

Here is a scathing editorial by Ontario News North Editor Karina Hunter. Her obvious displeasure with the inconsequential answers of Minister Jeffrey and the Minister's inability to grasp the issues contained in questions by NDP MPP Gilles Bisson lights up her editorial. It's a shame that more northern Ontario editors are not similarly angered by the injustices being perpetrated by the MNR in the preferential treatment of remote tourist outfitters, at the expense of the thousands of road-based tourist outfitters and the rights of the general public. You can read Ontario News North at www.OntarioNewsNorth.com-**Jeffries Continues To Ignore MNR ROAD CLOSURE Concerns**From the Editor;

I was disgusted last week, while watching televised session of the Ontario Legislature when, Northern Ontario MPP Gilles Bisson, NDP MNR Critic, asked the Minister of Natural Resources Linda Jeffries, for the 2nd time in as many weeks, what would be done in regards to allegations of illegal activity by MNR Staff in regards to road closures to suit remote outfitters in Northern Ontario at the expense of residents, recreational users, tourists and other accommodations and tour providers and she once again went off rambling about her enthusiasm for Northern Tourism.

How long I wonder, can Ms. Jeffries continue to avoid this critically important issue seeming to put on a performance of having either:

- 1. A hearing problem;**
- 2. An English Language Comprehension problem;**
- 3. An Inability To Address Ministry of Natural Resources Issues?**

Will this go on indefinitely while accommodations and tour providers like Willy & Bonnie Smedt of the Bristol Motel in Wawa are refused access to through areas of CROWN LAND they require travel on with their customers, putting their business and livelihood at risk; while members of the Dubreuilville ATV Club continue to find a road closure sign on the parcel of CROWN LAND which they have used for years to travel and enjoy the recreational activity which brought many of them to live in Dubreuilville and has attracted tourists there for years; or while OntORA's membership continues to demand unanswered questions of "WHY?" .

What has our government come to when a minister can continue to blatantly ignore a question that carries with it allegations of former and current MNR employees, being in the Outfitting Business, setting the rules in order to restrict access to the forest while, at the same time, being employees of the Ministry of Natural Resources? Where is a line drawn and who will hold Minister Jeffries accountable to fulfill the responsibilities of her title? The legislative broadcast yesterday, Thursday, November 18th, 2010 was PAINFUL to watch, dare I say SICKENING in my opinion as MPP Bisson attempted to remind Minister Jeffries that her responsibilities laid in the title of MINISTER OF NATURAL RESOURCES and not that of MINISTER OF TOURISM which, in my opinion, she appeared to possibly be campaigning for with what I would only describe as a rant about the wonder which is Northern Ontario Tourism. Would those concerned with Northern Ontario Tourism not be focused on assuring the protection of PUBLIC ACCESS to Crown Lands which attract so many visitors to our region and enhance quality of life for those of us who call it home, rather than continue what appears, in my opinion, to be placation of a select few with MNR Connections unlawfully restricting access, facilitating the actions it appears of select individuals who seem to be claiming large parcels of Northern Crown Lands as their private property on which to entertain a limited few?

THERE must be some end to this! OntORA's Membership continues growing exponentially with each occurrence of Minister Jeffries disregard of MPP Bisson's demand for answers, this will no doubt, help, there is power in numbers, but meanwhile time goes on and the consequences for those being restricted access are very much happening in the now.

Transcript of the questioning, Nov.4 and Nov. 18 can be found at www.temagamistewardship.ca .Share your thoughts as a comment.

For more information about what is being done to protect access to crown lands in Ontario, visit OntORA's website