

President's Report



This past year has once again proven to be busy and full of challenges for the OFAH Board of Directors and head office staff. It is impossible to tell you everything that your Federation has been working on in such a short space so please take the time to read the full annual report and share it with your family and friends.

I realize that some people may be getting tired of hearing about the Algonquin Land Claim and the Williams Treaty court case, but it is imperative that all our members, as well as all Ontarians, realize that these are precedent-setting cases for all who fish, hunt and enjoy the outdoor opportunities this province has to offer. It is critically important that we keep these issues in the forefront of everyone's mind and in front of our federal and provincial legislators, as it is they who will ultimately make the decisions that will impact on us all. To lose focus on these issues would be, in my mind, paramount to saying "we don't care, we give up," and there is too much at stake to do so. We urge you, our members, to be as diligent about these issues as our head office staff and our board members are. When it comes to land claims, all we want is a fair deal that recognizes First Nations and non-Aboriginal access to and use of our valuable natural resources, and the fair sharing of those resources.

Despite the downsizing that has occurred at the MNR, there have been some positive changes. The grants administered by the OFAH through the Community Hatchery Program have provided volunteer hatcheries across the province with badly needed funding to carry on their valuable work. New regulations governing the use of leashed dogs to track wounded game, the elimination of the special licence to hunt raccoon at night, and a reduction in the amount of paperwork required to hold wild game dinners are all positive developments on the provincial front. The OFAH Board of Directors also took part in an MNR Special Purpose Account (SPA) exercise by providing input to proposals for new ideas for additional revenue generation. We look forward to seeing the results of this consultation.

As a hunter education and firearms instructor, I was delighted to see the continued increase in the number of people taking the hunter education course. In 2013, we trained over 25,000 new hunters, which represents a 25% increase over 2012 and is the 12th consecutive year of growth of hunter education students trained. The introduction of a new southern Ontario mourning dove hunt by the Canadian Wildlife Service, and the creation of a spring bear hunt pilot project in eight northern wildlife management units was also encouraging in terms of new hunting opportunities. I urge everyone who is able to take advantage of these new seasons and opportunities to do so.

There is so much more to talk about, but as I mentioned in my opening, it is all covered in other sections of this annual report, so please take the time to read it.

I would be remiss if I did not mention once again, like every president before me and likely after me, how thankful I am for the entire dedicated and hard-working staff we have at our head office. Each person at our head office gives new meaning to the term "multi-tasking." On behalf of our board of directors, our 100,000 members, subscribers and supporters and 720 member clubs, I want to thank you for all the long hours, dedication and hard work you put in to make this one of the greatest conservation organizations anywhere. We are what we are because of what you do, and we sincerely thank you for that.

As my term as president of the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters comes to an end, I look forward to supporting and working with our incoming president. I also want to thank the board of directors for all of the work that they do in their zones, at the board table and on the various advisory committees, and for their faith and confidence in allowing me to serve this great organization as its president for these past three years. It has been an honour and privilege to do so, and an experience I will never forget.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bill Backwell".

OFAH Zone A Annual Report



Chair – Jeremy Funk

OFAH Zone A's annual general meeting was held in Ear Falls on January 26 and saw long-time executive committee member Bruce Hamilton move from the position of chair to 1st vice chair.

The January meeting also saw the presentation of the two zone awards. The first was the OFAH Zone A Fred Aaron Trophy for conservation, which is awarded to the OFAH Zone A club deemed to have done the most for conservation that year. The Sioux Lookout Anglers & Hunters won this award for their work in the previous year. The second award was the OFAH Zone A Larry Nault Award for the person in our zone who promoted conservation the most. This award was presented to the president of the Sioux Lookout Anglers & Hunters, Cory Lago.

The members present at this meeting were pleased to have an opportunity to meet and talk with the OFAH President and the OFAH Zone/Member & Club Services Liaison. We have had the opportunity to have the liaison attend all of our 2013 zone meetings, and we thank the OFAH for creating this position.

The second zone meeting was held in Dryden on May 4. Due in part to a freak storm, attendance was less than we would have liked but, as always, it was still nice to hear about all of the activities, issues, and programs the clubs of our zone have and are working on. It was also at this meeting that we presented our membership with the 2012 OFAH Bob Pope Memorial Award for the OFAH zone with the highest membership growth in the previous year.

Our third zone meeting took place in Sioux Lookout on August 17. As much as we had looked forward to our May meeting to see what the clubs had planned, at our August meeting we got to review what the individual clubs had done throughout the year so far.

The following are some of the topics we dealt with in 2013, as well as some club highlights:

Big Game

Moose Aerial Inventories (MAI) were carried out in WMUs 2, 9A and 12B. Unfortunately, we do not have the results from WMU 2. Results from 9A showed a slight increase in the population from the 2009 MAI — 1,184 animals up from 1,150. Populations in 12B have declined about 25% in the same time frame from 2,450 animals to 1,833.

The MNR has finally accepted the population estimate numbers from the Northwestern Elk Restoration Coalition. Previously believed to be lower, the MNR now acknowledges the 50 to 70 animals the coalition has been monitoring.

Fisheries

Both FMZ 4 and FMZ 5 councils have completed changes to their fisheries management plans. It has been a long haul, but our fisheries representative feels things went well on both committees. In early August, the Fort Frances Sportsmen's Club was involved in a research project to determine the crappie population in Big Sawbill Lake. The number of fish caught was 460; not one tagged fish was recaptured.

The Atikokan Sportsmen's Conservation Club applied for two grants, one from the Community Hatchery Program (CHP) to survey spawning beds, and the second from FedNor to repair some walking trails.

Club Events

The Dryden District Conservation Club ran archery and trap shooting events and competitions which brought in new members, and the same tournaments are bringing competitors from as far as Manitoba and other parts of Ontario. The club was also approached about organizing a fall hunting sports show in 2014.

The Sioux Lookout Anglers & Hunters took the challenge of bringing OFAH activities to the zone. In 2013, they held a Women's Outdoor Weekend (WOW) event that was a huge success, and are already planning two more WOW events for 2014.

Plans are in the works for a mid-January open house in Kenora to try to re-establish the OFAH affiliate club there.

I would like to acknowledge the efforts of the Dryden, Fort Frances, and Sioux Lookout clubs, all of which have made a dedicated effort to offer programs/events for families, and specifically for children. Supervised kids are given opportunities to be active in fishing, hunting, archery, and shooting, all while learning about conservation and respect for the environment.

The clubs of OFAH Zone A stay active and current on all of the issues facing our area; access to roads and trails, land claims, mining operations, fish and wildlife populations, and habitat issues. Zone and club members fight for the rights of hunters and anglers across northwestern Ontario.

Although 2013 was a busy year for our clubs we started to see a slow decline in membership near the end. It is only through our members that we, and the OFAH, are able to keep up with events and programming so, if you are a member, suggest membership to a non-member. If you are not a member, think about supporting a group that is working hard for your right to hunt and fish.

I would like to thank all zone members, clubs and the executive committee for all of their help and support for our zone in 2013.

OFAH Zone B Annual Report



Chair – Debbie Rivard

At this time, I would like to acknowledge and thank the OFAH Zone B executive for their hard work and dedication during the past year.

Shows and Events

The Central Canada Outdoor Show was once again a success, and had another increase in the number of memberships sold. Bill Blackwell, president of the OFAH, attended this show in Thunder Bay, and OFAH members from the northwest appreciated the opportunity to meet and talk to Bill. The Kam River Reel-In was

held in September with 60, mostly underprivileged, kids taking the opportunity to fish. Rods and reels were provided by the local TackleShare programs at the libraries. The zone also co-sponsored a 3D shoot with D & R Sports at the Lakehead Archery Club. Without the dedicated volunteers who continue to give their time at these events, it would be impossible for the zone to have a presence at these events.

The fall of 2013 saw the second urban bow season for deer inside the city limits of Thunder Bay. There were no changes to the regulations from last year. The positive news for 2013 was that we know a number of deer were taken, there were no public safety incidents, and all was quiet in the media with regards to the hunt. The Black Sturgeon River Dam has been a long-standing and emotional issue for OFAH Zone B members. Comments were submitted to the MNR through an EBR posting earlier in the year. Due to the number of concerns expressed, the MNR established the Black Sturgeon River Structured Decision-Making Process. Representatives from US jurisdictions around Lake Superior, the Great Lakes Fishery Commission, First Nations, FMZ 9, local stakeholders, as well as the assistant manager of fish and wildlife services from OFAH head office, and Deb Rivard, chair of OFAH Zone B, participated. At the end of the final meeting, all participants were expected to present their position with the rationale with regards to the dam.

Late in the fall, the MNR invited us to attend a meeting with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR), and other local stakeholders with regards to declining moose populations. The meeting was postponed until February 2014. The basis of the

meeting is for the Minnesota DNR to discuss what is happening with their moose populations, new regulations Minnesota has implemented, and studies they are currently undertaking regarding moose populations. Debbie and Glenn Rivard will attend this meeting when it is rescheduled.

The zone partnered with other stakeholders on a rehabilitation project on a small creek inside the City of Thunder Bay that supports naturally reproducing Brook Trout. It is a tributary of the Current River.

OFAH Zone B was approached to fill a vacancy on the Northwestern Ontario Emerald Ash Borer Committee. Doug Rivard, 2nd alternate director on the zone executive, volunteered to fill the position. With his background as an arborist, this is a good fit.

Bill Mauro, MPP for Thunder Bay/Atikokan, attended our zone meeting in October. He gave members a short update on his private member's bill that would see a return of the spring bear hunt, and answered questions. He feels that bear management is an important issue for the constituents in his riding.

Other topics discussed at our zone meetings included:

- elk hunt;
- mandatory reporting;
- Community Hatchery Program (CHP);
- Special Purpose Account Revenue Generation (SPA);
- Moose Aerial Inventory (MAI);
- moose survey;
- moose questionnaire; and
- salmon stocking in Lake Superior.

OFAH Zone C Annual Report



Chair – Robert Allen

OFAH Zone C held an executive meeting in Cochrane on January 27, which mainly dealt with determining venues for the upcoming zone meetings in April and September. A zone meeting was held in Kenogami on April 7. It was decided that the zone donate to Long Point Waterfowl for sandhill crane research, as well as the OFAH Hunter Education Conference.

The zone attended the Kirkland Lake Fish and Wildlife Advisory Committee meeting on March 4, and again in December. The meeting dealt with moose tag quotas for WMU 28 for 2013, and an upcoming moose survey. The MNR initially proposed lowering the tag quota for 2013 based on a lower success rate last fall. It was later decided to leave the tag quota the same as 2012.

The Northeast Regional Advisory Committee meeting was held on April 30 in South Porcupine, with a presentation on the Moose Program Review by Peter Davis, a State of the Forest Report by Bill Dalton, and a Tenure Modernization Report by Jim Duncan.

Fisheries Management Zone (FMZ) 12 met several times over the past year. More meetings were scheduled but some were delayed/ cancelled; the process appears to have slowed. Open houses to present the Draft Fisheries Plan have not been scheduled.

OFAH Zone C commented on an EBR Posting regarding Smallmouth Bass and Lake Trout in FMZ 10.

In addition, the zone commented on the federal proposal to delist Aurora Trout from the endangered species list.

The zone has now received a response to comments submitted to the 10-Year Review of the Temagami Land Use Plan last year.

The OFAH Zone Cannual general meeting was held in Kapuskasing on September 29, hosted by the Kapuskasing Rod and Gun Club. There were 27 members present, with the election of officers and directors, including a change in the zone chair.

Peter Davis, regional biologist for the MNR, provided an overview of moose hunting initiatives in the northeast. Some of the strategies the MNR have reviewed include scenarios to limit calf hunting. Peter expressed considerable interest in pursuing the option of opening WMUs outside of the core moose range for more intensive hunting. This could lessen pressure in the core area.

Waterpower projects in the zone continue to proceed through the planning process. As a result of public consultation, the Third Falls Project on the Ivanhoe River was changed from a modified run of the river project, to a run of the river project. The Chute Project, upstream, was left as a modified run of the river project. Unfortunately, no zone member could attend the last open house, hosted by proponent Xeneca Power Development Inc.

The draft environmental reports for the Marter Project on the Blanche River, and Wanatango Falls Project on the Frederick House River have been made available to the public.

OFAH Zone D Annual Report



Chair – Roy Polsky

The past year was a busy one for zone executives and members alike, with access and road restrictions, road closures and abandonment, Forest Management Plan amendments, new hunting and fishing regulations, and a range of wildlife issues.

The zone held three meetings during the course of the year. In January, the OFAH Zone D annual general meeting was held in Sudbury. In May, our spring meeting was held in Trout Creek, and was hosted by Commanda and Area Anglers & Hunters. In September, our fall meeting was held in Dunchurch, and was hosted by Whitestone Rod & Gun Club. Our guests during those meetings were the OFAH President, OFAH Zone/Member & Club Services Liaison, OFAH Assistant Manager of Fish and Wildlife Services, and Personal Insurance Manager for BrokerLink from their Sudbury office, Jessica Young.

In April, the zone, along with Doug Ogston from the OFAH Big Game Advisory Committee, and the OFAH senior wildlife biologist, attended a meeting of the Elk Subcommittee of the Economic Development Committee of the Municipality of Huron Shores. The MNR provided an update of what had transpired during the course of the winter to help alleviate the nuisance elk problem in the area. The MNR had tried to do a trap and transfer program, but due to weather conditions, was not very successful. Some members of the committee tried to table a resolution that the MNR remove all of the elk from the area if a suitable solution was not found. They were advised that this was not an option. The OFAH did not support the resolution as such. It has come to our attention that some farmers were in contact with local aboriginal communities to help them deal with the situation.

The United Walleye Clubs held a workshop in Sudbury in April. It was very well attended by a wide variety of groups and guest speakers, including George Morgan, Bruce Kilgour, John Casselman, and Mark Holmes from Xeneca Power Development Inc.

In the early part of May, the Manitoulin Deer Management Advisory Committee had their meeting. An update of the deer population and conditions, along with the result of the fall hunt was provided by the MNR. The antlerless deer quota was established. The committee voted to keep the status quo even though MNR staff had recommended an increase of antlerless tags in WMU 43B. From all reports received, the fall hunt does not seem as successful as in previous years, with many groups having limited success or none at all.

The Provincial Wild Turkey Working Group has not met for over a year and a half. The West Arm/French River Wild Turkey Group, along with the zone, have requested a spring hunt for wild turkeys in WMU 42. The zone is also recommending that a season be established in WMUs 47, 49, and 50.

We still have to be diligent with regards to the Spanish Arm Road, north of Sudbury. The gate was removed during the last Sudbury Forest Management Plan with some restriction on using the road to access certain lakes. Some cottagers are still trying to have the road gated, and have threatened the MNR with legal action, stating that the Area of Concern (AOC) prescription is illegal.

There is mounting opposition from local groups that oppose the use of pesticides in the forest to control unwanted vegetation. They would like the MNR to ban the use of the herbicide glyphosate (used in Round Up and Vision). The herbicide is used to control the growth of deciduous trees and shrubs after evergreen trees have been planted.

At the end of September, Xeneca notified stakeholders that a Notice of Completion for the Wabagishik Rapids Hydro Project was being published in local papers, and that there was a 33 day review period from September 30 to November 1, 2013. There is still opposition to these hydro dams on local waterways.

There is a new opening day for bass season in FMZ 10. The zone has representation on FMZs 10, 11, 13, and 14. Lake Nipissing and the decline of the Walleye population is still an ongoing issue; there has been no movement to suspend or regulate commercial gillnetting.

The zone provided funding to member clubs and organizations to help them carry out their fish and wildlife projects:

- Gore Bay and District Fish & Game Club - \$2,500 for the mini fish farm project;
- Manitoulin Area Stewardship Council - \$2,500 for the Youth Trapping Course (the funds provide six trapping kits and OFAH youth memberships);
- Manitoulin Streams Improvement Association - \$2,500 for stream restoration;
- Trailsmen Rod & Gun Club - \$2,500 towards electrical upgrades to the hatchery and ponds;
- United Walleye Clubs - \$2,500 for the purchase of trap nets;
- Espanola Game and Fish - \$1,000 for the Black Creek boat launch; and
- 85th OFAH Annual General Meeting and Fish & Wildlife Conference - \$1,000.

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

OFAH Zone E Annual Report



Chair – Gord Trylinski

In 2013, OFAH Zone E had a busy year. The first meeting was held on March 24 at the Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority (GRCA) in Port Hope. Ongoing and new issues were discussed that needed to be dealt with. We were disappointed to learn that the Pembroke Outdoor Sportsman's Club shut down the jar hatchery that was funded by the OFAH/MNR Walleye Put-Grow-Take Partnership.

The latest issue that has been reported concerns the Petawawa Power Project. Xeneca Power Development Inc., the project proponent, has been issued a lease cancellation notice by the Department of National Defence (DND). This location (DND property) was the proposed site for the project.

On the brighter side, the zone had some very good results with other activities:

- Renfrew County Youth Hunting Mentorship Program saw 20 youths, ages 12-17 years old, receive their firearms training and hunter education courses, a one-year OFAH membership, a mentored waterfowl hunt, and the understanding of the importance of wildlife conservation.
- The Ontario Family Fishing Event had a great turnout, with approximately 150 participants from the Department of

National Defence linesman group. This was their 15th Annual Fishing Derby at Cory Lake in Petawawa.

- The Bancroft District Fish & Game Protective Association celebrated its 50th anniversary.
- The Darlington Family Fishing Day had over 250 kids participate.
- The Peterborough Children's Water Festival was, once again, a huge success.
- South Central Ontario Fish & Wildlife Association Inc. had a successful Family Fishing Day event.
- The Griffith & Matawatchan Fish and Game Club also held a Family Fishing Day event in July.

Donations from our zone were distributed to the following:

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

OFAH Zone F Annual Report



Chair – Ed Giffin

OFAH Zone F held four meetings in 2013. All of the meetings were held in Perth at the Perth Royal Canadian Legion. The OFAH zone/member & club services liaison attended the February 24 meeting, as well as Silvia Strobl, MNR SPA Revenue Generation Project manager, who gave a presentation on the Special Purpose Account (SPA) which included suggestions and options for generating more revenue for the SPA.

The liaison attended the April 24 meeting. Also in attendance was Area Biologist, Mary Garvey who provided the attendees with updates on deer, moose, and a coyote study in the Kemptville District of the MNR. As well, Joff Cote, MNR management biologist, gave a presentation on the progress of FMZ 18's Fisheries Management Plan, new regulations for Walleye and bass, and the broadscale netting program for 2014-2015.

The meeting on August 29 was an evening meeting with a business agenda. The OFAH Zone F annual meeting was held on November 24. Our guest speaker was Dr. Bruce Tufts, from Queen's University, who also sits on the OFAH Fisheries Advisory Committee. He

provided the attendees with an interesting presentation on the fisheries biology programs offered at Queen's, research that is and has been done on freshwater fisheries, particularly in eastern Ontario, and the excellent facilities which Queen's provides its students for studying conservation, fish and wildlife.

OFAH Zone F is represented on the following committees:

- OFAH Executive Committee – Kerry Coleman
- OFAH Big Game Advisory Committee – Len Dickinson
- OFAH Fisheries Advisory Committee – Wendell Crosbie
- OFAH Firearms/Recreational Shooting/Hunter Education Advisory Committee – Len Dickinson
- OFAH Native Affairs Advisory Committee – Ed and Shirley Giffin
- OFAH Land Use/Access/Trails Advisory Committee – Kerry Coleman
- OFAH Sporting Dogs/Small Game/Migratory Birds/Wetlands Advisory Committee – Kerry Coleman
- Kemptville District 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 Advisory Committee – Doug Huddle
- Mississippi River Watershed Management Advisory Committee – Len Dickinson
- Mazinaw Area Fish & Wildlife Advisory Committee – Ed Giffin
- FMZ 12 Council – Pierre Boucher and Don Pajot
- FMZ 18 Council – Wendell Crosbie and Merrill Elliott
- FMZ 20 Council – Dr. Bruce Tufts
- Lanark Stewardship Council – Wendell Crosbie and Kerry Coleman
- Leeds Grenville Stewardship Council – Kerry Coleman
- South Nation Conservation Authority Advisory Council – Cyril Holmes

OFAH Zone F continues to support a variety of conservation projects by OFAH affiliated clubs including: Grenville Fish & Game Club's special events trailer; the Ottawa Region Walleye League's Annual Kids' Ice Fishing Derby; the Kingston Fish & Game Club's annual ice fishing and perch fishing derbies; Perth Kids' Fishing Derby; Crimestoppers; Ottawa Beagle Club for cedar trees to improve habitat for snowshoe hares; Lanark Stewardship

Council for spawning shoal improvement work on the Mississippi River near Dalhousie Lake; MNR Elk Inventory Study; Westport Area Outdoor Association to purchase a new pump for their fish hatchery; and Ottawa Valley Fishing Show booth space.

The OFAH and the Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC) have signed an agreement to allow OFAH affiliated clubs and their members hunting access to NCC properties. To date, the Grenville Fish & Game Club, the Osgoode Township Fish, Game, and Conservation Club, and the Giles Gang have taken advantage of this opportunity. It is hoped that other clubs will have an opportunity to participate as more land is made available by NCC. OFAH Zone F welcomed the following newly affiliated clubs: RD Hunt Club; Community Stewardship Council of Lanark County; Sugar Bush Country Club; Blue Swamp Hunt Camp Inc.; South Eastern Ontario Archery Club; Jellyby Gamers; Hastings Stewardship Council; Scott's Island Deer Camp; and Partridge Lake Hunt Club.

Our zone continues to provide plot mules which are conveniently located in Brockville, Cloyne, Cornwall, Lanark, Osgoode, and Sydenham to OFAH members and clubs.

The zone continues to maintain an OFAH Zone F website as part of our commitment to provide information to all OFAH Zone F members and clubs.

OFAH Zone G Annual Report

Chair – Rob Hare

OFAH Zone G is enjoying another successful year. Our membership is at approximately 11,000 members.

Our January quarterly meeting was hosted by the Canadian Croatian Hunters & Anglers Club, at their clubhouse in Mississauga. Our guest speakers were the owner and her first mate from the Salmon Express Fishing Charter. If you watch *Angler & Hunter Television*, you will have seen various shows throughout the years that have been filmed on these chartered boats. They gave a great talk about the fishing charters they offer, and their experiences on Lake Ontario.

The OFAH Zone G April meeting was hosted by the Islington Sportsmen's Club, at their facility in Caledon Hills. The guest speaker for that meeting was Greg Bennett, a pro staff member from Quaker Boy Game Calls. Greg's talk was geared to be a tune up for the upcoming spring turkey hunt.

The August OFAH Zone G meeting was hosted by the Georgina Sportsmen's Alliance. This meeting was held at District #3 of the York Regional Police Station in Sutton. The guest speaker for that meeting was Mike Pallotta from Pine Ridge Pudelpointers & Hunting Preserve. Mike spoke about hunting pheasants and quail on his farm. He also talked about the history of pheasant releases in Ontario.

At the November OFAH Zone G Annual General Meeting,



hosted by the Ajax Rod and Gun Club, the guest speaker was Keith Munroe, who was the recipient of the 2012 OFAH/ Zone G Wildlife Research Grant. Keith presented the results of his project titled "Application of Risk and Refuge Effects to Hunting as a Tool for Managing White-Tailed Deer Populations."

Our zone, again this year, has contributed funds to help offset the costs associated with the very popular Uxbridge Huck Finn Fishing Day. In past years, upwards of 2,000 youth have participated in this event. This year's fishing day took place on Saturday, April 27, and ran from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Once again, our zone contributed funding to partially sponsor a five-person MNR Stewardship Ranger Crew. This crew worked out of the Aurora District MNR office this past summer on various conservation-related projects in and around the GTA.

The OFAH Zone G Youth Adventure Camp was held in July at the Islington Sportsmen's Club and was a huge success. Twenty-four young ladies had the opportunity to attend this adventure camp for one week, and were able to experience a variety of outdoor activities. This camp could not have achieved the success it did without the tremendous efforts of Christine Finter, Jim Kelly, Stephen Huntley, and the volunteer youth counsellors. Next year's camp will be for boys and Christine, Jim, and Stephen are looking for adult help to operate the adventure camp. I would be remiss in not thanking the Islington Sportsmen's Club for donating the use of their wonderful facility for the week.

Last fall, the zone committed \$1,500 to help fund the reintroduction

of wild rice into historical locations around Lake Simcoe.

Discharge Bylaws

After numerous meetings with the City of Whitby municipal staff and councillors, a new discharge bylaw passed in September. This new bylaw replaced a poorly conceived bylaw, which totally banned the discharge of firearms within the city limits.

Municipal staff from the Town of Uxbridge worked very closely with OFAH head office staff and OFAH Zone G executive members to resolve what essentially amounted to a noise complaint issue. Very early in the process the municipal staff realized there were two very separate and distinct issues. The first issue was complaints from local residents concerned about the noise generated by a local shooting club. The second issue was related to firearms discharge. The municipality separated the two issues and the discharge bylaw, as it relates to hunting, was only slightly impacted.

The Township of King is reviewing their current discharge bylaw. Our zone and the OFAH have reviewed the proposed changes and have no objections to the bylaw changes. There are some concerns with the wording in the bylaw. The OFAH is working with the municipal staff to address our concerns, and officials at the municipality have been receptive to OFAH suggestions.

Fisheries

Muskies Canada and their partners have now entered into the monitoring phase of the Muskie reintroduction project on Lake Simcoe. The MNR issued angling-only collection permits to Muskies Canada and their partners. As you know, Muskies are notoriously hard to catch and, as a result, not many have been caught.

At the last Lake Simcoe Fisheries Stakeholder Committee meeting, a presentation was made reporting on the results of an ongoing hydro-acoustic study showing improved Lake Herring populations in Lake Simcoe. This, in combination with results from index netting study results, is encouraging for the prospect of reopening the Lake Herring fishery on Lake Simcoe.

Two Lake Ontario GTA Urban Recreational Fisheries meetings have been held in the zone. These meetings were held to seek input on the recreational fishery and to focus on the shore-based angler. By all reports, waterfowl and deer hunters have had successful seasons. Access issues continue to be problematic.

OFAH Zone H Annual Report



Chair – Wayne Forgrave

The Sydenham Sportsmen's Association (SSA) collected 120,000 salmon eggs this fall for the hatchery, as well as the Lake Huron Fishing Club which collected their salmon egg allotment at the Mill Dam in Owen Sound. The SSA had a research team from Western University collecting eggs for a follow-up study on salmon. The fishing was very good this year in Owen Sound Bay, and the salmon run was excellent.

The MNR recently released 140,000 fingerling Whitefish into Lake Simcoe -- 70,000 at Jackson's Point and 70,000 at Hawkstone.

The Kempenfelt Bay Fall Fishing Festival, sponsored by the Barrie-Huronia Rotary Club, was a great success with nine of the 71 tagged perch being caught (tags ranged from \$500 to \$10,000).

On October 22, the Dufferin Northern Peel Anglers and Hunters dedicated five fishing/observation piers to the Island Lake Conservation Authority (five more piers to be built), with one being sponsored and dedicated by OFAH Zone H.

The closure of Springwater Provincial Park by the MNR remains a hot subject. The Friends of Springwater are trying to get the MNR

to reopen the park and run it with volunteer help. They have a meeting set for early 2014 to discuss plans for reopening.

The policy for the Wodehouse – Karst Forest, near Kimberley in the Beaver Valley, is still in the early stages of production, with discussions taking place with all user groups, including representatives from OFAH Zone H.

The SSA led an extensive project on Kilsyth Creek, a coldwater trout creek that is a major coldwater source for the Pottawatomi River, to clean up and fence it so that cattle can no longer frequent the creek. This will help to reduce nutrient loading and the deposition of silt downstream on gravel spawning beds which should improve fish spawning conditions.

The Midhurst Secondary Plan, which would push the population of Midhurst from 3,000 to 30,000, is still a very hot subject. The plan calls for 1,868 acres of prime farm land to be used for residential growth. The project plan also calls for sewage system effluent to be discharged into Willow Creek, which would impact the Minesing Wetlands, an area that is of great significance due to the large number of at risk and endangered species that call it home. The Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority (NVCA) manages the Minesing Wetlands.

OFAH Zone J Annual Report



1st Vice Chair – Brian Moore

We certainly feel that this past year was successful in many ways, and we give thanks to the great support we receive from our clubs, other OFAH zones, head office staff, and our individual members. Despite the fact we continue to see large job losses in various industries, we are maintaining a strong membership.

As you will read through the various reports, there are many issues and concerns. At the same time, we continue to have success on many fronts working to create new or improved opportunities for anglers and hunters and the protection of our natural resources. As an example, we continue to see municipalities adopt Sunday gun hunting. Central and southern Ontario have also seen the implementation of the mourning dove season, which is an opportunity that many of us took part in.

Getting young apprentice hunters into the outdoors continues to be a priority. The youth pheasant hunts are now a nine-year success story, having originated in Fingal, and are now successfully taking place in several locations. Volunteer and see the success that, as mentors, we can be proud to be a part of. The Youth Trappers Program is a new opportunity to help us introduce youth to the outdoors.

Another event of recognition significant in our zone was the 25th anniversary of the OFAH Zone J Youth Campout that was hosted at the Wellington Street Sportsmen's Club. It was the Wellington Street Sportsmen's Club that held the inaugural camp in 1988. With 115 youth in attendance, and support from a multitude of partners, such as Bass Masters, this year's camp was the largest ever held. During the opening ceremonies on the Friday evening, we honoured some long-time members, heard from OFAH Executive Director, Angelo Lombardo, and keynote speaker Mike Miller, host of *Angler & Hunter Television*. Many thanks to our long-time supporters - Greg Balch and Tri-County Bass Masters. Greg supports this program with his excellent travelling hands-on educational display which explains the lifecycle, purpose, and value of various species, including our part in that matrix, both as stewards and consumptive users. The Tri-County Bass Masters donates supplies, manpower, and expertise to teach youths how to make bass lures, a prized possession for participants to take home.

Land access continues to be one of the bigger issues in 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 minimal and are often the focus of high activity from a variety of user groups.

Although we are supportive of multi-use trail systems, our understanding and others' perception of what are acceptable activities is often different. For example, a trail that is managed by the Grand River Conservation Authority (GRCA) had posted signs that stated "Firearms Prohibited." A portion of this trail is used by hunters to access a remote portion of the Grand River for

waterfowl hunting. We were given the opportunity to speak with the GRCA, and the signs have since been removed.

OFAH Zone J is concerned, and this is another reason to support our engagement with any new community trail initiatives. If we are not engaged early, we have a much larger and difficult challenge to protect our rights and access.

Discharge and noise bylaws seem to be an ongoing activity and it can be 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 of them have worked towards fixing the wording, but it is much more difficult to change an adopted bylaw. Please keep aware of your municipality's 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.

Solar and wind turbine installations are now an added landscape issue changing rural landscapes. The zone is especially aware and concerned with a multitude of onshore and offshore Industrial Wind Turbine (IWT) sites planned without due regard for their impact, not only on the landscape, but also wildlife, waterfowl, and offshore fisheries. Migration corridors of several species are directly impacted, and the IWT will also affect feeding habits.

All OFAH Zone J executive members have been very active with fisheries management, land access, hunting issues, club meeting presentations, and municipal council presentations. With respect to fisheries, we are actively engaged in FMZ 19, the Lake Erie Percid Management Advisory Group, Grand River Fisheries Management Plan and implementation, the Lower Grand River technical committee, Hamilton Harbour restoration groups, Misner and Springbank Dam issues, and many others.

OFAH Zone J membership concerns include:

- wind turbines (IWTs) and large solar farms;
- coyotes;
- land access, restrictions or fees for access;
- Grand River watershed issues;
- relationships with First Nations;
- changing white-tailed deer populations;
- invasive species (i.e. Emerald Ash Borer, Asian Carps);
- securing additional Sunday gun hunting opportunities;
- pushing forward with the Misner Dam decommissioning; and
- changes to the MNR (limited printed Hunting and Fishing Regulations Summaries, area offices closing, etc.).

We will continue to work hard for you and, together, find ways to protect, promote and create new outdoors opportunities.

OFAH Agriculture Liaison Advisory Committee

Annual Report



Chair – Jim Magee

The OFAH continues to be a member of the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs' (OMAFRA) Conflict Working Group. There continues to be a problem with wildlife damage to crops and livestock.

The Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association released a report in June 2013 outlining horticultural crop losses due to wildlife. They estimated that the total losses are over \$24 million per year.

Growers believe the factors causing increased losses are as follows:

1. increasing number of predators;
2. decreased hunting;
3. prevention tools that are less effective;
4. habitat expanding; and
5. expansion of crops.

Some of the species causing problems are hunted or trapped, such as deer, turkeys, geese, and raccoons. Other wildlife causing problems are rodents, song birds, etc.

Livestock damage continues with mainly sheep and cattle being killed. The main predator is coyotes. The damage varies from area to area with some counties having significant losses.

A new project is ongoing to enable farmers and trappers to use relaxing cable restraints. These would be used in the parts of the province where snaring is not allowed. These devices will allow the release of non-target animals, but give farmers another tool to remove problem predators.

Losses to bee hives continue with the most damage due to bears and raccoons.

The committee wishes to put on one or two coyote hunting workshops, and hopes to encourage more hunting of coyotes. This would, perhaps, help to keep the numbers in balance with natural food supplies, and decrease livestock predation. It would also be of benefit if farmers and municipalities had skilled coyote hunters to call upon to deal with livestock killers in particular problem areas.

Farmers do make an effort to protect livestock and crops, where practicable, but wildlife often find ways around these defenses.

We thank the members of the committee for their dedication, and OFAH staff for all of their assistance during the past year.

OFAH Big Game Advisory Committee

Annual Report



Chair - Neil Wiens

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the OFAH Big Game Advisory Committee members and head office staff who so selflessly dedicated their time and knowledge to the committee.

Over the past year, we have dealt with a number of issues that will/are impacting our ability to maintain access to our traditional hunting activities.

Bear

With the introduction of a Private Member's Bill by MPP Bill Mauro to bring back the spring bear hunt and the government's decision to implement a "pilot project" to allow for the spring hunting of bears in a select few wildlife management units (WMUs) in 2014, our committee spent time discussing this important big game animal. We have long recognized that a spring bear hunting season is sustainable, contributes to the health of bear populations, and provides for a reduction of bear/human conflicts. Additional benefits of reducing predator-prey interactions between bears and moose calves will also be welcomed. The OFAH has advocated for the return of the spring bear hunt across the province since its cancellation in 1999. The "pilot project" is a good first step, but our committee feels that a full spring hunt would provide increased benefits all around. Consultation around the new, proposed spring hunt is underway with the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) soliciting comments from municipalities in or near the WMUs affected by the pilot project. Public consultation is expected to take

place through an EBR posting in February 2014.

In addition to the spring bear hunting issue, the committee has also reviewed bear hunting opportunities as a whole and found a number of wildlife management units, with expanding bear populations, which currently have no open season. We have recommended that our organization press for the opening of fall hunting seasons for bear where populations will support them, especially in those units adjacent to areas in which a season currently exists.

Caribou

Even though licensed hunters do not have an open season for caribou in Ontario, our committee does allocate time over the course of the year to discuss caribou issues. At the forefront of our concerns is the current focus that the MNR is affording to these animals at the expense of other wildlife, particularly moose. We have reviewed a number of documents developed by the MNR and have commented on the draft "Range Management Policy for Boreal (Woodland) Caribou." The negative impacts of the management plan on moose populations and moose hunting opportunities in what has been designated as caribou range (both continuous and discontinuous) is concerning to us.

Deer

In general, deer populations across the province are in good shape. The committee still feels that there are some opportunities for improvements to the provincial deer management policies. We have requested a review of the "Controlled Deer Hunt" management

tool, as we feel hunting opportunities are being missed. We continue to ask the province to allow licensed hunters to help maintain sustainable deer populations in parks, so that we do not experience the negative ecological impacts of an overabundance of deer. We have had discussions around the MNR's use of antlerless tags and additional seals as tools for population management and harvest control. Hunting seasons as a whole and firearm-specific seasons receive attention from the committee in an effort to attempt to maximize opportunities for our members.

Chronic Wasting Disease

We are pleased to see that the MNR continues to be vigilant in its monitoring efforts to keep ahead of the threat of Chronic Wasting Disease by testing harvested deer. We are, however, disappointed that positive action to reduce the threat of this disease from captive cervids (eliminate deer farms) is not receiving the attention it deserves from both the provincial and federal governments.

Elk

We continue to push for expanded opportunities to hunt elk in Ontario. The licensed hunt in Bancroft/North Hastings has been held for three years. Harvest rates have been steady but the tag fill rate has not been as high as initially expected by the MNR. The total number of tags has remained at 70, with harvests coming in at 22-23 animals annually, even though the length of the season increased from one week to two weeks. The committee feels that an increase in tags is warranted, and a bowhunting season should be added to the season that currently exists.

We are anxious to see an elk management plan developed and implemented for the Lake Huron North Shore elk population. Some of the same human/elk conflicts that surfaced in the Bancroft area have become a reality in the Lake Huron North Shore region as well. Requests from landowners for elk removal permits and trap and transfer of nuisance animals tell the tale of a population that needs to be more thoroughly managed. Hunting opportunities is a potential tool that can be useful and must be part of the final management plan.

We had been apprised of an ongoing issue related to elk mortality along the railway line in the Sudbury elk restoration area. Reports of killed and injured animals, as a result of train/elk interactions, have been documented. Our assistance in helping to develop some protocols with CN Rail to allow for the study of ways to curtail these negative interactions, and to have the railway company advise the Sudbury Elk Restoration Committee when an animal is hit, resulted in a positive meeting between our head office staff, the Sudbury Elk Restoration Committee, and officials from the railway company.

Moose

Moose management across the province is always an integral part of our committee's discussions. Assessment of moose population status in each individual WMU is an important component, along with hunter harvest statistics, that forms the main data set for calculating tag distribution on an annual basis. In the winter of 2012/2013, the MNR managed to conduct moose aerial inventories (MAI) in only six units. We continue to press for surveys to be completed on a three-year rotation, and are concerned with any reductions in the number of sample plots that are flown in each WMU. Scheduled flights for the 2013/2014 winter have been set for an ambitious 19 surveys along with three contingency surveys. With the onset of early winter snows and good conditions, MAI

flights started in December. The MNR introduced the online moose status reports, which provide some useful information to hunters on the ministry's website. We have recommended that the MNR refresh the information on these reports on a regular basis so that the information contained remains relevant and up to date. The MNR distributed two individually-focused surveys to moose hunters this past year, and the committee has been anxiously pushing for the opportunity to review survey responses with the MNR and to be able to make recommendations for the next stage of moose management in the province. We have been advised that response rates from survey recipients have been very good (60-70% range). Questions being asked of the randomly selected hunters are intended to gather information on hunter characteristics, motivation, activities, impressions of moose populations, preferences for harvest strategies, and expenses incurred during moose hunting seasons.

Modernization of Approvals

As well as focussing on individual species, the committee engages in discussions on such topics as the Modernization of Approvals that the MNR unveiled this year. While we readily accept that any reduction in red tape and paper work can be a good thing, there are some downsides. Concerns have surfaced about the new process developed for the authorization to possess game animals that have been killed by such things as automobiles. Access to the requisite forms and notifications is done online (not universally accessible), and is proving to be cumbersome.

Hunting Regulations Summary

Our concerns about the limited number of printed copies of the Hunting Regulations Summary for 2013 proved to be right on the mark, and the MNR ultimately did a second printing of 100,000 more copies for broader distribution to satisfy hunter demands. Suggestions for a multi-year approach for hunting regulations has been made at both the provincial and federal (migratory birds) level. The committee looks forward to deliberations on this subject, as there are potential impacts to be considered.



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



Chair – Len Dickinson

The OFAH Firearms/Recreational Shooting/Hunter Education Advisory Committee was renamed, but the committee will still be responsible for issues concerning bowhunting, muzzleloading, recreational shooting, The Canadian Firearms Safety Course and hunter education. We have dealt with numerous issues this year and the following is a summary of some of our hard work.

Hunter Education

This has been another outstanding year for hunter education in Ontario. We have put through more than 3,900 students above last year's numbers, making it an all-time record number of students in one year of 25,235. This accounts for a great number of hours our instructors have put in to promote hunting in Ontario, and we thank these individuals for taking that much time out of their own busy schedules to benefit us all.

Since the removal of the long gun registry, statistics show that there has been a 20 percent increase in the number of people enrolling in firearms-related courses such as hunting, and there is also a significant rise in the number of firearms being sold across North America.

The MNR has increased the cost for hunter education student manuals by \$2 to \$20 each, and the cost of exams by \$6 to \$10 (plus taxes).

Students who have passed the Ontario Hunter Education Program must go to an MNR/ServiceOntario centre to purchase their first Outdoors card and licences. The OFAH is trying to convince the MNR to allow any dealer to issue these documents, making it easier for new hunters to get into the field. The committee also worked diligently all year to draft a Hunter Education Policy, which was passed by the OFAH Board of Directors in December.

Firearms

A minor who has been through the apprentice program and has a "Minor's Licence to Possess" has no license on his 18th birthday. The current Firearms Act does not allow for the person who is about to turn 18 to apply for a Possession & Acquisition License (PAL) until his/her 18th birthday, and if he/she submits an application prior to that, the Chief Firearms Centre in Miramichi will send it back. The OFAH believes that a person who will turn 18 who has already taken their course should be able to apply within 3-5 months of their actual birthday and receive their PAL, which will only become effective on their 18th birthday. The OFAH is pursuing this through the Federal Firearms Advisory Committee, the minister's office, and with the CFO.

The issue of the time span that students must wait to get their paperwork back before applying for a firearms licence is years old. We question the need to continue to have paperwork sent to the Chief Firearms Office/Firearms Safety Education Service of Ontario (CFO/FSES). They have said they are trying to create an electronic site so paperwork could be returned within 24 hours directly to the student; however, it is not their top priority at this time. The CFO/FSES also use the extra steps to check the eligibility of instructors. The OFAH is working with the CFO

and the minister's office on a means of eliminating this step. The OFAH will continue talks with CFO/FSES to help sort this out.

Seized Firearms

The committee discussed the issue of firearms that are seized as evidence in fish and wildlife investigations, and ordered forfeited by the court and slated for destruction. Before Section 15.1 of Bill C-68 was enacted in 2008, these firearms could be given to organizations, such as the OFAH, to be used to raise money for other conservation projects or in hunter education classrooms. Section 15.1 means that this can no longer occur. In our discussions with the CFO, and talks with the minister, it appears that the government could support changes to the regulation to allow this to happen again. The OFAH will continue to work on this initiative for the necessary changes.

Bowhunting During Controlled Deer Hunts

Back in the early 1970s, the original intent of not allowing bowhunting during controlled hunts was a safety issue. As hunter numbers are controlled during these hunts, we see no reason why, as long as a person who has applied to hunt during a controlled hunt wants to use bowhunting gear rather than a shotgun or muzzleloader, and is willing to comply with the hunter orange requirements while using his/her firearm of choice (bow), he/she should be prevented from doing so.

Youth Apprentice Hunter Game Seals

The proposal is to allow youth (ages 12-14) apprentice hunters to buy game seals, so that when they hunt deer, moose, bear, or turkeys with their mentor, the mentor does not have to use their game seal to tag the animal. We feel this is a win-win situation for everyone, as it will generate more revenue for the MNR through licence sales, and it will allow the mentor to hunt and take their own animals; this also allows them to mentor more than one person, etc. It was agreed that youth apprentice hunters would not be allowed into the lottery for game seals for deer and moose.

Hunting in Parks

We are concerned about the fact that licensed hunting has not been utilized in our parks and other places to prevent scenarios where deer become serious threats to our flora and fauna. Allowing hunting would provide more opportunities for licensed hunters and revenue generation for parks and the MNR (through game seal sales). The OFAH position is if public safety is a legitimate concern, or if deer are so conditioned to humans that they essentially appear tame, initial culling of deer should be conducted by the MNR or cooperating wildlife control agents. Once populations are at a sustainable level, then annual hunts should be implemented to provide optimal benefits.

Quebec Long Gun Registry Challenge

The Quebec Court of Appeal has ruled that the information contained in the long gun registry system is the property of the federal government, and they can destroy it if they want. The Quebec government is now taking their fight to the Supreme Court of Canada, which has agreed to hear the case.

OFAH Fisheries Advisory Committee

Annual Report



Chair – Debbie Rivard

I would like to thank the members of the OFAH Fisheries Advisory Committee (FAC) for their commitment, dedication, and knowledge offered to the committee and to the OFAH. The FAC meets three times annually to discuss fisheries management activities in Ontario; however, many committee members represent the OFAH on external committees and advisory groups, such as Fisheries Management Zone Councils, that meet throughout the year. The dedication of time and expertise by committee volunteers enables the OFAH to have representation across the province, and to have input at every stage possible during the fisheries management decision-making process.

At each FAC meeting, a significant amount of time is dedicated to allowing members, who represent the OFAH on FMZ councils, to provide an overview of council activities and raise issues or topics that require further discussion. This presents an opportunity for OFAH representatives from the different FMZ councils to share their experiences and knowledge. Councils for FMZs 7, 8, 15, and 16 have still not been formed. As some of the existing FMZ councils begin to wind down their activity, it is expected that the MNR will initiate some of the councils yet to be formed. Although many issues are raised and addressed through FMZ councils, there are some topics that require more in-depth discussion by the FAC. Other fisheries regulations discussed by FMZ councils included multiple lines in the Great Lakes, barbless hooks, proposed changes to trout regulations in FMZ 17, and new regulations for FMZs 4, 5, and 10 that will come into effect January, 2014.

The MNR's Lake Ontario Management Unit (FMZ 20) presented on the Lake Ontario Fish Stocking Program Review. It is hoped that there will be a final stocking plan in the fall/winter 2014. The development of stocking plans in each FMZ has been a priority for the OFAH. This presentation generated significant discussion from committee members on how fish culture and stocking plans can be developed and implemented on a provincial, regional, and FMZ basis. The committee will continue to pursue this topic.

The Black Sturgeon River Dam has been a long-standing issue in FMZ 9. Comments were submitted to the MNR through an EBR posting early in the year. Due to the number of concerns expressed, the MNR established the Black Sturgeon River Structured Decision-Making Process. Representatives from U.S. jurisdictions around Lake Superior, the Great Lakes Fishery Commission (GLFC), First Nations, FMZ 9, and local stakeholders participated. The OFAH was represented by Deb Rivard, chair of OFAH Zone B, and the OFAH assistant manager of fish and wildlife services. This topic generated significant discussion among the committee on issues related to obsolete dams, fish passage, invasive species, and the trade-offs that must be considered for conflicting fisheries management objectives.

The Toronto & Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) provided the committee an update on their urban fishing, habitat creation, and restoration efforts relating to the rehabilitation of coastal wetlands, including the installation of carp barriers and aiding the resurgence of plant growth. The TRCA has been involved in fish

studies and efforts to promote Toronto's angling opportunities, including the OFAH TackleShare Program.

Staff from the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) attended an FAC meeting to present on the implementation of the new Fisheries Protection Provisions under the Fisheries Act, and the new DFO Recreational Fisheries Conservation Partnership Program. They thanked the OFAH for being a significant contributor of credible and valuable input to the changes in the Fisheries Act, which included adding "recreational fishers" to the definition of fisheries in the Act.

The MNR Fisheries Policy Section staff attended an FAC meeting to present a draft of the MNR's future "Provincial Fish Strategy," and to discuss other topics relevant to fisheries management in Ontario. Having MNR staff attend meetings offers an opportunity for committee members to provide the MNR with feedback regarding FMZ councils.

Other topics of discussion at the OFAH Fisheries Advisory Committee meetings in 2013 included:

- Provincial Bait Policy Review;
- Lake Erie Percid Management Advisory Group;
- Lake Nipissing Walleye;
- Saugeen Ojibway Nation (SON) Commercial Fishing Agreement;
- Community Hatchery Program (CHP);
- DFO administered Recreational Fisheries Conservation Partnership Program;
- Grass Carp in Lake Erie; and
- Policy Reviews.



OFAH Land Use/Access/Trails Advisory Committee

Annual Report



Chair – Roy Polsky

The OFAH Land Use/Access/Trails Advisory Committee has representation on every OFAH zone. This committee deals with many issues that are relevant to other committees, such as the OFAH Big Game Advisory Committee and the OFAH Fisheries Advisory Committee.

Access issues are still a major concern throughout the province. Most are dealt with during Forest Management Plans. The five-year review will commence shortly for some Forest Management Plans. Some of the roads and road strategies will be reviewed and revised, if necessary. Also, Areas of Concern (AOC) strategies will be reviewed for compliance and restrictions implemented, if necessary. Members are advised to monitor local papers for when and where the reviews will take place, and let their intentions be known of any amendments that restrict access. During these reviews, the MNR will be using the new Forest Management Guide for Conserving Biodiversity at the Stand and Site Scales manual. In the south there is limited Crown land; residents deal more with restricted access on private property.

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

Crown Land Use Policy Atlas Guide (CLUPA)

The MNR recently updated their CLUPA guide, making the OFAH CLUPA quick reference guide on how to navigate the tool no longer useful. Head office has revamped the guide to deal with the changes. OFAH members can receive a copy of the guide by contacting OFAH head office.

McLaughlin Bay Restoration Project

The restoration strategy has been finalized. Options will be reviewed and selected in the next phase of the project. The OFAH, as a key stakeholder, has received acknowledgement that hunting and fishing will continue. We have requested to remain engaged during the next phase of the project.

Algonquin Land Claim

The Agreement-in-Principle draft provides for land transfer of no less than 117,500 acres of Crown land. Hunt camps and Land Use Permit (LUP) holders within the transferred land area will have to negotiate access with the Algonquins.

Temagami Land Use Plan

A decision notice was posted regarding the administrative amendments to correct errors and capture the original intent of the plan. There should be no changes to land use; however, the MNR will not provide any further opportunity to provide comment on the Temagami Land Use Plan until the next review period.

Madawaska Highlands Land Use Plan

A few camps are being impacted by access restrictions and they have been unable to come to an agreement with the MNR for temporary access to their camps. The OFAH has been working with these camps to try to resolve these issues.

Perth County G2G Rail Trail

The trail presently runs from Guelph to Millbank, but it is to be extended to Goderich on an old CNR rail line. Presently, there are restrictions on usage of ATVs and horseback riding, and hunting is not allowed. There are concerns that this will extend to the rest of the trail.

Hunting on Nature Conservancy of Canada Land

The OFAH has signed an agreement with the Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC) to administer hunting on seven of their properties. The OFAH Zone/Member and Club Services Liaison is coordinating with local clubs to administer the agreement. You must be a member of the OFAH and the local club to participate, and mandatory reporting is a requirement. ATVs are not allowed and only hunting for deer and wild turkeys is permitted.

Botha Creek Bridge Removal

Ontario Power Generation (OPG), which planned for the bridge removal in 2014, has agreed to meet with stakeholders to see if a mutually beneficial solution can be reached. Botha Creek is located in OFAH Zone C.

Shoals Provincial Park

The park had been slated for closure; however, Ontario Parks agreed to keep the gates opened for 2013 from May 17 to September 2. The OFAH has requested to remain engaged to investigate options for continued access in 2014 and beyond.

Clear Lake and Dawson Pond Conservation Reserve

The final plan has been approved, and it included only minor changes to the additions of trails and boat caches. When the OFAH commented on the draft management plan in 2012, we had concerns regarding the omission of some traditionally used trails and boat caches.

Navigable Waters Protection Act

The federal Act applies to specific waters, but there is no clear understanding of the Act, and what constitutes navigable waters.

Zone issues are also discussed during committee meetings such as applications for quarries, herbicide use, road decommissioning, wind turbines, hydro water dams on local rivers, bridge and culvert removals, etc.

The committee has discussed numerous other EBR postings and land use issues during the course of the year, such as Balsam Lake Management Plan, Coral Rapids Conservation Reserve Management Plan, Osisko Gold Development, Modernization of Approvals (Endangered Species Act [ESA] and Work Permits), Cottage Lease Policy in Algonquin Park, Quetico Provincial Park Management Plan, Strengthening Ontario's Trail Strategy, the MNR's Draft Request for Amendments to its Class Environmental Assessment for Resource Stewardship and Facility Development Projects, and Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves.

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

OFAH Native Affairs Advisory Committee

Annual Report



Chair – Gerry Haarmeyer

The 2013 OFAH Native Affairs Advisory Committee consisted of Chair, Gerry Haarmeyer, Vice Chair, Ed Giffin, Vice Chair, Dan Elliott, and committee members Felix Delongchamp, Jack Doherty, John Sullivan, and Shirley Giffin. Our in-house staff contact is the manager of government affairs and policy. The committee formally met and reported to the OFAH Board of Directors three times during the year.

As in the past few years, the Algonquin Land Claim has been our main topic of discussion and concern. We believe the release of a draft Agreement-in-Principle between the federal and provincial government negotiation team and the Algonquins in December 2012 has serious implications to all who may fish, hunt or recreate on Crown Lands in the claim area. We believe that both levels of government have failed to have meaningful consultation with the public and stakeholders in the claim area, and to listen to their concerns and needs. The OFAH had issued news releases, written articles in *Ontario OUT OF DOORS*, and conducted many media interviews to express this concern regarding the lack of true consultation. Further to this, the OFAH partnered with the Canadian Sportfishing Industry Association (CSIA) and the Federation of Ontario Cottagers' Associations (FOCA), and held a series of public meetings (Perth, Stittsville, North Bay, Pembroke, and Bancroft) in an effort to get the public involved in the issues that will affect their use of Crown lands and fishing and hunting as we know them today. A webcast was prepared and posted on www.ofah.org with the same message as was presented at the public meetings in an attempt to reach a wider audience. The posting is still available on the website.

Your Federation has been front and center on this issue, and staff have spent a great amount of time and effort presenting our

views across the province. For all Ontario residents, we want to maintain: 1) public fish and wildlife conservation management; 2) public fishing and hunting opportunities; and 3) public access to fishing and hunting opportunities. We want to maintain our culture, our heritage, our way of life, and our quality of life. The OFAH Board of Directors and staff should be complimented on championing this cause on behalf of the residents of Ontario.

At the beginning of the year we were also confronted with an appeal of the extinguished harvesting rights under the Williams Treaty. Both the federal and provincial governments served notice that an appeal was being launched by the Williams Treaty First Nations, with support from government, to challenge two previous Supreme Court decisions which upheld the decision that fishing and hunting rights had been extinguished for the Williams Treaty area and its members. The OFAH is seeking intervenor status on this issue (we acted as intervenors in the two previous cases). We were in court in December and are now awaiting the decision. This portfolio also took a great deal of staff time.

OFAH members of Fort Frances and in OFAH Zone A have kept us up to speed on the Stanjikoming claim in that area, and are monitoring and keeping us apprised of the situation as it develops. Fishery issues around Lake Huron were relatively quiet this year. The committee also dealt with the issue of First Nation-only hunts in provincial parks as outlined in the report of the OFAH Firearms/Recreational Shooting/Hunter Education Advisory Committee.

As this is my final report as chair of this committee, I would like to express a heartfelt thank you to all of the members I have served with over the years; it has been a pleasure working with you. Thank you to our hard working and dedicated staff. It has been a privilege to have worked with you on some very challenging files that may have far-reaching effects on our members and the public in general.

OFAH Past Presidents Advisory Committee

Annual Report



Chair – Rob Hare

Provincial directors-at-large (PDAL) are elected by the membership for a two-year term to serve on the OFAH Board of Directors. In 2013, a call for nominations took place and the successful candidates will commence their positions as PDALs on the OFAH Board of Directors at the OFAH Annual General Meeting and Fish & Wildlife Conference in March, 2014.

Two very dedicated and extremely knowledgeable PDALs chose not to seek re-election for this term, and I would like to thank both

Gerry Haarmeyer and John Sullivan, who truly were an asset to the OFAH Board of Directors. Their wisdom and experience will be missed.

The OFAH has an uncanny ability to have the right people with the right skill set at the right time on its board. This year is no exception. Our PDALs come from diverse backgrounds, and their skills and knowledge will be an asset.

I would also like to thank the members of the PDAL nominating committee, Frank Wick and Glenn Rivard, as well as staff at head office, for all of their help.

OFAH Sporting Dogs/Small Game Advisory Committee

Annual Report



Chair – Jim Greenwood

Kawartha Lakes Kennel Bylaw

The OFAH, with input from the OFAH Sporting Dogs/Small Game Advisory Committee, submitted comments on the proposed bylaw amendments to the City of Kawartha Lakes. Initially, 37 amendments were included, raising a number of questions and concerns by kennel owners and clubs; in particular, record-keeping requirements and privacy concerns.

Revised Sporting Dogs Brochure

With input from the OFAH Sporting Dogs/Small Game Advisory Committee, the OFAH Sporting Dog brochure was revised this year and can be downloaded from the OFAH website (www.ofah.org/hunting). The brochure promotes our sporting dog heritage, and highlights the ongoing work of the OFAH and sporting dog clubs across the province.

Use of Leashed Dogs to Recover Big Game

A regulatory amendment was made to allow the use of leashed dogs for big game retrieval in areas where the use of dogs for hunting is currently prohibited. The ability to use well trained dogs for tracking and retrieving big game benefits wildlife conservation, and enhances the overall hunting experience.

Protection of Property Agent Authorizations

Licensed hunters are now permitted, at the request of a landowner, to harass or dispatch certain species of wildlife in protection of property (effective July 1, 2013). As a result, this will facilitate the use of a licenced hunter to act as a wildlife agent in routine as well as urgent circumstances involving coyote and/or wolf depredation.

Wild Turkey Heritage Hunt

OFAH staff, through the recommendation of the OFAH Sporting Dogs/Small Game Advisory Committee, respectfully requested that the MNR designate certain days as a Youth Wild Turkey Hunt (e.g. weekend two-day hunt) before the regular opening of

the spring wild turkey hunt. Youth wild turkey hunts are presently in effect in a number of U.S. jurisdictions (and the Province of Manitoba) to increase hunter recruitment and retention, and enhance youth hunting opportunities. Likewise, we believe there are substantial benefits to initiating a youth wild turkey hunt in the Province of Ontario.

Additional Wild Turkey Hunting Opportunities

Discussions on additional wild turkey hunting opportunities are ongoing. There are still some WMUs without open spring seasons (e.g. WMU 42) for wild turkey. We also believe that there are WMUs that can support fall seasons, but do not currently meet the MNR's criteria for opening a fall season.

Apprenticeship Hunters

Currently, apprenticeship hunters (ages 12-14) must hunt under their mentor's licence and seal; the exception being migratory game birds. The OFAH Sporting Dogs/Small Game Advisory Committee recommended that OFAH staff explore options for apprenticeship hunters to purchase and hunt under their own licence(s) and seal(s), which would generate Fish & Wildlife Special Purpose Account (SPA) revenue, and increase opportunities for apprenticeship hunters.

OFAH Sporting Dogs Policy

The committee completed a review of the OFAH Sporting Dog Policy. To maintain the policy's relevancy, certain sections have been revised and will be presented to the OFAH Board of Directors for approval in 2014.

Coyote/Wolf Hunting

The committee was provided a paper (Wheeldon and Patterson) that summarizes the work they did on wolves/coyotes in the Little Claybelt area. The findings from their work suggest there may be rationale for proposing separate management of wolves and coyotes where the physical differences between them can be easily distinguished.



OFAH Wetlands/Migratory Birds Advisory Committee

Annual Report



Chair – Scott Petrie

The OFAH Wetlands/Migratory Birds Advisory Committee consists of the following members: Scott Petrie, John Sullivan, Kerry Coleman, Roy Polksky, and the OFAH fish and wildlife biologist. This committee was involved with a number of migratory bird- and wetland-related issues in 2013. A brief update pertaining to the most important issues is provided below.

Opening of a Mourning Dove Season in Ontario

The OFAH and Long Point Waterfowl (LPW) conducted research and promoted the opening of a mourning dove season in Ontario for several years. In response, the Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS) completed an extensive mourning dove population and harvest assessment report. The main conclusion of that report was that the Ontario breeding population is expected to produce a fall-flight that can accommodate anticipated harvest with minimal impact.

In the fall of 2013, the CWS opened a mourning dove season in the southern and central zones of Ontario. It was agreed that the season opener would coincide with the early Canada goose opener to simplify the regulations, and to avoid the increased enforcement that would be necessary if the season opened on September 1. The season remains open for 70 days, the bag limit is 15 birds, and the possession limit is 45 birds.

The CWS reported that, while they did receive some letters complaining about the mourning dove season, there were no complaints from landowners, and no other issues were identified. While we currently do not know how many hunters participated, the fact that many retailers ran out of non-toxic dove loads suggests that many hunters took advantage of this new opportunity.

Tundra Swan Season

There continues to be limited pressure for a tundra swan season in Ontario. This comes from a very small, yet very vocal group of individuals. The CWS recently prepared a report showing that an Ontario tundra swan season would be biologically sustainable; however, members of the Ontario Waterfowl Advisory Committee (which includes OFAH representatives), and the members of the OFAH Wetlands/Migratory Birds Advisory Committee, continue

to believe that there would be considerable social opposition to opening such a season, and that hunters may have more to lose than to gain from such a season. It was, therefore, decided that we would continue our position of not supporting such a season at this time.

Mute Swans

A mute swan workshop was recently held in Michigan, and representatives from the OFAH, LPW, and the CWS attended. There are now approximately 25,000 invasive mute swans in the Great Lakes Basin, and the population is rapidly expanding. There are 3,000-4,000 mute swans in Ontario. The United States is now coordinating control efforts but, with the exception of providing control permits to landowners, the CWS is not taking an active role in mute swan control. The OFAH continues to promote the control of invasive mute swans within the province.

Donation of Waterfowl to Conservation Dinners

The CWS is presently amending the Migratory Bird Regulations, and have proposed to allow birds taken under damage and danger permits to be donated to conservation dinners. Our committee agreed that this was not satisfactory, as it would result in a very limited number of birds being donated. The committee has requested that the CWS make provision for all legally harvested waterfowl (or at least overabundant geese) to be donated to conservation dinners.

CWS Recently Adopted the International Harvest Strategy for American Black Ducks

The CWS adopted the International Harvest Strategy for Black Ducks and, in 2013, this resulted in a lengthening of the season (107 days), and an increase in the bag limit to two birds in the southern hunting district, and four birds in the central, northern, and Hudson-James Bay hunting districts. Unfortunately, the 2013 breeding population estimates have triggered a change from a liberal to a moderate regulatory package for black ducks, as presented by the International Black Duck Harvest Strategy. As the CWS is obligated to honour the terms of this agreement, it is anticipated that either the length of the season or the bag limit will be reduced for the 2014 waterfowl season.



Photo: Michelle McCann Rowan



McCOLL TURNER LLP
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

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, 2013, 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, 2013. We expressed a qualified audit opinion on those financial statements in our report dated February 19, 2014 (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, 2013.

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, 2013 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, 2013.

The misstatement of the audited financial statements is described in our qualified audit opinion in our report dated February 19, 2014. 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, 2013, 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 19, 2014

THE ONTARIO FEDERATION OF ANGLERS & HUNTERS INCORPORATED
 Year Ended December 31, 2013

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS

	2013	2012	REVENUE	2013	2012
CURRENT ASSETS					
Cash	\$ 2,032,791	\$ 1,339,850	Membership fees	\$ 3,479,035	\$ 3,427,927
Investments	1,677,683	1,951,074	Program fees	1,926,891	2,736,268
Accounts receivable	1,144,458	1,567,568	OOD magazine revenues	3,956,034	3,826,822
Inventory	306,898	318,270	Sales	227,448	272,165
Prepaid expenses	<u>520,324</u>	<u>412,853</u>	Fundraising	1,292,539	1,389,211
	<u>5,682,154</u>	<u>5,589,615</u>	Donations	745,060	811,118
			Interest and investment income	47,412	67,971
			Solar panel revenues	29,446	29,041
			Foreign exchange gain	23,980	-
			Gain on sale of land	<u>136,500</u>	<u>-</u>
				<u>11,864,345</u>	<u>12,560,523</u>
LAND, BUILDINGS AND EQUIPMENT	<u>2,690,723</u>	<u>2,975,443</u>			
	<u>\$ 8,372,877</u>	<u>\$ 8,565,058</u>			
EXPENDITURES					
			Salaries and employee costs	1,845,560	1,914,038
			Membership	1,957,557	2,127,399
			Programs, public information and education	2,114,966	2,568,835
			OOD magazine expenses	3,512,038	3,517,636
			Office, general and professional	675,289	765,885
			Cost of sales	243,146	300,702
			Legal/policy	112,514	24,392
			Informational programs	5,500	14,500
			Fundraising	1,205,131	1,188,030
			Amortization	319,010	303,116
				<u>11,990,711</u>	<u>12,724,533</u>
EXCESS OF EXPENDITURES OVER REVENUE	<u>\$ 8,372,877</u>	<u>\$ 8,565,058</u>			
				<u>\$ (126,366)</u>	<u>\$ (164,010)</u>