



PEACEFUL
PARKS
COALITION

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE - November 7, 2005

Circa 17,000 Hunting Violations In Ontario

Monday November 7, 2005: Today is the opening day for the gun deer hunting season in many areas in Ontario. According to a report written on behalf of the Ministry of the Environment, 10% of hunters do not comply with hunting regulations. Almost 170,000 people buy deer hunting licences in Ontario every year, and if 10% of them violate the regulations in some way, that means circa 17,000 hunters do something that is not legal.

And many more go undetected. Hunting violations such as trespassing, hunting along roadsides, using dogs to run deer out of no hunting zones, altering deer seals and aerial hunting are commonplace. These activities can cause significant distress to rural residents who live in areas where hunting occurs.

The Ministry of Environment report was written in response to the Peaceful Parks Coalition's request that Ontario's deer management program be reviewed by a full environmental assessment. The request was made in reaction to the ongoing expansion of the deer hunting season rationalized by government as necessary to control an "over abundant" deer population.

The Ministry of Environment rejected the request, but the report validated many of the concerns raised by the Peaceful Parks Coalition.

"The report was contradictory in many ways," says AnnaMaria Valastro of the Peaceful Parks Coalition., "but it confirmed a well established fact in wildlife ecology and management - that as wildlife populations decrease, the rate of births in the population increases. So culling promotes a higher reproductive birth rate among deer, and hence an overall higher population."

It also suggested that hunting can contribute to car collisions primarily during group hunting and controlled hunts, and the relationship between hunting and car collisions needs further study. This could help reduce damage to both people and deer.

Immediately after the report was released, the Ministry of Natural Resources announced yet another expansion of the deer hunting season, including changing the law to allow hunting on Sundays. Sunday hunting will also be allowed within city limits.

For more information and/or copies of the report, please contact AnnaMaria Valastro at 416.785.8636. To read our submission to the Ministry of the Environment click [here](#).

Notes to the Editor:

The Ministry of Natural Resources tracks the sale of hunting licences only. Each licence does not necessarily concur with one hunter because hunters can purchase multiple deer licences (seals). The number of licences sold better reflects the number of deer being killed.

In 2004, the ministry allowed up to seven seals per hunter in many areas in southern Ontario. An increase in hunting licence sales can reasonably be expected to increase hunting activity, and hence increase hunting violations. In 2004, 191,451 deer hunting licences were sold in Ontario.

press release

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The Ministry of Natural Resources has been steadily increasing deer hunting opportunities over the last five years, citing an “overabundance” of deer, but yet deer populations continue to increase. The Ministry of Environment report states that 1/4 (100,000) of the deer population is removed annually, yet the deer population continues to grow. The report also states that removal of 100,000 deer of an estimated population of 350,000 to 400,000 is very near the sustainable limit of harvest, and “leaves no more room for error”.

Given all of the above, to realistically bring down the deer population by culling to a level that is “socially acceptable” to the very few people who consider deer a “nuisance”, would require a sustained mass slaughter beyond what is considered “sustainable”. In other words, an ongoing cull above the rate of birth, similar to the levels of harvest during the days of unregulated hunting.

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