

# ONTARIO FEDERATION OF ANGLERS & HUNTERS

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June 7, 2012

Honourable Kathleen Wynne, MPP  
Minister of Aboriginal Affairs  
Suite 400, 160 Bay Street  
Toronto, Ontario  
M7A 2E6

Dear Minister:

On behalf of the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters (OFAH), our 100,000 members, subscribers and supporters, and 675 member clubs across Ontario, thank you for attending the recent Wild Game and Fish Reception at the Main Legislative Building. We appreciated the fact that you took time out of your busy schedule to attend and enjoyed chatting with you, albeit briefly.

As we mentioned at the time, we have a number of serious ongoing concerns with regard to the Algonquin Land Claim, and comments made by you and others in a recent article in the Toronto Star. As a consequence, and as we suggested to you at the reception, we are seeking a meeting with you at your earliest opportunity to discuss the current status of the claim, and the numerous issues that are still unresolved and of concern to the outdoors community and the 22,000 OFAH members who live within the claim area.

You will know that the Ministry of Natural Resources has only recently undertaken the oft promised but long delayed “public” consultation process. The second in a proposed series of meetings with senior MNR staff and government negotiators will take place on June 11, 2012 in Bancroft. At this point, whether these meetings achieve anything of substance remains to be seen. The government has also promised to hold issue-specific workshops, but to date, no evidence of these has materialized. Since this consultation process has only just begun, the suggestion in the Star article that the claim is “nearly done” causes us great concern. If that is the case, the “public” consultation being conducted by the MNR is merely window dressing and nothing short of an attempt by the government to relegate the legitimate concerns of the OFAH and other major stakeholders who have played a key role in the process for so many years to the sidelines.

Like many of the other organizations and individuals who sit on the Committee of External Advisors for the Algonquin Land Claim, we understand the desire on the part of the Algonquin and both levels of government to achieve certainty in this matter, and agree that certainty in this long-standing issue will be a welcome outcome. However, certainty must not be achieved at the expense of nonaboriginal anglers, hunters, trappers, municipalities, tourist operators, outfitters, resort owners, local businesses and others potentially impacted upon by the claim; nor do we wish to achieve a certainty that has not taken into account the need for conservation of our valuable natural resources, the need for designated species, a fair enforcement regime, monitoring and assessment, fish and wildlife management plans, continuing access to public resources, fair sharing, the socio-economic impact, and other issues. These are matters that need to be discussed in the context of the claim, and be recognized as important issues that should be addressed **before** any Agreement in Principle (AIP) is signed, and in fact, deserve to be recognized in the AIP itself.

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The need for fulsome public consultation before the signing of an AIP is a priority for the over one million nonaboriginal residents in the claim area. Your federal counterpart has made it clear on a number of occasions that unless he is satisfied that **meaningful** consultation has occurred, he is not prepared to commit the federal government to an AIP. The former Minister of Natural Resources, Donna Cansfield, made a commitment in writing to the Canadian Sportfishing Industry Association that public consultation would occur prior to an AIP. The same commitment, again in writing, was made to the OFAH by your predecessor, the Honourable Chris Bentley. Therefore, we have every expectation that these commitments will be honored before an AIP is completed and signed.

We appreciate your willingness to meet with us to discuss some of the concerns and issues outlined above, and look forward to having an opportunity to do so in the very near future.

Yours in Conservation,



Angelo Lombardo  
Executive Director



Greg Farrant  
Manager, Government Affairs & Policy

AL/GF/jb

cc: Honourable Michael Gravelle, MPP  
Jeff Leal, MPP  
Doug Carr, Assistant Deputy Minister, Negotiations and Reconciliation Division  
Canadian Sportfishing Industry Association  
OFAH Board of Directors  
Dr. Terry Quinney, OFAH Provincial Manager, Fish and Wildlife Services  
Matt DeMille, OFAH Assistant Manager, Fish and Wildlife Services  
Craig Selby, OFAH Special Advisor – Conservation Issues

bcc: Jerry Ouellette, MPP  
Sarah Campbell, MPP