



## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **Canadian Sportfishing Industry Association Supports Spring Bear Hunt Decision**

**PETERBOROUGH** – The Canadian Sportfishing Industry Association (CSIA) supports the recently-announced expansion of the spring bear hunt pilot project in Ontario.

The Honourable Jeff Leal, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, made the announcement this past Friday at the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters/Mario Cortellucci Hunting & Fishing Heritage Centre in Peterborough. Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry Bill Mauro made a simultaneous announcement in Thunder Bay.

A limited expansion of the spring hunt was introduced last year in response to nuisance bears in Northern Ontario communities. The latest announcement expands the spring bear hunt to all 88 Wildlife Management Units across Ontario that currently have a fall bear hunt. There will also be opportunities for non-resident hunters to participate in the hunt, a welcome boost to tourism in the province.

The CSIA congratulates the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters and the Fish and Wildlife Heritage Commission for their persistent efforts to push for the re-establishment of the spring hunt. The Association also credits the Government of Ontario for recognizing the need to restore science-based management and sustainable harvest of bears.

According to CSIA Government Affairs Chair Phil Morlock, taking on a challenge like this was no easy task. “We know from our experience in addressing all levels of government on behalf of Canada’s fishery that convincing government to make decisions on proven science-based research, instead of on emotion or the rhetoric of well-funded anti-use lobby groups, can be daunting. The OFAH especially should be commended for its long and relentless pursuit of this file.”

The Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters has been fighting to bring back the spring bear hunt for almost 20 years, including a court battle with the province that went all the way to the Supreme Court of Canada.

MPP Leal also thanked the OFAH for being relentless in pushing this issue forward. He added, "You are great stewards for fishing and hunting heritage in the province of Ontario."

With more than 100,000 members, the OFAH is the largest non-profit fish and wildlife conservation-based organization in Ontario.

The Canadian Sportfishing Industry Association (CSIA) represents the manufacturers, distributors, retailers and sales agencies which serve the 9 million Canadians who fish as an outdoor heritage activity.

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