

OFAH ZONE “H” report for BPSA Stu Paterson – July 2022

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



1. EXPANDED SPRING BEAR HUNT:

OFAH is lobbying the province to expand the spring bear hunt into parts of southern Ontario. There have been more bear sightings in recent years in the Greater Toronto, Guelph, and London areas and other parts of the south. In Grey-Bruce sightings are described as “normal.” In recent months there were bear sightings in the Wiarton area. Owen Sound and Meaford had sightings in May. The province reports more bears were “harvested” in the southern region, south of Parry Sound in the spring of 2020. That’s up 300 from a few years earlier and about 100 more than the number of bears hunted in Ontario that spring.

The Ministry of Northern Development, Mines, Natural Resources and Forestry (MNDMNR) is now counting the bear population across the province, the first such study since 2011 with results expected next year.



Federation wildlife biologist Keith Munro suggests there could be a population increase: “More bears could be wandering into cities and towns due to a lack of food...or their habitat could be squeezed by increased urban sprawl.” Munro says “We are prepared to offer scientific proof if it exists, to back our request for an expanded spring hunt.” And from OFAH head office: “OFAH is pushing for an expansion of the bear hunt in Ontario’s southern region where hunting is not allowed, including areas north of Toronto and in the south west which includes Grey-Bruce. OFAH was one of the lead groups pushing for re-instatement of the spring bear hunt when it was cancelled in 1999 amid concerns about orphaned bear cubs. It was re-instated by the Ford government in 2016.

2. OFAH NXT-GEN PROGRAM:

Our federation has launched a major effort to involve young people in their teens and twenties, in the work of OFAH. At the latest OFAH Zone H quarterly meeting it was explained that this OFAH “NXT-GEN PROGRAM” will give young people opportunities to offer input into federation discussions and decision making.



OFAH President Dan Elliott explained the program will give participants valuable connections and give them insights into fishing and hunting and other conservation management topics. Anyone aged 18 to 29 is invited become an OFAH NXT-GEN ambassador. Ambassadors will serve for at least one year. Successful applicants will attend federation advisory committee meetings to give committee members a youthful perspective on the various topics they deal with. They will gain field experience as well as network with OFAH staff, directors and a broad range of external partners. They will form a NXT-GEN advisory committee which will make recommendations to the OFAH board. Successful candidates will be announced this summer.



3. I have thanked the Zone H executive for the \$500 donation to BPSA to support our clubs successful KIDS FISHING DAY.

With smiles all around the event was completed without any major challenges. A good time was had by all. Zone secretary treasurer Wally Motz says he appreciates clubs thanking the zone when such donations are made.



4. HELP SAVE FISH HABITAT:

Along with other stakeholders, OFAH is helping shape provisions of the Fisheries Act under DFO's Fish and Fish Habitat Protection Program. The federation says "There is a need for stronger wording, ongoing losses to fish and fish habitat need to be reversed. People who affect the future of fish habitat should be held more accountable." Our federation says "we want your feedback to be meaningfully considered by DFO and look forward to further consultation."

OFAH staff regularly review provincial and federal policy or legislative proposals, along with any other initiatives or programs, to defend and advocate for Ontario's natural resources and the rights of anglers and hunters. Our federation represents member views on issues we care about through OFAH advisory committees.

5. On June 21st I took part in a Zoom OFAH Club Membership 'Town Hall' Meeting for OFAH members.

This virtual event featured discussion on OFAH club insurance, OFAH advocacy, connections between clubs and OFAH Zone executives, club funding opportunities along with a Q&A with OFAH staff. As usual it was very informative. We never stop learning.

There was an announcement of a new "2022 OFAH COMMUNITY CONSERVATION FUND." The fund will provide OFAH member clubs up to \$10,000 to support all kinds of conservation projects such as stream rehab., wildlife habitat improvements, dock improvements, angler/hunter mentor training. Its a long list. Successful applicants must be registered as a business, a not-for-profit or charity.

Get more info here <https://www.ofah.org/conservationfunding/>

6. TACKLE SHARE - ALIVE AND WELL:

Borrow fishing equipment at Wiarton's library. No cost. Its free and supported by OFAH. 140 loaner Sites are now open across Ontario. There were some some unexpected delays this spring in sending new materials to sites. So be sure to call in advance to ensure availability. Check out the OFAH Loaner Site map to find a location near you.

tackleshare.com/loaner-sites/.

Oh yes there's lots of great fishing info on the TACKLESHARE FACEBOOK PAGE
<https://www.facebook.com/TackleShare/>



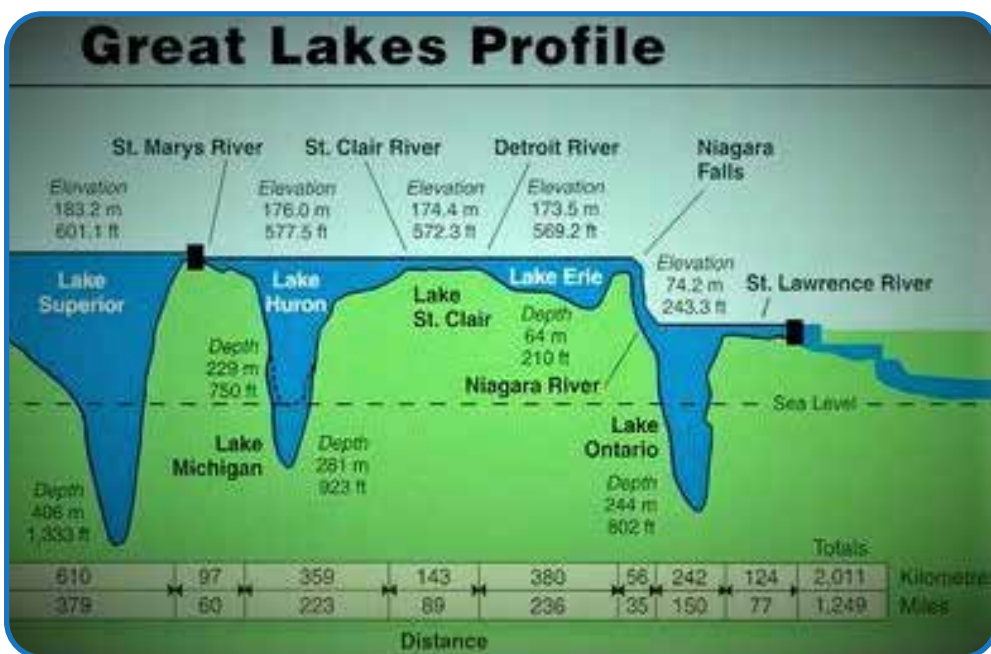
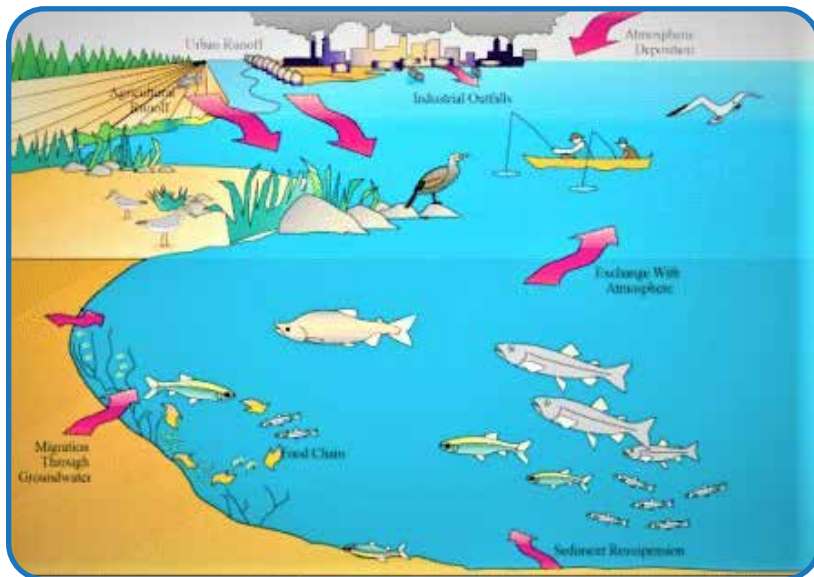
TACKLE SHARE - brought to you by the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters and Ontario Power Generation



7. GREAT LAKES DAY:

We all know how vital our Great Lakes are. OFAH staff were in Ottawa recently for Great Lakes Day on Parliament Hill. These types of events have been all but non-existent throughout the pandemic. But OFAH reps report this day represented one of the first opportunities to engage Parliamentarians on key issues of concern to federation members. .

While it may seem odd that the Great Lakes, home to more than 20% of the world's freshwater, would fall off anyone's radar, it happens more than you might think. This event provided the opportunity to keep certain topics on the radar of decision-makers. For example continuing work on controlling farm runoff. Also the Great Lakes Fishery Commission's SEA LAMPREY control program, industrial pollution , and climate change.



Check out the OFAH Insider post from Director of Policy and Programs, Matt DeMille, for more details on the importance of the Great Lakes.
<https://www.ofah.org/.../its-great-lakes-day-on.../>

June 5 2022 was World Environment Day. I spent part of the day fishing. Landed 2 three pound rainbow trout. Earlier a buddy and I landed 30 fish during a five hour morning outing. We kept 9.

Some outdoors folks view this day as a time to reflect on the role anglers and hunters play in society. We source food sustainably, volunteer for fish, wildlife and environmental causes. We are basically stewards of the outdoors. We are out there watching and experiencing trends and changes. Those are just some of the ways we help our precious environment. We are taking a break now until the fall. I will continue with my six OFAH reports a year for BPSA reporting on issues that are important to you as valuable members of our angler and hunter community.

Stu Paterson OFAH and BPSA member since 2005

