

President's Report



The past year has once again proven to be both busy and full of challenges for the OFAH Board of Directors and head office staff. It is impossible for me to convey everything that your Federation has been working on in such a short space. Please take the time to read this full annual report, and share it with your family and friends.

The year included the retirement of Mike Reader and the appointment of Angelo Lombardo as Executive Director. Angelo has proven to be a great choice as Mike's successor, and has provided us with a seamless transition of authority, which was very important given the number of pressing issues we were and are dealing with. During the year, we also experienced other retirements from our head office staff, including the retirement of John Kerr as editor-in-chief of Ontario OUT OF DOORS magazine and, more recently, Nancy Cator who has been on staff for the past 35 years. We were again fortunate to have excellent replacements for both of these long-time staffers. From within the ranks, John's position was filled by former OFAH Manager of Communications, Lezlie Goodwin, and Nancy's job was filled by Jane Beggs, who has been a part of our membership and administrative staff for over 25 years. We wish all of those who have retired this past year good luck and good health in the years to come, and congratulate their successors who are settling in to their new roles admirably.

Over the past year, one of the biggest issues we have been working on is the Algonquin Land Claim, which is now making its way through the political and public arenas. The OFAH has been involved in discussions around this claim for over two decades. To say that we are less than pleased with the lack of public consultation and failure to consider changes to the Agreement-in-Principle (AIP) is an understatement. During 2012, the OFAH was given the opportunity, along with a small group of stakeholders, to review a draft of the harvest chapter and provide input. On several occasions, the OFAH also met with the Algonquins and their legal counsel to reinforce the need for fair sharing of the resources. Unfortunately, very few of our proposed changes were incorporated into the AIP. As I write this, we continue to meet with both levels of government in an effort to make changes to the document, and to press for comprehensive public consultations on the agreement BEFORE it is signed. Of particular concern are issues related to fair sharing, access, and loss of Crown land.

The Algonquin Land Claim was not the only significant development in 2012 that directly involved the First Nations and aboriginal rights. In late October, both levels of government returned to federal court in support of a review of the Williams Treaty, under which seven First Nations communities gave up their traditional hunting and fishing rights. In 1994, the OFAH was part of a case at the Supreme Court that upheld the Treaty, and we will continue to support the 1994 decision, possibly through legal channels.

Another notable development in 2012 involved the downsizing of the MNR as part of the larger cost reduction strategy of the Ontario government. Although many of the changes will not be evident until some time in 2013, cuts to a number of programs and changes in the way that the Ministry does business began in earnest in 2012. The new Licensing Automated System (LAS) left many anglers and hunters, as well as licence issuers, very frustrated with the many months of system problems, fewer licence issuers in the province, and the added costs absorbed by the SPA with all of our licences coming from a United States provider. Another cost saving measure was the scrapping of notices to holders of expiring Outdoors Cards. At a time when the MNR is looking for ideas to increase revenue, the possibility of having hundreds, if not thousands of Outdoors Cards expire not only affects the bottom line, but could result in anglers and hunters in possession of expired cards.

The news for 2012 was not all bad. The first ever National Fish and Wildlife Conservation Congress, organized by the OFAH, was a major success. The partnerships that were developed with major conservation, hunting and fishing organizations on both sides of the border in support of the congress helped to raise the profile of the OFAH across North America and beyond. From a program perspective, our award-winning Invasive Species Awareness Program continued to demonstrate why it is one of our flagship programs, and we are pleased to have signed another five year agreement with the MNR to work cooperatively to deliver this program. The Hunter Education Program, which the OFAH delivers on behalf of the province, continued the trend of teaching more new students every year for the past decade.

I would like to close by thanking all head office staff for their hard work this past year. You do not really know the enormous workload that each of our staff have, and to say that they all multi-task is an understatement. They are the most dedicated and hardworking group of people I know. On behalf of our Board of Directors, I want to thank each and every one of them for their hard work, and the dedication they bring to this Federation. You are a great bunch of people. To our Board of Directors and all advisory committees, thank you for your zeal and dedication to the tasks you have undertaken this past year. To accomplish the amount of work we do, to address the issues we tackle, and the efficiency with which we conduct our meetings is what makes this Federation one of the greatest in all of Canada. I would like to give personal thanks to each and every member of the Board for their work and dedication this past year.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bill Backwell". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

OFAH Zone A Annual Report



Chair – Bruce Hamilton

OFAH Zone A's 2012 annual meeting was hosted by the Fort Frances Sportsmen's Club in January. Conservation Officer Steve Pauluzzo briefed the delegates on the "no discharge from the right-of-way" regulation, which came into effect in 2011 in parts of Fort Frances and Kenora. Elections at this meeting saw the same executive elected for a third term.

The spring meeting was in May, and was hosted by the Atikokan Sportsmen's Conservation Club. Lisa Solomon was on hand to brief members on the moose research project within Quetico Provincial Park. Poor snow conditions hampered collaring during the 2011/2012 winter. Also updating the meeting delegates were Mark Bowler and Cathryn Moffitt from Osisko's Hammond Reef Gold Project.

OFAH Zone A's summer meeting was hosted by the Northwoods Fish & Game Club of Red Lake. We were very pleased to welcome the OFAH Zone/Member & Club Services Liaison, Brian McRae, to his first OFAH Zone A meeting. I am sure he will prove to be of great value to all zones.

FMZ 5 expedited their meeting schedule and was able to go to the public with five open houses across the management area in November. At these meetings, the draft Fisheries Management Plan (FMP) was presented, and was also posted online. The council met in December to refine the plan. FMZ 4 has moved slightly slower, but also had a draft Fisheries Management Plan available for review online by year end. One area of concern within this plan is the restrictive regulations on the Watcomb Lake area. There is also an access issue, as the land around the lakes was "free-hold land" and has been sold to interested parties in the United States.

There was no activity by Ojibway Power and Energy Group after the closing of their Environmental Report on the Namakan River Hydro Development Project in February 2010. The Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR), Ministry of Environment (MOE), and the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency were critical of the report. Technical work did resume on the site during the summer of 2012.

Several mining operations within the zone are moving through the permit system at different stages. The most advanced is the Hammond Reef Gold Project (Atikokan). The Environmental Impact Statement has been accepted by the federal government. The Terms of Reference (TOR) were also accepted by the provincial government; however, the Osisko's Hammond Reef Gold Project has since added a fibre optics line and a large permanent work camp to the TOR, and these have yet to be accepted. The Rainy River Resources (Fort Frances) have filed their proposed Terms of Reference. Most of the concerns in the draft have been addressed at this stage. By mid-November, this was one of two projects in Canada to fall under the new Canadian Environmental Assessment Act 2012 (CEAA 2012). A third project, northeast of Ear Falls, by Gold Canyon Resources Inc., will see them extend the Wenesaga Road in the Trout Forest to their Springpole Gold Project site in 2013. The first 20 kilometres were planned for construction in 2014 under the Forest Management Plan (FMP); the second 20

kilometres will be gated until use/access can be determined in the next FMP extension.

In mid-January, five members of the Fort Frances Sportsmen's Club and the OFAH Zone A Chair met with the Ontario Aboriginal Affairs negotiators to review six areas of interest identified by the Mitaanjigamiing (Stanjikoming) First Nations in their Treaty Land Entitlement Claim. Both the club and zone filed submissions addressing issues such as: conservation; loss of bait harvest areas; and possible creation of "headland to headland" concerns. Further meetings are expected in 2013.

The Turtle River-White Otter Lake Park Management Plan has finally been adopted. The clubs in Fort Frances and Atikokan were very involved when the park was first envisioned in 1982. During the Lands for Life process, the park area was expanded, but nothing was done regarding a plan. Many of the original concerns have now been addressed.

Those who attended last year's conference will remember that Jeff Muirhead received the 2011 OFAH/Oakville & District Rod & Gun Club Conservation Research Grant. His research work regarding Lake Sturgeon and water flows (hydro dam controlled) was carried out on the Rainy River (Fort Frances area). A second student, Adrienne Smith, also did research to evaluate food and habitat in the river. They gave an excellent presentation to the Fort Frances Sportsmen's Club on their first year studies.

The Moose Aerial Inventory (MAI) conducted in WMU 6 during the 2011/2012 winter showed alarmingly low numbers. A population of 3,700 animals in 1988-1992 has fallen to 300 animals in the last MAI. There is a concern about future calf harvest if a population turnaround doesn't occur soon. An MAI will take place in WMUs 2 (northwest of Kenora) and 12B (Atikokan) during the winter of 2012-2013.

A slow decline in the OFAH Zone A's membership number finally turned around at the end of November. This can be attributed in part to the dedicated work of one membership representative from one of our larger clubs. This individual has raised his club's membership by approximately 50 members. These numbers will be very hard to maintain, as the main employer in this area has suffered a major downturn in operations. Member numbers are very important to the OFAH and the zone, not only financially, but more importantly as support when interacting with governments on issues of importance to anglers, hunters, and conservationists. I am asking each zone member who reads this annual report to consider either purchasing a gift membership for a family member or friend, or encouraging them to join a club in 2013.

OFAH Zone B Annual Report



Chair – Debbie Rivard

City of Thunder Bay Bow Hunting

In May 2012, Thunder Bay City Council passed a bylaw that would allow bow hunting for deer in designated areas of the City of Thunder Bay to start in the fall of 2012. An open house was held to educate and inform residents of the city regarding the details of the hunt. A bow hunting seminar, sponsored by the OFAH and Lakehead Archers, was held in early September, free of charge, for any interested bow hunters. It was held at the Lakehead Archery Club and provided bow hunters with an overview of the difference between bow hunting and gun hunting, as well as deer anatomy and treestand safety. Participants were also encouraged to bring their equipment for proper instruction and target practicing. The season opened on September 1 and closed on December 15, 2012. The MNR provided an additional 800 antlerless tags for WMU 13 to facilitate the city hunt. City officials and police were pleased to report that there were no incidents. OFAH 1st Vice President, Glenn Rivard, will meet in early 2013 with the MNR, city police, city officials, and other stakeholders to review and possibly improve on the success of the 2012 hunt.

Community Fish & Wildlife Involvement Program (CFWIP)

At the end of September it was announced that the provincial funding to CFWIP was being cut almost in half. As a result, OFAH Zone B only received \$600 for each of the two seeding projects that we had applied for at the beginning of the year. In the past we received \$1,000 for each project. We were notified at the beginning of October that we had received funding for seeding for 2012. The seed was ordered and paid for in 2012, and will be spread in the spring of 2013.

OFAH Zone C Annual Report



Chair – Peter Sword

The zone held meetings in Cochrane on April 1, and New Liskeard on September 30. In addition, zone executive meetings were held in Cochrane on February 8, and Englehart on June 27.

Fisheries Management Zone Councils have been established and are active in FMZs 10, 11, and 12. OFAH Zone C has representation on the FMZ 12 Advisory Council, as well as on the Kirkland Lake Fish and Wildlife Advisory Council, the Temagami Local Citizens Committee, and the Northeast Regional Advisory Committee.

Proponents for waterpower projects on the Frederick House River, the Blanche River and the Ivanhoe River have held their final public open houses. There are two land use planning processes ongoing in the zone. The Wawa Crown Land Use Atlas Harmonization

Entrance Removals

Late in summer, it was brought to our attention that construction work was taking place on highway 527 outside of Thunder Bay, and that the Ministry of Transportation (MTO) was removing a number of entrances to forest access roads and trails. In one instance the entrance was removed, leaving anglers stranded. OFAH Zone B 1st Vice Chair, Gilles Dumais, was given the lead on this issue. After some discussions with the MNR and the MTO, some of the entrances were replaced. A meeting with the OFAH, the Northwestern Sportsman Alliance, the MNR, and the MTO was requested in September, but to date has still not happened. We have been informed that a meeting is pending.

Shows & Events

The Central Canada Outdoor Show was held on February 24-26, 2012. Once again, a new record was set for memberships sold at the show; 60% new memberships and 40% renewals. The kids' moose calling contest continues to grow in popularity. The Northwestern Ontario Trapper's Convention was held from March 1-2, 2012. OFAH Zone B Executive members and volunteers ran the booth for this show. The Kam River Reel-In was once again held in September. As in previous years, OFAH Zone B sponsored this event. Basil and Ella Arney again volunteered to look after this event on behalf of OFAH Zone B. This event was held in one of the downtown cores of Thunder Bay, and provided an opportunity for the youth in the area to try fishing. Approximately 57 youth participated, and 40 fish were caught. Prizes were given to all participants. Our thanks go out to the many volunteers who assisted at these events.

Project has had no new developments in the last year, and we are still waiting for a response to the comments that we submitted at the last public information center. The 10-year review of the Temagami Land Use Plan, and its rolling into the Crown Land Use Atlas has not been finalized; we have not received a response to our comments, and no EBR posting announcing the completion of the project has been made. The zone has recently submitted comments to the FMZ 10 Advisory Council regarding the proposed changes to Bass and Lake Trout regulations in FMZ 10.

OFAH Zone C made donations to Long Point Waterfowl for sandhill crane research, the Temagami Area Fish Involvement Program for repairs to a Walleye rearing pond, and a youth waterfowl hunt held by a group of conservation officers.

OFAH Zone D Annual Report



Chair – Roy Polsky

This past year was a busy one for our zone executive and members alike. Many of the same issues never seem to go away, such as access and road restrictions, road closures and abandonment, forest management plan amendments, new fishing and hunting regulations, and a range of wildlife issues.

OFAH Zone D held three meetings: their annual meeting in Sudbury; a meeting in Sturgeon Falls, hosted by the Sturgeon Falls Rod & Gun Club; and a meeting in Parry Sound, hosted by the Parry Sound Anglers & Hunters.

During our meetings we had presentations by: Brian McRae, OFAH Zone/Member & Club Services Liaison; Everett Hanna spoke about Long Point Waterfowl and their study on sandhill cranes in the Manitoulin Island and North Shore Area; and Anglers and Hunters Insurance Brokers representatives, Debbie Young and Angele Giroux, spoke about insurance.

The Huron Shores Elk Sub-committee was formed to deal with the problem of nuisance elk in the North Shore/Algoma area. Our zone, along with OFAH head office, has representation on this committee. So far, two meetings have been held, and a third was rescheduled. They are presently documenting elk damage to local crops and will try to come up with a solution to the problem.

The Sudbury elk herd seems to be doing well and increasing with many calf sightings. The overpass over the new four-lane highway in the Burwash area that provides a route across the roadway for wildlife is complete.

In early fall, our zone was advised by the MNR that the environmental assessment for wild turkeys and pheasants for Manitoulin Island had been indefinitely delayed, due to financial restraints, but the research that was being carried out in the south (Jordan Plain Area) to study their diet and behavior will move forward and the data collected will be analysed. The MNR had allocated \$160,000 for this study.

The West Arm/French River Wild Turkey Group has collected data on wild turkeys in the area and submitted the results to the Provincial Wild Turkey Working Group and the MNR along with a request to possibly open a season in WMU 42. OFAH Zone D supports this initiative.

Concerns are still being raised by local groups in regard to the construction of hydro dams on local waterways, and how they will affect fish spawning shoals, water levels, and water quality.

Our zone attended a stakeholder consultation on the protection and recovery of Lake Sturgeon and Polar Bears, which are listed as threatened under the Species at Risk Act. During the course of the session it became apparent that some attendees were only there to see how it would benefit them in their opposition to hydro dams.

OFAH Zone D, along with OFAH head office, were invited to attend a Youth Elder Summit on Earth Day with the theme "Walking the Waters." This aboriginal event was sponsored by Environment Canada and the Ministry of the Environment to open up communication between the youth and elder members of First Nations and Métis communities along the French River.

Our zone attended a stakeholders' meeting, held in Little Current on Manitoulin Island, regarding the Ministry of the Environment's Bill 100, Great Lakes Protection Act and the Great Lakes Protection Strategy.

There was a request from a member of the public to amend the Sudbury Forest Management Plan and the Area of Concern (AOC) prescription for Lake Trout lakes. These changes would have almost shut down the forestry operations. After consultation with the Local Citizen's Committee (LCC), the District Manager rejected the request.

MNR's Sudbury and North Bay Districts have appointed new district managers and area supervisors.

There are new fishing regulations for Lake Nipissing (FMZ 11). The Walleye catch limit has been reduced from four to two with a sportfish licence (and from two to one with a conservation licence) as the lake has suffered a dramatic decline in the Walleye population, due to unregulated commercial netting. Several members of the Lake Nipissing Walleye Project Advisory Committee were disappointed that the MNR did not heed their recommendation, and that the decision had already been made prior to the consultation.

New regulations for open season, catch and possession limits, and size restrictions were also proposed for Bass fisheries in FMZ 10. There are also proposed changes to Lake Trout regulations to provide more consistency for management strategies and fishing rules.

We provided funding to member clubs and organizations to help them carry out their worthwhile projects.

- Long Point Waterfowl received \$1,000 to help continue the sandhill crane study;
- Manitoulin Area Stewardship Council received \$2,500 for their Youth Trapping Initiative. The money provided six youths with a trapping starter kit. The course was delivered by certified instructors to help them become licensed trappers;
- Manitoulin Streams received \$2,500 for some restoration projects to improve water quality and spawning habitat for Salmon and Lake Trout;
- Greater Nipissing Stewardship Council received \$2,500 for a Youth Hunting Opportunity Day program;
- Gore Bay Hatchery received \$1,000 toward the purchase of new equipment; and
- Temagami Area Fish Involvement Program received \$1,000 for bridge repair and work at the Sherman Mine ponds.

OFAH Zone D would like to thank OFAH head office for all of the assistance and direction they have provided during the course of the year.

OFAH Zone E Annual Report



Chair – Barney Moorhouse

It has been another busy year for OFAH Zone E. The following are the meetings/issues which were dealt with by OFAH Zone E:

The first OFAH Zone E meeting was held in Port Hope at the Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority on March 25. Topics included:

- A discussion on the North America Fish and Wildlife Congress - Valley 2000, and the restoration on Bowmanville and Soper Creeks; the gala dinner was attended by five OFAH members;
- An update on elk;
- Chronic Wasting Disease;
- Lower Trent Valley Youth Day in Frankford; reports on current status – firearms paperwork;
- A powerpoint presentation on the Lake Simcoe Muskellunge Project, which was given by Dave Boxall, Jim Kelly, Ian Young and Emily Funnell from MNR Aurora District, and information was placed on our website; and
- Eric Smith and Brian Sheppard attended the National Fish and Wildlife Conservation Congress in Ottawa on May 27-31, 2012. The next meeting was held at the Bancroft Game and Fish Club in Bancroft on August 19. Topics included:
- The opening of the new archery and air rifle gun ranges at the OFAH/Mario Cortellucci Hunting and Fishing Heritage Centre;
- MNR budget cuts;
- Haliburton Highlands Outdoors Association's anniversary;
- Long-tail duck tracking;
- Lake Nipissing Walleye numbers and issues;
- Wild game meat and food banks;
- CFO's retail stores record-keeping on long gun sales;
- Bill 55 and MNR funding;
- Licence Automated System (LAS) information going to the United States;
- Lack of opportunities for stakeholder input on the Algonquin Land Claim;
- OFAH Zone E's involvement with the Family Fishing Day at Darlington Provincial Park. This event turned out to be a huge success, with 100 children and adults taking part. Thanks goes to the zone membership, Darlington employees, the MNR and OFAH head office;
- Arnprior & District Fish & Game Club's 65th anniversary;
- South Central Ontario Fish and Wildlife Association's Kids' Fishing Day and classroom hatcheries; and
- 6th Annual Earth Week/Pitch-In event. There was student involvement from Cobourg's East and West high schools, Fleming College, Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority, and the Cobourg Trap and Skeet Club.

The zone has been involved with the Bancroft Area Fish and Wildlife Advisory Committee, and topics of discussion included:

- Broadscale monitoring reports;
 - Deer and moose tags;
 - Updates on nuisance elk and elk season extension; and
 - Farmer concerns with species at risk.
- Pembroke District activity included:
- Fish hatchery;
 - Hunter Apprenticeship Safety Program (HASP) (12 students took part and obtained their safety certificates);
 - 14th Annual Fishing Derby; and
 - Proposed Petawawa River power development.

OFAH Zone E Annual General Meeting and Elections

There was some discussion on the McLaughlin Bay Restoration Project and how it would affect the Family Fishing Day event and waterfowl hunt, as well as the people that fish there on a daily basis.

OFAH Zone E, along with the Delta Waterfowl/Rice Lake Waterfowlers, held a youth hunt in Bewdley on September 15. Introductions, matching up mentors with hunters, handing out calls, hats, and other items for the youth, as well as bird identification, were conducted on the Friday evening. After the hunt the youth were taught how to clean the harvested birds, trap shooting, decoy set up and display and dog retrieval. Different types of hunting blinds were on display. The sponsors of the event were BJ Tackle, who supplied breakfast, the OFAH, who donated calls, a hunter safety course, and other items, and Winchester and Federal, who supplied the ammunition. Thank you to all of the volunteers and sponsors for this great day. There has been some talk of possibly hosting a spring youth wild turkey hunt for 2013.

Class of Agent – adding licenced small game hunters to the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act regulations

- Land use/access trails;
- Madawaska Highlands Land Use Plan; and
- Road access removal.

Big Game

- Surplus moose tags;
- Use of dogs;
- Moose review; and
- OFAH Big Game Policy review.

Donations to date (totaling \$18,000) went to:

- Ontario Sporting Dogs;
- OFAH head office;
- Rice Lake Waterfowlers;
- Muskies Canada;
- Bancroft District Game and Fish Association;
- South Central Ontario Fish and Wildlife Association;
- Renfrew County Stewardship;
- Peterborough Children's Fishing Day; and
- The OFAH/Mario Cortellucci Hunting & Fishing Heritage Centre.

OFAH Zone F Annual Report



Chair – Ed Giffin

OFAH Zone F held three meetings in 2012. The April 22 meeting was held in Perth. Beverley McCreight, Area Supervisor (Acting), Kemptville District MNR, provided information on fish and wildlife updates, tag allocations for the upcoming hunting season, and the latest on possible fishing regulation changes in FMZ 18. The August 30 meeting was also held in Perth with the OFAH Zone/Member & Club Liaison Representative (Brian McRae) as our guest speaker. It was our first evening meeting and was well received by all members in attendance. Our last meeting of the year was the annual meeting, which was also held in Perth. At this meeting, annual reports were presented, and 1st Vice Chair, Kerry Coleman, presented the OFAH Zone F Strategic Plan, which was approved.

OFAH Zone F was represented on the following committees in 2012:

- OFAH Executive Committee (Ed Giffin)
- OFAH Big Game Advisory Committee (Len Dickinson)
- OFAH Fisheries Advisory Committee (Ed Giffin)
- OFAH Firearms/Recreational Shooting/Hunter Education Advisory Committee (Len Dickinson)
- OFAH Native Affairs Advisory Committee (Ed Giffin)
- OFAH Access/Land Use/Trails Advisory Committee (Kerry Coleman)
- OFAH Sporting Dogs/Small Game Advisory Committee (Kerry Coleman)
- OFAH Wetlands/Migratory Birds Advisory Committee (Kerry Coleman)
- MNR/OFAH Liaison Committee (Len Dickinson and Ed Giffin)
- Eastern Ontario Deer Advisory Committee (Kerry Coleman, Len Dickinson, and Wendell Crosbie)
- Madawaska Highlands Land Use Plan – Standing Advisory Committee (Doug Huddle)
- Mississippi River Watershed Advisory Committee (Len Dickinson)
- Mazinaw Area Fish & Wildlife Advisory Committee (Ed Giffin)
- FMZ 12 Council (Pierre Boucher and Don Pajot)
- FMZ 18 Council (Ed Giffin and Len Dickinson)
- Mazinaw/Lanark Forest Management Plan Local Citizens Committee (Hans von Rosen)
- Lanark County Stewardship Council (Wendell Crosbie)
- Leeds Grenville Stewardship Council (Kerry Coleman)
- South Nation Conservation Authority Advisory Committee (Cyril Holmes)

OFAH Zone F continued to support its OFAH affiliated clubs and their conservation projects, including:

- Grenville Fish & Game Club for their events trailer, as well as maintenance and operation of equipment for youth events;
- Ottawa Region Walleye League for their Kids' Ice Fishing Derby

and Winter Fishing Derby;

- Kingston & District Fish & Game Club for their ice fishing derby, their Youth Ice Fishing Derby, and Annual Perch Derby;
- Osgoode Twp. Fish, Game, and Conservation Club for their fishing derby and Plot Mule repairs;
- A camera purchase for the Safari Club International fundraiser;
- OFAH Zone F 3-D archery competition;
- Perth KIDFISH Derby;
- Young Hunter Education Scholarship (YHES) fund;
- Crimestopper vehicle lease;
- Frisbees as handouts at OFAH affiliated club youth events;
- MNR's elk study; and
- Westport Area Outdoor Association.

Total funding provided for conservation projects for 2012 was \$10,425.

OFAH Zone F Newly Affiliated Clubs

- Buckhorn Lodge;
- Giles Camp;
- Rideau Lakes Bass Anglers;
- Sedore Hunt Club;
- Buck Ridge Camp; and
- Shuttleworth Hunt Club.

OFAH Zone F Secretary/Treasurer, Len Dickinson, maintains the website as part of the zone's strategic plan. Posted on our website are:

- Agreement-in-Principle for the Algonquin Land Claim after it was released on December 13, 2012;
- The latest fishing regulation changes for FMZ 18;
- Fish stocking lists for MNR's Pembroke District; and
- The scientific paper written by Christopher Godwin, James A. Schaefer, Brent R. Patterson, and Bruce A. Pond on "Contribution of Dogs to Whitetail Hunting." This paper came about after 25 years of study in the Canonto Township area, with partial funding by OFAH Zone F.

The use and maintenance of this website is part of our strategic plan to improve communications with our OFAH clubs and members.

The Madawaska Highlands Land Use Plan has been undergoing an internal review by MNR District staff in Bancroft, Kemptville, and Pembroke. OFAH Zone F has made enquiries as to the status of the 10-year review of the Land Use Plan (LUP).

OFAH Zone F has completed its strategic plan for the next five years. 1st Vice Chair, Kerry Coleman, authored and directed the process, which led to the creation of the plan, with help from Wendell Crosbie, Len Dickinson, Doug Huddle, Merrill Elliott, Jack McNamee, and Ed Giffin. The purpose of developing this plan is to give direction to the OFAH Zone F Executive to prioritize the actions that will best serve our clubs and membership.

OFAH Zone G Annual Report



Chair – Rob Hare

OFAH Zone G has enjoyed another successful year; our membership number has remained stable at approximately 10,500 members. Quarterly zone meetings are hosted by zone clubs at various locations throughout the zone. Our January meeting was hosted by the Canadian Croatian Hunters & Anglers Club in Mississauga. The guest speaker at the meeting was MNR's Operations Manager, Lake Ontario Management Unit, Colin Lake, who spoke about the state of the Lake Ontario fishery. The Islington Sportsmen's Club hosted our March meeting in Caledon. Eugene Bulizo was the guest speaker at that meeting, and spoke on bowhunting. Our August meeting was hosted by the Georgina Sportsmen's Alliance at District 3 of the York Regional Police. Emily Funnell and Wil Wegman were the guest speakers, and they spoke about a wild rice reintroduction project in Lake Simcoe. OFAH Zone G's Annual General Meeting was held in November and was hosted by the Ajax Rod and Gun Club. The guest speakers were Jon Clayton from the Credit Valley Conservation Authority, and Brian McRae, OFAH Zone/Member & Club Services Liaison. Jon spoke about the monitoring project for Brook Trout in the Credit River, and Brian spoke about the OFAH insurance program for member clubs.

This past year, our zone provided funding for a number of youth-related events, in conjunction with zone clubs. We assisted the Pickering Rod and Gun Club at the Uxbridge Huck Finn Day. This event has seen tremendous growth over the years, and has truly become a community event. This year, over 1,000 youth

participated in a one-day Brook Trout fishing event. In July, we also provided funding for a Family Fishing Event near Pefferlaw on Lake Simcoe. This event was hosted by the Pefferlaw Post, and the Georgina Sportsmen's Alliance provided assistance to over 500 youth. OFAH Zone G also provided funding for an MNR five-member Stewardship Ranger crew working out of the Aurora District. This crew worked on various conservation-related projects throughout the York Region during July and August. In cooperation with the Islington Sportsmen's Club, we reached a major milestone in 2012. This was the 20th year that our zone has operated a youth adventure camp at the Islington Sportsmen's property in the Caledon hills. For one week in July, 24 boys (in alternate years, girls attend this camp) had the opportunity to experience the great outdoors and learn a number of skills.

At last year's 84th OFAH Annual General Meeting and Fish & Wildlife Conference, Phil Wilson was the recipient of the OFAH Zone G Wildlife Research Grant. Phil's research was on the habitat selection of long-tailed ducks overwintering in Lake Ontario.

Members of the OFAH Zone G Executive continue to work with head office on discharge bylaws in the Township of Uxbridge, City of Markham, and the Town of King City; and have also resolved an issue related to "no fishing" signs being posted on the Toronto waterfront. We are happy to report that the "no fishing" signs were removed. OFAH Zone G is looking forward to another year where we strive to save and protect from waste the natural resources of our country.

OFAH Zone H Annual Report



Chair – Wayne Forgrave

There were many conservation projects within the zone this year including: tree planting, stream rehabilitation, and food plots to enhance bird and wildlife populations, just to name a few.

In 2012, the OFAH Zone H conservation awards went to the Sydenham Sportsmen's Association, the Dufferin Northern Peel Anglers & Hunters, and the Barrie District Hunters & Anglers Conservation Club.

In June, the 2nd Annual North Simcoe Youth Expo was hosted by the Barrie District Hunters and Anglers Conservation Club, and was attended by 75 boys and girls. Everyone had the opportunity to experience what Ontario has to offer in our great outdoors.

Once again, the Owen Sound Salmon Spectacular was a great success. The winning salmon weighed in at approximately 20 pounds, and the winning Rainbow Trout was approximately 15 pounds. The 2nd Annual Barrie Fall Fishing Festival, sponsored by the Rotary Club of Barrie-Huron and assisted by the Barrie District Hunters & Anglers Conservation Club, was also very successful. Any game fish qualified for daily prizes, while Perch were the targeted fish that were tagged for cash prizes ranging from \$500 – \$10,000.

The Highland Corporation has withdrawn its application to turn 4,300 acres of prime farmland into the Melancthon Mega Quarry, citing lack of government and public support.

The Springwater Provincial Park in Midhurst is slated to close as more MNR cutbacks take place. The park houses a mini zoo of Ontario birds of prey and wildlife, as well as many hiking and cross country ski trails. The public use this park extensively and are protesting its closure.

OFAH Zone H continues to fund worthy projects, some of which are:

- Friends of Hullett;
- Luther Marsh Junior Day;
- North Simcoe Youth Expo;
- OFAH Tackleshare;
- Grey Bruce Children's Water Festival;
- Envirothon;
- OFAH Annual General Meeting and Fish & Wildlife Conference;
- Grey County Youth Expo;
- Orillia Fish & Game Conservation Club Kid's Fishing Day;
- Lake Huron Fish & Game Tackleshare; and
- Barrie Junior Bass Masters.

OFAH Zone J Annual Report



Chair- Jim Greenwood

OFAH Zone J covers an area from Windsor to Oakville, with nearly 24,000 members and 180 affiliate OFAH clubs.

In 2012, upwards of 600 quarterly newsletters were sent by mail or in electronic format to our members and clubs. An upgraded website and the use of social media including Facebook and Twitter convey and disseminate information that, years ago, was unheard of. Technology has given us the tools to keep in touch on a regular basis. It is exciting to open our Facebook account and read the stories of hunting, fishing, wildlife viewing, and conservation activities across our zone.

In addition to holding member meetings in different parts of our zone, the OFAH Zone J Annual Youth Camp brings people together for an exciting weekend. Celebrating the 25th year in 2013, the Wellington Street Sportsmen's Club will be hosting the event at their club in Dorchester on June 7-9.

OFAH Zone J has been actively promoting hunting activities across the zone this past year. Representation on the Essex Region Conservation Authority Areas Advisory Committee, the St. Williams Conservation Reserve Community Council, and the Grand River Conservation Authority Hunting Liaison Committee have provided opportunities to advocate hunting, and to comment on land uses within their respective land holdings.

OFAH Zone J has continued to gain ground with adding municipalities allowing Sunday gun hunting. North Perth has recently been added.

At our OFAH Zone J membership meeting at the Greenwood Rod and Gun Club in St. Agatha, a donation of \$7,000 was made to the Grand River Conservation Authority Conestoga Hunting Area. The money, in collaboration with Ducks Unlimited, Wildlife Habitat Canada, and the Grand River Conservation Authority, will allow for habitat work on a 500-acre property managed for hunting.

Fisheries matters in our zone, both inland and offshore, continue to raise concerns. Water quality, introduction of exotic species, commercial and recreational uses are just some of the many issues to which OFAH Zone J has input.

Changes in federal and provincial legislation will have significant impact on our resources and our recreational uses of them.

The federal Acts including Fisheries, Navigable Waters Protection, and Environmental Assessments, and provincial Acts under the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) and the Ministry of Environment (MOE), have been weakened significantly.

Clearly, development sanctioned by the government will have less scrutiny, since there will be minimal federal oversight (enforcement) and selective provincial enforcement. What is happening is the downsizing of resources (staff and funding), and streamlining legislation to the detriment of environmental protection.

On a positive note, the Randall Reef Toxic Waste Containment project is moving forward in an effort to delist Hamilton Harbour as an area of concern. This project will, in time, reduce the toxin

loading in fish and improve habitat conditions in the harbour.

Water issues were a serious consideration this past summer with near drought conditions. Our smaller creeks and river tributaries were nearly dry. Stage 2 water advisories from conservation authorities were in place for several weeks. Wildlife and fish were impacted, as fish moved to deeper waters, and wildlife resorted to obtaining moisture where they could find it, including vegetable and fruit crops.

Our habitat across the zone is rapidly being depleted. Small woodlots, forest edge, and windrows are continually being cut to increase productive farmland for grain crops. Pastureland that held large numbers of mice and other rodents, typical food for coyote, fox, and aerial predators, are being turned into cropland. This is forcing wildlife to source for food elsewhere, including urban areas where municipalities are having to deal with human/wildlife conflicts.

Recent developments in our zone have caused concerns for our members and other residents. The recent removal of an eagle nest to allow for wind turbine development has angered many people who view this as a not so "green" environmentally friendly government initiative.

First Nation hunting at Pinery Provincial Park and Short Hills Provincial Park have raised questions as to why this has been allowed, and why non-natives were not given any opportunity.

OFAH Zone J is active, and I want to take this time to thank our members, clubs, and executive for the work they have done in keeping the conservation of our resources at the forefront. We also want to thank our OFAH Board of Directors, and head office staff in Peterborough for the outstanding job they do.

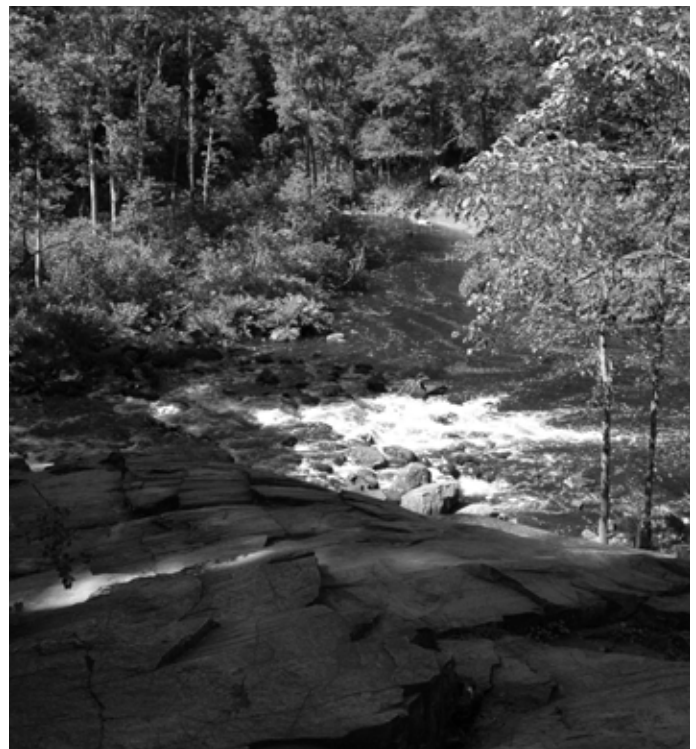


Photo: Ian Deslauriers

OFAH Agriculture Liaison Advisory Committee Annual Report



Chair – Jim Magee

The OFAH Agriculture Liaison Advisory Committee continued to be a member of the Agriculture/Wildlife Conflict Working Group. All major farm organizations were involved, as well as the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR), Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA), rural municipalities, Ontario Fur Managers Federation (OFMF), and the OFAH.

OMAFRA has asked Agri-Corp (the organization responsible for crop insurance) to survey farmers when reporting crop yields to estimate their losses to wildlife. To date, this is still ongoing, with no firm data to report.

OMAFRA has asked the OFMF and the OFAH to be proactive in controlling livestock predators, such as coyotes; the losses to livestock continue to escalate. Farmers try to be proactive in protecting their livestock, but only so much can be done against such a wily predator. One member of the advisory committee has a herd of cattle and has built a nine-wire hi-tensil electric fence and has three guard dogs, and still, coyotes have penetrated the herd.

The advisory committee has looked at the potential of organizing coyote hunting workshops. Two very successful workshops have been held in Manitoulin, and we could use them as models.

Some people have said this is an agriculture issue and the OFAH should not be involved. There are probably several good reasons to increase the hunting of coyotes:

- Research work in the upper portion of Michigan and South Carolina has shown coyotes to be major predators of deer. They may also be taking a large number of turkeys too;
- Coyotes can offer a new winter or off season hunting opportunity;

- A hunter willing to help a livestock farmer with predation problems could be opening a door to other hunting opportunities;
- Municipalities would appreciate coyote hunters to help where there is a predation problem; and
- Hunting will keep coyotes wary of humans.

All of the above are dependent on hunters who have the equipment and knowledge to effectively hunt coyotes.

OMAFRA is willing to help fund workshops, and there are enough qualified speakers available. The advisory committee would like to attempt three workshops for this coming fall and winter (2013-2014). We have looked at the areas where predation is the highest and believe that those areas would benefit the most. We have also considered videotaping the workshops so they could be shown at clubs and other venues. We will work together with the OFAH Sporting Dogs/Small Game Advisory Committee for such workshops.

The agriculture community continues to be concerned about increasing numbers of species at risk. Too often, the regulation that comes with this punishes the landowner, and will not reward them for hosting these species. One of the drawbacks would be farmers not willing to increase wildlife habitat on their farms for fear that a species at risk is found or attracted to their property.

At their annual meeting in November, the Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA) passed a resolution to lobby for the return of the spring bear hunt, due to increasing bear damage to agriculture. We would like to thank the members of the advisory committee and head office for their contributions.

OFAH Big Game Advisory Committee Annual Report



Chair – Neil Wiens

I would like to take the opportunity to thank all of the OFAH Big Game Advisory Committee members and head office staff for their selfless dedication and commitment to working on this advisory committee. Over the year, our work and reviews covered all of the big game species that we hunt throughout the Province of Ontario, and touched on a myriad of topics that were important for the continued conservation of all of these species, and to ensure our continued ability to maintain access to harvestable portions of the populations.

Bear

Completion of the Barbed Wire Hair Trap program by the MNR and analysis of the data have resulted in a ball park figure for bear populations across the province's Wildlife Management Units (WMUs). Provincially, the population of bears stands at approximately 95,000. State of the Resource reports for individual units have been completed, and we continue to push the MNR to

get stakeholders more involved with bear management. Now that the government has a baseline data set of population numbers for individual WMUs, we have discussed with the MNR the need for continued assessment and active management of this valuable resource. We have been advised that Regional and District offices of the MNR will do an annual assessment and harvest planning based on what the population objective is for each WMU. Recurring barbed wire hair traps will not be part of the program in the foreseeable future. Harvest statistics will be the guiding factor in determining what management actions will be taken each year. Tools for manipulating harvest are currently limited to quota adjustments for Bear Management Area (BMA) operators and the number, if any, of second seals that may be available for resident hunters.

Bear hunting license sales have remained relatively steady for the last three years, with 17,000 residents and 5,400 nonresidents participating in the hunt.

Bear Wise Program

The MNR discontinued the trap and relocation of problem bears, as well as other services formerly delivered under the province's Bear Wise program. In discontinuing the ineffective trapping and relocation of problem bears, the MNR will need to look at a more effective means of managing this valuable game species. The OFAH is unwavering in its position that a spring bear hunt is the most advantageous means of sustainably managing Ontario's bears. An early hunt assists in controlling problem bears (particularly males) by reducing their abundance and density in the spring and summer. The OFAH has a long and storied history of support for Ontario's spring black bear hunt, which was cancelled suddenly and without scientific rationalization in 1999. Since the cancellation, the province, as proven by its own data, has been dealing with an ever-increasing number of human/bear conflicts, and has attempted to address the problem through its Bear Wise program, with little success. The MNR is aware that public safety is a factor, with too many black bears on the landscape. MNR records show that prior to the cancellation of the spring bear hunt, there were fewer than 1,000 human/bear conflicts province wide, however by 2007, that number had risen to 12,700 reported incidents.

Deer

Throughout much of Ontario, deer numbers have declined from what were, in many WMUs, numbers deemed too high just a few short years ago. While those population peaks brought about new opportunities with extra seals and expanded hunts, now that population numbers are lower, there is a need to make sure that we continue to press the MNR to actively manage these ungulates. There are still populations of deer in areas of Ontario that continue to grow and expand, which makes this a challenge for both government and our Federation. We have had, and will continue to have, discussions with the MNR to maximize our hunting opportunities. We have reiterated our desire to maintain a fair sharing of the resource among our licensed hunters, and ensure that we are optimizing the use of the resource through our desire to see a review of the Controlled Deer Hunt program.

Elk

A second elk hunt was held in Ontario in 2012. Although the number of tags available for resident hunters remained the same as 2011, there was the addition of a second week to the season. There were a total of 70 tags to be issued (18 bulls and 52 cows). Interest in the hunt was still evident, although the number of applications to the draw dropped from 4,422 in 2011 to 2,727 in 2012. The total harvest was similar to 2011's hunt, with 23 animals being reported as taken by licensed hunters. Reports of crop damage declined after the first year's hunt, and elk herds in many of the problem areas broke up with animals dispersing over broader areas.

This advisory committee has been discussing potential solutions to nuisance elk issues that have surfaced in the North Shore elk release area. From the original release of 47 animals, the population estimate currently stands at between 155-200 elk. As this population has grown, there have been similar negative human-elk conflicts arising at an increasing rate, as was experienced in the Burwash area. The OFAH has representation on the elk subcommittee of the Economic Development Advisory Committee of the Municipality of Huron Shores, which is tasked with discussing potential solutions to elk-human conflicts.

Moose

As moose are the most intensely managed big game species in Ontario, we tend to spend a lot of time on discussions pertaining to this largest member of the deer family. Our involvement starts early with an in-depth review of the moose harvest planning that takes place for the annual tag allocation each year. Considering the compressed timeframe that is available before individual tag numbers are available in the "Hunting Summary" for review by the approximately 100,000 moose hunters in the province, we must thank all of our advisory committee members and other members of the OFAH Board of Directors who take the time and opportunity to sit on local wildlife committees in their respective MNR Districts to help get this stage of the planning right.

As budgets are constrained, it is clearly evident that our goal to keep the MNR holding to their commitment of three year rotating Moose Aerial Inventories (MAI) is heading down a slippery slope. Poor weather conditions over the last few winters have exacerbated the problem when scheduled flights are cancelled or cut short and not completed. For the winter of 2012/13, only six MAI's are on the books to be flown (not including the four WMU's that have a calf tag allocation). Focus of flights now and in the future will be in core moose range where hunting activity is highest.

We have had discussions with the MNR around our concerns about the Licensing Automated System (LAS) and the issue of access to surplus moose tags, considering the technical difficulties that seem to plague the government's telephone system when it is overwhelmed with calls from interested hunters.

The MNR has advised us that district offices are in the final stages of completing their State of the Resource Reports and population objectives for each WMU. To date, some of our discussions have revolved around how to get stakeholders involved with this next phase of consultation. There are some concerns around our committee table, and within the MNR, as to how we can best address the low calf component of herds in many of the northeastern WMUs, and what impact this will have on the management of this resource.

EBR Postings

An initiative of the OFAH to allow for the use of leashed dogs to track wounded game has gone through the requisite postings and is expected to be in the regulations for the 2013 hunting season. The EBR posting sought public response for the use of leashed dogs for the retrieval of big game in areas of the province where the use of dogs for hunting is not currently permitted. The OFAH Big Game Advisory Committee and the OFAH Board of Directors have endorsed this proposed regulation. We worked hard and are pleased to see that it is expected to go ahead.

Modernization of Approvals was another EBR posting that was brought to our advisory committee for discussion by the MNR. While the deciding factor for the MNR's position may be dictated by the need for fiscal relief, there are a number of places where our government seems to go over the top with their requirement for applications and documents of approval. The MNR is reviewing those instances where individuals are required to make an application and receive written approval for things that can be covered under common sense or a simple agreement to follow pre-approved rules and guidelines. Positive changes could include dealing with road kills for personal use, or having a wild game dinner.

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



Chair – Len Dickinson

In the spring of 2012, the OFAH Board of Directors made a decision to combine some of the advisory committees that dealt with similar issues, because as a united front it would be more appropriate to make recommendations. Therefore, a new advisory committee was formed to deal with bow hunting, muzzleloading, shooting sports, firearms safety and hunter education. The following are some of the items that have been discussed during the subsequent meetings.

Long Gun Registry

In keeping with his election promise, Prime Minister Harper's Conservative government successfully scrapped the long gun registry, and subsequently had the records destroyed for every province and territory, with the exception of Quebec who is challenging the government's right to do this; which is now before the courts. Firearms owners are reminded that the long gun registry was the only thing done away with and there is still the requirement for all firearms owners to have a valid firearms license (Possession Only License [POL] or Possession and Acquisition Licence [PAL]), and the requirement to register all restricted firearms is still in place.

United Nations (UN) Marking

In October, the government outlined its position, as required by parliament, pertaining to the marking of firearms. The Canadian Firearms Advisory Committee agreed to support the requirement for serial numbers to be marked on all firearms, but did not support the inclusion of markings indicating the country and year of import. The government announced the deferral of their response to the marking regulations until December 1, 2013.

Gun Show Regulations

It was great to hear that Public Safety Minister, Vic Toews, repealed the regulations for guns at shows. This legislation was introduced in 1998, but was never implemented. Appropriate safe storage and transportation regulations will continue, but the suggested regulations for guns at shows will not be implemented.

Municipal Discharge/Sunday Gun Hunting Bylaws

The OFAH continued to engage in discussions around 12 municipal discharge bylaws and Sunday gun hunting bylaws. Many of these bylaws are being updated due to new subdivisions being constructed, new land descriptions, etc. Details of any changes will be published in Ontario OUT OF DOORS as each result has been negotiated. We continued to make inroads on the number of southern municipalities that allow Sunday gun hunting to take place. Currently, 151 municipalities in southern Ontario allow Sunday gun hunting.

Hunter Education

In 2012, the Ontario Hunter Education Program, administered by the OFAH on behalf of the province, taught 21,300 students, an increase of 2,795 or 15% over 2011. This continued a trend of 11

consecutive years of growth.

After many years of growth, the Ontario Wild Turkey Hunter Education Program has started to see a decline in the number of students attending the half-day seminars. However, the new DVD program has experienced great growth. By the end of 2012, 6,510 DVD's were purchased and 3,597 had taken the tests had been taken.

Hunter Education Policy

Late in 2012, this advisory committee started to work on the development of a hunter education policy for consideration by the OFAH Board of Directors in 2013.

Disabled Hunter Policy

The advisory committee has been contacted to develop a policy for disabled hunters; however, the MNR is currently working on a revision to the hunting regulations in regard to hunters with disabilities. Once the MNR has completed their revisions, and we are able to see them, we will be in a better position to make recommendations and create our policy. Therefore, until we see the revisions, the advisory committee will not be able to comment and make recommendations.

Canadian Firearms Safety Course

Discussions have been ongoing with the Canadian Firearms Office (CFO) and the Firearms Safety Education Service of Ontario (FSESO) to update the Canadian Firearms Safety course and eligibility of students. The CFO and the FSESO created a policy that said a person must be 18 years of age to take the Canadian Restricted Firearms course and test; however, after a meeting between the CFO, the OFAH and the Canadian Shooting Sports Association (CSSA), we were able to convince the CFO, and subsequently the FSESO, that anyone who is 15 years of age should be allowed to take the course and test, as it is in line with current policy for getting a minor's permit to possess nonrestricted firearms. It is also being recommended that the Canadian Restricted Firearms course be reduced to eight hours, since there is so much duplication in the restricted and nonrestricted course that there is not enough material to cover in the mandatory 10 hours.

Fees for Canadian Firearms Licenses

As of September 17, the fee to obtain a restricted Possession and Acquisition License will be \$80 and, as of May 16, 2013, the fee to obtain a nonrestricted Possession and Acquisition License will be \$60.

The OFAH Firearms/Recreational Shooting/Hunter Education Advisory Committee is continuously working to keep ahead of all of the issues that are being brought up on a daily basis. Please take a minute and thank the members of this advisory committee for their dedication, and the insight that they have provided during the year.

OFAH Fisheries Advisory Committee Annual Report



Chair – Debbie Rivard

It has been an honor to chair the OFAH Fisheries Advisory Committee for the past year. At this time, I would like to thank all of the advisory committee members for their dedication and support.

The advisory committee consists of members of the OFAH Board of Directors representing OFAH zones across Ontario, and science advisors who offer a tremendous amount of expertise and guidance. Many of these members also sit on one or more of the Ministry of Natural Resources' Fisheries Management Zone (FMZ) Councils as OFAH representatives. In 2012, the advisory committee continued to make numerous recommendations on fisheries issues to the OFAH Board of Directors.

During the past year, the OFAH Fisheries Advisory Committee discussed many important fisheries topics ranging in scale from local and regional issues (e.g. FMZs) to fundamental changes in how our fish and fisheries are managed across the province and country in these challenging times of government cutbacks, access limitations to fishing opportunities, and increasing threats to our fisheries (e.g. development, invasive species, etc.).

Fisheries Management Zone (FMZ) Councils

Advisory councils have been established in FMZs 4, 5, 6, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 17, 18, 19, and 20. We are still waiting on the MNR to form councils for FMZs 7, 8, 15 and 16. The OFAH Fisheries Advisory Committee commits a considerable amount of time at each meeting to hear reports from committee members who serve as representatives on FMZ Councils. In addition to information updates, the advisory committee discusses some FMZ Council issues in greater detail to provide OFAH representatives and staff with additional guidance for future FMZ Council meetings or public consultations. The time dedicated to FMZ Council updates and discussions at advisory committee meetings has proven to be extremely beneficial in providing OFAH representatives an opportunity to share their Council experiences, and discuss similar fisheries issues. Due to the large volume of fisheries topics covered by the advisory committee, I will only highlight those that resulted in significant discussions during the past year.

Some of the FMZ Council discussions included Northern Pike size limits in FMZs 4 and 5, proposed regulation changes for Bass and Lake Trout in FMZ 10, Lake Trout in FMZ 11, the proposed extension of the Bass seasons in FMZs 17, 18 and 20, and a reduction in the Rainbow Trout sportfish limit to two and a conservation limit of one in FMZ 20.

Lake Huron and Lake Superior are in the process of formulating a stocking plan (fish stocking is an annual topic of discussion for the OFAH Fisheries Advisory Committee). Members are encouraged to request local or district stocking plans from their local MNR, and provide input to ensure that stocking reflects angler desires.

Lake Huron Lake Trout rehabilitation was also discussed. There are concerns that the MNR's proposed Lake Trout Rehabilitation Plan will come at the expense of other species, including naturalized species such as Chinook Salmon, Rainbow Trout, and

Brown Trout.

An MNR proposal to stock Black Crappie in select FMZ 15 lakes was discussed by the advisory committee. We acknowledged the MNR's interest in diversifying angling opportunities in FMZ 15, but raised concerns related to introducing Black Crappie outside of its historical range, because of the known impacts to native fish species (e.g. Walleye).

The FMZ 17 Advisory Council hosted a Walleye workshop at the OFAH/Mario Cortellucci Hunting & Fishing Heritage Centre. It was attended by 43 members of the public, as well as guest speakers. Feedback from the workshop was positive and the Council will review proposals for future workshops.

An FMZ 20 Advisory Council workshop was held in Picton. Representatives from other Great Lakes (FMZs 9, 13, 14 and 19) attended to discuss Great Lakes fishery management issues such as multi-line regulations.

The potential for reopening a Lake Herring fishery in Lake Simcoe has been discussed periodically by the advisory committee during the past few years. The Lake Simcoe Fisheries Stakeholder Committee continues to seek greater explanation from the MNR on why a recreational Lake Herring fishery cannot be reopened at this time. The MNR will not open a season with only two good year classes in the lake, but has committed to initiate a process to attempt to model the Lake Herring population in Lake Simcoe, which could be used by the Lake Simcoe Management Committee to determine when a sustainable recreational fishery could return.

Commercial Fisheries

OFAH Zone D has expressed concerns with the decline in the Walleye population on Lake Nipissing over the past few years, due to the commercial gill net fishery on the lake. The OFAH was asked to review a report commissioned by the MNR on the status of Lake Nipissing Walleye, and to provide comments. The OFAH concluded that Walleye populations in Lake Nipissing have suffered dramatic declines over the past decade due to the unregulated commercial gill net fishery. The OFAH declined an invitation to participate on a stakeholder advisory committee exclusively devoted to Lake Nipissing recreational fishing, that did not address the real problem of the unregulated commercial gill net harvesting. Lake Nipissing recreational anglers have already experienced shorter open water and winter seasons, lower creel limits, and a protected slot size. As of January 1, 2013, the creel for recreational anglers will once again be reduced from a four to a two fish limit. No new regulatory measures have been taken to regulate the commercial gill net fishery on Lake Nipissing.

Other commercial fisheries have been brought to the attention of the advisory committee including operations on Lake of the Woods.

A joint meeting between the OFAH Fisheries Advisory Committee and the OFAH Native Affairs Advisory Committee was held to discuss common issues related to fisheries.

Fisheries Act Changes

The advisory committee discussed the changes to the federal Fisheries Act, with a specific focus on what the changes will mean for the protection of fisheries values in Ontario.

MNR Fisheries Policy

The MNR Fisheries Policy Section staff attended parts of two advisory committee meetings to provide updates on relevant fisheries management topics, as well as receive feedback on FMZ Councils, and other fisheries policy issues. This included an update on the success of the MNR's Fish On-Line tool that has information available for 13,000-plus lakes.

OFAH Land Use/Access/Trails Advisory Committee Annual Report



Chair – Roy Polsky

The OFAH Land Use/Access/Trails Advisory Committee has representation from all OFAH zones. The advisory committee deals with many issues which are also relevant to other committees, such as the OFAH Big Game Advisory Committee and the OFAH Fisheries Advisory Committee.

One issue that never seems to go away is access. Although most access issues are dealt with in forest management plans, amendments to the plans occur throughout the implementation phase.

Some of the issues that the committee dealt with during the course of the year were:

The Temagami Land Use Plan (TLUP)

- A minor amendment to redesignate 29 management areas from “general use” to “enhanced management areas” to capture the intent of the TLUP;

Wolf Lake Forest Reserve

- Arguments were made that it should be disentangled and removed from forest reserve status; the EBR was posted in 2011. With substantial media coverage and a public campaign objecting to the status removal, a policy decision was issued to reject the proposed amendment and keep the forest reserve status;

The White River Mining Road

- The OFAH was not opposed to the road being built, but had concerns that the road would be gated, thereby preventing access for hunting and fishing. The MNR rendered a decision that the road be built as originally proposed, and gated;

McLaughlin Bay Restoration Project

- There was concern expressed to the MNR and the Central Lake Ontario Conservation Authority about the potential loss of hunting and fishing opportunities if some of the proposed restoration activities were undertaken;

Kawarthas, Naturally Connected

- The OFAH is involved in the natural heritage planning process to identify and set ecological targets and areas with natural and historical values. The final planning meeting was held in November and dealt with the restoration of land to the ideal

Additional topics and issues addressed were:

- reviewing current fisheries policies;
- Lake Erie percid management;
- Great Lakes Protection Act;
- Ontario's Great Lakes Strategy;
- Asian Carp prevention;
- Navigable Waters Protection Act;
- Waterpower Class EA Amendment; and
- National Conservation Plan.

distribution of forest cover, species distribution, water quality, etc. The project will be moving into the implementation phase in 2013. The OFAH has requested to remain engaged;

Melanchton Mega Quarry

- Due to the lack of public support and widespread opposition to the quarry, the Highland Corporation withdrew its application. The quarry would have encompassed approximately 2,300 acres and would have been excavating 200 feet below the water table;

Madawaska Highlands Land Use Plan

- The MNR has indicated that the 10-year plan review is on hold until the Algonquin land claim is settled. There are a few Land Use Permit (LUP) holders that have issues due to access restriction, as they are not able to access their camps. The MNR will not review options for some form of access, and the LUP holders asked the OFAH for their support to deal with this matter. The OFAH is working with the LUP holders to try to resolve this issue;

Copeland Forest

- The forest is under MNR ownership and the Couchiching Conservancy wants to set up an advisory board from various user groups to facilitate how to manage the land. The OFAH has zone representation;

Crown Land Use Atlas Harmonization Project

- The project was put on hold during last year's provincial election and was stalled again until the new Minister of Natural Resources was briefed. He had indicated that the project should move forward. Consultation with First Nations must occur before proceeding to stage four public consultations.

Woodland Caribou

- The OFAH has grave concerns with the proposed recovery strategy plan. Of the nine herds identified in Ontario, five are self-sustaining, two are likely not as self-sustaining, and two are not self-sustaining. The latter two have been grouped into “not self-sustaining,” which has an impact on land use and access;

Public Hunting Opportunities Database

- A preliminary report by the OFAH identified 214 areas and the project is still ongoing;

Crown Land Use Policy Atlas Guide

- OFAH head office has set up a guide to help users navigate this MNR web browser. They have distributed over 130 guides to OFAH members to assist in searching for Crown land for hunting and fishing opportunities. The guide is available by contacting the OFAH;

Hunting on Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC) Land

- Only traditional users had access to the land this fall, but plans will be implemented for 2013 to allow access for OFAH members;

Ministry of Transportation (MTO) Road Issues

- The MTO is now removing road access points (when upgrading highways) without proper notification and a chance for public consultation, unless a permit fee has been paid to maintain access. The advisory committee recommended that

the OFAH meet with the MNR and the MTO to deal with the issue of road access removal from highways, and establish a proper protocol for access removal;

MNR Parks Closure Decisions

- Due to cost cutting and low attendance, the MNR has slated 10 parks for closure to overnight camping. Due to public outcry, the MNR will review its decision on two to four of the parks; and

OFAH Land Use/Access/Trails Advisory Committee Policy

- The advisory committee has reviewed the land use policy, and revisions were made to bring the policy up to date. The policy was submitted to and approved by the OFAH Board of Directors.

I would like to acknowledge and thank OFAH head office staff for their help, guidance, and assistance in dealing with these issues. I would also like to thank the members of the advisory committee for their time and dedication.

OFAH Native Affairs Advisory Committee Annual Report



Chair – Gerry Haarmeyer

The OFAH Native Affairs Advisory Committee consisted of Chair, Gerry Haarmeyer, Vice Chair, Ed Giffin, and members, Felix Delongchamp, Jack Doherty, Wes Brown, John Sullivan, and Shirley Giffin. These individuals, as well as head office staff, spent many hours on complex files in attempts to get our OFAH message heard by federal and provincial governments in their dealings regarding native issues, and how they affect conservation, fishing and hunting, fair sharing, and Crown land use. Everyone on this committee is to be commended for their dedication, hard work and belief in a fair and equitable resource sharing arrangement, and I would like to thank them personally.

The major file on the agenda for 2012 was been the Algonquin Land Claim, and the input that we provided to the provincial and federal negotiators who were working toward an Agreement-in-Principle regarding the land claim with the Algonquins. We proposed a number of core principles for consideration in the AIP including: a definition of conservation; fair sharing of resources; designated species; a management plan for Algonquin Park; cooperative vs. comanagement of resources; and full public consultation. We had major misgivings about the process. The general public was not consulted and we insisted that public consultation should have occurred prior to the release of the draft AIP. To this end, we used *Ontario OUT OF DOORS* magazine to get the message out to the public to make them aware of the issues and get them involved. OFAH President, Bill Blackwell, and Executive Director, Angelo Lombardo, wrote about this claim process on numerous occasions. In spite of our best efforts, the draft AIP was released mid-December, just before Christmas, with very little, if any, attention drawn to it. The AIP does not appear to consider today's anglers, hunters, and Crown land users in any favorable way, so we urge you to participate in the upcoming public consultation opportunities. Your future use of these resources in the claim area

may depend on it.

For the draft AIP and background information on the claim, go to: www.aboriginalaffairs.gov.on.ca/english/negotiate/algonquin/preliminary-draft-aip.asp.

The advisory committee also stayed current on the Stanjikoming First Nation file in northwestern Ontario, as well as the Cape Croker file in Lake Huron. We reviewed and fine tuned our OFAH Native Affairs policy, and resubmitted it to the OFAH Board of Directors for approval in December, where it was accepted.

The OFAH Fisheries Advisory Committee and our advisory committee met regarding the Lake Nipissing Walleye fishery collapse, and the impact the native gill net fishery has on the population, as well as our concern over expanding exploitation of Walleye in other lakes in the area. This is an area of major concern, as the recreational angler is forced to take reduced limits while the commercial fishery is left untouched. This file will be kept active by both advisory committees.

In December, the advisory committee was informed of a new case in the Ontario Federal Court where the seven Williams Treaty First Nations are seeking to reestablish their traditional fishing and hunting rights with the support of the federal and provincial governments. This decision flies in the face of the 1994 Supreme Court of Canada's decision in the Howard case, in which the OFAH was a major player, and a subsequent refusal by the Supreme Court of Canada in 1996 to rehear the case. In both those instances, the Supreme Court ruled that those rights had in fact been extinguished. This file promises to be a major issue for the OFAH in the year ahead.

We are following this issue closely, and are seeking legal opinion on our possible involvement in this matter.

OFAH Past Presidents Advisory Committee Annual Report



Chair – Rob Hare

For the past two and a half years, in consultation with the OFAH Board of Directors, head office staff, and our legal counsel, the Past Presidents Advisory Committee has been reviewing the OFAH Constitution and Bylaws.

This review was undertaken as a matter of due diligence, to ensure that our constitution and bylaws were kept current.

Some of the proposed amendments are merely housekeeping in nature, while other proposed amendments are required to assist in

defining and clarifying the roles and responsibilities of the OFAH Executive Committee, the OFAH Board of Directors and officials, as well as head office staff, as they conduct business on behalf of the OFAH.

At this time, I would like to thank the past presidents, the OFAH Board of Directors, members of our head office staff, and our legal counsel, for all of the long hours and extremely hard work they put into reviewing the proposed changes to the Constitution and Bylaws.

OFAH Resolutions Advisory Committee Annual Report



Chair – Glenn Rivard

In 2011, a draft resolution was passed by the membership of OFAH Zone F to create a land trust fund.

In 2012, OFAH zones brought the resolution forward to their respective zones to be voted on by their membership at a zone meeting.

The resolution was approved by all OFAH zones and then brought before the OFAH Board of Directors at their April 2012 meeting,

where it received final approval.

It is now OFAH policy, and an OFAH Fish and Wildlife Land Trust Fund has been established to help purchase fish and wildlife habitat and access for hunting, angling, and other recreational pursuits.

OFAH Sporting Dogs/Small Game Advisory Committee Annual Report



Chair - Jim Greenwood

Habitat loss continues to be one of the greatest threats to wildlife. Land use in southern Ontario is changing, which directly impacts wildlife habitat. The value of agricultural land has risen in recent years to \$8,000/acre and, in some areas, to more than \$12,000/acre. We are seeing the removal of small woodlots, forest edges, and windrows, as well as pasture lands being converted to expand crops (grain in particular).

As cities and towns expand their boundaries, surrounding wildlife habitat is further reduced. Coyotes in particular seem to be able to adapt easily to land disturbances and have become increasingly more common on the landscape. Wildlife/human conflicts will likely continue as a result of land use changes. Annual livestock depredation claims to OMAFRA are in the millions.

In September, the OFAH Sporting Dogs/Small Game Advisory Committee made a recommendation to the OFAH Board of Directors to have OFAH staff draft a letter to the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR), requesting the MNR to develop a proposal to add licenced small game hunters to the Class of Agents for protection of property, as outlined in the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act (FWCA). I am pleased to report that a letter was sent to the MNR on this matter.

In addition, the OFAH Sporting Dogs/Small Game Advisory Committee has given their support to the OFAH Agriculture Liaison Advisory Committee to develop coyote hunting workshops. The idea behind these workshops is to provide information to those interested in hunting coyotes more efficiently and effectively. In the Leeds and Grenville area, a Relaxing Cable Restraint Pilot Project was initiated to assess the effectiveness of using relaxing cable restraints to capture coyotes involved in livestock depredation, and the impact the device may have on non target species (e.g. deer, dogs, etc.). The successful implementation of this project relies heavily on the dedicated time and effort contributed by volunteer licenced trappers. This project will be completed in the spring of 2013.

Given that the MNR has no current information on hunting efforts or hunting success for small game species, it would be beneficial to see some form of a survey, whether it is a postcard-type or an electronic version, conducted periodically in all wildlife management units to gain insight from hunters. Perhaps it would be possible to incorporate some questions on the big game surveys already in place. The committee will explore this further in 2013.

We were pleased to see the picture of an Ontario falconer on the cover of the 2012 Hunting Regulations Summary. We continue to support the ongoing efforts of the Ontario Hawking Club in promoting the practice of this valued hunting tradition in Ontario. We would also like to recognize the Ontario Deer Hounds Association (ODHA) for their continued work in providing temporary shelters for lost hounds during the two week gun season in areas where the use of hunting dogs is permitted. This initiative began in 2001, and the ODHA provides shelter, food, and water for

hunting dogs lost during the hunt. Hunters can check the shelters for their lost dog, or they may be contacted by the shelter through information on the dog's tag.

Lastly, I would like to thank the advisory committee members and head office staff for their support.

OFAH Wetlands/Migratory Birds Advisory Committee Annual Report



Chair – Scott Petrie

The OFAH Wetlands/Migratory Bird Advisory Committee consists of the following members: Scott Petrie, Jim Greenwood, John Sullivan, Kerry Coleman, Roy Polsky, and Clark Boyd. Our advisory committee was involved with a number of migratory bird- and wetland-related issues in 2012. A brief update pertaining to the most important issues is provided below.

Waterfowl Heritage Days (WHD)

Waterfowl Heritage Days (WHD) provided youth (12-18 years of age) with the opportunity to hunt waterfowl with a mentor prior to the regular waterfowl season. In 2010, the OFAH and Long Point Waterfowl proposed to the Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS) that Ontario establish Waterfowl Heritage Days during the weekend prior to the regular waterfowl opening season in each of the districts. This was approved and Ontario held its first annual Waterfowl Heritage Day in September 2012, which was a great success, and many OFAH youth members look forward to participating again in 2013.

Proposal to Reinstate Mourning Dove Hunting in Ontario

The OFAH and Long Point Waterfowl have been promoting a mourning dove season in Ontario for many years. In response, the CWS completed an extensive Mourning Dove Population and Harvest Assessment Report. The main conclusion of that report was that the breeding population is expected to produce a fall-flight that can accommodate anticipated harvest with minimal impact. As such, the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR), the OFAH and the CWS affirmed that they do not have concerns about the ability to hunt mourning doves sustainably in Ontario. In 2011, a Notice of Intent to implement a mourning dove hunting season was included in the CWS December Regulatory report. A mourning dove hunting season proposal has since been included in the 2012 CWS Regulatory report. If approved, mourning dove hunting seasons will open in the central and southern districts of Ontario in September 2013.

It was agreed that season length (70 days) and daily bag (15) limit would follow the current United States Eastern Management Unit season framework, but the season start date would not. It was agreed that the season opener would be concurrent with the early Canada goose season opener because it makes the regulations simpler for hunters and enforcement, and it would be after the Labour Day holiday weekend. It was agreed that the mourning

dove season would commence on the same day as the early Canada goose season in the central and southern hunting districts, and would close 70 days later. The possession limit would follow the standard practice in Ontario of three times the daily bag limit.

Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS) Proposal to Implement International Harvest Strategy for American Black Ducks

The CWS has proposed that the International Harvest Strategy be used to set black duck harvest regulations. At the recent Ontario Waterfowl Advisory Committee meeting the CWS, the MNR, and the OFAH agreed that the harvest of black ducks in Ontario is currently below the moderate regulatory package (i.e. harvest neutral scenario) and, therefore, liberalizing the hunting regulations for black ducks to 107 days with a daily bag limit of two birds in the southern hunting district and four birds in the central, northern, and Hudson-James Bay hunting districts is warranted. If the proposal is accepted (consultation period until February 28), these regulatory changes will take place in the fall of 2013.

Sales of Migratory Game Bird Hunting Permits in Ontario

Sales of migratory game bird hunting permits in Ontario peaked in 1978 at 159,698. Since 1978, there has been a consistent decline in permit sales, with only 53,164 sold in 2005. Fortunately, permit sales have been increasing since that time; 56,305 permits were sold in 2011. Increased sales could be attributed to Sunday waterfowl hunting and other increased opportunities to hunt waterfowl within the province.

During 2013, 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 and where it is considered to be ecologically sustainable.



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REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT AUDITOR ON THE SUMMARY FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

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, 2012, 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, 2012. We expressed a qualified audit opinion on those financial statements in our report dated February 27, 2013 (see below).

The summary financial statements do not contain all the disclosures required by Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations. 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, 2012.

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, 2012 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, 2012.

The misstatement of the audited financial statements is described in our qualified audit opinion in our report dated February 27, 2013. 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, 2012, and its results of operations and cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations.

McColl Turner LLP

Licensed Public Accountants

Peterborough, Ontario
February 27, 2013

THE ONTARIO FEDERATION OF ANGLERS & HUNTERS INCORPORATED
Year Ended December 31, 2012

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

	2012	2011
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash	\$ 1,339,850	\$ 1,582,507
Investments	1,951,074	2,280,524
Accounts receivable	1,567,568	1,677,124
Inventory	318,270	315,170
Prepaid expenses	<u>412,853</u>	<u>511,619</u>
	5,589,615	6,366,944
	<u>2,975,443</u>	<u>3,110,769</u>
LAND, BUILDINGS AND EQUIPMENT	<u>\$ 8,565,058</u>	<u>\$ 9,477,713</u>
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$ 603,464	\$ 622,948
Deferred revenue	<u>1,411,269</u>	<u>2,140,430</u>
	<u>2,014,733</u>	<u>2,763,378</u>
NET ASSETS		
Invested in land, buildings and equipment	2,975,443	3,110,769
Internally restricted	408,618	418,362
Unrestricted	<u>3,166,264</u>	<u>3,185,204</u>
	6,550,325	6,714,335
	<u>\$ 8,565,058</u>	<u>\$ 9,477,713</u>

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS

	2012	2011
REVENUE		
Membership fees	\$ 3,427,927	\$ 3,312,944
Program fees	2,925,471	2,434,298
OOD magazine revenues	3,826,822	3,641,634
Sales	272,165	307,767
Fundraising	1,305,343	1,388,934
Donations	811,118	893,696
Interest and investment income	67,971	75,650
Solar panel revenues	<u>29,041</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>12,665,858</u>	<u>12,054,923</u>
EXPENDITURES		
Salaries and employee costs	1,914,038	1,721,102
Membership	2,127,399	2,106,042
Programs, public information and education	2,758,038	2,365,130
OOD magazine expenses	3,517,636	3,336,023
Office, general and professional	765,885	807,950
Cost of sales	300,702	330,315
Legal/policy	24,392	21,350
Informational programs	14,500	20,792
Fundraising	1,104,162	1,252,680
Amortization	303,116	294,676
Amortization of OOD trademark, lists and contracts	<u>-</u>	<u>100,000</u>
	<u>12,829,868</u>	<u>12,356,060</u>
EXCESS OF EXPENDITURES OVER REVENUE	<u>\$ (164,010)</u>	<u>\$ (301,137)</u>