

**OFAH ZONE “H” report for BPSA  
Stu Paterson – January/February 2017**

**“opinions expressed in this report are  
not necessarily those of BPSA, its  
members or directors”**



This report includes coverage of the January 2017 Zone H OFAH meeting in Orillia.  
(this report may contain date sensitive material - editor)

1. OFAH President Kerry Coleman attended our January zone meeting.



Coleman told us the MNR is streamlining the regs for hunting fur bearing small game. For example Grey Bruce will be lumped in with South West Ontario where there are few small game creatures such as grouse, bunnies, and hares. He told us the ministry has done little to improve habitat for small game and in fact is not managing small game. Coleman suggests the ministry needs to work with the fur industry and hunters as there is a chance of added bans on trapping and hunting these animals in central Ontario. He emphasizes the importance of

posting your comments in these issues including the decline in moose populations, on the ministry EBR system.

He urges all anglers and hunters to become familiar with the EBR system as this is how the MNR gets its input on its decisions affecting fish and wildlife management.



Here is the link where you can add your input.  
Please do it asap-

<https://www.ebr.gov.on.ca/ERS-WEB-External/searchNotice.do>

For further clarification OFAH head office issued this about the small game changes:

MNR is proposing new regulations that govern small game hunting in Ontario. The registry closes on January 31 so you don't have long to comment.

If you go to your browser and type Environmental Registry and then type in 012-9170, you will be at the correct place to read the changes and submit a comment.

OFAH is concerned that:

-Grey-Bruce is lumped in with the rest of Southern Ontario rather than with Central Ontario where we belong

-The Varying Hare season ends at the end of February even though we have been asking for a March closing

-The limit for Varying Hare has been reduced to 2

-The limit for Ruffed Grouse has been reduced to 2

-The limit for Pheasant has been increased to 10

Please submit your comments ASAP as the closing date for comments is January 31,

2. OFAH and the Canadian Wildlife Service are working on the issues of baiting and hunting for migratory game birds.

CWS is currently seeking public feedback on baiting and hunting of migratory game birds. The OFAH has serious concerns. If approved, these changes could impact waterfowl and hunters negatively.

CWS wants your thoughts on these proposed changes before February 17, 2017. Please state whether you agree or disagree, and list any major concerns and/or suggestions. Two changes to the Regulations are proposed:

1. It is proposed to discontinue the issuance of bait authorizations for the purpose of attracting migratory birds for hunting (bait authorizations allow baiting within 14 days of and during the open season);
2. It is proposed to prohibit the deliberate modification of an agricultural crop that is not part of normal recognized agricultural practices for the purpose of attracting migratory birds for hunting (for example intentionally flooding a standing cornfield).

We are calling on all water fowlers to have their say. [Please share and provide your own comments on the proposed changes by visiting](#) the The Canadian Wildlife Service of Environment and Climate Change Canada website.

We are also reminded the MNRF is doing reviews of elk and deer management and you should add your voice to the process.



3. President Coleman, who is from Eastern Ontario and is a retired MNR employee, has praise for the federal government because it is working on strengthening the fisheries act which was weakened by the Harper government.

He told us our federation and the Canadian Wildlife Federation are working with federal officials on ways to beef up fish habitat protection across the country.

4. Zone H native affairs director Kevin Vardy wants to make sure he receives information on any controversial issues or good news stories involving first nations in our region.

Please contact me your OFAH rep. and Kevin, if you see or hear anything we should know affecting fishing, hunting and conservation. An example of that would be the two cases of illegal garbage bag loading of spawning rainbow trout last spring in the sanctuary at the Colpoy's dock. No one bothered to get a license plate number or call MNRF.



Another issue: the setting of gill nets longer than allowed under the SON Commercial Fishing Agreement just before Christmas 2016 near the Colpoy's dock.

Kevin's email address is [trophyhunter2384@gmail.com](mailto:trophyhunter2384@gmail.com)  
And mine [stupaterson@hotmail.com](mailto:stupaterson@hotmail.com)

The zone Native Affairs chair warns us about first nations folks using high powered rifles, trespassing, while doing night hunting. A BC court

has ruled is legal for first nations to hunt at night. Meetings are taking place between the OPP and Ontario native councils to resolve this issue before



someone gets hurt. So far the OPP and MNRF have refused to lay charges when native night hunting has occurred in our province.

5. I have just learned of a probe involving commercial fishing on Lake Superior..here is the info which is of grave concern to OFAH members and Directors-

#### Ministry Seeks the Public's Help in Case of Abandoned Nets in Lake Superior - NEWS January 2017

The Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry is seeking the public's help in identifying the individual or individuals responsible for abandoning gill nets in Lake Superior, near the Montreal River. On January 19, 2017, conservation officers with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry responded to a report of gill nets set in the vicinity of the Montreal River in Lake Superior. Officers located and removed gill nets which contained hundreds of rotting walleye, whitefish, lake trout, rainbow trout, and salmon. A number of nets were still set and actively fishing at the time of removal. The nets were marked with yellow plastic jugs on each end. It is estimated that the nets had been left unattended for well over a month. Since November 2015, officers have responded to eight reports of abandoned nets in eastern Lake Superior and the western portion of the North Channel on Lake Huron. During the investigation of these reports, officers removed over seven kilometres of abandoned gill nets containing thousands of kilograms of rotting fish. The Ministry is looking for information that will help identify the owners of the nets. If you have any information about these nets please contact the MNRF TIPS line at 1-877-847-7667 toll-free any time or call Crime Stoppers anonymously at 1-800-222-TIPS (8477).

Chris Staples, Northern Marine Enforcement Unit,  
705-941- 5141  
Jeff Anderson, Northern Marine Enforcement Unit,  
705-564-7858

The story hit the media in the north <http://www.saultstar.com/2017/01/25/more-gill-nets-found>

6. OFAH wants us to be aware of -  
WILD TURKEY HUNTING REGS - MNRF CHANGES THE RULES



See page 13 of the latest Ontario Out of Doors Magazine on this-

As of January 1, 2017, hunters were no longer required to complete the separate Wild Turkey Hunter Education Course to legally hunt wild turkey in Ontario. Key information from the Wild Turkey Hunter Education Course will be incorporated into the broader Ontario Hunter Education Program Course that is required for Ontario residents to become accredited hunters.

From now on, the “T” will no longer appear on the hunting Outdoors Cards of those who have turkey hunting accreditation. The requirements for purchasing a Wild Turkey License are a valid Hunting Outdoors Card and a valid Small Game License.

Please check the MNRF website.  
Outdoors Card Centre  
Peterborough, ON K9J 3C7  
1-800-387-7011  
toll free 1-866-686-6072  
[outdoorscard.mnrf@ontario.ca](mailto:outdoorscard.mnrf@ontario.ca)

7. A zone H “land use” report claims the MNRF has no concerns about a proposal to turn 29 km of South Bruce Peninsula roads into what’s called a “collector” road between Oliphant and Ferndale. A public information meeting on the West Road issue is scheduled in the next few months.

8. Some things I learned at this OFAH meeting:

- two neighbouring clubs that stock fish (SSA and LHFC) keep fish until they are yearlings to improve their survival rate
- some US states are considering re-introducing alligator gar into their river systems hoping they may help control Asian carp.
- many observers now feel it seems inevitable that big head and silver Asian carp will make it into the great Lakes

- our federation is concerned about incidents of “angler harassment” in Toronto...city staff have allowed the harassment to occur without consequences.
- the federal government is studying the impact on the environment of lead ammunition and fishing tackle. The study is expected to be completed by April.
- the OFAH is concerned that a group called Canadian Coalition for Firearms Rights is spouting views contrary to those of our federation. For example their support of “concealed carry” and “the right to defend yourself with guns”...the quote is “we will continue to keep an eye on this group”.

9. In a New Year’s report to members, OFAH President Kerry Coleman discusses the decline of the Lake Nipissing walleye sports fishery thanks to First Nations commercial fishers.



He points out there is reason for optimism. He points to the fact the MNRF and Nipissing First Nation agreed to a memo of understanding regarding commercial walleye harvest reporting and compliance with the rules and enforcement.

Our President notes this is not the same kind of legally binding agreement that would occur for non-native commercial fishing folks. But he says it is a step towards sustainable management. There remain problems in Nipissing as rogue commercial fishing folks are ignoring their chief’s direction by continuing to gill net walleye saying they “have a treaty right to fish”.

Coleman points out non-natives follow laws and regulations because we understand these laws are intended to conserve the long term social benefits of our natural resources.

Our President and OFAH continue to push for a well-funded MNRF enforcement branch to help protect our natural resources from abuse. For years the OFAH has preached about “the fair sharing of our natural resources”.

The way I see it is that it is in our best interest to share a common vision of conservation with all groups to focus on the goal of fish and wildlife sustainability.

10. I have a copy of the OFAH funding application which BPSA will need to use to apply for the 400 dollar grant to help us with our Kids Fishing event. In 2016 the federation willingly provided us with this much appreciated financial help.
11. The annual meeting of the OFAH runs March 16, 17 and 18 in Mississauga. I will represent you at this session.

- the next Zone H OFAH meeting is set for 10 am April 23, 2017 at the clubhouse of the Sydenham Sportsmen's Association South of Owen Sound. Let's have a good turnout from BPSA. Please bring your views and concerns. Take part in the discussions of the issues that affect fishing, hunting, conservation and our enjoyment of outdoors recreation.

- the summer meeting is on July 9 2017 at the Barrie District Hunters and Anglers clubhouse. It includes a free weekend campout.

- the fall meeting is on September 30, 2017 location tba.

Stu Paterson reporting on OFAH for the  
BRUCE PENINSULA SPORTSMEN'S  
ASSOCIATION

