

**OFAH ZONE “H” report for BPSA
Stu Paterson -April 2018**

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



1. Ontario’s Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry has answered questions about the recently renewed SON Commercial Fishing Agreement. At the 90th annual OFAH annual conference Nathalie Des Rosiers, who earlier called the previous agreement “a success”, said the fisheries in our region will be dealt with collaboratively through meetings with all stakeholders and indigenous communities. She praised the Community Hatchery Program (CHP). BPSA is part of that program with 40 other community hatcheries. She said the CHP has worked well for 6-years. It has one more year to run. We don’t know if it will be renewed. Half of our hatchery costs are covered by the CHP. The Minister dealt carefully with the SON agreement.



During a question and answer session I addressed Minister Des Rosier and several others from the MNRF.

Stu: "our club applauds the minister when she said we continue to seek public input on the management of the fishery through.....meetings with local stakeholders and indigenous communities".

We cheer when the minister talks about balancing natives commercial fishing rights with the interests of local anglers.



We praise the minister when in the recently renewed SON commercial fishing agreement she talks about "harvest restrictions" on first nation's fishers and about public safety and conservation.

We like the idea of, in the minister's words, both commercial and sports fisheries being sustainable fisheries now and for future generations.

We question the sincerity of the Ministry when we observe over the last five years, continuous breaking of the rules of the previous commercial fishing agreement for our region. And when rules are broken a secret group called "the governance council" deals with infractions of the agreement

Our continuing priority is to ensure the highest possible survival rate of fish we stock. How can we expect positive survival rates when your ministry negotiators allow unlimited net lengths in the new 5-year SON commercial fishery agreement?

Our club will apply for approval of a test project using Net Pens to hold fish between the hatchery and stocking stages. Holding hatchery raised fish in pens as volunteer clubs do in Lake Ontario, guarantees a rapid growth rate and greatly improves survival rates. We are confident both SON and your ministry will approve of our Net Pens application".....



Minister Des Rosier replied that her ministry wants "peace on the water". In her words "we want to continue working on this" and noted the importance of having good fisheries data to guide the future of the sports and commercial fisheries.

I am working to obtain an audio/video recording of this exchange. Hope we get it by our next meeting. I have copied our President, the

hatchery manager and Fish Committee chair on the full version of my presentation which was based on concerns expressed by our club members over the last year.

2. There was an in-depth session on “indigenous harvesting rights, relationships, and the path forward”. It was led by Matt Demille the OFAH Manager of Fish and Wildlife Services. The session ran for an hour and was very worthwhile. If you see that Matt is going to repeat this lecture, attend it. One of my takeaways was, we might have better relations with first-nations if we “take government out of the room” and “keep an open mind as we continue to build trust and respect as we all move forward together”. In Matt’s words “we can’t get caught up in the past but must face the future in a positive way”. He noted many first-nations folks can trace their families back 7 generations and said “we must all find a way to move forward working together to conserve our precious fish and wildlife”.



3. As was reported at the 90th annual OFAH conference, our federation is closely following the issue of the controversial Federal firearms proposals:

BILL C-71: AN ACT TO AMEND CERTAIN ACTS AND REGULATIONS IN RELATION TO FIREARMS

OFAH supports firearms legislation measures that increase the public safety of Canadians, as long as they don’t implement further unnecessary restrictions or barriers on law-abiding firearms users.

The government’s stated intention of Bill C-71 is to prioritize public safety and respond to increasing trends in gun crime and violence, yet it would seem that the majority of the proposals are focused on lawful firearms users. The government is painting a picture of alarming trends in firearms-related crime and violence to justify the proposed measures and



to show action on election platform promises of 2015. Unfortunately, targeting lawful firearms users will not help them achieve their intended goals.

The [stats being used to support the need for Bill C-71](#) reference 2013 (lowest criminal homicides in 50 years) as a baseline to suggest we have a growing problem with firearms in Canada. However, the facts show a long-term decline in firearm-related crime.

For decades, the OFAH has been pushing the federal government to invest in programs and policy that targets illegal firearms and actual criminal activity, rather than policy that has the effect of making criminals out of law-abiding firearms owners. The investments announced by the Government of Canada in 2017 to fight gangs and gun violence are a step in the right direction; however, this 'complementary bill' will do little to achieve the government's stated goals.

KEY POINTS TO BILL C-71:

- This bill directly affects ALL firearms users, in one way or another. The answers to our outstanding questions (coming soon) will determine the extent.
- As stated by the federal government Bill C-71 is intended to:
- Prioritize public safety by keeping firearms out of the wrong hands;
- Strengthen measures for firearms safety and give police tools to ensure public safety and help solve firearms-related crimes; and,
- Respect law-abiding firearms owners
- Bill C-71 appears to do little to improve public safety as is Instead it appears to put further, unnecessary restrictions and burdens on Canada's most vetted population
- The OFAH fully recognizes that Bill C-71 will be defined by the finer details and policy mechanisms required to implement the five key themes highlighted in Bill C-71:
 - Enhanced background checks
 - License Verification
 - Record-keeping by vendors
 - Classification or Re-Classification — RCMP
 - ATTs
- The contents of Bill C-71 proposes the remaining aspects of the 2015 Liberal Party's platform related to firearms. The OFAH provided initial comments to the government in anticipation of these proposed changes, and worked with them in an attempt to ensure they fully understand how changes in policy will affect lawful firearms owners in Canada

- The government has stated it will NOT bring back another long gun registry, but...
- What's the deal with the Quebec Long Gun Registry files? Bill C-71 says all files will be given to the Quebec Minister upon request. Canadians have been previously told these records no longer exist. Apparently they do. The government needs to address this issue

[Read Bill C-71 in its entirety.](#)

As of March 28, 2018 this was the latest OFAH “critical analysis” of this bill

<https://www.ofah.org/firearms/billc71/backgrounder/>

THE OFAH CONTINUES TO CONDUCT A THOROUGH ANALYSIS OF THIS BILL – FOLLOW US ON [FACEBOOK](#), [TWITTER](#), [INSTAGRAM](#).

4. SANDHILL CRANE HUNT:

An expert on sand-hill crane populations in Ontario tells us a sand-hill crane hunt will be here sooner rather than later. Populations are skyrocketing topping 100-thousand in our province. An increasing number of farmers are complaining about Sandhill Crane related crop losses. The big birds are found between the Arctic Circle, South to Mexico and Central America. Sand Hills migrate in large groups. We have seen groups of 150 in recent days in Grey-Bruce.



Crystal Kelly M.Sc. candidate at Trent University told us, her studies and studies by others, will probably lead us to a sandhill crane controlled hunt, but she couldn't predict when it would start. She noted “this Ontario population has exhibited a recent rebound and continues to grow despite previously facing near extinction due to overexploitation and habitat change”. You can tell an adult sandhill by its red cap.

You can reach Crystal at crkelly@trentu.ca



5. At the 90th OFAH annual conference there was a helpful information session on licensing changes affecting all Ontario anglers and hunters.

Ryan Large manager of the MNRF automated licensing renewal project gave us the news.

HUNTER HARVEST REPORTING –

[Harvest reporting](#) is a vital piece of the information puzzle when it comes to sustainable fish and wildlife management. The MNRF needs this information to support [research](#), to accompany population modeling and to develop harvest quotas. The idea is to collect the information by electronic device (computer, smartphone, telephone) rather than by mail.



Details...

- Mailed-in postcard surveys will be coming to an end (they are still being mailed out in 2018)
- ALL hunters who purchase a license for moose, elk, white-tailed deer, wolf/coyote, wild turkey and black bear will be required to provide information whether they harvested an animal or not, and even if they didn't end up hunting
- If you do not complete the report, you may not be able to purchase a license the following year. The new regulations coming into effect on January 1, 2019 allow the government to refuse to issue a license to a hunter who did not report in the previous year, but the details related to the consequences of not reporting have not yet been finalized
- The MNRF will communicate with hunters (via email) to remind them of deadlines and mandatory reporting
- In meetings with the MNRF the OFAH has pushed for a phased-in approach to allow hunters to adapt to the new system (i.e. not have severe consequences immediately), and to share harvest reporting results with hunters as well as how they are using the information in wildlife management

OPTIONS FOR APPRENTICE HUNTERS AND MENTORS –

Starting January 1, 2019, [apprentice hunters](#) will have the option to purchase an Outdoors Card and their own license/game seal (except through game draws). The [OFAH has been requesting this](#), keeping in mind that safety and learning would remain top priority. This change will offer enhanced opportunities for both the apprentice and the mentor.



Details...

- Apprentice hunters can have their own bag limit while still hunting under the direct supervision of a mentor and a shared single firearm (i.e. all requirements of the existing Hunter Apprenticeship Safety Program remain the same)
- Apprentice hunters will no longer be required to complete multiple consent forms to take the [Ontario Hunter Education](#) course
- Parental consent would only be required for youth hunters (12-15 years old) to purchase their Outdoors Card

This is the link to the OFAH page on this subject:

<https://www.ofah.org/issues/mnrf-licensing-system-changes/>

6. At the conference we learned of “good insurance news” for anglers & hunters who are members of OFAH:

Legal Defense Insurance Coverage

*Includes Legal Advice

As a member of the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters (OFAH), you NOW have the peace of mind to protect your traditions of fishing and hunting.

A Legal Defense Insurance policy is an insurance product that offers firearm owners financial coverage of unexpected legal costs and protects them in the case of a legal event, such as a charge for mishandling a crossbow or a cancellation of your firearms licence.

A Legal Defense Insurance policy:

- Protects you from costly legal expenses
- Empowers you to defend or pursue your legal rights
- Provides you with unlimited access to general legal advice at any time



Give yourself the power to take action by having access to legal resources at any time. The Legal Advice Helpline, which is included in the Legal Defense Policy, is here to help with any legal issue from 8am to midnight, 7 days a week. In an emergency situation, calls will always be answered and an advice lawyer will be made available 24/7.

“The professionalism of DAS and the high value and need for legal insurance help average, ordinary people access much needed affordable help to deal with a complex and stressful part of life and society today: our justice system.”

– Darren

Legal Defense Coverage Summary

Claims Examples

How will a Legal Defense Policy protect and empower firearm owners?

- Firearm Offences
 - Firearm Licensing
 - Legal Advice Helpline

 - As a firearms owner, here are some questions that you may have:
 - “I was just pulled over for a routine police check. Can the police search my home if they discover my hunting rifle in my trunk?”
 - “What are the current laws and restrictions on the transportation and storage of ammunition?”
 - “I am a licensed gun owner. What laws apply if I want to take my guns out of province?”
-

How to Make a Claim

Legal issues can be expensive, complex, and stressful. With a Legal Defense Insurance policy, making a claim is easy.

Step 1: Have your policy number ready

If you have a legal issue or question, call the Legal Advice Helpline right away. An intake agent will ask for your policy number and will schedule the most convenient times for an advice lawyer to call you back.

Step 2: Talk to an advice lawyer

An advice lawyer will speak with you, provide general legal advice, and recommend next steps for your situation. Advice is always given, even if your issue is not covered by the policy.

Step 3: Determination of claim

The advice lawyer will forward the matter to our Claims Department if it appears that your issue may be covered by the policy.

Get more information on this OFAH member advantage at

<https://www.ofah.org/membership/insurance/ldic/>

7. These are tough times for OFAH in wake of North American bankruptcies of major outdoors related businesses. Many are companies our federation has depended on for sponsorship dollars. Among the bankruptcies:

- Maurice Sporting Goods filed for Chapter 11 Voluntary Bankruptcy in November 2017. One of the largest fishing tackle distributors in North America has been struggling in the wake of several ripples through the sporting goods industry and consolidation moves made internally. The bankruptcy has been said to be a move to help streamline the acquisition of the distributor and its owned debtors: Danielson Outdoors Company, Inc., South Bend Sporting Goods, Inc. and Triple Crown Holdings, Inc. which owns Matzuo America, Inc. by Middleton Partners, a private investment firm. Reading through the court documents, there are more than 17,000 creditors listed. The top ones listed based on outstanding balances were as follows:

- Rivers Edge, Saint Clair, Mo., \$5.45 million
- First Source (Signet Products), Hong Kong, \$5.2 million
- Yuan Huang, Taiwan, \$3.1 million
- HKM International, Hong Kong, \$1.9 million
- Normark, Ontario, Canada, \$1.47 million
- Shandong Welhai, Walhai Shandong, China, \$1.46 million
- Shimano/Innovative Textiles, Irvine, Calif., \$991,000
- Gary Yamamoto Custom Baits, Page, Ariz. \$967,000
- Thermacell Repellents, Bedford, Ma. \$929,000
- Scott Plastics, Sidney, BC, \$898,000
- Pautkze Bait Co., \$839,000
- Gamakatsu, Tacoma, Wash., \$814,000
- Panther Martin, Port Jefferson, N.Y. \$814,000
- Zoom Bait Co., Bogart, Ga., \$793,000
- Uncle Josh Bait Company, Fort Atkinson, Wisc., \$747,000
- Mahco, Bentonville, Ark., \$741,000
- Pure Fishing US, Columbia, S.C., \$737,000

- Pure Fishing Canada (Berkely), Brantford, On., \$722,000

- Rapala USA, Minnetonka, Minn., \$539,000

And the other big company in trouble:

Gun Maker Remington Files for Bankruptcy Protection

US gun sales are down, indicating that gun buyers aren't rushing to stock up in anticipation of stricter gun regs. Gun makers' fortunes tend to rise and fall depending on who is in the White House. Gun sales rose in the years that Barack Obama was in office because people feared greater gun control. Demand has plummeted since President Donald Trump took office. In Remington's case, these ups and downs hurt attempts to build a firearms-and-ammunition behemoth, making it's nearly \$1 billion debt pile insurmountable.

During these challenging times OFAH is working on attracting new younger members. There is a big thrust into social media:

.... "Whether you are in the turkey blind, the tree stand, the bass boat or fishing off the dock, we know your smart phone is likely nearby. Share with us your prize buck, your big catch and your first-time experiences by visiting us on [Facebook \(ofah.org/facebook\)](https://www.facebook.com/ofah.org/facebook) and following us on [@ofah](https://twitter.com/ofah). Let us be your one-stop-shop for outdoors news and help us promote hunting, fishing, conservation and the great outdoors province-wide"

7. The OFAH and partners have awarded three different grants worth \$4,000 each to university students researching fish and wildlife topics that are helping to improve resource management. The OFAH uses a science-based approach to our advocacy in fish and wildlife management.

Winners of the 2018 OFAH Student Research Grants

The Dave Ankney & Sandi Johnson Award for Avian Ecology – \$4,000 - Jennifer Baici

- *Social Structure and Behaviour of the Eastern Wild Turkey*

The OFAH Zone G/ Oakville & District Rod & Gun Club Wildlife Research Grant – \$4,000 - Pauline Priadka

- *Optimizing monitoring of harvested moose (Alces alces) populations*

The Toronto Sportsmen's Show/OFAH Zone H Fisheries Research Grant – \$4,000 - Rene S. Shahmohamadloo

- *The impact of harmful algal blooms and microcystins in relevant species of the Great Lakes*

In addition to the grants above, OFAH also offers the following opportunity.

The OFAH/Mike Reader/Toronto Sportsmen's Show/Fleming College Scholarship

Who can apply?

Any graduate or post-graduate student currently researching a fish and wildlife topic, and whose findings would benefit Ontario's fish and/or wildlife management.

What is being offered for 2019?

There are three separate research grants of \$4,000 each to be awarded:

- The OFAH/ [Dave Ankney](#)/ Sandi Johnson Award for Avian Ecology – \$4,000
 - The [OFAH Zone G/ Oakville & District Rod & Gun Club](#) Wildlife Research Grant – \$4,000
 - The [Toronto Sportsmen's Show/OFAH Zone H](#) Fisheries Research Grant – \$4,000
8. The person who recently volunteered to re-build the OFAH Zone H website has had to withdraw her offer. If you would like to volunteer to co-ordinate material for input into this site please contact Wally Motz secretary Zone H OFAH at buffy1@tnt21.com
9. On your behalf I will attend the next quarterly meeting of zone H OFAH in Midland on April 22, 2018 at 10am. Thank you for allowing me to represent you at OFAH one of Canada's most respected conservation organizations.

Stu Paterson reporting on OFAH for BPSA

“many go fishing all of their lives not realizing it is not fish they are after” - Henry David Thoreau

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