

Media Release



OFAH File: 842/420H
June 28, 2006

To All Media

For Immediate Release

O.F.A.H. partnership means new hope for fish hatcheries

Province in talks with O.F.A.H. about leasing Ringwood Hatchery

Government plans to mothball the Ringwood Hatchery near Stouffville have been averted thanks to partnership talks between the Ministry of Natural Resources (M.N.R.) and the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters (O.F.A.H.), the province's largest charitable, nonprofit hunting, fishing and conservation organization.

"We are pleased that the Minister is committed to having meaningful dialogue with the O.F.A.H. toward conserving our precious fish and wildlife stocks," said O.F.A.H. Executive Director, Mike Reader. "We look forward to continuing our dialogue with the ministry with respect to the Ringwood hatchery. The goal of the O.F.A.H. is to do what is right for a diverse and viable fishery, and to do what is right for Ontario's angling community. If these two elements are part of the equation, we will ultimately look to enter into an agreement to lease the Ringwood hatchery."

For years, the O.F.A.H. has insisted that the provincial fish culture program, including the Ringwood, Normandale and Dorion fish hatcheries, must remain a core operation of the Ministry of Natural Resources. Yesterday, the M.N.R. made a commitment, endorsed by the O.F.A.H., to upgrade the Dorion Fish Culture Station serving Lake Superior and northwestern Ontario's inland lakes.

As noted in today's M.N.R. media release, the O.F.A.H. also leads the Atlantic Salmon Restoration Program that has been critical in the continued operation of the Normandale Hatchery where a variety of species are reared, including Lake Ontario's chinook salmon.

"The O.F.A.H. has years of experience in volunteer-run fish hatcheries. We are looking forward to continuing talks with the M.N.R. as we work toward a long-term solution to sustain the 140-year-old provincial fish culture program that now annually stocks about 7 million fish in over 1,000 lakes and rivers in Ontario," Reader added.

-30-

Contact: Robert J. Pye
O.F.A.H. Communications Coordinator
(705) 748-6324
robert_pye@ofah.org

Greg Farrant
O.F.A.H. Government Relations Manager
(705) 748-6324
greg_farrant@ofah.org