

# ONTARIO FEDERATION OF ANGLERS & HUNTERS



*Ontario Conservation Centre*

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OFAH FILE: 400L  
March 14, 2016

Mayor Rob Keffer and  
Members of Council  
Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury  
100 Dissette Street, Unit 7  
PO Box 100  
Bradford, Ontario  
L3Z 2A7

Dear Mayor Keffer and Members of Council:

On behalf of the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters (OFAH), our 100,000 members, subscribers, supporters, 725 member clubs and the 2,258 members who live in the area of Bradford West Gwillimbury, I am writing to you today in support of Sunday gun hunting and to comment on Reports COR 2016 11 and COR 2016 12.

At the November 3, 2015 Committee of the Whole meeting, members of council voted in favour of passing a resolution to adopt Sunday gun hunting. This decision was made after listening to a presentation that spoke to the numerous benefits associated with allowing Sunday gun hunting. Most importantly, the decision was based on fact, not fiction. Our hope is that members of council uphold the original decision of November 3, 2015 and, once again, vote in favour of passing a resolution to permit Sunday gun hunting within Bradford West Gwillimbury.

Staff Report COR 2016 12:

Recommendation:

- That Council approve Sunday gun hunting in Bradford West Gwillimbury; and
- That staff be requested to file the necessary application with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry to permit Sunday gun hunting in Bradford West Gwillimbury; and
- That the Discharge of Firearms Bylaw (95-006) be updated and presented to council for enactment.

The OFAH fully supports this recommendation to council. As indicated in our letter to council on November 24, 2015, the OFAH would be pleased to offer our assistance in making reasonable adjustments to the discharge of firearms bylaw and noise bylaw, to allow for Sunday gun hunting, while respecting the aspects of public safety.

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Staff Report COR 2016 11:

Recommendation:

- That Report COR 2016 11 regarding Simcoe County Forests – hunting as a permitted activity be received; and
- That council approve Option #1 to maintain the current hunting regulations in Simcoe County Forests Tracts.

The OFAH does not support either option for the following reasons:

- Sunday gun hunting is an “all or nothing” approach, where the municipality is given the ability to approve it or not. Private landowners (county-owned forests in this situation), will always have the right to decide whether or not to allow Sunday gun hunting on their land, just as they do the rest of the week. Simply put, without an “all in” approach, the program would be a logistical nightmare to enforce. The exclusion of Simcoe County Forest tracts is not an option.
- As indicated in the County of Simcoe Policies, Policy number (POL-CSF-001), section 2, **“hunting is the primary traditional sport practiced extensively since the beginning of the County Forests.”**
- As indicated in the County of Simcoe Policies, Policy (number POL-CSF-001), section 5.6, **“hunting is a traditional sport in Simcoe County, and is a management tool utilized by wildlife biologists to regulate and control wildlife populations,”** and **“all hunters must be members in good standing with the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters”** (this section recognizes the liability insurance coverage that is included in a membership with the OFAH).
- There are only 10 out of 134 County Forest tracts where hunting is not permitted. The common characteristic among the tracts that have hunting prohibited is that they are directly adjacent to urbanized areas and/or subdivisions. There are three Simcoe County Forest tracts located in Bradford: the Welsh Tract, the Hodson Tract, and the Sinclair Tract.

As acknowledged through the staff report (COR 2016 11), none of these three tracts have the same or similar urbanized areas when compared to the list of non-hunting Simcoe County Forest tracts found elsewhere. The areas around the tracts in Bradford West Gwillimbury are by no means urbanized to the extent of other non-hunting tracts which have subdivision-type streets and/or commercial properties in very close proximity to them. Staff do not recommend the prohibition of hunting in any of the tracts.

- Hunting already occurs from Monday to Saturday – the only reason it has not occurred on Sundays as of now, is because Sunday gun hunting has not been approved as of yet. There are no public safety concerns from Monday to Saturday, so why would Sunday be any different?
- Simply put, Simcoe County Forests are pro-hunting.

Since the topic of Sunday gun hunting initially started last fall, we want to make you aware that Tiny Township, another township with a number of County Forest tracts within their boundaries, has also approved Sunday gun hunting (which will come into effect on April 1, 2016). With the addition of Tiny Township, there are now 172 municipalities in Southern Ontario who have adopted Sunday gun hunting – without incident.

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In summary, the OFAH firmly supports the recommendation to approve Sunday gun hunting within the Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury.

We appreciate your time and consideration on this matter.

Yours in Conservation,



Brian McRae  
Zone/Member & Club Services Liaison

BM/gh

cc: Brent Lee, Manager of Enforcement  
Geoff McKnight, Chief Administrative Officer  
Rebecca Murphy, Clerk  
Tara Reynolds, Deputy Clerk  
OFAH Board of Directors  
Angelo Lombardo, OFAH Executive Director  
Greg Farrant, OFAH Manager, Government Affairs & Policy