

# ONTARIO FEDERATION OF ANGLERS & HUNTERS



*Ontario Conservation Centre*

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Recovery Planning  
Environment and Climate Change Canada  
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**Subject: Management Plan for the Snapping Turtle in Canada**

On behalf of the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters (OFAH), its 100,000 members, subscribers, and supporters, and 735 member clubs, we have reviewed the draft management plan for the snapping turtle. While there is general support for the intent of the plan, the OFAH is still not convinced that snapping turtle populations are in any way currently “at risk” in Ontario. As such, we support conservation measures to carry out surveys and monitoring of snapping turtle populations and habitats in Ontario.

To our knowledge there still has been no attempt (despite their designation as a species of “special concern”) to estimate snapping turtle abundance and distribution in Ontario. The OFAH would not support measures to adjust Ontario regulations pertaining to harvest due to the current lack of empirical data, which is required to rationalize any proposed change to existing regulations.

Monitoring and assessment can provide critical information required to evaluate status and population trends over time. The OFAH supports the mandatory reporting of snapping turtle harvest as a component of the monitoring and assessment program the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry are required to carry out. In addition, mortality due to roads, habitat loss/degradation, landowner persecution, egg predation, illegal harvest, and all other factors must also be investigated to provide a complete and comprehensive explanation of snapping turtle mortality risk factors. A monitoring and assessment program for snapping turtles must also include population demographic data, including abundance, geographic distribution, age-class structure and recruitment.

In closing, the OFAH is committed to the long-term conservation and sustainable harvest of snapping turtles in Ontario. We strongly recommend the implementation of conservation measures that collect the required information to ensure sound management decisions are based upon concrete, scientific evidence.

Yours in Conservation,

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DS/jb

cc: Angelo Lombardo, OFAH Executive Director  
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