



PEACEFUL
PARKS
COALITION

For Immediate Release - September 2007

Parks Canada Betrays Public Trust

Dear Member of the Press,

Please find attached two sets of documents released through the freedom of information act regarding the management of double-crested cormorants at Point Pelee National Park and across Ontario.

These documents are being provided to you because Parks Canada is hosting two public meetings, beginning tonight in Windsor, to discuss cormorant control at Middle Island, Point Pelee National Park.

Parks Canada has repeatedly denied they intend to kill thousands of nesting cormorants, but these documents prove that's exactly what Parks Canada intends to do. The public meetings are necessary to fulfil the requirements under a federal environmental assessment and not likely a genuine assessment of public opinion.

We want everyone to know that Parks Canada is lying, and after dealing with the disgusting behaviour of Ontario Parks at Presqu'île Provincial Park, we have zero tolerance for deceptive bureaucrats wasting public time and betraying the public trust.

The records confirm:

Ontario Parks and Parks Canada are planning a joint culling operation of double-crested cormorants on East Sister Island and Middle Island to save on costs of carcass disposal – June 2006;

Parks Canada organized a survey of Middle Island with Ontario Parks, a representative from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Nature Conservancy of Canada followed by a meeting discussing basin-wide control – July 2006;

Parks Canada is in discussions with NGOs (non-governmental organizations) regarding culling on Middle Island – briefing note February 2007.

The records consist of internal emails and a briefing note to Minister of Natural Resources David Ramsay. The briefing note is dated February 2007 and then updated in April 2007.

The only glimmer of hope is the budget cuts to Environment Canada. The deep cuts could result in a cleansing of employees and programs whose feet are firmly planted in the consumptive camp of natural resources.

We suspect that severe budget shortfalls, combined with the upcoming provincial election, were responsible for silencing the guns at Presqu'île Provincial Park, where the Ontario government killed over 10,000 cormorants since 2004.

For more information, please call AnnaMaria Valastro, Peaceful Parks Coalition, 416 785 8636

press release

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Note to the Editor

The briefing note also includes a description of Bill 156 – the proposed legislation to remove all protection off the double-crested cormorant so hunters could kill the bird at will.

It states that under Bill 156, shooting cormorants would be considered public take rather than a 'hunted' species because some sport hunters fear a negative public perception of hunting a species not considered table fare. So Liberal MPP Ernie Parsons introduced a bill that would strip cormorants of all protection so sport hunters could kill the birds at will without tarnishing their public image.

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