



# MLOA CONVENTION and AGM 2015 – Dec. 6-8, 2015

## Canad Inns Polo Park, Winnipeg

### Report to MLOA members

#### Table of Contents

Resolutions	p. 2
Board elections	p. 2
Fish & Wildlife Day Conservation Panel	p. 3
New AIS regulations	p. 3
Waterfowl Outfitting Policy	p. 3
Keeping Master Angler fish	p. 4
Caribou	p. 4
Season dates	p. 5
Lake Winnipeg/Red River walleye review	p. 5
Bear bait sites on Crown land	p. 5
Aerated lakes	p. 6
Industry Day Conservation Panel	p. 6
Provincial Parks commercial leases	p. 6
E-licensing	p. 6
Drinking Water Systems	p. 7
Guides vs Outfitters	p. 7
Septic, fuel storage and waste disposal	p. 8
Accommodating clients in an outfitter's home	p. 8
Short-term licenses	p. 9
LAC	p. 9
Status of the anti-hunting lobby in Manitoba	p. 9
All-Party Candidate's Debate	p. 10
Anti-hunting question	p. 10
Exclusive rights question	p. 10
Vendor commissions question	p. 10
TLE question	p. 11
Park pass question	p. 11
Night hunting question	p. 11
Why should we vote for you question	p. 12
Content Marketing Media Panel	p. 12
Travel Manitoba: Marketing hunt/fish in 2016	p. 13
Manitoba Big Game Crisis Committee Update	p. 14
Banquet and Trade Show	p. 14
Convention Attendance 2015	p. 15

## Resolutions

As part of our formal AGM process, one resolution was introduced by membership, debated, and then voted on by members in attendance. The resolution passed, and therefore becomes official MLOA policy. The MLOA will lobby for this change in the coming year.

**Resolution 1: Sponsored by: Shaun Jackson, Jackson's Lodge & Outposts**

**Seconded by: James Hnatishin, Wallace Lake Lodge & Outposts**

**Whereas:**

- With opening season of general moose presently on a Monday, hunters that book the first week are only hunting five days.
- Aircraft are limited and must use both Saturday and Sunday as change-over days.
- If future general moose seasons began on a Sunday, outfitters could offer a six-day hunt during the first week with change-over days on Saturday and Sunday.

**Therefore, be it resolved that: The MLOA lobby the province for the following change: That future general moose seasons begin on a Sunday rather than a Monday.**

**Background:** This change would affect all groups of hunters, including residents. In fact, it is primarily targeted at hunting parties of resident hunters who book unguided, week-long trips at outpost camps. Our members have found that most hunters book their holiday time away from work in week-long, Monday-to-Friday blocks, rather than, say, mid-week to mid-week, or Monday to the following Tuesday or Wednesday. What this means is generally they will begin and end their trips on a weekend. Therefore most outfitters will offer their outpost camps during moose season on a Saturday-to-Saturday or Sunday-to-Sunday basis. This means that hunting parties often prefer to book the second or third weeks of moose season because they can begin hunting the day they arrive. The first week of the season is more difficult to book because although the group arrives on Saturday or Sunday, they cannot hunt until Monday, and therefore lose hunting time. Moose season is already very short so outfitters must "make hay while the sun shines" and maximize their bookings during this time, but having a week that is undesirable to many groups because they lose a day of hunting makes it difficult. If the season were to begin on a Sunday instead, outfitters would not encounter the problem of groups not wanting to book the first week and could more easily fill up their camps without having to discount the first week or worse yet, leave it empty because everyone wants the later weeks.

## Board elections

Three board positions were available this year as a result of terms coming to an end. MLOA board terms last three years. All three directors whose terms were up indicated they wanted to run again, and no contenders were nominated or stepped forward either before or at the meeting, so all three were acclaimed. The following directors were re-elected:

**Director at large:** Peter Slobodzian      **Director (Interlake):** Helgi Einarsson

**Director (South):** Ryan Suffron

The MLOA executive remains unchanged for 2016:

**President:** Paul Conchatre      **Vice-president:** Helgi Einarsson

**Secretary:** Ann Louise Budd      **Treasurer:** Ron Dare

## Panels and Sessions

Several panel discussions and presentations took place over the course of our convention. Contact information for any and all of the panelists is available through the MLOA office. Here is a summary of the sessions and discussions that took place and what came out of them:

### Fish & Wildlife Day Conservation Panel

Panelists: Candace Parks, MCWS                      Brian Parker, MCWS                      Frank Baldwin, MCWS  
                    Brian Hagglund, MCWS                      Ken Rebizant, MCWS

This panel featured representatives of Manitoba Conservation and Water Stewardship's wildlife and fisheries branch, answering questions about fish and wildlife issues.

**AIS:** Candace Parks opened the panel by giving a brief presentation on the new Aquatic Invasive Species regulation and what it means to lodge operators and outfitters. It is essentially illegal now in Manitoba to transport water, mud, aquatic plants and other such debris from one body of water to another. The rules do not apply if you are merely pulling a boat or dock out of the water to be placed in the same body of water, with no intention of transporting it elsewhere (see AIS info sheet for more details of new requirements). Ms. Parks noted float planes are an important vector for transmission of zebra mussels, and that those that moor in control zones must use anti-fouling paint on pontoons, and that it must be maintained in good condition (repaint scratched areas, etc). She said this paint is available through marine dealers but was not aware of its cost or particular approved brands.



Ms. Parks noted Cedar Lake now has zebra mussels, and that is upstream from Lake Winnipeg, meaning they were transported there by humans. Zebra mussels do not naturally migrate upstream. She noted that veligers (fledgling mussels) can survive out of the water for remarkably long periods of time.

**Waterfowl outfitting policy:** Frank Baldwin reported that the branch is still working on its draft waterfowl outfitting policy. The policy is being developed due to increasing conflict on the landscape and competition for land access, especially in a few highly concentrated areas of Manitoba, such GHAs 25B and 22. They are hoping to help bring stability to the waterfowl outfitting industry with this new policy. A moratorium on new waterfowl outfitting licenses has been in place since early 2015, and will remain in place until the policy is developed.

The first step in developing the policy was a survey that went out to all waterfowl outfitters, to determine more information about where they operate, at what times of year, how many clients they have, etc. The survey was voluntary but the results were needed to help inform the policy. So far the response rate has been just over 50%, which Mr. Baldwin says is not enough to properly inform the policy, hence the delay in developing the policy. He said the branch will make another effort to contact outfitters to encourage non-respondents to answer the survey. They would like an 80% response rate to draft the policy and if this cannot be achieved in the short-term they may be looking at implementing interim measures based on the information they do have. Mr. Baldwin is hoping to have the policy completed by Fall 2016.

Some of the things that may be contained in the new policy include the possibility of outfitter declaration forms for waterfowl outfitters (big game already has this), and the possibility of caps on the number of outfitters who can operate

in any GHA, and the number of GHAs outfitters can operate in. Another possibility is classes of licenses for waterfowl outfitters. For example, a “Class A” license would allow 1-20 clients; a “Class B” license would allow 40-100 clients, and so on.

It’s important to note existing outfitters’ operations would be “grandfathered” and that any changes, such as achieving a cap on the number of outfitters in any GHA, would be achieved through natural attrition as people retire or leave the industry. Any new restrictions would only be applied to newly minted outfitters who receive their license after the policy is put in place.

There was some discussion of illegal waterfowl outfitting (and more the following day). Illegal outfitting is defined as providing more than one of guiding services, accommodations or equipment without a Resource Tourism Operators license. One member suggested the resident community welcomes illegal outfitting and that it’s seen as an important part of the rural economy. Dan McMahon (MNROA) said officers do investigate claims of illegal outfitting (and are currently doing so) but that it is very difficult to prove and enforce.

**Master Anglers:** The MLOA proposed to discuss whether Manitoba should continue allowing anglers to keep Master Angler sized fish. Please note the MLOA was not advocating for or against this position, but simply wanted to have the discussion with members, in light of a recent regulation change that now allows anglers to keep Master Angler walleye on a Manitoba lake at which they were previously barred from doing so. The MLOA takes no position on keeping Master Anglers.

Brian Parker said there is no doubt biologically that larger fish produce more eggs and larger eggs, and therefore are better breeders, so there is a benefit to large fish being released. However, he noted the Master Angler threshold does not represent any kind of biological threshold and that the trophy size is arbitrary. He also noted big fish such as Master Anglers do not suffer more or less mortality when they are caught than smaller fish do. That is, the chances of a fish dying when you catch it, even if it’s released, are about the same whether the fish is large or small.

Trevor Gates (Gates Taxidermy) said nowadays about 75% of the fish he does are replicas, and that most of the skin mounts (ie real fish) are for kids. David Baxter (Telesky Taxidermy) said he still does more skin mounts than replicas, but that he doesn’t do many of either any more.

One member noted that some guests like replicas, but others want to keep big fish. There is still a desire to keep big fish and take them home. Another member suggested kids should certainly still be allowed to keep Masters. Another member noted commercial fishing kills far more large fish than keeping Master Anglers does. Brian Parker suggested making individual proposals to fisheries managers and requesting high quality management status for your particular body of water is the best option for lodge operators and outfitters who want to consider keeper-size restrictions for conservation reasons.



**Caribou:** Ken Rebizant said the Qamanirjuaq herd is down significantly in numbers, and has lost about half its population over the past 20 years. That being said, it’s probably the herd that has experienced the least significant decline of any herd in Canada. The Beverly herd which goes into Saskatchewan, for example, is in worse shape.

Is it a concern? Yes, but we are unsure at this point how much of one, Mr. Rebizant said. Is it a long-term cycle? Is it due to climate change? We are unsure at this point. He said a survey is scheduled for 2018, and once the results of that survey are known, that's when decisions will be made about changes to caribou licenses, if any. Brian Hagglund noted there is an entrenched commercial caribou hunt in Nunavut that allows Inuit to harvest and sell caribou to other Inuit communities, and that is occurring, with much of the caribou meat destined for Baffin Island. He said Manitoba will not consider reducing caribou hunting licenses so long as that hunt is occurring.

Mr. Rebizant said a sustainable harvest of barren-ground caribou is estimated to be about 2-3% of the herd annually. It's unclear where we're at right now, partly because of poor record-keeping in Nunavut. Satellite-collared animals give us an idea of migration routes. Once a herd gets to critically low numbers, they actually stop migrating and stay put. So far this has not occurred. Mr. Hagglund suggested outfitters could contact Daryl Hedman (northern MB regional wildlife manager) to find out information about where collared animals are being tracked, assuming he gets this information from his colleagues in Nunavut.

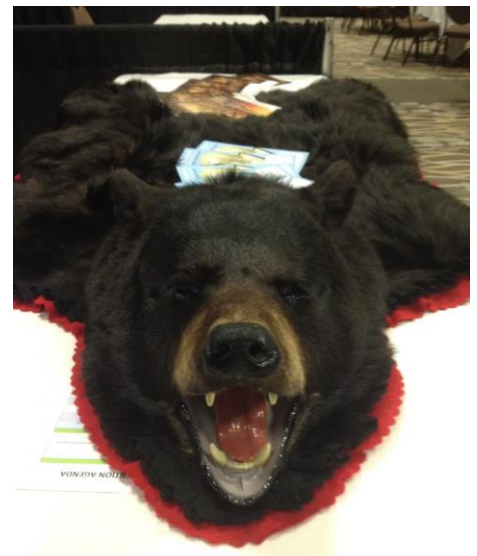
**Season dates:** Members were asked whether they would like to see any opening and closing dates of hunting and fishing seasons shifted for any reason, in light of the mistake in the printed hunting guide this year about the fall bear season dates. One member discussed the opening date of moose season being shifted from a Monday to a Sunday, which led to the resolution that passed at the AGM the next day.

Brian Hagglund said the branch is starting to move towards printing explanations of the season dates in the hunting guide, rather than printing actual dates, to avoid confusion and mistakes like the bear season one this year. For example, the guide might state that a season "begins on the last Monday in April and runs for 7 weeks." The idea of going with set dates (ie the same opening date every year) is widely disregarded among branch staff because hunters have said they like the idea of the season starting on a certain day of the week, such as a Monday. This depends on the season in question and does not apply to all seasons.

**Lake Winnipeg/Red River Walleye Review:** Brian Parker explained that fisheries staff have concerns about walleye mortality on Lake Winnipeg and in the lower Red River (it's the same population). About half the fish die in any given year and ideally they would like that number to be about 39-40% instead. They have therefore been conducting a review of mortality and harvest and have implemented a moratorium on new outfitting licenses for these areas until the review is complete. Although that review is nearly complete, we must now also wait for consultant Harold Westdal to conduct his own review, which was ordered by the minister after Seafood Watch recently reported that Manitoba's largest lakes were among the worst-managed fisheries in the world and recommended consumers not buy fish that is commercially caught from these lakes. That review is expected to be completed by September 2016, and Mr. Parker said he is hopeful it will consider recreational and outfitter tourism activities as well as commercial fishing.

One member noted illegal outfitting on Lake Winnipeg is a problem. Dan McMahon (MNROA) said this is on the radar of officers but that resources are always an issue when it comes to enforcement.

**Bear bait sites on Crown land:** Brian Hagglund noted there have been issues of bait sites being abandoned when an outfitting business is transferred. The new owner sets up his own sites and leaves the old ones in the bush, creating permanent litter. He said more and more pressure is being put on the government from the public to clean up these sites, as other users of Crown



land don't like encountering them. The branch is considering implementing a practice of writing into transfer agreements when an outfitting business is transferred that either the seller or buyer agrees to clean up bait sites that will no longer be used.

Mr. Hagglund said he is considering putting together a committee to review best practices in baiting and to consider issues such as this one on Crown land. One member suggested resident bait sites are largely the problem when it comes to litter and messy sites.

**Aerated lakes:** Brian Parker advised outfitters that they have a higher degree of legal responsibility when it comes to taking clients ice fishing on aerated lakes, where the aerators can often cause open water, even in the winter. Outfitters could be liable if their clients fall in, so he advised that outfitters exercise due caution when fishing these lakes.

## **Industry Day Conservation Panel**

Panelists:      Mike Gilbertson, MCWS (parks)                      Donna Smiley, MCWS (environment)  
                         Jim Duncan, MCWS (fish & wildlife)                      Kim Philip, MCWS (office of drinking water)  
                         Bill Galbraith, MCWS (fish & wildlife)                      Shari Gascoigne, MCWS (LAC)

**Provincial Parks commercial leases:** Mike Gilbertson said changes to commercial leases in parks will not be the same as the changes that were recently implemented for cottages. Cottage rates are based on a combination of service fees and Crown land rents, and increased rates are being phased in. This will not be the case for commercial properties, which over the years have been negotiated individually. No increases have been implemented yet but some may be coming.

The new system has yet to be determined yet but the process of deciding that will likely begin in 2016. Mr. Gilbertson said parks branch will involve MLOA in this process and will also likely visit with commercial property owners in the parks prior to making a decision on how to proceed.

**E-licensing:** Jim Duncan said online licensing is probably 18 months away. The branch received feedback from the MLOA and from vendors about this, and those comments are being actively considering, including the MLOA's recommendation to increase vendor commissions or risk losing vendors who do not want to migrate to the new system. He said they have also taken note of the need for a tag to be placed on harvested meat as well as considering the issue of no internet, or poor or unreliable internet, in certain areas of the province.

Mr. Duncan said the branch has looked at electronic licensing systems in other jurisdictions and they vary widely. Manitoba has not yet decided what type of system to adopt, but has put together a list of parameters for what it would like the system to be able to do, which went into a Request for Proposals to potential providers of this new system.

One member noted that he services camps in Ontario and lots of clients show up with their licenses already printed. Another member said he has experience with Saskatchewan's e-licensing system and that it does have the potential to



hurt vendors. There were computer equipment and internet service requirements and his initial cost to migrate to SK's new system was about \$1,000. He said it took a long time to log the information into the system, although it stores client information for returning clients in subsequent years. "I will not sell these licenses if it costs me money," he warned of Manitoba's new system.

Mr. Duncan said he is aware vendors would like to maintain a paper system but cautioned there are very few printers in Canada who actually manufacture that type of product anymore and that this will have to be explored. One member asked how allocated big game licenses will work, and Mr. Duncan replied that the branch has included in its parameters that the system must be flexible enough to deal with different types of licenses like that. Another member noted he was recently in South Dakota and there you don't even need an actual license, just an identification number and a bar code that can be scanned on your smartphone. (In a moment of resigned levity, Dan McMahon (MNROA) held up his flip phone and suggested it might be a while before conservation officers in Manitoba could take advantage of that type of system.) Another member suggested vendors should be given account numbers that clients could charge their licenses to if they print it at home, for those who include the license fee in package prices.

**Drinking water systems:** Kim Philip said most lodges would typically be considered a semi-public system (less than 15 service connections but more than one) and with that designation comes a requirement to regularly test drinking water. But her office recognizes that remoteness is an issue, and that getting water samples to a lab within 48 hours is often not feasible. Therefore the office has come up with a new designation called a "non-consumptive" system that allows you to avoid testing, with some catches. First, you must apply (see declaration form) and your application requires the sign-off from a health officer. Your taps must also be posted with signs advertising that the water is not to be consumed, and you must provide bottled or otherwise safe and tested drinking water. This system is new within the past year. Ms. Philip said her office still prefers if lodges have potable drinking water systems, but she recognizes that isn't always possible.

**Guides vs Outfitters:** The MLOA asked whether we believe licensed outfitters are losing business to people who have a guide's license but not an RTO. They say they do not offer accommodations or equipment for client use and therefore don't need an outfitting license. This could apply to waterfowl hunters or Canadian big game hunters. One member suggested there is lots of that out there, and suggested a public listing of licensed outfitters could help, since clients may not be aware their guide isn't a licensed outfitter.

Shari Gascoigne responded that she always advises complainants to contact conservation officers if they suspect illegal outfitting is occurring, but that technically someone who is offering guiding services only isn't breaking the law, since outfitting must also encompass either equipment or accommodations. As for the public registry, she suggested she would require a legal opinion as to whether Freedom of Information laws would prevent the government from publishing a list of license-holders. She said there would also be questions about who would pay to develop and maintain such a public registry. She suggested the Travel Manitoba listings serve that purpose in lieu, although it was noted to her that the Travel Manitoba listings are voluntary and therefore not exhaustive.



Dan McMahon (MNROA) said the clients aren't really in danger of being charged if they are hunting with an illegal outfitter, because they're not the ones breaking the law. He did suggest calling Revenue Canada if you suspect an illegal

outfitter is taking in undeclared revenue. One member suggested that maybe it's time we look at lobbying to change the regulations that allow guides to offer guiding services only without an outfitting license.

**Septic, fuel storage and waste disposal:** Donna Smiley was asked to comment on the documents given to members as part of their convention kits (see guidelines for lodges, outposts and tent camps) with respect to septic, wastewater, fuel storage and solid waste disposal. She said there is nothing new in the documents in terms of regulations that have changed, but that these guidelines are the result of an effort of environment branch working with MLOA the past couple of years to better present the existing regulations in a user-friendly format.

She said all waste disposal grounds (ie garbage pits) are technically supposed to require a permit but that practically speaking her branch deals with them on a site-specific case-by-case basis, and that they tend to leave the more isolated areas alone unless there is some kind of problem.

One member suggested some of the guidelines were pretty "far-fetched," for example that wastewater systems should be built to accommodate up to 25 gallons per day of use. Ms. Smiley replied that she is always looking for "real data" to help set the guidelines and that members should provide flow data to their local environment officers if they have it.

**Accommodating clients in an outfitter's home:** Shari Gascoigne was asked where in the regulations it is written that outfitters cannot accommodate clients within their own homes. Ms. Gascoigne responded that it is contained in the Resouce Tourism Operators Act, under the following sections:

#### **Classification of accommodation facilities**

**3 The following classes of accommodation facility are established:**

- (a) campground — an accommodation facility where tents, trailers or motorhomes are placed;**
- (b) lodge — an accommodation facility of a permanent or semi-permanent nature that accommodates nine or more persons;**
- (c) outcamp — an accommodation facility of a permanent or semi-permanent nature that accommodates fewer than nine persons;**
- (d) portable camp — a temporary or portable accommodation facility, such as a tent, trailer, motorhome or houseboat.**

#### **Permit to operate facility**

**5 No outfitter shall use or operate an accommodation facility or related facility except under the authority of a permit.**

#### **Permit to construct, establish or modify a facility**

**6 Except under the authority of a permit, no outfitter shall**

- (a) construct an accommodation facility or related facility;**
- (b) use any existing building or structure as an accommodation facility or related facility; or**
- (c) expand the capacity of, structurally alter or relocate an existing accommodation facility or related facility.**

That is, only those accommodations that fall under the categories as described in Sec. 3 are approved facilities, and private homes are not one of them.

The MLOA's Paul Turenne then read aloud a submission from a member who was not in attendance about why this member felt outfitters should be allowed to accommodate clients in their homes. Among the member's points were that Bed and Breakfast facilities and farm vacations may accommodate clients within their homes, so how are hunters different?; that decent accommodations such as hotels are difficult to find in rural Manitoba and that outfitters who only accommodate clients for a few weeks a year cannot with good business sense build a separate facility just for those few weeks; that staying with the outfitter can be part of the experience of camaraderie that clients enjoy; and that if decent and respectable accommodations are a concern then the market will take care of that on its own and MCWS should not be concerned about that.



Ms. Gascoigne replied that regardless of those points the RTO Act prevents it and the government staff must abide by the law as it is currently written. She said the MLOA and its members were involved in the writing of the RTO Act, which came out in 2002, and that presumably they provided input as to the accommodations portion. As for B&B's those are not approved facilities under the RTO Act either, she said, noting that means outfitters cannot run one for their clients or have their clients stay in one. Donna Smiley and Kim Philip said there is no reason from the perspective of their own branches that would prevent private homes from being used as accommodations, other than the RTO Act.

One member said we need to be very careful where we go with this discussion, as outfitters did indeed have a say in the original writing of the RTO Act and that the accommodations categories were decided for a reason. He explained that at the time outfitters felt it was important to protect their investments of lodges and other such facilities and deliberately wanted to set them apart from "backyard operators." He also noted that we had been talking a lot about illegal outfitting and that allowing outfitters to house clients in their homes would be a step backwards in the fight against illegal outfitting.

**Short-term licenses:** The MLOA asked whether the government is considering introducing short-term hunting or fishing licenses, such as one-day or three-day. Bill Galbraith responded that for fishing licenses it is not actively being considered but that it's not necessarily off the table. A reduced-rate bird license for foreign-resident big game hunters remains an MLOA priority since a resolution was passed on the topic at our AGM in 2012, and wildlife managers were reminded of this. Frank Baldwin said there are financial implications that must be considered and that similar licenses ought to be offered to all user groups, including resident hunters. We will continue to discuss this issue.

**LAC:** Shari Gascoigne reported to members that the LAC (Licensing Advisory Committee) is now mapping out where lodge facilities are located for forest fire fighting and resource management purposes. They will be looking to operators for longitude and latitude coordinates. This will be coming with next year's RTO renewals.



**Status of the Anti-Hunting Lobby in Manitoba:** Jim Duncan said the anti-hunting lobby is a consistent presence but "the best offence is a good defence" when it comes to having scientific facts to support hunting as a wildlife management tool. The bear tooth study that MLOA proposed resurrecting with the government has not proceeded because branch staff were unsure how much new information could be gleaned from it, considering how thorough the last study was and how consistent the numbers were throughout the course of that study. It was also a question of relative priority with branch resources.

Ken Rebizant said "trophy hunting," the spring bear hunt, and wolf hunting are all flash points for the anti-hunting movement when it comes to Manitoba. His opinion is that keeping these activities "under the radar" is probably beneficial. He noted there was a big effort to eliminate the spring bear hunt in Manitoba about 15 years ago but the current lobby is fairly quiet.

One member said his fear is that if the sleeping giant does awaken, we'd be behind the eight-ball and it would be too late to start up the bear tooth study if we felt it was necessary again. Mr. Rebizant responded that it wouldn't take much time to get it running again, even if it was just to reaffirm that the data set hasn't changed. Mr. Duncan said maybe the branch will resurrect the study one day, especially if they decide they don't need as much information.

Mr. Duncan also noted the branch has decided not to proceed with applying to Environment Canada for a dove season in Manitoba. The decision was to defer the proposal until after the spring election.

## All-Party Candidates Debate

Participants: Gord Mackintosh; NDP – MLA for St. John’s  
Shannon Martin; PC – MLA for Morris Jamal Abas; Liberal – Candidate for Interlake  
James Beddome; Green Party – Leader

The provincial candidates were each given two minutes to answer six questions, which they had been provided with ahead of time, followed by a seventh question which was simply, “Why should our members vote for your party?” Here are their responses:

**Question 1) You get an email from an angry constituent who says it’s despicable and shameful that the province allows “trophy-hunting” for bears and wolves in Manitoba, and demands an end to this “barbaric practice.” What is your response?**

Jamal Abas (Lib) said the most important thing is the sustainability of the resource, and noted he is a hunter himself. Shannon Martin (PC) said hunting is important to Manitoba’s economy and must be supported. James Beddome (Grn) said he wouldn’t answer constituents with a blanket response because each concern is unique, but in general he would reply that hunting is a form of management and that there is room for compromise with anti-hunters. Gord Mackintosh (NDP) said there is “an increasing urban mindset out there” that ignores the value of hunting and population management and that he supports hunting.

**Question 2) You are working with a Northern Manitoba First Nation on indigenous land use planning, and the band proposes that anyone, including outfitters and their clients, who wishes to hunt or fish within the First Nation’s traditional territory ought to have the express permission of the chief and council to do so. What is your response to this proposal?**

Shannon Martin (PC) said we have laws in Manitoba that must be respected but that he would probe the First Nation to find out what is at the root of their desire to have this implemented and could it be resolved through dialogue instead? James Beddome (Grn) said there must be compromise with First Nations. Everyone has rights, including indigenous people and outfitters. But is there a way to share the resource? He suggested outfitters should offer their ideas to First Nations and government. Gord Mackintosh (NDP) said reaching out to First Nations is good practice but at the end of the day Crown land is Crown land and everyone has access. Jamal Abas (Lib) said the land is everyone’s land and that a respectful compromise must be reached to share it.



**Question 3) Vendors of fishing and hunting licenses in Manitoba currently earn a commission of \$1 for every license they sell, regardless of the type. The same is true of park passes. Yet many vendors actually lose money selling licenses due to POS fees for credit cards. There is also a substantial amount of administration and effort required to order and remit licenses, which we feel is not adequately reflected in the current commissions. The MLOA has proposed a commission of 10% per license instead. Is your party willing to negotiate a better commission rate for vendors?**

James Beddome (Grn) said yes, his party is willing to negotiate a better rate. It seems “completely unfair” to vendors right now, he said. Gord Mackintosh (NDP) said the government must promote hunting and fishing, and that he believes there ought to be a new commission structure when e-licensing is introduced. Jamal Abas (Lib) said yes we should “fix the system” and support vendors. Shannon Martin (PC) said yes his party would be willing to renegotiate the commissions, and recognizes that businesses are tax collectors for government and ought to be valued.

**Question 4) There are many outstanding Treaty Land Entitlement claims across Manitoba, including some either at or near the site of lodges located on leased Crown land. These claims have stagnated for many years with no end in sight, and although this has not prevented our members from continuing to operate on those lands, this uncertainty significantly affects the ability of our business owners to attract buyers, if they are looking to sell. What would your party do to help resolve outstanding TLE claims one way or another, as soon as possible?**

Gord Mackintosh (NDP) said TLEs are an area of frustration for a lot of people. He said the new federal government has pledged to complete the TLE process within the next 10 years, so he’s hopeful things can get moving. Jamal Abas (Lib) said people running businesses should not have to worry about issues like this, and was also optimistic the new federal government will get things moving. Shannon Martin (PC) said business needs predictability and certainty and that moving TLEs forward could provide that. James Beddome (Grn) said recognizing why TLEs exist is important, because the Crown is still trying to fulfill a very old promise. He said this file definitely needs more action and that it could represent an opportunity for lodge owners to sell for fair market value.

**Question 5) Many of our members located within provincial parks have on-site restaurants and stores, and would love to accommodate customers whose one and only destination within the park is to patronize their business, without that customer having to pay extra for the visit. Under the current regulations, all park visitors (who are not currently exempt) must purchase a pass regardless of whether they intend to make use of any public park facilities. Would your party consider exemptions from park pass requirements for people whose sole purpose in visiting a provincial park is to patronize a private business, including stores, restaurants, lodges and resorts?**

Jamal Abas (Lib) said park pass exemptions are the fair thing to do. You don’t want an unlevel playing field so if some people are not using the park services why should they pay? Shannon Martin (PC) said park pass prices are not unreasonable and he doesn’t believe businesses are suffering because of the price. He said his party would not introduce new exemptions from park passes. James Beddome (Grn) said exemptions could make sense and maybe we could go even further and add additional exemptions to encourage people to visit parks. Gord Mackintosh (NDP) said businesses are important to parks but pointed out in national parks there are no exemptions for anyone. He said his government recently agreed to carve out a new exemption for wedding guests at the MLOA’s request and that they will continue to work with MLOA on future parks issues.

**Question 6) Would your party consider banning, or at least further restricting, the current practice of allowing indigenous hunters to discharge firearms after legal shooting light “where it is safe to do so?”**

Shannon Martin (PC) said treaty rights are enshrined in the constitution and the government can’t just impose its will on indigenous hunters. He noted Saskatchewan banned spotlighting by working in consultation with First Nations and respecting their rights. James Beddome (Grn) said he doesn’t believe this is provincial jurisdiction but that his party would be willing to work with First Nations to find out if they believe night hunting is ever safe. Gord Mackintosh (NDP) said unsafe night hunting is already illegal and that the Supreme Court has already ruled that some night hunting is ok. He said it’s therefore an enforcement issue. Jamal Abas (Lib) said we need more money for enforcement, and that safety is the biggest concern.

## Question 7) Why should we vote for your party in April?

James Beddome (Grn) said you should vote for his party because their candidates all love nature so there is a natural alliance with anglers and hunters. His party also doesn't want to run roughshod over anyone's rights. Gord Mackintosh (NDP) said you should vote for his party because they've "done some great things" with the industry over the past few years and there is good potential to continue that. Jamal Abas (Lib) said you should vote for his party because they do not believe in cutting budgets for fish and wildlife science. Shannon Martin (PC) said you should vote for his party because hunting and fishing do not get the respect they deserve from the current government and neither does the fish and wildlife branch.

## Content Marketing Media Panel

Panelists:      Steve McInnis – Adventures North      Tara Colpitts – Expedia  
                    Aaron Wiebe – Uncut Angling              Don Lamont – Hooked Media  
                    Rich Pope – Freelance videographer      Ryan Suffron – Travel Manitoba

Ryan Suffron said content marketing is different than traditional advertising in that it focuses on things like photos, video and editorial rather than brochures or ads. Steve McInnis said when shooting your own video, be conscious that not everyone is a video producer and that professionals shoot 10 times what they end up using and the rest ends up on the cutting room floor. Aaron Wiebe said social media gives you the opportunity to give your guests regular updates about your business but it could be as simple as what's happening on a daily basis, including what's currently interesting to your staff and customers and what they're up to. Don Lamont said if you're going to spend money in one place, spend it on designers to ensure you have a sharp logo and brand look. He advised members not to "cheap out" on that. Tara Colpitts said you have to know your audience. Think about who you are trying to reach and think past people who you have always had as guests. Make your content relevant and honest.

Rich Pope said make sure if you're going to do it yourself that you have the right equipment. Cell phone videos are not professional. Always use a tripod,



don't freehand. Lock shots in steady and shoot the same thing from different angles. It takes about one hour of footage to make a good quality one-minute video. Lighting is important too. Don't shoot into bright windows, for example. Shots should be at least 10-15 seconds long, don't always pan.

Mr. McInnis said you don't want to show stressed fish or dead fish. He added that lodges and outfitters are niche marketers and should not only know their niche but should consider the conversion rates of their various types of marketing. Mr. Lamont noted that operators need "good" content, not just content. Ms. Colpitts said Expedia is all about conversion. You have to be aware of who is viewing your content. Show your experience to people who are doing their research. Only 10% of people make buying decisions by visiting only one website. Mr. McInnis said you have to target potential buyers, not just random people.

Mr. Suffron said consider hiring a professional to produce some of your content, or consider becoming a semi-professional yourself through proper training. You should know how to shoot video and what to shoot, not everyone's a writer either. Mr. Pope noted having a Go Pro is great but nobody's going to watch an hour of raw footage so you need to have some editing capabilities. Audio is also key to videos so you need to know about that too.

Mr. Suffron said 5-10% of revenues is not a bad start when determining how much to spend on marketing. Mr. Wiebe suggested making an extra effort with your content to do things like adding captions. Do regular updates but do them right. Don't just dump a bunch of photos at once; do a pic of the day or a pic of the week.

One member asked whether there should be training available to lodge operators and outfitters and their staff on how to produce semi-professional content yourself. The MLOA will be looking into this with MTEC (Manitoba Tourism Education Council).

## **Travel Manitoba: Marketing hunt/fish in 2016**

Colin Ferguson, Travel Manitoba CEO, said the provincial government recently agreed to a 96/4 funding model where Travel Manitoba will receive 4% of tourism-related tax revenues, which will increase the marketing budget significantly, including for the hunt/fish sector. Our sector will be a priority and will be marketed in the USA, as well as Alberta and Ontario.

Linda Whitfield said Destination Canada has received \$10 million to market Canada to the USA. They will be doing a fishing pilot program with Travel Manitoba. It will primarily focus on fly fishing and fly-in lodges but will also promote ice fishing and drive-to lodges. The campaign launches Dec. 14 and will run in Chicago and Minneapolis. Website analytics allow Destination Canada to follow people who are already interested in travelling to Manitoba. This is a \$300,000 pilot.

Ryan Suffron said he has been committed to gathering fresh content since he started with Travel Manitoba in April. Content fuels the marketing machine. He noted Aaron Wiebe has been contracted by Travel Manitoba to showcase what we have to offer. Mr. Wiebe's Uncut Angling is the most viewed fishing channel on YouTube and he is a local boy. Travel Manitoba has also contracted The Resistance TV, who will showcase all huntable species in Manitoba (for foreign visitors) over the next 3 years. They have an audience of 200,000 people.



Travel Manitoba will be doing a Google Ad Words campaign to drive traffic to [www.huntfishmanitoba.ca](http://www.huntfishmanitoba.ca). The website has undergone significant improvements over the past year. Traffic has increased 53%, and the bounce rate has decreased by 12%. More than 4,000 clicked directly through to lodge and outfitter websites through links on the page. A lodge and outfitter finder is now organized by species.

A new publication called Manitoba Marvels has replaced the old Master Angler listings and lodge directory. It focuses on fishing and includes new initiatives like the 12 months of Master Angler contest and Angler of the Year. It's going out direct to 16,000 Master Anglers in the database as well as sealed in with 10,000 Hooked Magazines and in the Travel Manitoba vacation planner. It will also be distributed at All-Canada Shows and the

St. Paul ice fishing show. The TV commercials that were produced last year will continue running on World Fishing Network and Sportsmen's Channel.

Travel Manitoba will also be introducing a Master Hunter program based on harvest alone, not on size. This will allow Travel Manitoba to build loyalty among clients and collect content for marketing. The program will promote responsible, ethical harvest and will feature different levels of achievement. It will launch in Fall 2016.

## Manitoba Big Game Crisis Committee Update

Vince Crichton, a biologist who is retired from Manitoba Conservation, is a member of this committee, struck by the Manitoba Wildlife Federation, and gave an update on the committee's work. The committee is targeting several issues, including spotlighting and night hunting, seeking money for big game surveys and enforcement, and critically examining the impact of indigenous hunting on the resource and the involvement of indigenous hunters in resource management.

Recently the Association of Manitoba Municipalities passed a resolution supporting the committee's call for an end to spotlighting in the province. So the AMM will now help push that issue with government. Mr. Crichton believes moose are in particular danger of significant declines in Manitoba, noting they have changed very little over the centuries while the tools we have to hunt them, such as ATVs, GPS, ballistics technology and optics, have improved substantially.

Mr. Crichton said he believes there must be some form of controls on indigenous harvest or the resource will not be able to sustain it. He said he believes the government does have the legal authority to implement such controls, however politically unlikely that may be.



## Banquet & trade show

Our annual fundraising banquet took place the evening of Dec. 7 with a live auction and a delicious four-course meal. There were 180 people who attended. Our trade show ran throughout the three-day event, with 20 exhibitors ranging from boat dealers and airlines to taxidermists, hotels and food service companies.



# MLOA Convention attendance - 2015

\* = exhibitor

Adventures North [www.adventuresnorth.com](http://www.adventuresnorth.com)  
Agassiz Outfitters [www.agassizoutfitters.com](http://www.agassizoutfitters.com)  
Airmaster Signs [www.airmastersigns.com](http://www.airmastersigns.com)  
Aikens Lake Wilderness Lodge [www.aikenslake.com](http://www.aikenslake.com)  
All-Terrain Bear Hunts [www.atbh.ca](http://www.atbh.ca)  
Alpine Country Outfitters [www.alpinecountryoutfitters.com](http://www.alpinecountryoutfitters.com)  
\*Alumacraft Boats [www.alumacraft.com](http://www.alumacraft.com)  
Bear Track Outfitters [www.beartrackoutfitters.com](http://www.beartrackoutfitters.com)  
\*Beretta [www.beretta.com](http://www.beretta.com)  
Big Grass Outfitters [www.biggrassoutfitters.com](http://www.biggrassoutfitters.com)  
Big Sand Lake Lodge [www.bigsandlakelodge.com](http://www.bigsandlakelodge.com)  
Birdtail Waterfowl [www.birdtailwaterfowl.com](http://www.birdtailwaterfowl.com)  
Blackwater Cats [www.blackwatercats.com](http://www.blackwatercats.com)  
Bolton Lake Lodge [www.boltonlake.com](http://www.boltonlake.com)  
Budd's Gunisao Lake Lodge [www.buddsgunisaoakelodge.com](http://www.buddsgunisaoakelodge.com)  
\*Cabela's [www.cabelas.ca](http://www.cabelas.ca)  
Canada Border Crossing Services [www.bordercrossing.ca](http://www.bordercrossing.ca)  
City Cats [www.citycats.ca](http://www.citycats.ca)  
Continental Travel Group [www.continentaltravel.ca](http://www.continentaltravel.ca)  
Cook & Cooke Insurance [www.cookandcooke.com](http://www.cookandcooke.com)  
Danny's Whole Hog [www.dannyswholehog.com](http://www.dannyswholehog.com)  
Dunlop's Fly-In Lodges [www.dunlopfishing.com](http://www.dunlopfishing.com)  
Eagle Nest Resorts [www.eaglenest.ca](http://www.eaglenest.ca)  
Einarsson's Guide Service [www.einarssons.ca](http://www.einarssons.ca)  
\*EMCO Waterworks [www.emcoww.com](http://www.emcoww.com)  
Expedia [www.expedia.ca](http://www.expedia.ca)  
Fairfield Inn and Suites [www.fairfieldinnwinnipeg.com](http://www.fairfieldinnwinnipeg.com)  
Fish Futures [www.fishfutures.net](http://www.fishfutures.net)  
Gammon River East Outcamps [www.gammonriver.com](http://www.gammonriver.com)  
Gangler's Fly-in Lodges [www.ganglers.com](http://www.ganglers.com)  
\*Garriock Insurance [www.garriock.ca](http://www.garriock.ca)  
\*Gates Taxidermy [www.gatestaxidermy.com](http://www.gatestaxidermy.com)  
Green Party of Manitoba [www.greenparty.mb.ca](http://www.greenparty.mb.ca)  
Grey Owl Outfitters [www.huntsinmanitoba.com](http://www.huntsinmanitoba.com)  
\*Guertin Equipment – Marine Division [www.guertinequipment.com](http://www.guertinequipment.com)  
Harvest Lodge [www.huntharvestlodge.com](http://www.huntharvestlodge.com)  
Hastings Bros. Outfitting/Windsock Lodge [www.hastingsbros.com](http://www.hastingsbros.com)  
\*Hooked Media Inc. [www.hookedmagazine.ca](http://www.hookedmagazine.ca)  
Interlake Safaris/Hunts From the Heart [www.huntsfromtheheart.com](http://www.huntsfromtheheart.com)  
Jackson's Lodge & Outposts [www.jacksonslodge.com](http://www.jacksonslodge.com)  
Jason Hamilton Outdoors [www.jasonhamiltonoutdoors.com](http://www.jasonhamiltonoutdoors.com)  
Kaye's Auctions [www.kayesauctions.com](http://www.kayesauctions.com)  
KC's Outfitting [www.kcoutfitting.com](http://www.kcoutfitting.com)

\*Kingfisher Boats [www.kingfisherboats.com](http://www.kingfisherboats.com)  
Kississing Lake Lodge [www.kississinglodge.com](http://www.kississinglodge.com)  
Laurie River Lodge [www.laurieriverlodge.com](http://www.laurieriverlodge.com)  
\*Luke's Town Service [www.lukestownservice.com](http://www.lukestownservice.com)  
\*Lund Boats [www.lundboats.ca](http://www.lundboats.ca)  
Manitoba Conservation and Water Stewardship  
Manitoba Hotel Association [www.manitobahotelassociation.ca](http://www.manitobahotelassociation.ca)  
Manitoba Hydro [www.hydro.mb.ca](http://www.hydro.mb.ca)  
Manitoba Liberal Party [www.manitobaliberals.ca](http://www.manitobaliberals.ca)  
\*Manitoba Natural Resource Officers Association [www.mnroa.com](http://www.mnroa.com)  
Manitoba NDP [www.todaysndp.ca](http://www.todaysndp.ca)  
Manitoba Tourism Secretariat [www.gov.mb.ca/chc/tourism\\_sec/index.html](http://www.gov.mb.ca/chc/tourism_sec/index.html)  
Manitoba Wildlife Federation [www.mwf.mb.ca](http://www.mwf.mb.ca)  
Mercury Marine [www.mercurymarine.com](http://www.mercurymarine.com)  
Molson Lake Lodge [www.molsonlakelodge.ca](http://www.molsonlakelodge.ca)  
Mystery Country Lodge & Outposts [www.mysterycountry.com](http://www.mysterycountry.com)  
\*Northern Meat Services [www.nmscanada.com](http://www.nmscanada.com)  
\*Northwest Printwear [www.northwestprintwear.com](http://www.northwestprintwear.com)  
Oak Hammock Outfitters [www.oakhammockoutfitters.com](http://www.oakhammockoutfitters.com)  
Paint Lake Lodge [www.paintlake.ca](http://www.paintlake.ca)  
PC Party of Manitoba [www.pcmnitoba.com](http://www.pcmnitoba.com)  
Poplar Forest Lodge & Outfitter <http://mloa.com/member/poplar-forest-lodge/>  
Quesnel Lake Caribou Lodge [www.qlakelodge.com](http://www.qlakelodge.com)  
Riverside Lodge [www.huntriverside.com](http://www.huntriverside.com)  
\*Safari Club International [www.scifirstforhunters.org](http://www.scifirstforhunters.org)  
Shining Falls Lodge [www.shiningfallslodge.com](http://www.shiningfallslodge.com)  
Sleeve Lake Outfitters [www.sleevelakeoutfitters.ca](http://www.sleevelakeoutfitters.ca)  
Snoman Inc. [www.snoman.mb.ca](http://www.snoman.mb.ca)  
Standard Press [www.thestandardpress.com](http://www.thestandardpress.com)  
Stanley's Goose Camp [www.goosecamp.com](http://www.goosecamp.com)  
South Side Outfitters <http://mloa.com/member/south-side-outfitters/>  
\*Sysco [www.syscowinnipeg.ca](http://www.syscowinnipeg.ca)  
\*Telesky Taxidermy [www.teleskytaxidermy.com](http://www.teleskytaxidermy.com)  
\*The Four Points Sheraton / The Grand Hotel [www.fourpointswinnipegairport.com](http://www.fourpointswinnipegairport.com)  
The Lodge at Little Duck [www.thelodgeatlittleduck.com](http://www.thelodgeatlittleduck.com)  
The Standard Insurance Brokers (West) [www.thestandardonline.com](http://www.thestandardonline.com)  
The Standard Resort Insurance [www.thestandardonline.com](http://www.thestandardonline.com)  
Trail End Camp [www.trailendcamp.com](http://www.trailendcamp.com)  
Travel Manitoba [www.travelmanitoba.com](http://www.travelmanitoba.com)  
Uncut Angling [www.uncutangling.com](http://www.uncutangling.com)  
Wallace Lake Lodge & Outposts [www.wallacelakelodge.com](http://www.wallacelakelodge.com)  
Webber's Lodges [www.webberslodges.com](http://www.webberslodges.com)  
Whiteshell Outfitters [www.whiteshelloutfitters.com](http://www.whiteshelloutfitters.com)  
\*Wholesale Sports [www.wholesalesports.com](http://www.wholesalesports.com)  
\*Wings Over Kississing [www.wingsoverkississing.com](http://www.wingsoverkississing.com)  
Winnipeg Airports Authority [www.waa.ca](http://www.waa.ca)  
\*Winnipeg Sport & Leisure [www.wpgsport.com](http://www.wpgsport.com)