

**OFAH ZONE “H” report for BPSA
Stu Paterson – April/May 2017**

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



Conservatives claim bill is a backdoor attempt to bring back the long gun registry

1. At the latest OFAH Zone H meeting there was alarm expressed by several delegates about federal Bill C-47an act to amend the export and import rules governing the trade of arms. It was introduced in the Commons on the same day as the federal pot legalization bill, apparently in a bid to sneak it in with few people noticing. This bill is described by some OFAH firearms users as “a stealth gun registry”.

This seems to be a back door registry. It will restrict imports of firearms parts. All records must be kept and be accessible to the federal government. Fines for breaking the law will increase from 25-thousand dollars to 250-thousand dollars. Under the law government inspectors would be allowed to enter any place without a search warrant to search for information on your guns, parts of guns and ammo. Gun parts valued at under 100 dollars, are governed by this bill. A broker permit will be needed by every firearm owner and the info must be kept on file for 6 years.



The following are views of delegates to this latest zone meeting not the official view of OFAH:

....” This bill is an attack on Canada’s 2 million law abiding firearms owners and a serious threat to the multi-million dollar industry they support. Canada’s 2 million licensed firearms owners make up the most law abiding portion of our country’s population”....

....” This bill seems to be the first step in removing our right to own and use firearms”....

OFAH is checking with firearms owners, manufacturers and politicians. I am told it will have an official reaction when head office has “all the facts”. As of this writing the bill has been given first reading the House of Commons. Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound MP Larry Miller tells me he is taking a close look at this bill and so far, is opposed to it.

The Internet site I Politics ran a short item on this story

<http://ipolitics.ca/2017/04/13/liberals-table-arms-trade-treaty-accession-bill/>

2. At the OFAH annual conference there was an interesting demonstration by the MNRF Canine Unit. You do not want to try to hide anything from these beautiful dogs or their handlers. The handlers hid a deer leg in one of seven back packs on a row of tables. One of the unit dogs at the conference with its keen sense of smell, immediately went to the pack with the leg inside.

These dogs are used to catch poachers. On Lake Simcoe for example, a trained sniffer dog will instantly find those lake trout that are hidden away by anglers who are exceeding their catch limit. The dogs are also expert at detecting drugs and alcohol. You have been warned. These dogs are used province wide, and are an effective tool for the Conservation Officers as they try to be as effective as possible,



3. At the latest zone meeting OFAH Senior Wildlife Biologist Mark Ryckman delivered an update on moose populations in Ontario. He is among the top moose experts in Canada.

The number of moose tags in Ontario is going down again. Last year the province issued 16-thousand five hundred. This year slightly more than 10-thousand will be issued. Tag numbers are down by 62-hundred over the last five years and he points out this is a huge loss to the economy when you consider the millions spent by hunters every year. Mark is calling for check stations in moose country where hunters can bring their harvested moose to be counted. Only one in five moose hunters are reporting their kills. Mark calls for mandatory moose harvest reports.



He wants first nations to be required to report their harvests. He says the MNRF must involve indigenous people in controlling moose hunting. And suggests moose will become endangered in Ontario if tough new controls are not put in place by the province..



4. Mark Ryckman delved into the elk situation. He said natives are having a "good elk hunt on the North Shore of Lake Huron". These are elk populations established by the MNRF and OFAH in recent years. Another quote " elk will go extinct again without action to control first nations hunting ". In his words " they can harvest every elk with zero repercussions". Our federation has been an active player in elk restoration. Through significant financial contributions, technical support and volunteer services, the OFAH and its members played an important role in restoring elk to Ontario. Between 1998-2005, 460 elk were transferred from Alberta to Ontario and released in four different regions: Nipissing/French River, Bancroft/North Hastings, Lake of the Woods and Lake Huron North Shore.



5. Mark and OFAH recently offered the province the official federation view on deer management, harvesting and populations. Here is the link"
<https://www.ofah.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/WtDeer-Policy.pdf>

6. At the zone meeting once again there was reference to stocking trout and salmon in the 12 to 14 inch size...stocking yearlings not fingerlings.

Most clubs that stock fish in our zone stock them after raising them for one year. It is well known that there is a much better survival rate when fish are kept for at least a year, then stocked. When I delivered our hatchery report and mentioned stocking brown trout fingerlings....I thought to myself, "we need to find a scientific way to keep these fish for at least one year".



The thank you letter Marj Beaver wrote to zone H, which I delivered, was noted by zone secretary Wally Motz. He said he appreciated getting it. The letter acknowledged the 400 dollars the OFAH donated to BPSA to support our annual kids fishing derby.

7. Zone H first nations director Kevin Vardy reports members of first nations in the East Georgian Bay Region have been busy trying to damage walleye stocks on the Severn River. They have been spearing spawning eyes "harvesting lots of hens". This action he says is bound to take a heavy toll on Georgian Bay walleye populations. He reports MNRF conservation officers have been watching the action...but no action is taken as first nations folks can legally fish and hunt as long as they are doing this on public property.



8. As I was putting this report to bed, there was a development that will interest many hunters. Here is the link:
<https://www.ofah.org/2017/04/rabbit-hare-seasons-restored-in-ontario/>
9. Just a reminder OFAH sponsored Angler and Hunter Radio is heard Saturday at 8am on 560 CFOS, your Bayshore Broadcasting station in Grey Bruce. Check out some past shows with host Randy Jennings:
<https://www.ofah.org/news-media/angler-hunter-radio/>
10. The next OFAH Zone H meeting is on Sunday July 9, 2017 at 10 am at the Barrie District Anglers and Hunters clubhouse.

Stu Paterson reporting on OFAH for BPSA

....."Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters....the oldest and largest non-profit, non-government fish and wildlife conservation organization in Canada. With more than 100,000 members, subscribers and supporters, and 740 member clubs, the OFAH is the VOICE of anglers and hunters".....

