

HERITAGE HUNTING AND FISHING ACT FULFILLS GOVERNMENT PROMISE

TORONTO – A bill to recognize recreational hunting and fishing as part of the province's heritage has received third reading in the Legislature at Queen's Park, Natural Resources Minister Jerry Ouellette announced today.

The *Heritage Hunting and Fishing Act* fulfils the government's commitment to anglers and hunters across the province to introduce legislation that legally recognizes the right to hunt and fish in accordance with the law. At the same time, it ensures that the government can continue to manage fish and wildlife resources in a sound, sustainable manner.

“With the passage of this legislation, we are fulfilling a commitment that we made to anglers and hunters across the province,” said Ouellette. “I have been an outdoorsman all my life, and this act will help ensure that future generations have the same opportunity to enjoy hunting and fishing that I did.”

Hunting and fishing played a role in the founding and settlement of the province. As well, hunters and anglers have made a significant contribution to fish and wildlife conservation and habitat restoration. The act recognizes this contribution.

The *Heritage Hunting and Fishing Act* will also establish the Fish and Wildlife Heritage Commission to provide advice to the Minister about a variety of fish and wildlife initiatives and to promote increased public involvement in recreational hunting and fishing and other fish and wildlife activities.

The *Heritage Hunting and Fishing Act, 2002*, was introduced in the Legislature in November 2001, following a 30-day public comment period when the proposed legislation was posted on the province's Environmental Bill of Rights registry. During the comment period, support for the Ontario *Heritage Hunting and Fishing Act* was overwhelming, with 97 per cent of respondents indicating support.

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Contact:
Karen Gordon
Minister's Office
(416) 327-0654

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