



PEACEFUL  
PARKS  
COALITION

**For Immediate Release - June 17, 2004**

***Slaughter at Presqu'ile Complete  
Liberals Move Onto Kingston Islands***

Ontario Parks surpassed their quota of 6000 dead Double-crested Cormorants last week at Presqu'ile Provincial Park near Trenton, Ontario. The final tally of dead birds is 6030. But even before the birds could be laid to rest, the Liberal government hosted a meeting last Friday, June 11 with the New York State Fish and Wildlife Service to explore the possibility of killing cormorants on islands near Kingston, Ontario.

The destruction of cormorants at Presqu'ile is just the beginning. "We believe the McGuinty government and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will collaborate a massive attack on cormorants across the Great Lakes region in an attempt to bolster an over exploited recreational sport fishery," says AnnaMaria Valastro of the Peaceful Parks Coalition. Double-crested Cormorants are a top fish predator of the aquatic system.

Cormorants are migratory birds. They winter in the southern states but nest in Ontario. To efficiently reduce their population, cormorants need to be killed during their nesting season because they are most vulnerable at this time. This means killing the bulk of the birds in Ontario.

Here is how we believe the destruction of cormorants will unfold across the Great Lakes region:

Shooting will continue at Presqu'ile for four years. This year was the first of a four year program.

By this time next year, the McGuinty government will have finalized and posted for public comment a proposal to kill cormorants in the eastern basin of Lake Ontario. This is the area of most interest to New York State.

By this time next year, the McGuinty government will have announced an extension to their current oiling program on Lake Huron, with the option of shooting the birds to rapidly increase fish stocks.

By this time next year, the McGuinty government will propose shooting cormorants at another provincial park, East Sister Island, on Lake Erie. Ontario Parks is currently reviewing the park management plan.

This is in addition to plans in the United States to also kill cormorants. To rapidly reduce the population across the region, the killing needs to be swift and everywhere.

"The very same people that have mismanaged the fisheries in the first place are now telling us they need to kill tens of thousands of birds to bolster an over exploited recreational fishery. This is nothing short of a total attack on a native species, and represents one of the worst examples of wildlife management," says Valastro.

press release

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**Note to the Editor:**

Four leading U.S. national and state animal protection and conservation organizations and several bird enthusiasts filed a lawsuit in February 2004 in U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York, challenging the U.S. government's plan to kill tens of thousands of double-crested cormorants—a migratory bird species protected by federal law and international treaty.

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Photos are available to the media at <http://www.pronature.on.ca/cormorantpictures.html> compliments of The ProNature Network

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