



**April 4, 2013**

## **City Council Committee Report**

**TO: Mayor and Council**

**FR: Heather Kasprick, Deputy Clerk**

**RE: Changes to Natural Resources Fish and Wildlife Regulations**

### **Recommendation:**

**Whereas** tourist camps in Northwestern Ontario are experiencing an annual decrease in the number of tourists visiting from the United States of America; and

**Whereas** Kenora and many Northwestern Ontario communities greatly depend on the tourism industry for sustainability of many businesses and services in their communities; and

**Whereas** traditionally American hunters have represented a large percentage of the tourists that occupy our tourist camps annually and continuing to draw visitors north of the border remains a challenge each year; and

**Whereas** the wolf population in wildlife management areas 3, 6 and 7 along with others in the north continues to grow, this over population has had negative effects on other species inhabiting the same space and the moose population in these specific wildlife management areas is now nearly non-existent;

**Therefore may it be Resolved That** changes to the current Natural Resources Fish and Wildlife Regulations include the following:

The wolf hunting season be extended by one month in order to coincide with the fall bear hunt, beginning August 15<sup>th</sup> each year; and

The price of a wolf license for non-residents be reduced including the requirement for an Outdoors card and small game license; and

That the Province of Ontario re-instates the spring bear hunt; and

That the out of Province deer hunters are required to stay at a licensed tourist establishment; and further

**That** these proposed changes will help grow and rebuild the moose population in the Kenora area and entice more tourists into our province improving the economy of northern areas that are dependent upon those tourism dollars.

## **Background:**

John Palson from Hideaway Outfitters contacted Mayor Canfield regarding the ongoing challenges for local tourist outfitters. He provided Mayor Canfield with a letter he sent to the Honourable David Orazietti regarding the decline in tourism and the wolf population which he was requesting amendments to the current Natural Resources Fish and Wildlife regulations.

Mr. Palson expressed that as our economic trade area has seen a significant reduction in the number of US tourists over the last decade, we need to investigate and support alternative ways to lure those customers and their disposable income back into Ontario. The Kenora area greatly depends on the tourism industry and traditionally American hunters have represented a large percent of those tourists. With the difficult economic times many US citizens continue to experience, it proves more difficult every year to be able to entice those people north of the border. As the wolf population in wildlife management areas 3, 6, 7, and others in the north, continues to grow, this over-population has had negative effects on other species inhabiting the same space. First of all, local citizens are fearful of encountering wolves during their normal outdoor activities. As the wolves are encroaching into cities, towns and other populated areas, it's merely a matter of time before a local resident or child is harmed by these animals. Secondly, wolves are responsible for helping to deplete the moose population; to the point where the moose population in wildlife areas 3, 6 and 7 is now nearly non-existent.

Mr. Palson proposed the following changes to the current Natural Resources Fish and Wildlife regulations to the Honourable Orazietti:

1: The wolf hunting season be extended by one month in order to coincide with the fall bear hunt, beginning August 15<sup>th</sup> each year.

2: The price of a wolf licence for non-residents be reduced. Currently, the cost of a wolf tag for non-residents is \$266.76. In addition, in order to obtain a wolf licence, a hunter must first purchase an Outdoors card worth \$9.68 as well as a small game licence worth \$115.28, resulting in a cost of \$391.72 for each hunter. By lowering the price of these licences, more hunters will be able to afford the cost of a hunt in Ontario.

3: That Ontario re-instates the spring bear hunt.

4: That out of province deer hunters are required to stay at a licensed tourist establishment.

**Budget:** N/A

## **Communication Plan/Notice By-law Requirements: Resolution forward to:**

The Honourable David Orazietti

Greg Rickford, MP Kenora Riding

Sarah Campbell, MPP Kenora Riding

Randy Nickle, Provincial Conservative Candidate, Kenora Riding

Deb Weedon, District Manager, MNR, Kenora

Bruce Ranta, Biologist, MNR, Kenora

Carol Fawcett, Head Conservation Officer, MNR, Kenora

Mayor Craig Nutall, City of Dryden

Mayor Dennis Leney, Municipality of Sioux Lookout

Wes Romaniuk, President, Kenora Chamber of Commerce