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To Selected Media
For Immediate Release

MAJORITY IN ONTARIO SUPPORT HUNTING

A recent Ipsos-Reid public opinion poll shows conclusively that the vast majority of the public finds hunting an acceptable activity in Ontario.

Passage of Bill 135, the province's Heritage Hunting and Fishing Act, is timely recognition and support for hunters and our hunting heritage. Clearly, both the government of Ontario and the province's residents find hunting an acceptable and often beneficial activity.

The Ipsos-Reid poll found that over 85 percent of Ontario residents find hunting acceptable with 50 percent agreeing that it is completely acceptable to hunt and a further 35 percent agreeing that hunting is acceptable given certain limitations. Only eight percent of those surveyed believed hunting should not occur under any conditions.

Almost 90 percent of Ontario residents find hunting for food to be acceptable, and 82 percent of Ontarians agree that hunting is part of Canada's cultural heritage. Over 73 percent of the people polled also acknowledged that hunting is necessary to manage wildlife and to control overabundant wildlife populations.

Surveying both urban and rural residents, the poll also determined that 62 percent believe hunters are conservationists, and 55 percent concur that hunters are well trained in firearm safety. The poll also revealed that the general public is not well informed about hunting or hunting regulations, and that persistent stereotypes and misinformation continue to shape impressions about hunters.

This is one of the most revealing opinion polls conducted on public attitudes toward hunters and hunting. The high level of public acceptance of hunting is gratifying, particularly since the public also understands the hunter's role in conservation. This information should go a long way to dispelling the myth and misinformation about the acceptability of hunting in Ontario.

The poll also shows that individual hunters can be the most effective at communicating their contributions to conserving wildlife and our natural environment and that they should speak out more often about their contributions.