that the move to the Metro Toronto Convention Centre was the right one. The larger venue offers real potential to grow, and your Federation experienced that this year, with record membership sales at the show. In both the O.F.A.H. fishing and hunting hall booths, staff were kept busy meeting a large crowd of interested anglers and hunters, many of whom took the opportunity to join the O.F.A.H. while enjoying the show.

As information-packed as the conference was, it covered only a small fraction of the work your O.F.A.H. Board of Directors, zones, advisory committees, member clubs, individuals, and head office staff were involved in during 2009. The O.F.A.H. 2009 Annual Report provides an in-depth summary of all the programs and projects your federation is involved in on your behalf, and is now available online at www.ofah.org/report. You can choose to view the full report, or just one section. Feel free to share the URL with others too.

I want to finish with a few words about the new O.F.A.H./Mario Cortellucci Hunting and Fishing Heritage Centre, which is truly incredible. It is equal parts entertaining and educational, and 100 percent inspiring, not only to anglers and hunters, but to anyone with an appreciation for our natural resources. Important fish and wildlife conservation messages are going to be shared through this venue for years to come, which is good news for outdoors enthusiasts. If you do nothing else this summer, I urge you to plan a visit to the centre, and bring along your children, grandchildren, friends, and club associates. You'll be glad you did.



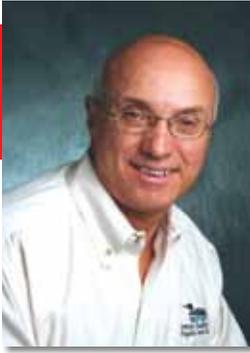
The O.F.A.H. 2009 Annual Report is available at www.ofah.org/report

Angler & Hunter HOTLINE is produced exclusively for members of the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters.

It is available ten times per year. Please direct inquiries to:

Lezlie Goodwin, Communications Coordinator, O.F.A.H., P.O. Box 2800, Peterborough, ON K9J 8L5

Phone 705-748-6324 Ext. 270 Fax 705-748-9577 Email ofah@ofah.org Visit www.ofah.org



FMZ 17 regulations can work for all

Mike Reader

Executive Director

In January 2010, the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) introduced new Fisheries Management Zone 17 (FMZ) regulations, which for the first time in eighty years provides for an all year fishery in the Kawarthas for yellow perch, black crappie, northern pike, and sunfish. Sport fishing licence holders are able to catch and possess a limit of 300 sunfish, 30 of which may be greater than 18cm (7.1 inches). Conservation license holders have a possession limit of 15 sunfish, any size.

The change came about after extensive input, most notably from the FMZ 17 Advisory Council, one of three pilot councils formed in 2008, as part of the new provincial Ecological Framework for Fisheries Management. The council is comprised of several stakeholder groups, including the O.F.A.H., which is highly supportive of the changes. The overharvest of larger sunfish can contribute to the stunted growth of populations, due to the opportunity for smaller sunfish to spawn, and therefore, devote more energy to spawning rather than growth. Managing for quality-sized sunfish means incorporating regulations to protect a number of larger sunfish from being harvested. We also support the harvest limit of 300 sunfish per angler, as it regulates sunfish populations.

The O.F.A.H. supports the creation of a year round fishery for these species because it allows for greater angler opportunities and will contribute to the recruitment of new anglers. In many ways, ice fishing is not only easily accessible, but may require less financial investment on the part of the beginning angler. Winter fishing also makes a great family activity and will provide additional economic return for local bait shops and tackle stores, at a time of year when business is traditionally slower in many cottage and tourist areas of the province. In fact, the benefit to local businesses and area residents was one of the key factors behind the Ministry's decision to move to year round fishing in the zone.

Unfortunately, a small group of tourist operators in the Kawarthas have suggested that the recent regulation change to FMZ 17 will cause a decline in U.S. tourists on lakes within FMZ 17, and on Rice Lake in particular. At the heart of their disagreement with the change is the new possession limit of 300 sunfish per angler, which they believe will jeopardize the fishery and hurt their business during the summer months. They have suggested instead that the limit be raised to 500 with the fishery restricted to six months a year, an idea founded not on science, but on self-interest.

Based on statistics from the 2005 Survey of Recreational Fishing in Canada produced by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, there were 1.4 million licenced anglers in Ontario (not including those under 16 and over 65 who are not required to be licenced). Of these, two thirds were Ontario residents, the rest from out of province or from the United States. Licence fees alone contributed almost \$39 million to the province's Special Purpose Account (SPA). Rice Lake is the sixth largest fishery in the province, and the Kawartha Lakes region is second only to Lake Huron in terms of popularity for recreational fishing. With the addition of year round fishing in the Kawarthas, these numbers are expected to grow significantly. The economic benefit to local businesses is also significant, with the Rice Lake fishery worth at least \$50 million.

The creation of a year round fishery in the Kawarthas was a long time coming, and was the result of extensive hearings through the FMZ council. It also recognizes a new brand of tourism, which attracts as many Ontarians to the area as it does those from out of province. Depending solely on the influx of American anglers, particularly at a time of economic uncertainty, ignores the huge potential of the market here at home. Witness the success of the Bridgenorth Winter Panfish Festival on Chemong Lake this past January, which attracted 1,000 participants during Ontario Family Fishing Weekend, 600 of these being children experiencing ice fishing for the first time. What better way to bring families together, to enjoy time in the great outdoors, and introduce a new generation to the joys of fishing.

Aside from Lake Simcoe, Rice Lake is one of the area's most notable destinations for anglers, and the ability to fish year round will, in our view, enhance this reputation and bring more business to the area. Over time, we hope that the small number of tourist operators on Rice Lake who are seeking to derail this great new opportunity will come to see it not as a detriment, but as an important recreational and economic benefit for all.



Keeping the invaders at bay

Rob Hare

President

Asian carp have been getting a lot of press lately. These invasive species (actually bighead and silver carp, but referred to collectively as Asian carp) are making media headlines in the US and Canada, because their migration into Lake Michigan could spell disaster for the fisheries resources of the Great Lakes.

Our invading species biologist tells me that Asian carp were brought over from China in the 1970's to the southern US. Flooding in the early 1990's allowed the fish to escape into the Mississippi River and since then, the carp have been migrating northward, with devastating consequences to native fish along much of the way. Our best, and likely only defence, is to prevent Asian carp from ever making its way into Lake Michigan.

Last fall, our O.F.A.H./MNR Invading Species Awareness Program (ISAP) manager was invited to join the Canadian team (led by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada with Ministry of Natural Resources participation) that headed to Chicago to help with the international Asian Carp response effort. Over 40 agencies, and 400 people were involved in preventing Asian carp from advancing, while the electric barrier in the Chicago Ship and Sanitary Canal that keeps invasives out of Lake Michigan, was down for essential maintenance. It remains to be seen whether legal actions, now underway by Michigan, several US states, and the province of Ontario, will be successful in getting the canal closed permanently, which would cut off the primary route enabling carp and other invasive species, to reach the Great Lakes from the Mississippi drainage basin.

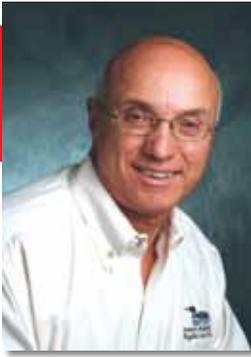
Of course, Asian carp aren't our only problem. We're at risk from other known and unknown invasive species – aquatic as well as terrestrial – and every invader has the potential to be an ecological and economic disaster. Governments are spending billions of dollars annually just to control the spread of those species that have already become established.

It isn't all doom and gloom. The O.F.A.H./MNR Invading Species Awareness Program (ISAP) is leading a highly successful campaign to raise awareness about invasive species in Ontario. It was one of the first public education initiatives on the scene, more than 20 years ago, in response to the discovery of the invasive zebra mussel in the Great Lakes. At that time, few Canadians had ever heard of invasive species, and little if anything was being done to prevent their entry into Canadian lands and waters. The O.F.A.H., however, was quick to identify this new threat to our natural resources, and formed a partnership with the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources to launch a public education and awareness program.

What started as a small outreach and education initiative now reaches five million Ontarians annually, through its Invading Species Hotline, well-visited interactive website and online tracking system, hundreds of Invading Species Watch lake volunteers, invasive species "Hit Squad" of summer students working province wide, plus educational materials, public service announcements, media stories and more.

The world is getting smaller and goods now travel to us from virtually every corner of the world. Unfortunately, many species of plants, animals and fish are able to hitch hike with incoming shipments and without natural predators, these guests settle in and put our native species at huge risk by out competing for food and habitat.

Our natural biodiversity is at stake, and with it, a way of life that outdoors enthusiasts are particularly passionate about. Programs like ISAP must continue to be supported and expanded if we want to keep invasive species where they belong - out of Ontario's lands and waters.



Celebrating our proud heritage

Mike Reader

Executive Director

For the past two years, a scene has been unfolding outside my office. Construction crews have been onsite daily, building the long-awaited heritage centre next door to the O.F.A.H. Head Office and Conservation Centre. Their work is finished. Where there was a construction site, there now stands the beautiful O.F.A.H./Mario Cortellucci Hunting & Fishing Heritage Centre—the perfect stage for the story of our outdoor traditions.

This month, we proudly throw open the doors and welcome all to see the result of our collective dream, one that began 20 years ago. It wasn't an easy project for a nonprofit organization to undertake; it took many people to keep the vision alive, including lifetime O.F.A.H. member David Wilson, who generously bequeathed the land on which the centre now stands. Your Board of Directors, zones, many clubs and others have contributed. There is one man though, more than anyone, who is responsible for making our dream a reality.

A passionate hunter, philanthropist and O.F.A.H. member, Mario Cortellucci recognized the value of creating a centre where we could celebrate the important role that Europeans and indigenous peoples have played in opening up this great country, and to educate visitors about our passion for fishing and hunting. To support this ideal, Mr. Cortellucci made a monumental commitment to the O.F.A.H., and to the outdoor community in general, by donating two million dollars to the construction of the building. We are thankful for his vision and generosity, and are proud to name the centre in his honor.

Others have played a key role in the completion of the centre. People such as Don McVittie who has sponsored many of the wildlife displays; O.F.A.H. zones, clubs and individuals have contributed much needed financial resources to help complete the displays. Corporations have also come forward, including the Toronto Sportsmen's Show and Shimano.

Speaking for everyone who has been involved in this process, we are excited to finally share this wonderful centre with you, and we hope that you will be as proud as we are of what has been accomplished. As with all ambitious projects, however, it is still very much a work in progress. The bones are there in this fine facility, but there is more we want to do.

Since one of the key objectives of the heritage centre is to educate visitors about the important role that anglers and hunters have played in fish and wildlife conservation in North America, we are developing content that ties in with the provincial school curriculum. We hope to incorporate the centre with the proven O.F.A.H. Get Outdoors youth program, and we are planning to expand the Centre beyond the walls, by developing Internet materials and classroom loaner kits. Our goal is to offer schools across the province a great learning opportunity, even if they aren't able to physically visit the centre. The possibilities are endless and we are eager to get started, but I am getting ahead of myself.

Beginning April 10, we invite you to come and experience the heritage centre - your centre. Take in the spectacular Shimano sport fish aquarium, watch a short film in the state-of-the-art Toronto Sportsmen's Show Amphitheatre, and interact with the wildlife and ecosystem dioramas. Visit the "cabin," where the early tools of our outdoor traditions are assembled, and much more.

The O.F.A.H./Mario Cortellucci Hunting & Fishing Heritage Centre is an exceptional opportunity to educate Canadians about the contributions that anglers and hunters have made, and continue to make, in conserving our valuable natural resources. Our story needed to be told, and now it will be. Thank you, and enjoy.

Angler & Hunter HOTLINE is produced exclusively for members of the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters.

It is available ten times per year. Please direct inquiries to:

Lezlie Goodwin, Communications Coordinator, O.F.A.H., P.O. Box 2800, Peterborough, ON K9J 8L5

Phone 705-748-6324 Ext. 270 Fax 705-748-9577 Email ofah@ofah.org Visit www.ofah.org



Old favorites, new additions to this year's conference

Rob Hare

President

I always look forward to attending our annual conference. It's a chance to reconnect with people that I only see once a year, and to meet new some new people who love the outdoors as much as I do.

It's great to talk to delegates who have not attended conference before—they are usually blown out of the water by the scope of O.F.A.H. involvement in fish and wildlife conservation, and by the effectiveness of our advocacy for hunting and fishing traditions.

I learn a lot from the informal conversations that happen in the hall during breaks, over dinner, and in the hospitality suite. Every year I come away with some new ideas to take to my local club, and I hope that our club has occasionally returned the favor.

Conference is also an opportunity to discuss ideas and issues with staff from the Ministry of Natural Resources. Even though we're sometimes at odds about how best to manage our fish and wildlife, I believe that they share our passion and commitment, and I appreciate that from the Minister on down, they take the time to attend and to give presentations.

I have noticed that more and more representatives from outdoor organizations across the country have begun attending our conference, including the Canadian Wildlife Federation and our provincial affiliates. This gives us the invaluable opportunity to network, and it gives me the chance to showcase for them just what the O.F.A.H. accomplishes on behalf of its members.

The real "meat" of conference though, is the always impressive line up of speakers, and this year's agenda is no exception. On Friday morning, the new Minister of Natural Resources, the Honourable Linda Jeffrey, will speak to delegates, followed by a question and answer period, in which O.F.A.H. members have the opportunity to question the minister on issues of concern to them. Friday afternoon our Executive Director, Mike Reader will deliver his always impressive "Year in Review." Mike's summary of head office activities provides real insight into the incredible breadth of projects and issues the O.F.A.H. is tackling on our behalf, and is a must-attend event, in my opinion. Be sure to take away an O.F.A.H. Annual Report as well. At almost 100 pages, it provides a summary of the year's accomplishments and challenges. Members, look for it online too.

On Saturday morning, noted author and hunting advocate, Randall Eaton will talk about the importance of hunting in raising our sons to be "men of heart." As someone who hopes to pass on my love of hunting to my grandson Ayden, I am eager to hear Dr. Eaton's insights. At the gala on Saturday, the keynote speaker is none other than MP Candice Hoepfner, the woman who introduced the private member's bill to scrap the long gun registry. With the bill through Second Reading, Ms. Hoepfner has taken this cause further than anyone before her, and I am eager to hear her speak about what comes next.

New to conference this year are "rapid fire" sessions. Speakers will have just fifteen minutes to bring us up to date on the highlights of their project, program, cause or issue. What a terrific addition to an always interesting agenda.

The Toronto Sportsmen's Show promises to be bigger and better than ever at its new home, the Metro Toronto Convention Centre. I know I'll be impressed by what the outdoors industry has produced to increase our odds in the field and on the water, and I'm hoping to catch several of the sessions scheduled for the O.F.A.H. Hunting Hall Stage in the Ontario OUT OF DOORS Hunting Hall. It doesn't get any better than a line up of the top experts sharing their insider tips and tricks on how to get the most out of our time in the outdoors.

Conference gets me excited about what I do for conservation, and what others are doing. There is no other event, that I know of, that draws upwards of 500 people, offers informative presentations, provides great food and entertainment, celebrates conservation and those who are most committed to restoring, protecting and managing our natural resources.

I can't wait to get to conference. If you see me in the corridors, on the bus, in the dining hall, or at the Toronto Sportsmen's Show, please stop and say hello. I need some ideas to take back to my club.



Sweeping changes at MNR

Mike Reader

Executive Director

In my column last month, I included a brief update about the sweeping organizational changes just announced by the Ministry of Natural Resources. We knew very little about the move at that time, except that it would almost certainly impact the delivery of fish and wildlife policy and programming, and at some level, anglers and hunters. In the very next week, there was a cabinet shuffle, and Linda Jeffrey, MPP for Brampton-Springdale was appointed our new Minister of Natural Resources. This is the Minister's first cabinet position, although she has held her riding since 2003 and is well versed in the legislative process. On behalf of our members, we have extended congratulations to Minister Jeffrey, via a phone call and in correspondence, and have assured her that we are a strong ally when it comes to the conservation of our fish and wildlife resources and the protection of hunting and fishing traditions.

A few weeks in, we're better briefed on the "realignment," as the MNR calls it, but like you, we are anxious to see how the new business model will work in the real world. Some of the changes appear to make sense, while others could be detrimental.

Here's how the new structure looks: one deputy minister will oversee five divisions, two of which got pieces of the former Fish and Wildlife Branch: Provincial Services and Policy. Under Provincial Services, a new section called Fish and Wildlife Services contains several fisheries efforts, and Marketing and Client Services, that will handle licensing, but also becomes the unlikely home of the province's hunter education program and wild turkey education courses.

Gone in the realignment is the Natural Resources Management Division, which housed the Fish and Wildlife Branch. At this point, that is a concern. It was the branch that angler and hunters most related to, and its splintering raises the possibility that outdoor issues will become marginalized. I can assure that we are watching, and will be responding strongly, should there be any sign of this happening.

The creation of a Policy Division may yield positive results. Bringing all policy makers together under one "roof," accountable to one director, may make sense. Fish and Wildlife policy falls under the Biodiversity branch, which, given the successful track record of O.F.A.H./MNR partnerships in such biodiversity-driven initiatives as the Invading Species Awareness Program and Lake Ontario Atlantic Salmon Restoration Program, could be a positive move.

The MNR has been hit with multiple changes over a short period of time. Just months ago, forestry, which represented a large proportion of the MNR, was moved over to Northern Mines and Development. The appointment of a new minister always brings a period of fluctuation, and the realignment will take time to implement. Combined, these changes mean a major shake up for the MNR. As the ministry's largest stakeholder and an important partner, we are heavily invested in how this will all play out for anglers and hunters.

For now, your federation is reserving judgment. We respect the government's right to make changes in order to improve its delivery, for the benefit of taxpayers and more importantly, for our natural resources. We know that Minister Jeffrey will need some time to get up to speed on the many issues and concerns in her portfolio. We also know that anglers and hunters are the backbone of our fish and wildlife conservation efforts in this province, both financially and through their significant volunteer contributions.

As the dust settles at the MNR, your Federation will be making sure that no one loses sight of our rightful place in the policy development and management of our fish and wildlife.

Angler & Hunter HOTLINE is produced exclusively for members of the ON Federation of Anglers and Hunters.

It is available ten times per year. Please direct inquiries to:

Lezlie Goodwin, Communications Coordinator, O.F.A.H., P.O. Box 2800, Peterborough, ON K9J 8L5

Phone 705-748-6324 Ext. 270 Fax 705-748-9577 Email ofah@ofah.org Visit www.ofah.org



Your membership matters

Rob Hare

President

Outside of family, there is nothing more important to me than spending time in the outdoors. It's how I recharge my batteries. My passion for the outdoors is the reason I joined the O.F.A.H. so many years ago, and it's why I'm still a committed volunteer. As O.F.A.H. president, I get to meet hundreds of O.F.A.H. members over the course of the year. It isn't long before we're talking about the latest fishing or hunting issue and what our Federation is doing about it. It's a strong bond we share, and I don't know where the outdoor community would be without the O.F.A.H.

Despite the tough economy in 2009, O.F.A.H. membership numbers defied the odds and hit a historic high. I'm sure this is due in part because members know that there is strength in numbers. All anglers and hunters benefit from a strong Federation, and in my opinion, no other outdoors organization accomplishes as much as we do. When it comes to standing up for our heritage traditions, and the wise management of our natural resources, the O.F.A.H. truly is the VOICE of anglers and hunters.

The fact that we speak for 100,000 outdoor enthusiasts enables the O.F.A.H. to be at the table for fish and wildlife policy and management decisions at all levels of government, supported by the Federation's professional resources, including biologists and government relations experts. We fight to ensure that the conservation of our natural resources gets the money and manpower it deserves, and we're fierce advocates of our traditional hunting and fishing rights.

As a membership based organization, we're keenly aware of how important it is to spend your money wisely, where it will do the most good for conservation. It helps that as a nonprofit charitable organization we can often attract matching contributions through grants, enabling us to make the most of every donation. It's donations that enable us to run many O.F.A.H. conservation programs, including the O.F.A.H./MNR Invading Species Awareness Program, Lake Ontario Atlantic Salmon Restoration Program, O.F.A.H./Toronto Sportsmen's Show Ringwood Hatchery, Community Stream Stewardship Program, Ontario Invasive Plant Council, walleye enhancement, the O.F.A.H. Get Outdoors youth program and WOW (Women's Outdoor Weekend), and the list goes on.

There are personal benefits to O.F.A.H. membership too, like the \$3 million dollars liability insurance coverage for a hunting and fishing related accident claim, should I ever need it. Just knowing that it's there gives me great peace of mind. I also look forward to receiving *Ontario OUT OF DOORS* magazine regularly in my mailbox, with the members-only *HOTLINE* section that highlights Federation activities and issues of importance to our members. Knowing the best outdoor publication out there (in my view) is Federation owned, gives me a real sense of pride. I also enjoy using my O.F.A.H. discounts at Marks Work Wearhouse, Pioneer Petroleum stations, the Brick and other retailers that support the O.F.A.H. and I make an effort to show my appreciation to those corporations that put their money where it makes a real difference - the conservation of our natural resources.

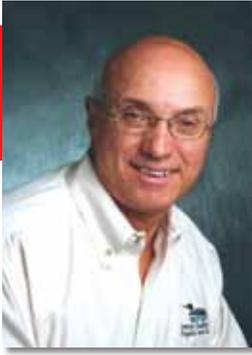
Your ongoing loyalty to the Federation and to conservation is the reason we continue to be so effective, even in these difficult times. I know I speak for the Board of Directors and staff when I tell you that we don't take your loyalty lightly. We share your passion for the outdoors and feel privileged to work on your behalf.

In the coming months, I hope you'll make the decision to continue to support your Federation. Consider asking a friend to join too. O.F.A.H. membership does matter.

Angler & Hunter HOTLINE is produced exclusively for members of the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters.

It is available ten times per year. Please direct inquiries to:

Lezlie Goodwin, Communications Coordinator, O.F.A.H., P.O. Box 2800, Peterborough, ON K9J 8L5
Phone 705-748-6324 Ext. 270 Fax 705-748-9577 Email ofah@ofah.org Visit www.ofah.org



Some old, some new challenges for 2010

Mike Reader

Executive Director

UPDATE:

As *HOTLINE* went to press, we were informed that the Ministry of Natural Resources will undergo unprecedented organizational changes. No further details were available, but watch the March issue for a complete breakdown of what lies in store for the Ministry.

Every new year should start with a clean slate. It gives us renewed energy and a fresh sense of purpose. Unfortunately, not every issue can be resolved by year end, and 2009 was no exception.

In December, we warned that the Liberal government's new Harmonized Sales Tax (HST) might be applied to Outdoor cards and fishing and hunting licenses. We've repeatedly voiced our concerns about this to Minister Cansfield, but her response continues to be vague, and at press time, we are still awaiting clarity on whether the outdoor fees will be exempt from the new HST. Outdoor cards and licenses have always been PST exempt, but as we interpret the notice in the 2010 Recreational Fishing Regulations Summary, anglers and hunters may be hit with an 8% increase in fees come July. We don't want to see outdoors enthusiasts burdened with any new taxes, but at the very least, we want the Minister's assurance that the new provincial portion of the HST will be allocated back to the Special Purpose Account for the fish and wildlife program. Anything less will be considered a tax grab on the backs of anglers and hunters.

Ongoing challenges aside, 2010 is shaping up well.

January 1 brought winter fishing to the Kawartha, Durham and Northumberland regions, and residents, including me, are taking advantage of the chance to ice fish near home. It's been more than 80 years since there was a winter season in the area, and I take my toque off to the many who made it possible. The O.F.A.H. has been pushing for this for several years now, but change is always a process, and this process was brought along by the Advisory Council of Fisheries Management Zone (FMZ) 17. The council provided valuable local input to the new regulations, and is to be highly commended for assisting the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) in bringing this terrific recreational and economic opportunity to the region. The new FMZ 17 management plan also brings changes to walleye, sunfish and muskie regulations to balance angler demand with the protection of these stocks for the future.

Late in 2009, the MNR introduced its elk management plan, which includes the opportunity for a controlled harvest, particularly in the Bancroft North Hastings area. This would help resolve nuisance elk issues in isolated areas, and would eliminate any need for a kill permit to be issued. Hopefully, we'll see the plan approved and implemented in time for the first elk season of the 21st century. In the absence of a hunt in 2010, we are looking for the Minister's assurance that no kill permits will be issued. To waste even one of these magnificent animals flies in the face of the huge effort that the MNR, the O.F.A.H. and so many others have undertaken to restore them to the province.

This may be the year we see the end of the long gun registry. After a decade of fighting this wasteful and misguided legislation, Candice Hoepfner's private member's Bill C-391 will move to committee in March when Parliament resumes. There is still a long way to go, but I am cautiously optimistic that 2010 will be the year we see the registry finally scrapped, paving the way for more effective measures to protect public safety.

In the coming months, your Federation will be urging governments at all levels to take decisive action to prevent the devastating invasion of Asian carp into our Great Lakes. We'll be consulting with the MNR on a provincial review of small game regulations, policies and programs. In Manitoulin, we'll be monitoring as an environmental assessment gets underway, part of the process of a promised release of wild turkeys and pheasants there. Moose hunters across the province can expect to be consulted by the MNR on an improved moose tag allocation system, as well as possible changes to wildlife management unit populations objectives. The O.F.A.H. will be working to ensure that the MNR's Enhanced Black Bear Management Strategy is implemented this year, and includes opportunities for hunter involvement in the new area-specific black bear population objectives. We'll be working on dozens of other concerns, like these, on behalf of our members and the broader angling and hunting community.

I am looking forward to all that lies ahead in 2010, and ask that you continue to work with us, your fellow O.F.A.H. members, clubs, zones and Board of Directors and staff, to provide essential support for the conservation of our precious fish and wildlife. Collectively, we are the voice of anglers and hunters.

O.F.A.H. Media Programs



**Ontario
OUT OF
DOORS**



Follow us on:



twitter



www.ofah.org

Your OFAH membership helps support these important initiatives across Ontario:

CONSERVATION

Wild Turkey Restoration
Atlantic Salmon Restoration
Elk Restoration
OFAH/MNR Invading Species Awareness Program
Community Stream Steward Program
OFAH Walleye Research and Stocking
OFAH/Toronto Sportsmen's Show
Ringwood Fish Culture Station

EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

OFAH Get Outdoors Summer Camps
OFAH TackleShare presented by Ontario Power Generation
Ontario Family Fishing Weekends
Ontario Hunter Education Program
Ontario Wild Turkey Hunter Education Seminars
Ontario Angler Awards
Women's Outdoor Weekends

ADVOCACY

For enhanced hunting and fishing opportunities
For fair sharing of fish and wildlife resources
For scrapping the long gun registry
For effective cormorant control programs
For species conservation and enhancement
For new Sunday gun hunting opportunities
For better black bear management, including an early season hunt
For fighting inappropriate "discharge of firearms" bylaws
For improved moose and deer tag allocation
For awareness of the economic & cultural value of hunting and fishing

COMMUNICATIONS

Ontario OUT OF DOORS magazine
Angler & Hunter HOTLINE section for OFAH members
Angler & Hunter Television
OFAH Annual Conference
OFAH Zone meetings



www.ofah.org



The VOICE of anglers and hunters



www.ofah.org