



PEACEFUL
PARKS
COALITION

For Immediate Release - May 6, 2004

McGuinty's death squad begins senseless slaughter of 6,000 wild birds today.

Dalton McGuinty's death squad will begin shooting 6000 double-crested cormorants at High Bluff Island at Presqu'ile Provincial Park starting today.

For those individuals interested in witnessing this atrocity, please contact the Peaceful Parks Coalition at 416.537.3212 or email ppc@peacefulparks.org

Killing 6000 cormorants to protect the vegetation on High Bluff Island sets a terrible precedent -- that wildlife limited by nesting sites or habitat has less value than common and abundant vegetation. With this logic, any species could be targeted. By stating that the cormorant impact is devastating, as McGuinty has done, gives the cormorant no escape.

"The impact created by these birds is both natural and ecologically beneficial, and must not be tampered with," says Gus Zylstra of The ProNature Network.

It is fully anticipated, McGuinty will turn his guns next to East Sister Island, another provincial park where cormorants nest on Lake Erie, and other islands near Kingston, Ontario.

Notes to the Editor:

A request to have this proposal reviewed for a full environmental assessment (EA) was rejected early yesterday morning, May 5, 2004. The decision to move ahead with the shooting was posted on the Environmental Bill of Rights Registry (EBR) yesterday afternoon, May 5, 2004. It takes approximately 7 working days to write and translate into french a posting on the EBR, according to government sources. Therefore the decision to shoot 6000 cormorants was made long ago, and prior to public statements by Natural Resources Minister David Ramsay that he was considering all comments and the request for an environmental review.

A review of the file at the Ministry of Environment, Approvals and Assessment Branch, showed the request for a full EA was not properly reviewed suggesting political interference from McGuinty's office. This undermines a legitimate public process. (It is common practice to seek input from third party government agencies when assessing a request for a full EA -- this did not happen with this request)

Conditions imposed by the Approvals and Assessment Branch are feeble. The executive committee, entrusted to review the shooting at Presqu'ile, is comprised of Ministry of Natural Resources staff and one representative from the Canadian Wildlife Service.

A request by the Peaceful Parks Coalition to review the "science" behind Ramsay's decision was flatly denied and redirected to the Freedom of Information Act by his executive assistant, Kevin McGuire.

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