

# OFAH ZONE “H” report for BPSA Stu Paterson – November 2023

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



## 1. BPSA JOINS OFAH:

It was unanimous! The 300 member Bruce Peninsula Sportsmen’s Association will go ahead with a move to become fully affiliated with the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters.

The vote came September 28, 2023 after a presentation to BPSA members by two OFAH head office reps

The Federation Executive Director Angelo Lombardo and Kim Staples the OFAH Member Services Manager led the informative session. BPSA members agreed that there are many reasons why full affiliation is a positive move including the OFAH’s excellent insurance coverage that comes with federation membership.



BPSA President Carl Jones said “it’s a win-win, there are no negatives for the future of BPSA by affiliating with OFAH.” He added “the federation insurance assures us that all members including the kids will now be covered without our members having to pay extra for family coverage and our volunteers will be covered when taking part in all BPSA activities.” OFAH insurance includes coverage for Lyme Disease, and 5-million dollars worth of liability coverage for each member. OFAH is considered one of the most effective lobby groups in Canada. It has a solid reputation of effectively representing the interests of Ontario’s anglers, hunters and trappers.

After touring the BPSA Hatchery under the guidance of Hatchery Manager Al Sutter, our federation visitors said they were very impressed. Lombardo noted “you have something special here, do your best to keep doing your valuable conservation work.” He urged all clubs like BPSA to work hard to bring young people into our movement as “they are the future of organizations like OFAH and BPSA.”



## 2. OFAH LOBBYING:

In early October an eight member Ontario Federation of Anglers & Hunters (OFAH) delegation visited Queen’s Park. The aim was a day of lobbying, advocating on behalf of our thousands of members on issues important to outdoors folks.

The delegation met with the Ontario Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry Graydon Smith and other Ministers as well as MPP's from across Ontario and our Premier Doug Ford.

Among the issues discussed were transfer payment agreements, moose management, snowshoe hares, the Community Hatchery Program, Atlantic Salmon stocking, protected area management and invasive species such as invasive carp.

### 3.FISH SAMPLING:



In Grey-Bruce again this year Ministry of Natural Resources technicians were checking fish in a process called "sampling." The Owen Sound Salmon Spectacular provided plenty of fish to study.

One issue under investigation is the effect on the health of fish that consume Round Gobies, and if we eat the fish, should we be concerned. In several

OFAH reports Round Gobies have been labelled a "bait of choice" in parts of Georgian Bay. Gobies eat zebra and quagga mussels which concentrate toxins. During sampling the Ministry techs found several species of bait-fish including partly digested gobies.

They say further analysis of the partly digested material this winter will help them determine if we should worry about consuming fish that have feasted on Gobies.



### 4. "FROM ANTI-HUNTING TO HUNTING ADVOCATE"

At the Zone H annual meeting in Orangeville we heard from guest speaker Maya Basdeo who chairs the OFAH Small Game, Migratory Birds, Wetlands Advisory Committee. She told us she grew up in Toronto and was against hunting.

But when she learned how to train birds of prey, she had a change of heart. Basdeo observed birds harvesting quarry in a sustainable way. She saw that hunting







connected her to nature and the cycles of life. She learned that conservation “comes from hunters and anglers” as they are in the field monitoring the health and numbers of wildlife and helping governments keep wildlife sustainable.

Maya Basdeo is the lone female on the OFAH Board of Directors. She says we have a big challenge ahead to open minds and convince people about the valuable connection between fishing, hunting and conservation. Check this link for more on Maya and one of her passions - falconry.



<https://www.ofah.org/insider/2021/03/falconry-in-its-entirety-has-finally-arrived-in-ontario/>

## 5. “CONSERVATION FUND”



Zone H Chair Mike Evers reminds us that applications will be accepted in January for clubs seeking funding of projects through the “OFAH COMMUNITY CONSERVATION FUND.” This fund makes up to \$10,000.00 available in five different categories. Projects covered include fish and wildlife conservation projects, habitat restoration, youth hunting, making fishing and hunting accessible, archery equipment, and projects addressing climate change. Clubs that are not affiliated with OFAH are eligible to apply.

## 4. WALLY IS RECOGNIZED:

Wally Motz of Kincardine spent more than 27 years as OFAH Zone H secretary/treasurer. It’s an important job, one that’s vital to the continuing success of our zone.

Here he poses with Zone Chair Evers checking an article in the Salmon Spectacular magazine that refers to his long-standing work with zone H. Wally wants to retire from the secretary/treasurer post, but promises to continue attending zone meetings. An appeal has gone out to zone clubs seeking an energetic outdoors person with a financial background, who can take over for Wally.



## 5. Outdoors Summer Summit:



Outdoors folks, including OFAH members, took part in a recent “exchange of views” session with federal MP Blaine Calkins, the Federal Conservative Shadow Minister for Hunting, Fishing and Conservation. The event at the Sydenham Sportsmen’s Association clubhouse, was hosted by Bruce Grey-Owen Sound MP Alex Ruff. Calkins, a western MP, and an active skeet/trap shooter is a strong advocate for anglers and hunters.

Both MPs agreed the next federal election will not be won on the issue of firearms, but on bread-and-butter issues. But they promise, when they form government, to work hard to remove firearms restrictions imposed by the current federal government.



Calkins, a former conservation officer, told the outdoors audience these sessions help him in his continuing “work and advocacy to represent hunters and fishers in Parliament.”

### 7. Mechalko extends “ambassadorship”

BPSA member Natalie Mechalko has agreed to serve for a second year as one of fifteen OFAH youth ambassadors.

Mechalko welcomes her role of observing several federation advisory committees in action and having the opportunity to offer suggestions to those committees.

OFAH launched the NXT-GEN program in 2021 to bring enthusiastic 18-30-year-olds into the decision-making process. The program brings representation from various communities including new Canadians, and female anglers and hunters. Natalie has been active with BPSA for the last year. She is an avid angler and hunter and works as a Planning Ecologist with Grey County.



### 8. RECORD BUCK?



This is a big deal among hunters. The Foundation for the Recognition of Ontario’s Wildlife (FROW) reports Ontario will likely have a new whitetail-deer record listed under the Typical Firearms category. FROW still has to have the antlers studied by a panel.

Dearl Hill, a 62-year-old, Sarnia-area hunter, had his buck scored in April last year. The buck, which was harvested the previous November, was confirmed at 194 3/8 by a Boone and Crocket scorer. The current Typical Firearms whitetail record in the FROW books is the Harry Brown buck taken in 2009. It scored 190 1/8.

Hill was hunting a bean field near Brigdon, for a 10-pointer he had patterned, when the massive 14-pointer, who was trailing a doe, showed up. The doe stopped 60 yards away from his stand to urinate. The buck, which followed minutes later, stopped at the same spot when Hill shot him through both lungs.

The buck’s scorer assured Hill that this buck will top the Ontario record.

### 9. GRASS CARP:

A 32-pound grass carp caught near Fort Erie, in the Upper Niagara River in mid-August was found to be sterile.

Brook Schryer with the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters (OFAH) Invading Species Awareness Program (ISAP) reported on the case.





Fort Erie angler Denis Kreze encountered the fish on Aug. 16 in the Upper Niagara River. He netted it, and sent photos to ISAP where it was confirmed to be a grass carp. Fisheries and Oceans was immediately alerted. Their staff met Kreze on shore and retained the fish for examination. Testing confirmed the fish was sterile and probably a hatchery fish that had escaped from somewhere in the US. A grass carp was also caught three years ago near the same location.



Of the four species of Asian carps (Grass, Bighead, Black & Silver), Grass Carp pose the greatest threat to the Great Lakes. Grass Carp eat primarily aquatic plants and can consume up to 40% of their body weight in food daily! That is like a person eating 40 large pizzas, 430 cups of lettuce, or 180 burgers!

If you suspect you've captured a grass carp or any other invasive species, take a photo, note your location, and report it to the Invading Species Hotline at 1-800-563-7711 or online at [www.EDDMapS.org/Ontario](http://www.EDDMapS.org/Ontario).

### 10. MANDATORY LIFE VESTS...for kids?

Joshawa's Law is a bill in Ontario that would make it mandatory for kids 12 and under to wear a personal flotation device (life-jacket) while on a boat in Ontario waters. The bill is named after Joshua Steinberg, who was 11 when he died in a boating accident in 2018. He was not wearing his life-jacket at the time. The bill has had second reading and has unanimous support from all parties. If passed, boaters would be charged and fined \$200 for each child not wearing a personal flotation device. At the present time any boat in Ontario is required by law to have a life-jacket for every person on board.



### 11. OFAH AND OOD PHOTO CONTESTS:

These contests are fun. Everyone can enter. A recent Ontario Out of Doors weekly Friday PHOTO CONTEST was won by Laura Sandre of Walkerton. Pike is her favourite fish. Laura caught this toothy critter on a small lake north of Wiarton. It won her the OOD weekly award. Submit your photos to [oodmag.com/mbentry](http://oodmag.com/mbentry) for a chance to win an Ontario OUT of DOORS prize as part of our magazine's weekly Photo Friday contest.



### 12. A CAREER START AT OFAH?

If you feel you are ready to start your career with the OFAH check this out. Our federation is looking to fill four contract positions starting in January:

- 2024 OFAH/Fitzsimons Financial Conservation Internship
- Invasive Species Internship
- Atlantic Salmon Education Liaison
- ALUS Peterborough Liaison

Learn more and apply at [www.ofah.org/jobs](http://www.ofah.org/jobs)

Thanks to Kat McCulloch who skillfully edits our OFAH reports. These days there are HUNDREDS OF subjects I could tackle for inclusion in these reports. Hopefully the ones chosen are of interest to our anglers, hunters, sports shooters and conservationists with BPSA and across Zone H. Please have a safe and successful fall hunting season.

Stu Paterson your OFAH rep for BPSA  
Photo credits: Pa. Environmental Digest, OFAH, MNR, Ontario Out of Doors, Paterson Media, Kat McCulloch

