

COPY OF NOTO LETTER TO JOSEPH COMUZZI, FEDERAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE FOR NORTHERN ONTARIO

The Honourable Joseph Comuzzi
Minister of State (Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario)
235 Queen Street
Ottawa, ON
K1A 0H5

Dear Minister Comuzzi:

I have enclosed copies of two pieces of correspondence that I received within the past few days. One was sent to several members of the NOTO Board of Directors, the other was emailed to the NOTO Member Services Manager. I hope these will help illustrate the magnitude of the problem our industry faces with poor communication and uneven enforcement by customs and immigration officials. As Minister responsible for economic development in northern Ontario, where tourism is a very large and growing industry, I trust that these matters concern you as much as they do us.

It seems that a new wrinkle on the same old problem faces us each year. First it was guests with decades old DUI convictions, last year it was imports of potatoes, this year it is work permits for non Canadian business owners. Every year, it is rude, ill informed and overzealous enforcement, combined with long lines and delays at the border. All of it is costing us many millions each year.

Our organization and our regional branch groups have been repeatedly promised improvements to the system, and more importantly, better communication. We have yet to see either. Each new procedure or enforcement initiative comes completely without advance warning. Last year, hundreds of tourists were turned back at northwestern Ontario border crossings for "illegal potatoes". We could easily have made sure our guests knew that they should not bring potatoes from home, and have repeatedly urged officials to give us the opportunity to help head off these problems, but to no avail.

As a northwestern Ontario MP, we believe you should also be very concerned about enforcement and screening practices in northwestern Ontario that we believe differ from the norm elsewhere in Ontario. Although officials continue to deny that this is the case, our industry surveys indicate that more than 90% of our complaints originate in three northwestern Ontario border crossings.

We are especially disappointed that the promise of improved customer service training for border personnel, made after our meeting with Minister Coderre in October 2002, was never kept. This step, combined with improved communications, could solve a large number of problems.

We very much appreciate the strong support FedNor has shown for the tourism industry, and our interest, as Minister in helping tourism reach its real potential as an economic driver for the region. Much as we appreciate FedNor's important role in financial support, this time we do not need money. We need support for needed changes of a policy and administrative nature in order to realize the full benefit of investment in the industry, both by FedNor and by the private sector.

I look forward to the opportunity to meet with you and your officials to find ways to removing barriers to growth in tourism in northern Ontario.

Sincerely,

Doug Reynolds
Executive Director, NOTO

EXECUTIVE & DIRECTORS

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Rob Wisneski 807-227-2199

If for any reason you wish to speak with the executive or directors, and can not reach them directly at their listed telephone, please call or fax the K.C.D.A. office:
(807) 223-3266



K D C A
Kenora District Camp Owners Association



Your Local Tourism Lobby Association Representing the Federal District of Kenora. NOTO's Largest and Oldest Chapter

NEW SMOKE TRAILS

JUNE 2004 P.O. Box 545, Dryden, Ontario P8N 2Z2 Phone (807) 223-3266
WWW.KDCA.CA

TO: KDCA Members, Allied Members & Other Readers

By the time that you read this newsletter the tourism season will be in full-swing, meaning our KDCA members have already spent several million dollars in their local communities for jobs, services, supplies (e.g. food, gas, diesel, propane, etc.) equipment (e.g., boats, motors, cars, trucks, etc.), licenses and taxes (e.g., PST, GST, provincial tax, federal tax, employer tax, CPP, UI, etc.). We have expended these millions in just 60 short days! You do make a difference – don't forget it.

While we are making a difference in local economies we are having mixed success with officials at "higher levels." Namely, topical letters (i.e., Drinking Water System Regulations and white-tail deer hunting) have been sent to the Ministries of Environment and Natural Resources, respectively. To date the Ministry of Environment has acknowledged our concerns (see letter dated June 07 2004) while the Ministry of Natural Resources, at all levels, continues to be silent on the topic of white-tail deer hunting in the Dryden area. This MNR silence is deafening especially in light of the fact that many of our members are active in outfitting for whitetail deer hunting. This office will continue to press for a response from the MNR; at the same time each of you is encouraged to contact your local District Manager and/or Regional Manager and request a response to our concerns.

A follow-up on the KDCA contribution to the Tourism Revitalization Project, as coordinated by Sunset Country, indicates that most of the matching dollars have been received and the advertising campaign is well underway. The focus of the campaign is directed towards those markets (i.e., Chicago, Minneapolis, Madison/Milwaukee) that benefit our membership greatly. If you have any questions about the campaign I would encourage you to call Gerry Cariou at the Sunset Country offices in Kenora.

NOTO is reaching out (See Memo dated May 31, 2004)! NOTO is speaking out (See letter of May 21, 2004 to Minister Comuzzi)! While we are all awaiting the follow-up to these initiatives it is clear that the severity of our issues continue to demand action – action at all levels of tourism.

While the list of tourism concerns is lengthy (e.g., bait restrictions, border crossing, RSAs, water systems and regulations, etc.) this association needs to take the time to THANK each and every person that attended our Annual Spring Dinner/Dance in Waldorf. We would also like to THANK everyone for the very generous donation(s) and/or contribution(s) that made this festive occasion the "Spring Event of the North." And, if you have not already received it our letters of THANKS should be arriving in the mail.

Finally, let me apologize for the length and tardiness of this letter. As each of us maybe aware things are changing at a very rapid pace; but remember, there is no greater joy for us in tourism to see that child smile when he "lands the big one" or when, together, Mother, Father and the kids enjoy that beautiful wilderness and experience that each of us in tourism offers.

Keep a tight reign and a tight line!

Harald Lohn

P.S. I might mention the weather: it has not been the best but we continue to do our best. THANKS, tourist outfitters!

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS AND OTHER NEWS CAN BE FOUND AT THE KDCA WEB SITE: www.kdca.ca

Next Meeting:
Wednesday, October 6th
at Evergreen Lodge
9:30 A.M.

HUNTING REGULATIONS REVISED TO ENSURE CONSERVATION

"Ministry publishes new guide with changes in eastern Ontario

TORONTO — The Ontario government has revised and issued the 2004/2005 Hunting Regulations Summary to ensure conservation and sustainability of wildlife, Natural Resources Minister David Ramsay announced today.

"Ontario offers excellent hunting opportunities," said Ramsay. "Hunters need to know and follow the rules if we are to sustainably manage our wildlife."

The summary includes new regulations which establish a moose calf tag system, create a new six-day archery season and require hunters to report their results. The regulations are now in place in Wildlife Management Units (WMUs) 48, 55A, 55B and 57 in eastern Ontario.

The summary also covers new rules for party hunting, which involves two or more persons legally hunting moose, deer or black bear. Under the new rules, each member of the party must hunt within five kilometres of, and within the same WMU, as the person who holds the seal that is valid for the wildlife being hunted. Each member of the party must also be able to communicate reliably and immediately with other members of the party.

The 2004/2005 Hunting Regulations Summary is available on the Ministry of Natural Resources' website at www.mnr.gov.on.ca/MNR/pubs/pubmenu.html and at ministry district offices and most licence issuers..."

SOURCE: http://www.mnr.gov.on.ca/MNR/csb/news/2004/may07bnr_04.html

MCGUINITY GOVERNMENT TAKES FURTHER ACTION TO PROTECT ONTARIO'S DRINKING WATER

New advisory council to make recommendations on water quality and testing

TORONTO— The McGuinty government is further protecting Ontario's drinking water by establishing an Advisory Council on Drinking Water Quality and Testing Standards, Environment Minister Leona Dombrowsky announced today.

"Our people's health is our most precious resource. We share a responsibility to protect it from harm," said Dombrowsky. "The Advisory Council will help us ensure that Ontario's standards for drinking water quality and drinking water tests are among the most stringent in the world. Our citizens deserve no less."

The Advisory Council will be chaired by Jim Merritt, a former Assistant Deputy Minister with the Ministry of the Environment.

With members drawn from key professional organizations with expertise in areas related to drinking water, the council will make recommendations to the Minister of the Environment on provincial drinking water standards and other measures to improve the safety and quality of Ontario's drinking water supply.

The establishment and mandate of the Advisory Council satisfy six specific recommendations made by the O'Connor Commission.

In response to concerns raised by rural municipalities, public health officials and small privately-run systems across the province, the minister also announced proposed changes to the Drinking Water Systems Regulation. These proposed changes extend the deadline for some systems to install treatment equipment to December 31, 2004 and will allow the ministry to consult on further changes to the regulation to make compliance more feasible for small waterworks.

"The previous government didn't consider the effects of the drinking water regulation on rural Ontario," Dombrowsky said. "We will meet with affected stakeholders over the next few months to come up with solutions that will make the regulation more workable for rural drinking water systems while protecting public health and meeting our commitment to implement all of the O'Connor Commission's recommendations."

Contacts: Art Chamberlain Minister's Office (416) 314-5139 John Steele Ministry of the Environment (416) 314-6666

Source: www.ene.gov.on.ca

ADVISORY COUNCIL ON DRINKING WATER QUALITY AND TESTING STANDARDS

The Advisory Council on Drinking Water Quality and Testing Standards will make recommendations to the Minister of the Environment on matters related to provincial drinking water standards.

Council members are from key professional organizations with expertise in the areas of microbiology, engineering, utility operations and public health and a record of interest and accomplishment in areas related to drinking water. The council will contribute to ensuring Ontario's standards for drinking water quality and testing are consistent with the most up-to-date information and practices, and that the standards-setting process is transparent with increased public input.

The Advisory Council has a mandate to:

- review scientific and technical documentation of proposed standards;
- consult and provide feedback to the public;
- undertake additional consultation to clarify and address issues; and
- consider and make recommendations on adopting standards for contaminants that are not currently being considered through the federal-provincial process for developing Canada-wide drinking water guidelines.

The Advisory Council will first focus on the following priorities:

- replacing the total coliform test with an E. coli test;
- the desirability of a turbidity limit that is lower than the limit specified in the federal-provincial guidelines;
- treatment standards for protozoa based on source water quality; and
- reviewing Ontario's standards for disinfection by-products.

Through the Advisory Council, the McGuinty government is implementing six recommendations (Recommendations 25 to 29 and 31) regarding an advisory council and standards made by Commissioner O'Connor in Part Two of the Walkerton Inquiry report.

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO DRINKING WATER SYSTEMS REGULATION (O. Reg. 170/03)

The Drinking Water System Regulation (O.Reg. 170/03) was implemented in June 2003 to address recommendations of the O'Connor Commission. The ministry has heard from rural municipalities and operators of non-municipal drinking water systems about its impact on their ability to continue to provide services to their clients.

The Ministry of the Environment has proposed amendments to the Drinking Water Systems Regulation which respond to these concerns and give the ministry time to consult over the summer months with rural municipalities and operators of non-municipal drinking water systems, medical officers of health and health officials on making the regulation more workable. The government remains committed to providing safe, clean drinking water, and is prepared to look at workable solutions towards achieving that goal.

The proposed amendments, affecting both municipal and privately-run drinking water systems, are as follows:

- The treatment deadlines will be extended from July 1, 2004 to December 31, 2004 for surface water systems in the three categories listed below, as long as the system does not serve a designated facility (i.e. school or health/social care facility):
 - non-municipal year-round residential systems (i.e., mobile home parks, subdivisions, condos/apartments)
 - large non-municipal – non-residential systems (i.e., systems serving hotels, resorts and campgrounds with less than 6 hook-ups)
 - large municipal – non-residential systems (large community centres and recreational facilities, for example, capable of supplying water at a rate greater than 2.9 litres of per second)

The treatment deadline for groundwater water systems in the three categories listed above remains December 31, 2005.

- Small municipal – non-residential systems (i.e., systems serving small community centres and town halls not capable of supplying 2.9 litres of water per second) would be allowed to post signs until December 31, 2004 rather than conduct tests required by the regulation. Signs would state that the water has not been tested or treated for drinking water purposes.
- Small non-municipal non-residential systems (i.e., motels, resorts and restaurants not capable of supply 2.9 litres of water per second) would receive a deadline extension to June 1, 2005 to notify the ministry of their intention to comply, apply for relief from treatment or post warning notices.
- As well, changes have been proposed to the sequence of corrective actions for some adverse test results to better provide for the immediate correction of the problem, and to the definition of 'food premises' to be clear that systems that do not serve the public, such as food manufacturers, are not included in the regulation.

The majority of systems will continue to have to meet tough standards, sample and test, use accredited laboratories for microbiological and chemical testing, provide immediate notification of any adverse test results and are subject to tough penalties for non-compliance.

EXCERPTS FROM A LETTER TO DAVID RAMSAY, ONTARIO MINISTRY OF NATURAL RESOURCES FROM HARALD LOHN, KDCA PRESIDENT

As you may be aware, deer hunting by non-residents of Canada has become an increasingly important economic generator in northwestern Ontario, particularly the Dryden area, over the last few years. The KENORA DISTRICT CAMP OWNERS ASSOCIATION (KDCA) view this hunting, if properly managed for sustainability and compatibility with resident resource harvest, as a continuing benefit to all resource users, tourism investment and employment and local supply services. A larger deer population, in recent years, has however, led to a significant increase in unfettered non-resident alien hunting and unregulated outfitting services with accompanying impacts on resident hunting activity, the resource condition, wildlife enforcement and the sustained operations of KDCA members and

Memo from NOTO
May 31, 2004

To: Tourism Branch Group Representatives

Don Elliot, Armstrong Wilderness Outfitters Association
Greg Swiatek, Bisco Tourist Outfitters Association
Susanne Rieser, Callander South Shore Tourist Association
Dan Denzler, Ear Falls-Perrault Falls Outfitters Association
Joe Ott, French River Resorts Association
Harald Lohn, Kenora District Camp Owners Association
Alan Dare, Loring-Restoule Business Association
Dorothy Cloet, Marten River Association of Tourist Camp Operators
Tom Pearson, North Western Ontario Tourism Association
Jody Morin, Sioux Lookout-Hudson Tourist Association
Paul Edwards, West Nipissing Upper French Tourist Association
Rick Lockhart, Temagami Tourist Operators Association
From: Todd Eastman, NOTO- The Voice of Nature & Outdoor Tourism in Ontario

Greetings Tourism Colleagues,

Over the last several years communications and information sharing between NOTO and branch groups across the province has declined. This memo and the actions that come out of it are intended to reverse this trend.

We believe that improved communications will at a minimum have the following benefits:

- improve our understanding of the issues facing your members;
- improve your understanding of the issues we are working on in support of the industry; and to help us identify/confirm priority issues for the industry.

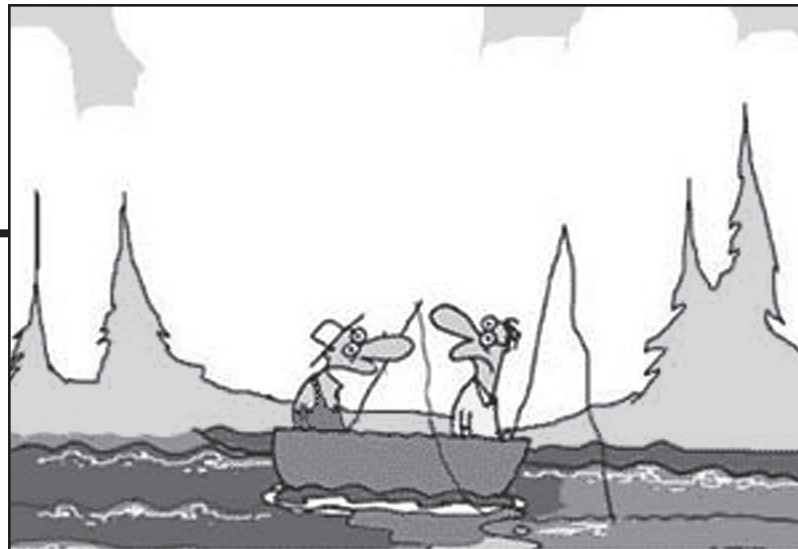
Recognising we are all busy (especially at this time of the year!) and that resources may be limited, NOTO is interested in knowing if you see value in our idea and if so, how might it best be unfolded. Among several things we are imagining a group conference call, organised and facilitated by us, for an hour or two every two months.

Let's start talking - only by working together can we insure a better, stronger nature and outdoor tourism industry.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Kind Regards,

Todd C. Eastman, NOTO Research Analyst - todd@noto.net



"So we haven't had a bite in days... so I lost our bait... so we're drifting to who knows where because I dropped the paddles in the water. A bad day of fishing is better than a good day at work."

**Don't forget to visit the
NorthWestern Ontario Tourism
Association's web site at**

www.nwota.com

**for minutes of their meetings, and
a calendar of events**

suppliers. Unfortunately, the record-sized whitetailed deer, illegally harvested near Dryden in the Fall 2003, has aggravated these problems by widely highlighting hunting opportunities through the written and electronic media. Given the rapidly emerging non-resident alien deer-hunting scenario, the KDCA feels that urgent action needs to be taken in the resource management sector to pre-empt resource damage, more serious resource user conflicts and enforcement issues. To this end, KDCA would, as an immediate and initial step, like to see greater control over the size and conduct of the non-resident alien deer hunt in its membership area by making it mandatory that:

**Non-resident alien deer hunters be accommodated
by licensed tourism services beginning in 2004.**

NOTO LETTER DATED MAY 21, 2004

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Minister of State (Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario)
235 Queen Street
Ottawa, ON
K1A 0H5

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