



ONTARIO

Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry ENFORCEMENT BRANCH



125

YEARS *of* PROTECTION

IT IS A NOVEMBER MIDNIGHT in Northwestern Ontario. The first week of the eleventh month is synonymous with the peak of deer hunting season. The vast darkness observed from the windshield of the helicopter is cut by a single, scanning, Q-beam spotlight from the ground below.

The pilot banks the chopper and zeros in on the light. The steady grumble of the rotors is interrupted by radio communications. Unknown to the spotlight operator below, he is now being silently watched and tracked by well-trained Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNR) staff, a pilot and a conservation officer (CO), in an EC-130 helicopter some 10,000 feet above.

As he and his comrades continue to scan the cutovers in search of more wildlife to poach, he is unknowingly losing time and space to multiple conservation officers and K9 units on the ground, descending on the remote area. At 12:10 am, the night hunting spree

comes to an abrupt end as the poachers roll into more flashing lights than a Santa Clause parade. The jig is up, and as the takedown unfolds, the faces of the accused ironically take on that “deer in the headlights” look.

Ontario COs, with the support of MNR aviation services, wrapped up this case in 2013 in one fell swoop. The night hunters were arrested and officers seized, amongst other items, a freshly poached deer (still warm), high powered

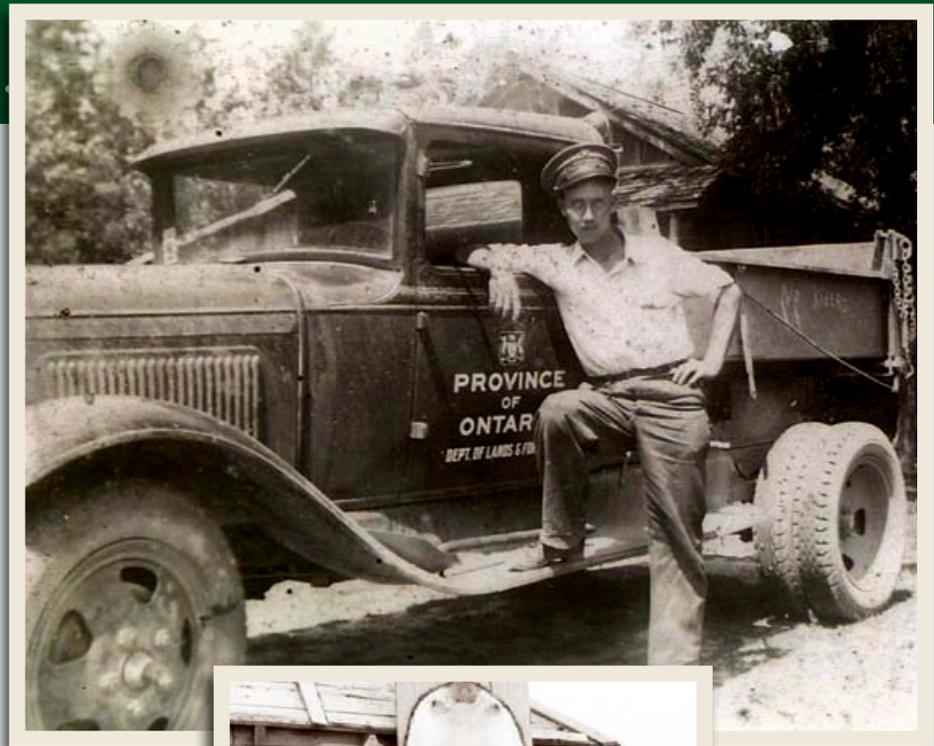
rifles with mounted spotlights, a side-by-side off-road vehicle and an Argo, tracked amphibious, off-road vehicle. These guys were no amateur poachers, as the Argo was completely outfitted with a homemade turret attached to the gunner, mounted steps, spotlights, heated handlebars, a gun scabbard and a hardwired signalling light. This allowed the gunner on top to communicate with the driver if he spotted game. Ten thousand dollars in fines, forfeited equipment and lengthy hunting suspensions made it another successful pinch for Project Owl.

This is just one example of the many enforcement efforts put forward every day by Ontario’s MNR Enforcement Branch and its hardworking and highly skilled COs, in an effort to protect Ontario’s natural resources. Incredibly, 2017 marks the 125th year anniversary of Ontario’s game wardens (COs) holding the thin green line.

It’s not an easy job, given the physical

dynamics and demographics of Ontario alone. The province is over 1,075,000 square kilometers in size, 4 times larger than the United Kingdom, and almost twice the size of Texas. More than 10% of Ontario's mass is freshwater, being home to over 250,000 lakes, 100,000 km of rivers and 4 out of 5 of the great lakes. Fish and wildlife varies greatly, from Ontario's southern sub-tropical, to its northern, sub-arctic climates. It includes 483 species of birds, 154 species of fish, 50 species of reptiles and amphibians and 81 species of mammals. Ontario is well known for its incredible hunting and fishing, with popular big game including moose, white-tailed deer, elk and black bear. Despite Ontario's immense size and natural resources, it was realized early the fish and wildlife would succumb to exploitation without formal protections.

Colonization, access, and technological advances (such as vehicles) brought with them unprecedented pressures on fish and wildlife. The result was the reduction and disappearance of some species, as there were no laws or individuals to protect them. In 1892, the Ontario Game and Fish Commission Report was issued. It contained a damning statement of conditions and a list of recommendations to prevent resource abuses and protect Ontario's natural resources through, amongst other things, effective enforcement. As a result, Ontario hired its first game wardens, four in total. They were tasked to enforce game and fish laws for a salary of 10 dollars per month. In addition, 392 deputy game wardens were appointed, receiving half of any fines secured as payment. Ontario's old-time game wardens didn't receive uniforms until 1930, or any formal training until 1946. A pair of snowshoes, a ticket book and a love of the bush was all that kept them fueled in the early days. While



the fuel source hasn't changed, the evolution of natural resource enforcement in Ontario has been significant.

Ontario's MNRF Enforcement Branch and its officers operate as an independent, modern day law enforcement agency, tasked with protecting everything from rattlesnakes in the south, to the polar bears in the north. The MNRF and the role of a conservation officer in Ontario has come a long way from the early 1900's, continually evolving to meet modern standards and demands. All recruits are now trained at Ontario Police College alongside every policing agency in Ontario. Standards for recruitment, physical and psychological testing, firearms training, defensive tactics, radio communications, enforce-

ment database entry, and other facets all equal or exceed the standards of Canada's major policing agencies. Today's Enforcement Branch is composed of roughly 280 staff in total, the majority of which, approximately 180, are the recognized

face and uniform of the MNRF itself. They are the badges and boots on the ground, front line field officers answering the call in districts and marine units across the province. In addition, the branch has several investigative and support services units. This includes six dedicated canine units, assisting field officers province-wide in crime scene evidence collection, detection of hidden fish and wildlife and tracking. Other support units include a top-notch training unit and a special investigation services unit providing intelligence analysts, investigation specialists and undercover operators and operations. Staff are supported and monitored by



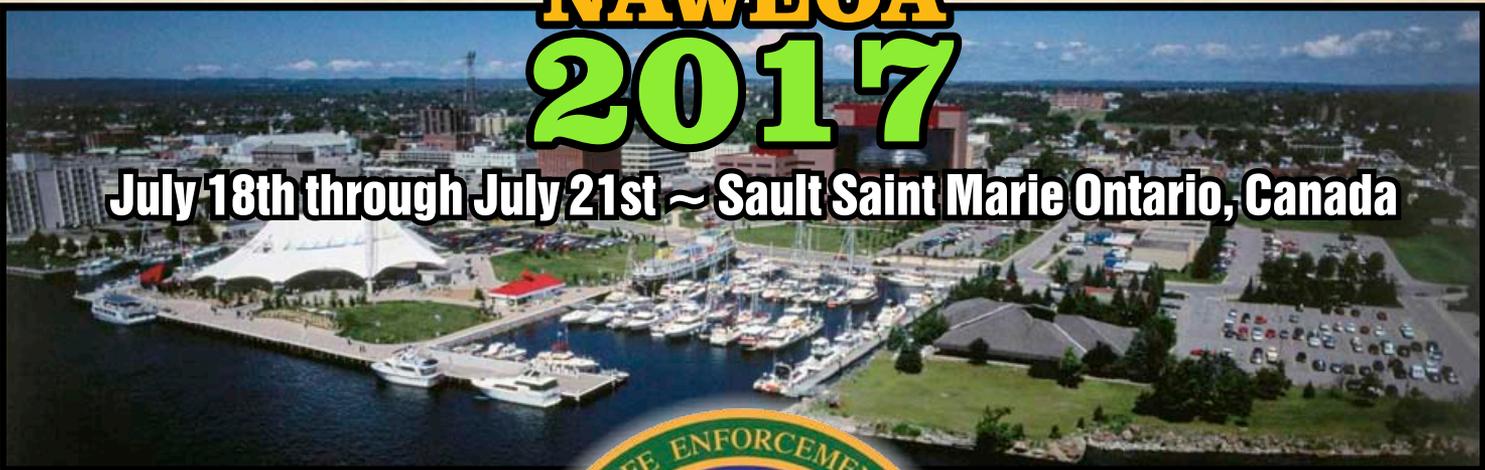
the branch's own Provincial Communication Unit (PCU) for 24-hour call-taking, information assistance and safety; incredibly the PCU has logged and dispatched more than 40,000 tips from the public to date. Front line managers and sergeants, administrative assistants, fleet management and legislative specialists make up the balance of staff who work behind the scenes to keep the field on their feet.

The present job of Ontario's men and women in green is as diverse as the environment they are tasked with protecting. The responsibilities of front line officers are complex and demanding,



requiring strong, independent and well-rounded individuals. Officers enforce a variety of federal and provincial legislation, policing the wide range of natural resource-based activities occurring in Ontario throughout the year. On any given day, this could include

enforcing legislation related to hunting, fishing, trapping, endangered species, invasive species, forest fires, migratory birds, public lands, lakes and rivers, provincial parks, commercial aggregates, petroleum, forestry and commercial fisheries. This list merely scratches the surface of the job description. On top of protecting the integrity of all things



NAWEOA 2017

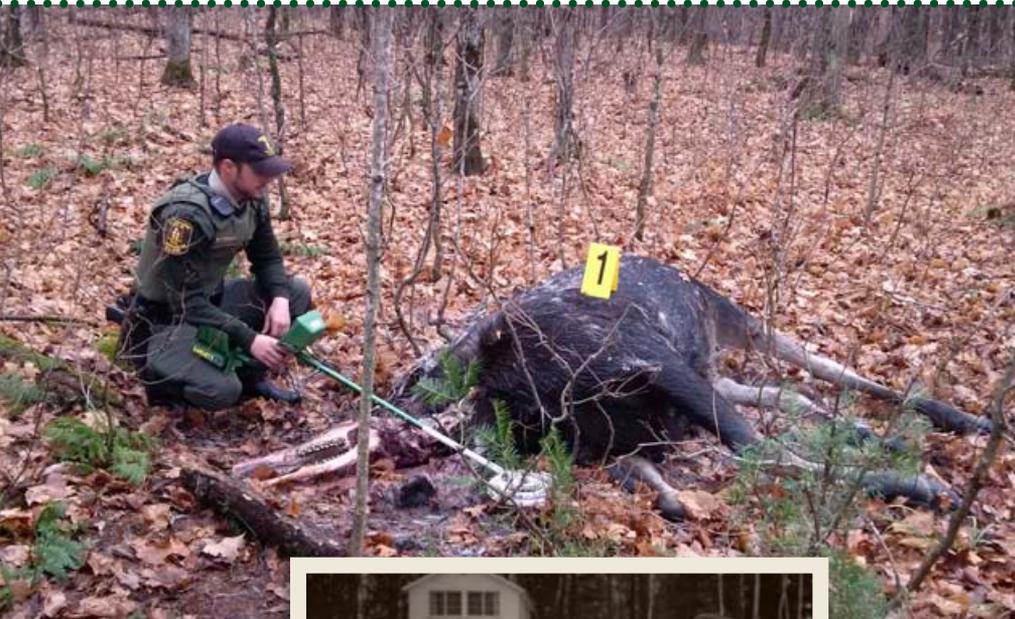
July 18th through July 21st ~ Sault Saint Marie Ontario, Canada

SAULT STE MARIE, Ontario, Canada is the host city for the North American Wildlife Enforcement Officers Association (NAWEOA) Annual Conference in 2017. NAWEOA will be taking its 2017 Annual Conference to the Quattro Hotel and Conference Center, July 18th through July 21st, with opening ceremonies on Tuesday, July 18th. The NAWEOA Board, along with the Ontario Conservation Officers Association and the Ministry of



Natural Resources, will work together to once again bring an exciting, training oriented, and family friendly conference to its members. The Quattro Hotel staff are assisting with coordination of a productive and enjoyable conference. Officers and their families will be presented excellent training, networking opportunities, and a great time enjoying what Sault Ste Marie has to offer.

<https://naweo.org/Conf/>



natural, they are tasked with ensuring public safety, enforcing everything from the Criminal Code of Canada, to liquor regulations, off-road vehicles, snowmobile and boating safety legislation.

Like many game warden agencies, there are no 'typical days' for the officers. A CO in the far north could be on remote patrol by float plane, staying in patrol cabins and checking remote outpost camps. Simultaneously, an officer in the south is inspecting the commercial fish markets in downtown Toronto. Priorities for the officers are planned and change almost daily with new seasons and pressures. In addition, officers regularly take part in public education and outreach at sportsman's



shows, schools, hunter education courses and more. Ontario's CO's use all modern law enforcement tools available to secure convictions in court, right

down to detailed crime scene processing. This work is evident from their extremely high conviction rates. This includes tools such as firearm and tool-mark forensic analysis, DNA analysis and profiling, K9 for crime scene evidence recovery and reconstruction, wildlife decoys of all varieties and more. The

CO in uniform is responsible for doing everything from the field to the courtroom, and every administrative task in between. From making sure all their equipment is mechanically fit, to writing news releases for local media.

Fortunately,

Milestones of Natural Resources Enforcement in Ontario

- 1892:** Ontario hires 5 game wardens, a chief warden and 392 deputy game wardens
- 1903:** The sale of game fish is prohibited, a radical move that saves bass and muskellunge for sport fishing
- 1920:** 60 overseers working under the Ontario Department of Game and Fisheries
- 1930:** First uniforms for game wardens issued
- 1947:** 177 game wardens working under the new Division of Fish and Wildlife
- 1948:** Name change from game warden/overseers to conservation officer
- 1980:** First female conservation officer appointed
- 1986:** Special Investigation Unit formally established
- 1990:** Canine Services Unit formally established with the first dog based in Sudbury
- 1991:** DNA fingerprinting first accepted by the courts for the first time in a poaching trial
- 2006:** MNR Enforcement Branch expanded to include all field operations
- 2017:** 125th year anniversary of natural resources enforcement in Ontario
Source: "Game Wardens - Men and Women in Conservation" by Joe Fisher



the equipment and technology in Ontario has evolved to keep pace with the demands of the job. Overall, officers are outfitted with high quality, professional equipment to get the job done. Modern snowmobiles, ATVs, high-visibility enforcement vehicles with mobile offices, and state-of-the-art vessels are standard operating equipment, as they should be. Proudly, the MNR Enforcement Branch is home to the largest fleet of freshwater vessels of any agency in Ontario, required to adequately cover everything from smallest duck ponds to the great lakes border waters. In addition, officers are supported by our very own MNR Forest Fire and Avia-



enforcement. Other equipment includes remote monitoring systems and an impressive array of electronic wildlife decoys, used by district officers and decoy task teams, covering everything from surrogate moose and turkeys to turtles and fish.



tion Services, having an impressive fleet of EC130 and A-Star helicopters and Turbo beaver float planes for aerial

While well trained and equipped, working as an Ontario CO today comes with many unique challenges. Divided

evenly, there's approximately one officer for every 6,000 square kilometers and 75,000 people in Ontario. To efficiently get the job done, officers regularly work alone in remote areas, having little or no backup. They commonly operate complex equipment in all weather conditions, while frequently dealing with armed clientele and suspects. Ontario is the most multi-cultural province in the country, with one in four residents originating from outside Canada, speaking more than 100 different languages and dialects. COs frequently work nights and weekends, well outside of society's 9-5 working schedule, which can be challenging for personal lives. In addition, politics and evolving case laws make adjusting to change in a CO's world a constant. Combine the above with the daily scrutiny modern day law enforcement is faced with, and it's not a career or lifestyle for the faint of heart. The job is mentally and physically demanding, with high risk and high reward; and most Ontario CO's wouldn't have it any other way.

Many things have changed since 1892, some for the worse, but most for the better. Perhaps most remarkable however, is what has remained the same. Just like the game wardens of years past, today's COs are driven by a passion for the resource, dedicating themselves to the work that must be done. The passion and hard work of the COs, combined with support of the public, makes Ontario's MNRF Enforcement Branch one of the best agencies in North America.

As such, the 125th year anniversary of natural resources enforcement in Ontario is a significant milestone, and



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one to be celebrated. Since 1892, Ontarians have laid their trust in the MNRF and a select few men and women to step up and deliver efficient and professional enforcement services to keep safe their people and the natural resources they love. The MNRF enforcement program and its COs will continue to honour that mission, maintaining a watchful eye from the land, the water, and occasionally the sky. 🐾

*Todd Steinberg,
Ontario Conservation
Officers Association*

The Ontario Conservation Officers Association (OCA)



In 1979, Ontario COs realized a need for a fraternal organization to represent the unique world of Ontario's field officers. The

association was developed and is dedicated to continued excellence within the CO profession, fostering fellowship amongst officers and promoting mutual interests to ensure maximum protection of Ontario's natural resources. The group, composed of nearly all active COs and many retired, works to:

- Maintain recognition of COs by their employer and the public
- Promote and encourage high standards and professionalism amongst officers
- Support and promote education with regards to Ontario's natural resources
- Promote and encourage officer safety and provide support and assistance to members in need
- Promote awareness and understanding of natural resources enforcement

The OCOA will be supporting NAWEOA this summer at the 2017 annual conference in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, having the OCOA summer convention in conjunction. You can follow the association online through their webpage (www.oco.ca) or on Facebook.

WILD CONCOCTIONS



DUTCH OVEN BAKED BEANS

By Lew Huddleston

RECIPE

- 1 (one) 12 inch deep Dutch oven.
- 3 (three) 3 pound 5 ounce cans of Van Kamp's pork and beans
- 2 pounds bacon. (Thick Sliced)
Cut into one inch pieces.
- 1(one) large onion, chopped
- 2(two) medium red peppers, chopped
- Several shakes of granulated garlic.
- 1 ½ cups brown sugar
- 1 ½ cups Worcestershire sauce.

I always try to give credit to the person I get a recipe from. As for the baked bean recipe I have to give credit to JR Henderson. JR Henderson and his wife Susan are owners of All Things Automotive and Diesel Service in Idaho Falls. We were having a neighborhood BBQ and JR was in the backyard stirring a Dutch of beans. When we were enjoying the evening meal I really liked the baked beans and asked JR for his recipe. I did modify it a little bit. I really like a lot of bacon in baked beans so I start with more bacon than JR uses.

First thing to do is cook the bacon. When the bacon is done cooking I will use a spoon or a turkey baster and get out some of the grease. Try to leave some grease in the Dutch to provide additional flavor.

Next add the peppers and onions, cook them down using the liquid to make sure the bacon drippings stuck on the bottom of the Dutch are liquefied. (I have to admit, to get the pictures of the Dutch of beans for the article I cooked the bacon, peppers and onions on the stove inside. The March weather this spring in Eastern Idaho was just a little chilly.)

Next add the pork and beans, brown sugar, granulated garlic, and Worcestershire sauce. Be sure to mix thoroughly. Set the Dutch with approximately 10 briquettes on bottom and about 16 or so on top. (Remember this is a deep Dutch so you can add a couple extra briquettes, especially on top) Cook for about an hour.

After about an hour the beans will have cooked but they still have too much liquid for me, so what I do is cook off some of the liquid. It is easiest if you have a propane cooker with a stand to use. The reason is to cook off some of the liquid off you will need to stay by the beans stirring them making sure they do not scorch. Bring the beans to a slow boil with the liquid bubbling, cook/stir for about 1/2 hour or until you reach your desired consistency. You can cook off the extra liquid with briquettes but it is easier if you have a cooker.

Enjoy.

NOTE: In the spirit of continuing to modify different recipes, a friend of mine, after reading the article on cooking a prime rib in a Dutch suggested using some rosemary. So the last time I cooked a prime I took a several sprigs of rosemary, removed the leaves and chopped them into small pieces. I then added the rosemary to the outer paste of olive oil and garlic pepper. I have to say, I really enjoyed the aroma the cooking rosemary gave off as the prime cooked. I also could taste just a hint of the rosemary in the meat. 🐾