

**OFAH ZONE “H” report for BPSA
Stu Paterson –Dec 2018**

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



1. FINALLY – a cormorant hunt:

This is a move the previous Liberal government of Ontario should have made, but did not. The Ford government seeks our opinions on a proposed legal hunt to dramatically reduce cormorant populations. OFAH enthusiastically endorses this plan. This is the reaction at head office:
.... “The OFAH has been asking the government for cormorant control for decades, so we are pleased to see action being taken”....



Here is what we know. An Environmental Bill of Rights (EBR) Registry Proposal Notice released on Nov. 19, 2018 asks for your input regarding a proposed hunting season for double-crested cormorants starting in 2019.

The proposal, if approved, would list the cormorant as a game bird, like ruffed grouse, and allow anyone with an Outdoors Card and small game license to hunt cormorants during a March 15 to Dec. 31 season. During that season, hunters would be permitted a bag limit of 50 birds with no possession limit.

This would be accompanied by an exemption that would make small game licenses in northern and central Ontario valid from Jun. 16 to Aug. 31 for cormorant hunting. Shotgun and shot size and type would be consistent with those of the Migratory Bird Act and hunting would be allowed from a stationary boat.

The Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF) is also consulting on a proposal to amend the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act, which prohibits anyone who kills game wildlife (including game birds), or who possesses game wildlife killed by hunting, from allowing that meat to spoil. The amendment would add provisions permitting hunters to allow cormorants to spoil, though they would be required to retrieve and dispose of the carcass.

2. Our very own OFAH publication has solid coverage of this big story. As Ontario Out of Doors magazine reports

"The EBR posting on the proposed cormorant hunt notes double-crested cormorants are abundant in Ontario and says the proposed hunt is not expected to affect their sustainability."



The proposal's 45 day public review and comment period began Nov. 19, 2018 and ends Jan. 3, 2019.

All comments received will be part of the decision-making process by the MNRF. Comments can be submitted in writing or electronically using the form provided in EBR Registry number 013-4124, which can be found at this link

<https://ero.ontario.ca/notice/013-4124>

Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters Resources Management Specialist Lauren Tonelli (lauren_tonelli@ofah.org) says, "The OFAH has been asking the government for cormorant control for decades, so we are pleased to see action being taken. This proposal would allow hunters to target cormorants, but won't be effective in areas where hunting is not permitted such as city waterfronts and many protected areas. Without a larger provincial management plan that includes removal of cormorants where they are overabundant, we will continue to see ecological damages."

3. We continue to emphasize that there has been no CHRONIC WASTING DISEASE (CWD) found in Ontario deer, elk, moose or caribou. However this disease HAS been found in Quebec and neighbouring US States. The Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters was one of the organizing groups of a recent public meeting on CHRONIC WASTING DISEASE. The session was held in Eastern Ontario near the Quebec border where CWD has been identified in deer.



As Eastern Ontario media reported ... "hunters started asking questions about CWD once they heard of the outbreak nearby in Québec"...

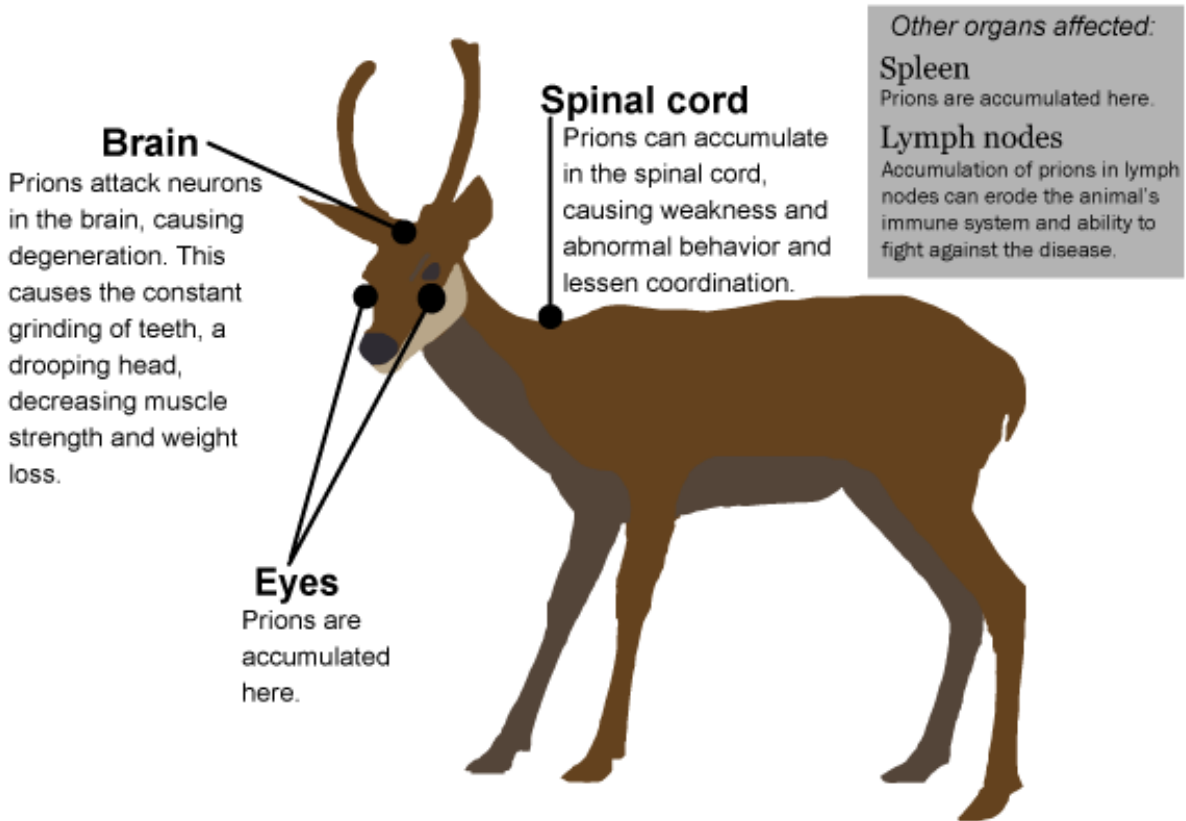
This is coverage of the meeting by an Eastern Ontario weekly:

<https://thereview.ca/2018/10/30/cwd-the-topic-of-meeting-in-embrun/>

We continue to emphasize that so far CHRONIC WASTING disease has not been found in Ontario deer, elk, moose or caribou.

In case you missed this in my earlier report, OFAH has prepared an in-depth compilation of

ORGANS AFFECTED BY CHRONIC WASTING DISEASE



Sources: CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION, MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND BRAD DEBEUI OF KANSAS STATE VETERINARY DIAGNOSTIC LABORATORY

CWD FACTS:

CWD is highly infectious, incurable, and 100% fatal to members of the cervid family, which includes Ontario's native white-tailed deer, moose, elk and caribou as well as exotic species such as red and fallow deer. It has been detected in three Canadian provinces, 25 US states including Michigan and New York as well as Finland, Norway and South Korea. CWD is caused by a misfolded protein known as a prion ("pree-on") and is one of a group of diseases known as transmissible spongiform encephalopathies which also includes mad cow disease. CWD-infected animals continuously shed prions which can pass to other animals through direct contact or accumulate in the soil, vegetation, or on hard surfaces and from there infect other animals. Prions are resistant to chemicals, radiation, freezing and even incineration at more than 600°C. The visible symptoms of CWD include weight loss, excessive salivation, disorientation, tremors, stumbling, a lack of coordination, and paralysis. However, not all infectious animals display these symptoms and there is no effective live

test for CWD. All these factors make CWD incredibly dangerous to Ontario's native cervids and incredibly hard to eradicate if it becomes established.

4. Our provincial government has issued an advisory on the threat from wild boar. OFAH is concerned about the increasing number of sightings of these dangerous critters. Some have been sighted near Purple Valley with no injuries reported.

Risks to the environment:

Wild boar is not native to Ontario. These critters can have a negative impact on native wildlife and ecosystems. They have high reproductive potential, making their impact more severe. Risks include:

- preying upon native wildlife
- competing with native wildlife for food, water, and space
- grazing on plants
- rooting into the ground with their tusks and snouts to dig for roots, tubers, bulbs, worms, insects, slugs, and snails
- spreading disease to livestock, pets and humans
- aggressive behavior to humans or pets



Impacts include:

- putting native wildlife and ecosystem health at risk
- impacts to species at risk plants and habitats
- agricultural impacts including damage to crops and pasturelands
- control costs which can also be high and on-going if the wild boar become established in parts of Ontario



The bottom line:

WILD BOAR may be hunted under a Small Game Hunting License

Private landowners have the [right to protect their property](#) from wildlife damage.

All relevant federal, provincial, and municipal legislation about trespassing, discharge of firearms by-laws and firearm licensing requirements also apply.

Here is more on the WILD BOAR THREAT -

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/reporting-wild-boar-ontario>

5. Weeks after we hosted Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNR) Jeff Yurek here at BPSA, we find this ministry is one of revolving doors. Premier Doug Ford has announced a new Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry as part of a cabinet shuffle. Replacing Yurek at the helm of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry is John Yakabuski, MPP for Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke.



The shuffle came on the heels of the resignation of Jim Wilson from his position as Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade. “After four months of unprecedented action, we are taking this opportunity to calibrate our cabinet assignments to ensure we continue to deliver on our commitments to the people,” said Ford.

Yakabuski was serving as the Minister of Transportation prior to this announcement. He was originally elected as an MPP in 2003 and in 2014 was re-elected for a fourth term. Before his time in office John Yakabuski was a real estate sales rep and owner-operator of Yakabuski’s Home Hardware in Barry’s Bay.

“Minister Yakabuski has always shown a strong interest in the outdoors community while representing his constituents at Queen’s Park. We look forward to working with him in his new role to move forward some very important priorities that will benefit anglers and hunters across the province,” said Matt DeMille, OFAH manager of fish and wildlife services, of the announcement.

6. OFAH welcomes news about the spring bear hunt. The province has announced the expansion of the spring black bear hunting pilot project. Under this expansion the pilot will be extended for an additional five years, beginning this spring and ending in 2020. The spring bear season will run May 1 through June 15 in each of these years.



All 88 provincial wildlife management units that currently have a fall bear hunt will be included in the expansion, as well as non-resident hunters. In the majority of cases, each licensed hunter will be permitted to hunt one bear in each calendar year.

“We’ve been advocating for the reinstatement of the spring bear hunt for 17 years, so we are pleased with this announcement.” said Mark Ryckman, senior OFAH wildlife biologist. New rules on the baiting of bears will be implemented this spring, and will be in effect during all bear hunting seasons.

“The province has instituted new baiting restrictions for both the spring and fall seasons to prevent conflicts between hunters and other outdoor recreationists, so we will monitor the impact of those restrictions to determine if they are having the desired effect without unnecessarily reducing bear hunting opportunities.”

Regulations on the baiting of bears will be implemented this spring, and will be in effect during all bear hunting seasons.

Bait must not be placed within:

- 500 metres of a residence, unless written permission is obtained from the property owner

- 500 metres of a public building
- 200 metres of a right of way for vehicle traffic or a marked public recreational trail

7. FIREARMS LEGISLATION:

At the annual Zone H OFAH meeting in Collingwood we heard criticism of the federal government’s latest firearms legislation and calls for a handgun ban.



The speaker was John Brassard Conservative MP for Barrie-Innisfil. Brassard told us Canada is already a country with some of the most restrictive firearms legislation in the world. He reminded us the federal Bill C-71 will do nothing to control gangs and their illegal guns. He suggested Bill C-71 is really a “back-door gun registry” that Andrew Scheer’s government will repeal the bill after the 2019 federal election. He concluded “this bill does nothing about the guns and gangs problem in our big cities and has a huge impact on law abiding firearms owners”.

On handguns there was a discussion about the OFAH statement on the possibility of any kind of handgun ban, which delegates concluded will do nothing to wipe out their use in crime. Ottawa has launched a public consultation on access to handguns and “assault weapons”.



<https://www.ofah.org/firearms/reducing-violent-crime/>

7. WATER POLLUTION:

A long line of Ontario governments have left us with a mess when it comes to pollution of our lakes, rivers and streams. That’s the conclusion of the Ontario Environment Commissioner. Ontario Out of Doors did a nice job on this major story.

<https://www.oodmag.com/news/pollution-threatens-ontarios-waters/>

8. Among many changes and improvements announced recently by the MNR are those affecting moose hunters. Here is the key quote:



”the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry will make the moose draw fairer, more accessible and simpler for hunters“

The story was carried by Ontario Out of Doors

<https://www.oodmag.com/hunting/big-game/moose-draw-system-coming-under-review/>

9. An OFAH survey on moose management in central Ontario has some interesting findings about unregulated moose harvesting.

A major concern of hunters is related to indigenous harvest of moose. More than 70% of respondents raised concern about the unregulated nature of indigenous moose harvest and/or the lack of harvest reporting by indigenous harvesters. One hunter stated “the issue of unrestricted unreported harvesting of moose by First Nations should be a top priority for OFAH and the government”. Results of the survey have been sent to the MRNF by the OFAH Big Game Advisory Committee.

10. The name for the OFAH Native Affairs Advisory Committee is now “OFAH Indigenous Relations Liaison Committee”. The committee will build relationships and establish partnerships towards further future conservation initiatives with First Nations communities.

OFAH director Dan Elliott will continue to chair this group.

This committee will provide advice to clubs and members on how to engage indigenous communities. Federation staffers Brian McRae and Matt DeMille are members of this Committee. It will also deal with indigenous harvesting, land claims, relevant court decisions and relationship building.



11. At the Zone H annual meeting in Collingwood we learned that OFAH ZONE H bursaries are still available to any Ontario student attending college or university in the fields of FLORA & FAUNA. We approve two bursaries per year. The amount per paid out per person is 500-dollars per semester to a maximum of one-thousand dollars. Each bursary lasts two years. Applications are to be made in writing to the Zone H secretary-treasurer. The new secretary-treasurer for our zone is Dennis Wiseman who can be reached at taxman2001@rogers.com

Candidates must have been a member of OFAH for the 12 months prior to the application.

10. In wake of the zone annual meeting in Collingwood
your OFAH Zone H Directors for 2019 are:

Wayne Forgrave – Zone H Chair - hillview27@gmail.com

Mike Evers – 1st vice-chair - wildlife and forestry - d_evers@rogers.com

Glen Meads – 2nd vice-chair-land use - gmeads@hotmail.ca

Dennis Wiseman – secretary-treasurer-fisheries taxman2001@rogers.com

Rob Little – 2nd alternate director - rlittle@rogers.com

11. The Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry has a new on-line newsletter. One of the stories featured in a recent edition was about the revamping/streamlining of our fishing and hunting licensing system. If you are an angler or hunter please keep reading:

License summary:

We have a new easy-to-carry license summary. This convenient summary lists all of your valid fishing and hunting licenses in one place, eliminating the need to carry multiple licenses.

You can now print your license summary, either at home or by visiting a participating Service-Ontario or license issuer location. Or you have the option to go paperless and carry a digital copy on your mobile device.

Tags instead of game seals:

A new term comes with the new service. The game seals hunters use will be known as "tags" starting in 2019. You can print your tag at home or go to a participating Service-Ontario location or license issuer to have it printed. Just remember, it's your responsibility to keep your license

summary and tags intact and readable at all times. A re-sealable plastic bag protects them from the elements.

The new service rolled out on November 26. Since then you have been able to buy Outdoors Cards, fishing licenses and small game licenses, as well as selected 2019 products. Wolf/coyote hunters will want to note that while 2019 tags were available when the new service launched, these tags will not be valid until January 1.

Starting January 1, 2019, all fishing and hunting license products will be available according to their regular time frames.

Here is the link to this new MNRF newsletter thanks to OFAH Director and former Conservation Officer Mike Evers:

<http://app.dialoginsight.com/T/OFSYS/SM2/1116/2/S/F/7567/852772/4oR9nCMY/17.html>

12. OFAH RESEARCH GRANTS:

The Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters research grant application process is underway for 2019. The OFAH and partners are offering three different grants worth \$4,000 each to university students researching fish and wildlife topics that are helping to improve resource management.

<https://www.ofah.org/programs/ofah-student-research-grants/>

13. The next OFAH Zone H quarterly meeting will be in Georgian Bluffs on January 13, 2019 at 10 am at the headquarters of the Sydenham Sportsmen's Association. I hope to represent your interests at this meeting. You may want to attend as it not a long drive from South Bruce Peninsula.

Other 2019 zone meetings are on April 21st in Orangeville, and July 7th in Barrie. The September 28th 2019 meeting location is TBA.

At this time of the year we have nothing but positive wishes for all in our outdoors community. Here's to good health, good cheer, some down-time and great outdoors adventures for us all in 2019.

Stu Paterson reporting on OFAH for the Bruce Peninsula Sportsmen's association

Photo credits – OFAH, OFAH Zone H, Ontario Out of Doors, Government of Ontario, Postmedia, Paterson Media

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

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***“The fishing was good; it was the catching that was bad”. ~A.K. Best
BPSA - now celebrating 56 years of conservation***

