



PEACEFUL
PARKS
COALITION

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Ontario Hunters with Dogs Will Be Charged

Tuesday December 19, 2006: Sport hunting on private property clearly marked “no trespassing” or “no hunting” is illegal, and this also applies to hunting dogs according to the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources.

Beginning next year, conservation officers will begin reminding hunters that as soon as their dog enters property where hunting is not allowed it becomes an “illegal hunt”, and they could be charged under section 10 (1) c) of the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act which states, “ a person shall not engage in hunting or fishing in contravention of the Trespass to Property Act.”

Every year conservation officers are inundated with complaints about hunting dogs going astray. Instead of patrolling the actual hunt, enforcement officers spend the bulk of their time acting as interveners between non-hunters and hunters.

“To assist conservation officers in laying a trespassing charge against a hunter hunting with dogs, a property owner should have their property marked as a “no hunting / trespassing” zone. They need to catch the dog, report it to the ministry of natural resources, photograph the dog and its collar with the owner’s contact information, and release the dog only to an enforcement officer,” says AnnaMaria Valastro of the Peaceful Parks Coalition.

“We hope this will be the beginning of the end to hunting dogs,” says Gus Zylstra, a property owner in the Bancroft district. “Not only is it an insult to our basic rights to enjoy our own property and the animals on it, it is cruel to the deer and especially cruel to the dogs.”

Hunting dogs are traditionally starved prior to the hunting season. Their ribs protrude through their skin, often have scars and display signs of neglect and trauma. It’s sport hunting’s dirty secret and enforcement officers and local pounds turn a blind eye.

Photographing the dog is part of gathering evidence for a trespassing charge most likely to be presented in court, but it is also a testimonial to the sad condition of the animal.

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