



July 8, 2024

Public Input Coordinator
MNR Fish and Wildlife Policy Branch – Wildlife Section
300 Water Street
5th Floor, North Tower
Peterborough, ON K9J 3C7
Email: wildlifepolicy@ontario.ca

Dear Public Input Coordinator,

Re: *ERO 019-8071 Amendments to Ontario Regulation 667/98 (Trapping) made under Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act, 1997, to update technical specifications of relaxing cable restraints used for trapping*

Beef Farmers of Ontario (BFO) appreciates the opportunity to comment on *ERO 019-8071 Amendments to Ontario Regulation 667/98 (Trapping) made under Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act, 1997, to update technical specifications of relaxing cable restraints used for trapping*. BFO represents the 19,000 beef farmers in Ontario by advocating in the areas of sustainability, animal health and care, environment, food safety, and domestic and export market development.

BFO is pleased to support the proposed changes that would increase the breakaway device rating from 122.5kg or less to 158.8kg or less and decrease the minimum cable loop diameter from 8.9cm to 6.4cm. The stated purpose of these proposed changes is to align the regulations with research findings on recommended breakaway device ratings that are suitable for coyotes while maintaining the design function to allow non-target species, such as livestock, to break the device and escape unharmed. Relaxed cable restraints (RCR) are an important tool that farmers and trappers can utilize to help mitigate conflicts between livestock and wildlife predators.

Approximately 68 per cent of wildlife habitat capacity within agricultural lands in Canada is supported by land managed by beef producers, especially agricultural grasslands. Beef farmers are proud of the role they play in providing and maintaining habitat for wildlife on their farms, and the continued presence of wildlife and various species at risk on Ontario beef farms is a testament to the preservation of these habitats.

With that said, conflicts with wildlife, particularly coyotes, continue to present issues for beef farmers and other livestock farmers across the province. In the 2023 government fiscal year, approximately 81.5 per cent of Ontario Wildlife Damage Compensation Fund approved predation claims were due to coyotes and wolves, resulting in close to \$650,000 in compensation payments to cattle producers alone. However, the extent of the predation conflicts is likely greater than current reports would indicate, given compensation numbers do not reflect ineligible claims or unreported incidences. The bottom line is that predation events caused primarily by coyotes create significant costs for farmers and the broader Ontario economy. Maintaining and improving this live capture trapping option is important to farmers and how they can manage predation issues.

We thank the Ministry for the opportunity provide our comments and for its efforts to improve the effectiveness of RCRs.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Richard D. Horne". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "R" and "H".

Richard Horne
Executive Director