



FIREARMS

RECREATIONAL SHOOTING/HUNTER
EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
ANNUAL REPORT



Who are we?

CHAIR

Bill Blackwell (Zone H)

MEMBERS

Robert Allen (Zone C)
Roy DeCorte (Zone A)
Dan Elliott (Zone J)
Wayne Forgrave (Zone H)
Ed Giffin (Zone F)
Steve Laird (Zone G)
Carmen Woodcock (Zone B)
Brian McRae (Staff Liaison)

Introduction

I would like to thank all of the members of this committee for their participation this past year. As this is a multi-tasking committee, only one or two significant issues which the committee dealt with has been mentioned. -- **Bill Blackwell, Chair, Firearms Recreational Shooting/Hunter Education Advisory Committee**

Firearms

Bill C-71 An Act to Amend the Firearms Act – The OFAH had numerous concerns with Bill C-71, including classification; the OFAH is not against the classification of firearms, we just want a transparent process that classifies firearms by form and function and not appearance, colour or a curved magazine. This concern, among others, were presented to the Senate Standing Committee on National Security and Defense on April 1, 2019. On June 21, 2019, Bill C-71 received royal assent which was the last step required to turn it into law. Some provisions of Bill C-71 took effect immediately upon receiving royal assent, whereas others will require the development of regulations and other actions by government before the amendments come into effect. You can find all of the OFAH's advocacy on Bill C-71 on our website at www.ofah.org/firearms.

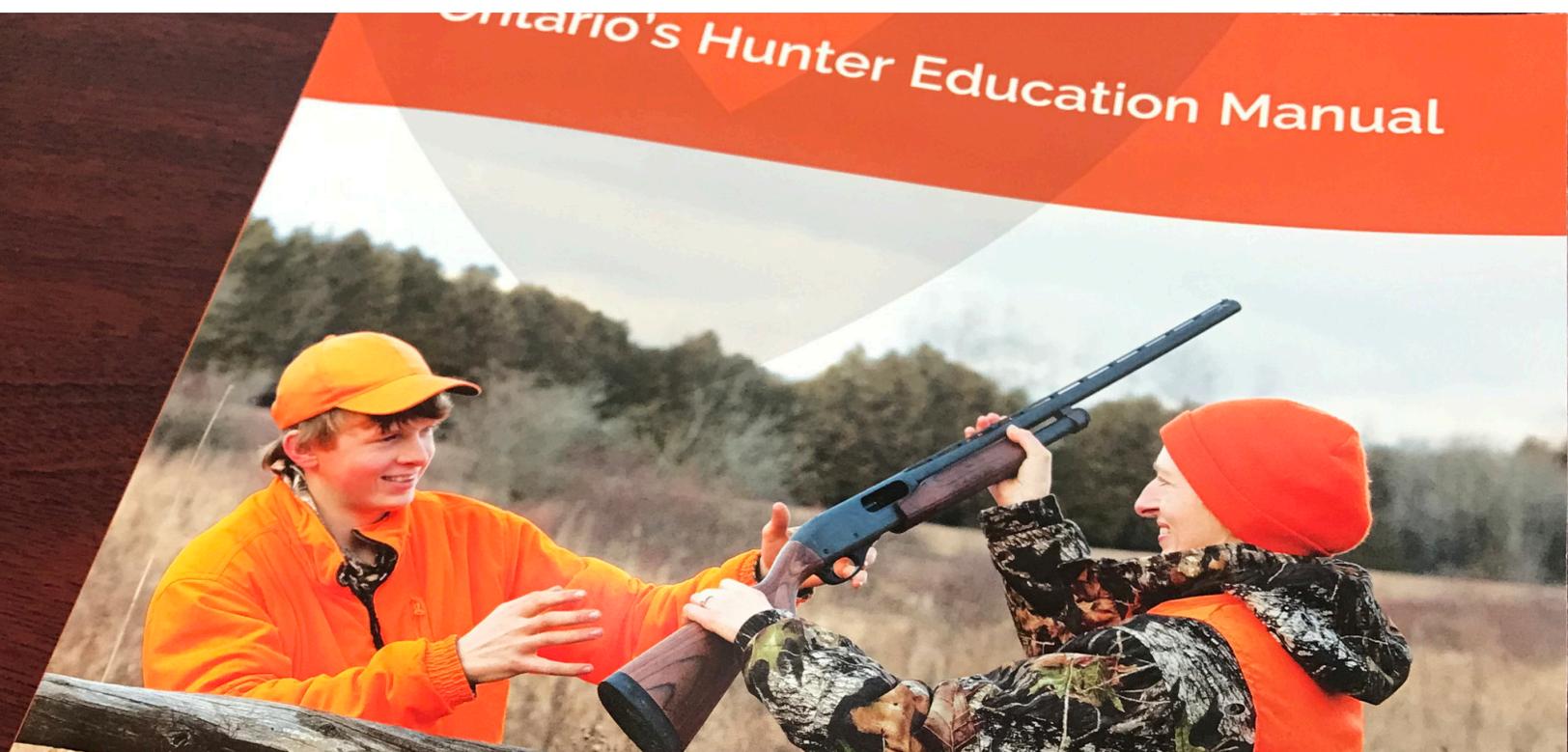
Discharge of Firearms Bylaws – Every year, the OFAH works with many municipalities when they are reviewing their discharge of firearm bylaws to ensure that hunters, trappers and recreational shooters are not inadvertently impacted by unnecessary restriction. In 2019, the OFAH was engaged with the City of Hamilton, City of Kingston, City of Port Colborne and the Municipality of Trent Hills.

Collaborative Communications – The OFAH has been taking advantage of the opportunity to work with Firearms Safety Education Service of Ontario (FSESO) and Chief Firearms Office of Ontario (CFO) on creating some joint messaging, in particular, educational materials. Topics include how to legally acquire non-restricted and/or restricted firearms and firearm/ammunition storage.



Hunter Education

There has been no further movement in a course curriculum update or a move towards online training due to staffing changes at MNRF. This past year, instructors trained 16,732 new students. It has been noted by several instructors that hunter education class size numbers are down. In the spring, we held our 28th annual instructors conference in Peterborough, with 63 instructors in attendance and a crowd of 100 at our banquet. Our silent auction raised \$8,000 for the Hunter Education Program. Many instructors have voiced their concern with the changes in the format of the 2019 Summary of the Hunting Regulations. Concerns include the difficulty in finding information, the disappearance of the Firearms Chart that was available on pages 23 and 24 of the old editions, and all the changes people are having to make to their PowerPoint programs that were in tune with the old editions. The 2020 version showed a marked improvement in the regs, which was welcomed by the instructors.



Bow Hunting

There have been no new rule changes with regards to current regulations on the use of bows or other archery equipment for the purposes of hunting. Technical advances with bows and crossbows, in particular, have seen a reduction in size and weight, and the speed at which some crossbows are sending arrows/bolts downrange; some achieving speeds of 470 feet per second. One has to wonder if they will reach the 500 fps which will now require a person to have a PAL to purchase one if Federal regulations recognize them as a firearm.



National Archery in the Schools Program

Ontario's NASP started with 12 schools as a pilot program in 2014, and has now grown to 135 active schools across Ontario. There are already 10 more schools scheduled to join NASP once they are back in session. To date, the OFAH has certified 847 teachers as basic archery instructors, who teach this program as part of their gym class each year. Over 50,000 Ontario students have participated in the NASP program at their school since its inception.



Muzzleloading

Nothing new to report on muzzleloading at this time; however, we did ask the MNRF to consider the use of straight walled cartridges such as .357, 44/40, 44 Rem Mag etc., during muzzleloading seasons. The straight walled or handgun cartridge rifles, in most cases, do not shoot as far as some muzzleloaders and have less range so they would be ideal in areas where bullet trajectory distance is an issue. The real issue will arise with hunters in the areas where muzzleloaders are the only firearm allowed.

