



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Official Record of Debate

(Hansard)

FISH AND WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT

STATEMENT TO THE LEGISLATURE

March 11, 2010

Mr. Jerry J. Ouellette: It's a concerning day.

Having had the honour and privilege to serve as the Minister of Natural Resources, the very foundation that founded the MNR is being questioned. To many people across the great province, to northerners, rural Ontarians, anglers hunters and trappers, when you say you work for the ministry, they thought you worked in the Ministry of Natural Resources.

We are troubled by the Deputy Premier's response to my question about the elimination of the MNR's fish and wildlife branch and the lack of awareness and concern from the McGuinty government. I'm also concerned with the MNR's changes and the impact it will have on hunting and fishing licence revenues going to the special purpose account and that the deputy minister failed to address that.

Also, there has been a lack of clarification from the McGuinty government over the effect of the new HST on hunting and fishing licences. We are still awaiting word on whether the price of hunting and fishing licences will go up the value of the HST or not. Fishermen and hunters need to know if this is indeed the case, that this extra revenue will go into the special purpose account to directly benefit the fish and wildlife programs and not simply be another tax grab.

The anglers, hunters and trappers of this province share a genuine passion for their traditional way of life and their commitment to conservation.

As I look forward to meeting with, next week, the outdoor community I'm hopeful this government will refocus its attention on these important aspects and retain core Ministry of Natural Resources functions and responsibilities.