

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

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



1. OFAH is expected to appear before any committee or body studying the issue of a possible Canadian Handgun Ban in wake of a rash of handgun crimes in Toronto. We are taking an active role in fighting for the rights of firearms owners. Our federation has issued this statement about the issue:

OFAH STATEMENT



On August 28, 2018, the Prime Minister of Canada, the Right Honourable Justin Trudeau tasked the newly minted Minister of Border Security and Organized Crime Reduction, Honourable Bill Blair, with "leading an examination of a full ban on handguns and assault weapons in Canada, while not impeding the lawful use of firearms by Canadians".

The ridiculousness of this contradictory statement is mind-boggling. A ban of any firearm will directly impede law-abiding Canadians who own and/or use them.

The firearms community is not opposed to policy that will help keep Canadians safe, but they can't understand why the government continues to target them with actions that will have minimal benefits for public safety, especially when they don't see any tangible plans to stop the root causes of violence or illegal firearms activity.



One quote from this statement “the firearms community can’t understand why the government continues to target them with actions that will have minimal benefits for public safety“

Our Federation continues to be a leader in opposing any such ban which will negatively affect millions of sports shooting Canadian hobbyists. So far there have been no news stories about the fact thousands of illegal hand-guns are smuggled into Canada by First Nations folks at border crossings near Cornwall and Montreal.



2. In a recent commentary, the OFAH President reminded us that some good things happened for the outdoors community under the previous Ontario Liberal government.



Kerry Coleman listed the return of the spring bear hunt as one positive move. However he notes “I never got the impression that angling, hunting and trapping were high on the Liberals’ list of priorities.” He said they introduced “very few programs that provided direct benefits to anglers, hunters and trappers.”

Under the Ford Conservative government Coleman says he expects decisions affecting our outdoors priorities to be based more on science, not emotion as we saw with the Liberals.

Our President reminds us the Mike Harris Conservatives scrapped the spring bear hunt because of pressure from animal rights groups. Kathleen Wynn banned hunting and trapping of wolves and coyotes for the same reasons. In Coleman’s words “will all the upcoming changes be positive? Maybe not, but there are some encouraging signs. Let’s keep our fingers crossed.” President Coleman told me he was encouraged when he heard what the new MNRF Minister said during his August visit to BPSA. Minister Jeff Yurek promised his ministry will improve co-operation and will cut red tape in its dealings with conservation groups.



- Hunters are being asked to help with a study that will determine the extent of West Nile virus in turkeys and ruffed grouse. It is easy to help. First email study director Dr. Amanda MacDonald at Amacdo21@uguelph.ca. Do this before the fall hunting season. You will be sent envelopes containing submission forms with instructions on how to take part in this study. You will send her your samples which will determine how extensive West Nile is in Ontario's various regions. Easily recognizable symptoms in game birds include stumbling, head tremors and an inability to fly. The study was launched in partnership with OFAH, Environment and Climate Change Canada and the Canadian Wildlife Health Cooperative.



- Cormorants continue to have the attention of both the Great Lakes Fishery Commission and OFAH. Will the new Ontario government understand how serious this situation is?

If you don't know what they look like, check out the end of the dock at the Warton marina. These hungry birds have had a severe impact on fish populations. One cormorant can eat a pound of fish a day. The commission is calling on governments in the US and Canada to create a long term multi-agency cormorant strategy. For decades OFAH and clubs like ours have been calling for beefed up cormorant controls including removing cormorant protections under the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act.



- BILL C-71: A FEDERAL ACT TO AMEND CERTAIN ACTS AND REGULATIONS IN RELATION TO FIREARMS**

UPDATE

The Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security has finished studying Bill C-71. The OFAH went to Parliament Hill on May 30, 2018 to provide testimony to the committee. The Committee's report on Bill C-71 was presented in the House of Commons on June 12, 2018 and briefly debated (time allocation for debate was restricted). The report recommended only a few amendments, none which addressed the important issues raised by the OFAH during our testimony on the bill. The government's lack of recognition of legitimate concerns of the firearms



community is disappointing, but we are not finished trying to get some significant changes to the proposed legislation.

The fall session is underway and Bill C-71 has received 3rd reading. The Bill still needs to make its way through the Senate – a process very similar to what it just went through in the House of Commons. It will be debated, go to committee and be considered for amendments. The process may be similar, but it doesn't have the same degree of partisanship (Senators aren't thinking about re-election, and some are independent). Also, other recent bills (e.g. Bill C-45, the "Cannabis Act") have been scrutinized, hotly debated and subject to numerous proposed amendments in the Senate – some of which were actually accepted by the government in the Commons.

The OFAH will continue advocacy on Parliament Hill to try to get some traction on meaningful changes to Bill C-71.

6. Report strange acting animals:

Are you out for a hike and notice an animal acting in a strange or unusual manner? The Canadian Wildlife Health Cooperative wants to know about it. Please get pictures and report your sightings to the CWHC:

http://www.cwhc-rcsf.ca/report_submit.php

Speaking of pictures your OFAH correspondent will use any pix you get of people spearing salmon or rainbow trout. Some groups in society can legally do that. However we feel this practice should be stopped considering the hard work put in by clubs like ours, to stock these fish for our recreational fishery. Spearing often happens at this time of the year when salmon are spawning and they are easy to reach in streams.

7. Black bear hunting:

Planning to hunt black bear this fall? Please remember the regs regarding the placement of bait. See page 75 for more black bear hunting info <https://www.ontario.ca/document/ontario-hunting-regulations-summary>

8. We love pictures of BIG FISH so here you go. Ontario record perch and common carp.

YELLOW PERCH

Angler = Joseph Ryan Schaus

Weight (lbs.) = 2.46 Length (in) = 15.25

Girth (in) = 13.0 Date (m/d/y) = 05/27/2018

Waterbody = Lake Erie

Closest Community = Crystal Beach, ON

Lure or Bait = Minnow



And another record in that region this time for the COMMON CARP

Angler = Allen Babakhani
Weight (lbs.) = 41.88
Length (in.) = 41.0
Girth (in.) = 31.0
Date (m/d/y) = 06/02/2018
Waterbody = Lake Erie
Closest Community = Crystal Beach, ON
Lure or Bait = Crayfish Fly Pattern



For your information ... In case you didn't know it Ontario Out of Doors Magazine a publication of OFAH, now comes in a digital format:

<https://www.ofah.org/memberservices/digital/>

9. COMMENTARY:

I had a chance to talk one-on-one with the Ontario Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry Jeff Yurek when he visited our hatchery this summer. I had discussed BPSA concerns with him for two hours 3 years ago at the annual OFAH conference. At that time he was the MNR critic for the Ontario Conservative Party. He said he remembered our conversation. During this recent meeting I stressed how important his ministry is to our club and reminded him of our strong desire to have the Ontario Community Hatchery Program (CHP) renewed. The Program is operated by the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters and funded by the province. It covers more than half of the cost of operating our hatchery.



I was impressed that the Minister chose our hatchery and clubhouse as the site of his first official ministerial visit. I was impressed when he told us "we will be better at consulting with volunteer clubs...we hope to offer better service including streamlining the way we deal with groups such as BPSA". He also said he will transform his ministry to make it more responsive and engaged with conservation groups like ours.

Here we see BPSA director Jerry Beaver discussing fish stocking with minister Jeff Yurek and MPP Bill Walker

We have thanked MPP Bill Walker for helping organize this ministerial visit. Walker said after the meeting “this was an opportunity to connect and allow Minister Yurek to see first-hand how important recreational fishing is in our area, especially the positive economic impact” it has on our region.

As our President Jim Martell said “all this was refreshing and encouraging for our club”.



My bottom line is that perhaps we are in a new era of co-operation and positivity that will benefit our ongoing conservation work.

(Please see more coverage of the visit to BPSA of MNR Minister Jeff Yurek in the latest BPSA newsletter)

10. On your behalf I attended the latest zone H OFAH meeting in Collingwood. At this meeting we voted on a new executive. This has been the standing executive of zone H for the last year.

OFAH Zone H Executive members 2018

Chair	Wayne Forgrave, Midhurst (705) 725-8611
1st Vice Chair	Jack Doherty Owen Sound (fisheries)
2nd Vice Chair	Michael Evers, (fisheries) Innisfil (705) 436 4521
Secretary/Treasurer	Wally Motz (hunting) Kincardine. (519) 395 0320
Alternate Director	Glen Meads, (land use) Priceville 519 369 3282

In my next report I will update you on the new OFAH Zone H executive for 2019.

BPSA - now celebrating 56 years of conservation

That’s all for nowStu Paterson reporting on OFAH for BPSA.
As we have said so many times –

“The fishing was good; it was the catching that was bad”. ~A.K. Best

Photo credits OFAH, Paterson Media and Josh Miller

