

2004 Resolutions

2004-01 FORESTRY - JAAKKO POYRY REPORT

WHEREAS it is the belief of the NBWF that the forest industry should not self regulated itself on Crown land;

AND WHEREAS we should conserve our forest natural biodiversity;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that we reject the main premise of the Jaakko-Poyry report.

Response from Dept. of Natural Resources:

The NBWFs' position will be given due consideration as the government develops its response to the Jaakko-Poyry report. More specifically, the Government of New Brunswick has no intention of relinquishing its responsibility for the regulation and oversight of forest management activities on Crown lands.

2004-01 FISHERIES - EXTENSION TO CHAIN PICKEREL SEASON

WHEREAS chain pickerel supports a very popular sport fishery in southern areas of New Brunswick;

AND WHEREAS the end of the pickerel fishing season, even in tidal waters, ends on 15 October;

AND WHEREAS pickerel are spring spawners;

AND WHEREAS there are opportunities to fish pickerel well into the fall;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the angling season for pickerel in tidal waters including the Lower Saint John River, Grand Lake, Indian Lake, French Lake and Maquapit Lake be extended to the last day of November.

Response from Dept. of Natural Resources:

Since the angling season is open 365 days a year on these waters and it appears that the chain pickerel populations are relatively healthy, DNR supports your resolution and intends to undertake steps to implement the change for the 2005 angling season.

2004-02 FISHERIES - HOOK AND RELEASE LICENCE - SALMON

WHEREAS the province of New Brunswick has instituted a Hook and Release/Live Release license which requires the release of grilse, but permits the retention of trout;

AND WHEREAS trout populations are in as bad a decline as Salmon in many parts of our Province;

AND WHEREAS Hook & Release is simply an enhancement tool which should be applied where necessary to help rebuild stocks of fish;

AND WHEREAS it does not make sense and it is illogical to require the release of Atlantic Salmon while permitting the retention of trout with a Hook & Release/Live Release license.

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the holders of a Hook & Release/Live Release license must release all species of fish.

Response from Dept. of Natural Resources:

The Live Release Atlantic Salmon Licences was established in 2002 at request of the NB Salmon Council in order to encourage release of all Atlantic salmon including grilse.

DNR does not support your Resolution. The implementation of the Resolution would be counter productive to the desired results expected by the NBWF. Only 1.6% of resident and 34.1% of non-resident salmon anglers purchased the licence in 2003. The result of implementing the resolution would shift the voluntary purchase of the live release licence back to the retention licence (same price). The result would not conserve trout or Atlantic salmon.

In regards to the desired results of the resolution expected by the Federation, it would be appreciated if you could identify those areas where brook trout populations are in similar declines as the Atlantic salmon. DNR would consider implementation of more restrictive mandatory harvest regulations (season and quotas) in order to restrict harvest and therefore sustain the brook trout populations and the fisheries which they support.

2004-03 FISHERIES - MERGANSER AND CORMORANT CULL

WHEREAS every angler knows mergansers and cormorants are feeding heavily on our young fish;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that DNR undertake a culling program on New Brunswick waterways in order to decrease significantly the number of cormorants and mergansers.

Response from Dept. of Natural Resources:

Cull programs to reduce impact of predators on prey are a "treatment" and not a "cure", and to be effective require significant long term, continuous commitment of staff and resources. DNR is not prepared to undertake the activity.

As many of the NBWF membership are aware, cormorants can be legally hunted, with no bag limits, on the Varmint licence from March 1 to September 20, and on the Migratory Bird Licence during the open season for ducks. Similarly, mergansers can be hunted inland under the Federal Duck season from approximately October 1 to January 3.

The New Brunswick Department of Natural Resources will not undertake a culling of mergansers and cormorants on New Brunswick waterways. The Department is not aware of scientific information that definitively indicates merganser or cormorant predation poses a significant threat to the maintenance of viable salmon populations, nor does it believe that a culling program would be acceptable to the public at large in the absence of a cause-affect relationship. At the jurisdictional level, both Atlantic salmon and merganser species fall under the care of Federal government so you may wish to direct your concerns to the Canadian Wildlife Service and the Department of Fisheries and Oceans.

Comments as a result of meeting with Minister, Oct. 15/2004

The NBWF will have to make attempts at encouraging migratory bird hunters to hunt mergansers in areas where they are numerous. Mergansers may be hunted from October 15 to January 3, 2004 in Zone 1 with an additional season in coastal waters from February 1 to February 26, 2004.

The season runs from October 1 to December 18, 2004 in Zone 2. A daily bag limit of 6 birds is permitted. Check with the Canadian Wildlife Service for additional information or any clarifications.

2004-01 WILDLIFE - HUNTING LICENCE DOCUMENT

WHEREAS under our present hunting situation hunters are required to carry and produce a variety of licences or permits;

AND WHEREAS the possible licences and/or permits often consist of deer and bird Licence, varmint licence, bear licence, moose licence and a migratory bird licence;

AND WHEREAS hunters are also required to carry with them a FAC/PAL/POL along with a registration certificate for each and every firearm that the hunter is using;

AND WHEREAS the hunter may be required to carry up to seven (7) different licences and/or permits, both Federal and Provincial, in order to hunt with a firearm in this province.

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the New Brunswick Department of Natural Resources consider the development and implementation of a new, cost effective licensing document that will include all species in one document, be easier to carry, waterproof and durable.

Response from Dept. of Natural Resources:

The New Brunswick Department of Natural Resources is currently reviewing the present licensing system. It will not be able to incorporate licenses or permits from other departments such as the Migratory Game permit from Canadian Wildlife Services or the Firearm License or Registration documents from the Department of Public Safety.

It will however explore the possibility of eliminating the need of multiple licenses. It will make use of modern technology to provide better access to purchasing licenses and allow real time access to the data for license sales. A new system will include safe guards against multiple license purchases by the same individual as well as ensuring that all license prerequisites are met prior to the license sale. This initiative involves several provincial departments and is currently under development. The implementation date has yet to be set.

Comments as a result of meeting with Minister, Oct. 15/2004

This will not likely occur until 2006.

2004-02 WILDLIFE - NORTHERN DEER HERD

WHEREAS the deer herd in northern New Brunswick is still too low to sustain a deer hunt;

AND WHEREAS it was originally thought by government that a 5-year ban on deer hunting in these zones would increase the population to sufficient levels to sustain a hunt;

AND WHEREAS this plan has been in affect since 1993 and although the population has grown it still has not grown sufficiently to allow deer hunt;

BE IT KNOWN that we believe the growth in population is not at a fast enough rate and that other means to grow the deer herd must be employed;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the government spend more money on enforcement officers to curb the problem of poaching in the northern portion of the province and that additional funds be allocated to programs aimed at increasing the deer herd growth in these zones.

Response from Dept. of Natural Resources:

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has been tracking deer population growth in the northern closed zones since 1993 by use of an annual aerial survey as well as through indices of number of road-killed deer and number of deer observed per hour by moose hunters.

This information indicates that the northern deer herd is growing, although more rapidly in some zones than in others.

DNR has recently received one proposal from northeastern hunters to open WMZ 8 to deer hunting and recently a DNR deer management biologist spoke to hunting and fishing clubs in the northwest on the topic of opening zones in that area.

DNR's position, based on both empirical data and input from local hunting groups, is that deer population levels in some northern WMZ's are growing to the point where restricted hunting opportunity is becoming possible.

Having said the foregoing, there are several northern zones where deer population growth is slow. Historically these zones have not produced an abundance of deer and it is highly unlikely, given the quantity and the quality of the habitat and the climatology, that they will in the future.

While an agency can always use more resources to protect or manage wildlife, the Department is confident that current management and protection efforts are assisting deer population growth and that regulated deer hunting can be re-established in most Wildlife Management Zones.

2004-03 WILDLIFE - PHEASANT SEASON

WHEREAS the pheasant population in the southern region of the Province is sufficient to warrant an open season;

AND WHEREAS at one time New Brunswick has an open pheasant season, and Nova Scotia has had an open pheasant season for many years, with no significant decline in the overall population;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that New Brunswick Department of Natural Resources establish a fall season for pheasant in Wildlife Management Zone 25, with the proper safeguards in regards to bag limits, seasons, etc. to ensure a viable pheasant population remains.

Response from Dept. of Natural Resources:

The Province of New Brunswick closed the public pheasant hunting season in 1964 in response to a sharply declining pheasant population. Like many North American jurisdictions, ring-necked pheasants had been stocked for hunting for many years throughout the province by both public agencies and private interests. It was concluded that during particularly severe winters, there is insufficient food and cover available to sustain this species in New Brunswick except for perhaps the south eastern portion of the province, which has relatively large amounts of marsh-type habitat that this species finds favourable for survival. The Department determined that establishing a wild pheasant population that could sustain hunting was not possible and pheasants could only be hunted if annual stocking was undertaken. Public subsidy of game bird hunting was not seen as a wise use of public funds and the pheasant season was closed.

While abandoning publicly funded attempts to establish sustainable wild pheasant populations, the province instead licensed private pheasant preserves where hunting enthusiasts could release captive-reared pheasants for subsequent licensed hunting on the preserve. Pheasant hunting is most popular with hunters using pointer and flushing breeds of hunting dogs, as the bird is an avid runner unless held to flush by the dog. Pheasant hunting preserves offered a short-term abundance of birds and a lot of guaranteed work for the dogs. As many as 25 pheasant hunting preserves have existed in NB at one time or another, however about 10 preserves are currently licensed by the Department.

The basic management unit for sustainable hunting of ring-necked pheasants is approximately 60 km² of suitable habitat. It is doubtful if New Brunswick has such a contiguous area of suitable habitat. While south eastern areas appear to have an abundance of wild pheasants, the contribution to the population by released birds and winter feeding by the public cannot be dismissed. One pheasant hunting preserve in the area releases ~10,000 birds on their 400 acres each year.

The ring-necked pheasant is considered exotic wildlife in New Brunswick and the Department of Natural Resources does not plan to divert resources or management effort from native wildlife programs to maintain this species. The Department does not support the concept of stocking for propagation of an exotic species or for put-and-take hunting.

The Department of Natural Resources believes that the current policy of allowing private hunting preserves that offer pheasant hunting to the public for a fee is an acceptable compromise to public land stocking or attempting to establish a wild pheasant population. The estimated cost of production for public land stocking pheasants is approximately \$30 per pheasant harvested. That amount does

not include costs associated with administering and regulating a sustainable hunting harvest, or the further regulation of pheasant hunting preserves which would be required.

Comments as a result of meeting with Minister, Oct. 15/2004

After considerable conversation the Minister agreed that his department would meet to discuss the possibility of a limited hunt in WMZ 25.

2004-04 WILDLIFE - WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT ZONES (WMZ)

WHEREAS under our present situation Wildlife Management Zone (WMZ) maps are very general making it difficult to locate the boundaries of specific zones;

AND WHEREAS the twenty-seven WMZ's do not have any identifying markers or signs identifying boundaries;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED the twenty-seven WMZ's do not have any identifying markers or signs identifying boundaries;

That the New Brunswick Department of Natural Resources create signs and post these signs at major highway intersections which serve as boundaries of the various WMZ's and at no less than on kilometre intervals along major highway routes that serve as the boundaries of these zones.

Response from Dept. of Natural Resources:

Wildlife Management Zone (WMZ) boundaries have been designed to be easily recognized by the public. Most boundaries follow roads, rivers, lakes, streams or railways. When the 27 WMZ's were created and described in regulation in 1990, a companion booklet illustrating the boundaries and prominent features of each WMZ was also produced. This booklet is available through all vendors and DNR offices at time of hunting licence purchase. The large wall maps showing WMZ's were also produced but intended for general reference use only. The Wildlife Management Zone Booklet has been recently up-dated to reflect the re-numbering of some highways as a result of new highway construction, and will be up-dated again as construction and highway re-numbering continues. A copy of the up-dated WMZ booklet is attached.

The boundaries between WMZ's in New Brunswick constitute a linear distance of approximately 6000 km. Approximately 3000 km of WMZ boundary are provincial roadways. All roads and railways that form WMZ boundaries are considered part of both adjacent WMZ's. To accurately indicate each adjacent WMZ, both sides of a roadway would require posting, therefore 6000 km of boundary (i.e. 6000 signs) would require posting.

The intent of the production and distribution of the WMZ booklet since 1990 has been to provide hunters with an illustrated guide to the WMZ boundaries and reduce confusion where 2 or more WMZ's meet. The Department of Natural Resources does not support the placing of WMZ signs along the 6000 km of boundary between WMZ's and believes that the production and distribution of WMZ booklets to hunters is a more efficient and practical means of ensure compliance with the hunting regulations.

Comments as a result of meeting with Minister, Oct. 15/2004

After discussing the issue it was agreed that more effort would be made to show the changes in highways and where these highways are located in relation to the various WMZ's. It was noted that

this was of particular importance where new highways are constructed such as the Moncton to Fredericton highway and may also be important with the construction of the new highway north of Fredericton. Fish & Wildlife Branch staff will look closely at these situations in conjunction with the NBWF to ensure that the highways are identified on WMZ maps.