

ONTARIO FEDERATION OF ANGLERS & HUNTERS



Ontario Conservation Centre

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OFAH FILE: 406/452
September 26, 2014

Mr. Eric Boysen, Director
Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry
Biodiversity Branch
5th Floor North
300 Water Street
Peterborough, Ontario
K9J 7C3

Dear Mr. Boysen:

SUBJECT: OFAH Participation in Annual Deer Tag Allocation Process

The Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters (OFAH) is Ontario's largest, non-profit conservation-based organization, representing 100,000 members, subscribers and supporters, and 720 member clubs. We are contacting you to request that the OFAH be considered a key stakeholder in the annual deer tag allocation process.

Background

The cold, extended winter conditions of 2014 were harsh on the province's wildlife populations, particularly white-tailed deer. The Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF) responded by reducing additional deer seals and antlerless deer tags across the province. Provincially, the MNRF eliminated over 15,000 antlerless deer tags and 7,650 additional deer seals in order to ensure the sustainability of deer populations. Although it was well-intentioned, the move sent a shockwave through the deer hunting community. The OFAH fielded dozens of calls about the tag reductions from members and like-minded hunters, who were concerned about the lack of accountability and transparency in the deer tag allocation process. To help us effectively communicate with the hunting public, we subsequently met with MNRF staff from the southern region, Aylmer and Parry Sound districts to discuss the reason for the reductions. During this meeting, it became clear that very few stakeholders are involved in the deer tag allocation process.

Public Involvement in Deer Tag Allocation Process

The OFAH has professional staff, as well as local representation (nine OFAH zones) covering all areas of the province. As a provincial organization, the OFAH is ideally suited to participate in district-level consultations conducted by the MNRF. We realize that stakeholder consultations do not occur in every MNRF district every year. Nonetheless, we respectfully request to be involved in the annual deer tag allocation process, wherever they are conducted in the province.

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Our involvement will benefit both the OFAH and the MNRF. It will increase the accountability and transparency of the deer tag allocation process; it will provide the MNRF with a powerful outlet for communicating information to the hunting community; and will provide the OFAH with the opportunity to better represent our membership.

I look forward to discussing our proposal with you in the future.

Yours in Conservation,



Matt DeMille, M.Sc.
Manager, Fish & Wildlife Services

MD/mr/gh

cc: Mike Gatt, MNRF, Southern Region Biologist
Peter Davis, MNRF, Northeastern Region Biologist
Brad Allison, MNRF, Northwestern Region Biologist
OFAH Board of Directors
OFAH Big Game Advisory Committee
Angelo Lombardo, OFAH Executive Director
Greg Farrant, OFAH Manager, Government Affairs & Policy
Mark Ryckman, OFAH Senior Biologist