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December 30, 2007.

## **Year end review of the activities for 2007**

**To start with I hope you all had a good year to look back on and I wish all of you happy Holidays a prosperous 2008 and good health.**

My wish for the year 2008 is that we all get a bit more involved in the affairs of OFEAA. It would be much easier for the board of directors if more input from the members about ideas to better serve the association. If members have a problem or conflict with government agencies we like to hear about this and in most cases we might be able to help or resolve the issue. As the saying goes only united are we strong.

What we did and what did we not accomplish in 2007!

We developed our new web-site it was quite a task since none of us that were involved did really know what we wanted, needed or how to go about it. The web master who is a friend of one of our directors had and still has a lot of patience with us. I think it is somewhat acceptable in its present form but changes can be made.

We would like that members make use of the site to post and advertise their business, on the market place link you can post things you like to sell or buy.

A few instances I got involved when over zealous MNR biologists tempted to put their ideas on licenses of how to, how may, when and where to stock fish. One biologist wanted that all brook trout being stocked in his

jurisdiction is fin clipped. I contacted MNR in Peterborough and we got him stopped in his tracks. Two of the people affected by this folly are also members of or association.

On June 28 07 we held a meeting at Mr. Blacktopp's farm in Mount Albert. The main issue for this meeting was to elect a new board of directors. For better or worse I was acclaimed again as President, Mr. Owen Williams acclaimed as Treasurer, Mr. Al. Bunn elected as Secretary and Dr. Steven Zaichuck elected as communication director. Our Treasurer reported on our financial status which is in good shape and otherwise it was a good social get together.

What we did not "yet" accomplish.

Who ever had or has to deal with bureaucrats knows what a problem is, especially in our case with the MNR and environment ministry not to forget the Conservation Authority.

This past year my main target was the MNR and in particular the designated person who supposedly was to support our association.

Well no surprise when I and three other members of our association applied to buy brook trout eggs from the MNR through him he put up a price more than double than the average private sector price. For walleye eggs he increased the price from \$2 per thousand to more than \$26 per thousand. For more than 10 years before he became manager we paid 10% premium more than the private sector.

We did buy the trout eggs from him since we had no alternative. I had to postpone any action on this matter because spring stocking took up all my time.

During the summer month I made the MNR Minister Mr. Ramsay of the UN-cooperate and in some way discriminating attitude of the MNR towards our association members aware. My letters were forwarded to him by the Liberal MPP for Peterborough and the then Liberal Finance Minister G. Sorbara.

Both gentleman and their staff tried unsuccessfully to get Mr. Ramsey involved I received two unrelated letter of the matter in question and one call from his office and no reply when I phoned back to contact that person in his office. I am not the person who gives up easily but by this time it was fall

and busy stocking time again and the election was up and Mr. Sorbara was not available since he was the motor behind the Liberal party.

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Now comes the surprising and hopefully the best news of 2007.

First MNR Minister Ramsey lost his appointment as Minister for all I know he is a nice person but to manage the MNR we need a person with a strong personality with an open mind and the right support staff to be able see what is best for Ontario environmentally and economical.

Secondly the MNR deputy Minister Ms. G Beggs also left her MNR post and moved to the Environment Ministry. She was perceived in the aquaculture industry as our main nemesis. I met her three times over the years my opinion is that she is very intelligent but if she is not for but against you she finds ways to manipulate it her way. We will have to wait and see what she will do in her new appointment. There are quite some open problems to be solved yet.

I kept what I think the best and most encouraging news for last and hopefully it will be a new jump-start for our industry in the New Year.

I received a letter on Dec. 4. 07. from the new MNR Minister the Honorable Donna Cansfield which at first glance seemed to be well written but like so many I received in the past to be mostly meaningless.

This time so I think I was dead wrong because this minister contacted me by phone through a personal assistant to invite me for meeting the Minister on February 13. 08. in her office in Toronto to discuss matters that is important for our association.

It is for me the first time in all the years since I am involved in aquaculture that a Minister gets so active in such short time after being installed in her present position.

I think we all should be thankful and guardedly hopeful for better times to come but we also have to be supportive to the minister in being good stewards and respect the environment with its **Flora, FAUNA and HABITAT.**

I told the Ministers assistant that I would prepare an agenda for the meeting and send it prior to February 13 to her office.

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I would like to get some input from all of you if possible of what you like change and what your problems were in the past or you feel are looming in the future.

I will start an agenda from my point of view and will distribute the same by e-mail to get your comments and if needed revise it.

If weather permits we can have a meeting on January 16 around 2 or 3pm at my place to discuss the agenda in more detail.  
Please advise if you want to attend.

If you have any comments I would need them no later than January 26.07

I will forward with this rather lengthy letter also the Minister's letter of introduction and the invitation letter for your entertainment.

All the best again for 2008

Karl Dickob  
President, OFEAA



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The Honorable Donna Cansfield  
Minister of Natural Resources  
Room 6630, Whitney Block  
99 Wellesley Street West  
Toronto, Ontario M7A 1W3

Re: OFEAA Agenda for the meeting with the Honorable Donna Cansfield on January 30.  
08. at 1pm

At: To Ms. Amanda Tonen and Ms.Rebecca Amyotte

As requested the following persons representing OFEAA will attend:

Karl Dickob President  
Owen Williams Treasurer  
Dr. Steven Zaichuck Information director

Since time is a factor of importance our agenda is factored to that extend and it is hoped that for the future different arrangements can be facilitated to keep the Minister informed of the status of our association on issues that are of importance.

For discussion we selected the following topics at this time.

**Status of land-based fish farms**

Under present conditions subject to red tape and unfavorable government policies there will be very few new fish farms established in the future.  
Existing fish farms are bound to close since farmers are mostly at retirement age and land is sold to developers.

2.

### **Socio and economic opportunities**

The demand for fresh water food fish in Ontario is supplied entirely except for rainbow trout from other Canadian Provinces or other Countries.

The GTA with its large Asian immigrants is a market by itself for more than 5 million lbs of warm water fish like carp, bass, walleye, crappie, perch and others.

Bait fish culture is a 25 million dollar business and a shortage of the same occurs every year. The culture of bait fish is fairly easy and would guaranty a supply when needed most and also would take some pressure of the harvesting of wild bait fish.

More species of fish should be cultured by the private aquaculture industry for stocking private and Ontario waters. The natural recruitment of game fish in most of Ontario urbanized waters insufficient for many man made reasons. Well managed waters will satisfy Ontario sport fisher and will bolster the tourist industry when expectations of their customers are met.

Quebec tourist outfitters cater now mostly to European and Asian clientele in well stocked and managed public waters.

Ontario-Americans?

Land-based fish farm can be of environmental benefit in many ways especially when extensive or semi intensive fish culture in ponds is practiced.

The retention of phosphorous and other nutrients from run-offs of fields can be more than 90%.

Water is stored for the dry season; habitat is created for wild life etc.

Farmers can make use of marginal land for fish culture and recreational purposes.

Tile draining of wet fields should be discouraged and instead used for pond culture.

Give people an incentive and they will protect their investment and environmental concerns.

**Ontario has two great learning institutions namely Sir Sanford Fleming College in Lindsay and the Aquaculture Extension Centre of the University of Guelph that can and would support an environmentally friendly aquaculture industry.**

## **Will the Aquaculture Industry have a future in Ontario?**

If the status quo of today will prevail it is doubtful that we will ever have an industry that will be able to develop to a degree to make Ontario self sufficient to produce food and recreational fish as is needed in the future. We are lagging behind at least a decade.

The main hindrances can be attributed to the self serving and un-cooperating attitude of the MNR and of the un-reasonable empowerment of many Conservation Authorities.

3.

The Environment Ministry also plays a negative over reactive role in enforcing some costly regulations that are more adopted to regulate large developments, industries and general pollution problems.

The Ministry of Agri and Food is the only Ministry that is helpful towards our industry, but all the money and efforts that are spend so far are a waste.

To go into details in this brief to describe all problems would be too time consuming and better be discussed at the meeting.

It is of the general opinion of our members and others that only the direct involvement of the government will have an effect for changes that are necessary.

I would like that our Government may consider a suggestion I like to make that could be of the benefit for all stakeholders.

**To keep the three Ministers mainly involved and responsible in regulating aquaculture and related issues informed an Inter Governmental Advisory Counsel should be formed since many issues overlap. It is of my opinion that a well informed person has a better chance of controlling directly or indirectly our bureaucratic jungle.**

**This counsel should have a designated person from each Minister who is a special advisor to a Minister and not a bureaucrat.**

**Other members should be from private sector stakeholders, OFEAA, NOAA, OFA, and OFAH to name some.**

**Meetings may be held bi-annual.**

**Stakeholders may consult with a special advisor of a Minister when an occasion warrants this.**

On a lower level we formed an **“Aquaculture Policy and Regulation Advisory Committee”** in 2006. We had several meetings and it became apparent to us that the designated persons from the government were not helpful or competent and lacked any authority. For us that meant we were wasting our time and funds.

We need a committee like this but it has to be staffed with bureaucrats that are competent of the issues and being given authority to summon persons in a dispute resolution process from various other departments. These persons should have when needed access to an ADM for assistance.

4.

I am sorry for my lengthy letters but this is the best I am able to do there is a lot of backlog and I shall bring more correspondence with me.

I hope that we can discuss some of the subjects and find a way of how best to address the issues.

Sincerely

Karl Dickob  
President OFEAA

This email is to confirm that your meeting with Minister Cansfield has been moved from February 13<sup>th</sup> to January 30<sup>th</sup> @ 1:00 p.m. in the Minister's Boardroom on the 6<sup>th</sup> floor of the Whitney Block located at 99 Wellesley St. West. Please enter the building off of Queen's Park Circle, just south of Wellesley St. Security officers will have your name to allow you entrance to the building. If there is anyone else accompanying you, please let me know their names as well and, since the meeting is for 45 minutes, it would be very helpful if you could provide us with an agenda of the concerns which you wish to address in advance of the meeting so that Minister Cansfield will have background information to address your concerns. Thank you.

Rebecca  
*Special Assistant to the Honourable Donna Cansfield*  
*Minister of Natural Resources*  
*Room 6630, Whitney Block*  
*99 Wellesley Street West*  
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February 20. 08.

## **Report of the meeting between OFEAA and the Honorable Minister Cansfield [MNR] on January 30. 2008 in Toronto.**

The meeting commenced at 1pm and ended at approximately 2pm.

The meeting was attended by:

The Honorable MNR Minister Cansfield  
The MNR ADM Mr. Kevin Wilson  
Minister's secretary Ms Toner

OFEAA was represented by:

Karl Dickob President  
Owen Williams Treasurer

After a short introduction the Minister was ready to discuss the agenda that I had prepared for her in advance of the meeting.

It was surprising to us to realize how well she and Kevin Wilson were prepared to address our concerns and how in their opinion land-based aquaculture may benefit the socio and economic needs of Ontario.

She listened intently to the problems our industry and other stakeholders have with government agencies that can or will only be resolved with political will and intervention.

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We were able to discuss the entire agenda in the one hour we had at our disposal with her.

The Minister was very supportive and agreeable towards most of the points we brought to her attention that in our opinion needed to be addressed.

To that effect to support Land-Based -Aquaculture in the future she instructed the ADM to be directly available when we need assistance.

The ADM Kevin Wilson promised us that he will appoint a new person at the Peterborough MNR Head Office to deal with problems that have to be resolved on a district level.

When I arrived home that same evening from the Toronto meeting the appointee had already phoned to make an appointment for a meeting with us.

It was surprising for us to experience how the MNR bureaucracy can act on a short directive of a seemingly strong willed Minister

The newly appointed individual is Mr. Eric Boyson, MNR Director Great Lakes Fishery Branch.

In conclusion, the Minister impressed us in being open minded, proactive and very decisive.

On one subject in our agenda we were not able to convince her at this time, in setting up an inter-governmental advisory consul to deal with matters where different ministries are involved in.

It is hoped that the MNR bureaucracy doe's not wear her out and that she will retain her Ministry for an extended time.

We need very badly continuity that works.

Karl Dickob  
President, OFEAA

