

Town of Minto Council Meeting
February 20th, 2024 at 7 p.m.
Delegation re: By-law to permit Sunday
Gun Hunting in Minto
As submitted by Jill Machan

Good evening Mayor Turton, members of Council and fellow attendees. For those of you who don't know me, my name is Jill Machan. I am here this evening with my husband, Gerald and our sons, Reid and Luke. After much thought and consideration, Gerald & I decided we would spearhead this proposal and seek support for a By-law that permits Sunday Gun Hunting in Minto. As rural landowners, we enjoy hunting our property for sport, sustenance and our love of nature. We hunt mainly as a group of six; the four of us, our nephew and my father, who taught the rest of us to hunt. Our boys are fourth

generation hunters and we know several other groups who are multigenerational hunters as well. We get together during hunting seasons to spend quality time doing something we all enjoy. At present, our two adult sons, Reid & Luke and our nephew, Damon are all working full time Monday to Friday as Apprentices in separate fields of Trade work. Being young men who work and study hard, they have very limited days off. At present, Saturdays are the only day they can hunt, unless they take a weekday off, however that is costly, as losing pay in the current economy is just not feasible for them. We have discussed the matter at hand with fellow hunters, family, neighbours, friends and others over the past several months. We have gained a significant amount of support in favor of a By-law. Some of those supporters are here tonight and we

thank them for taking the time out of their busy lives to attend this meeting with us. Others have sent emails of support and numerous people have signed a petition in support of the cause.

At this time, I would like to introduce Mr. Mark Ryckman who is a Manager of Policy at the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters (OFAH). Mark is going to give you a detailed overview of the many reasons why Sunday Gun Hunting is beneficial to hunters and the animal population. He will also highlight some of the positive impacts Sunday Gun Hunting could have on both conservation and the community.

Thank you.

PRESENTATION TO THE
Township of Minto
ON
SUNDAY GUN HUNTING
Tuesday, February 20, 2024



MARK RYCKMAN – MANAGER OF POLICY
ONTARIO FEDERATION OF ANGLERS AND HUNTERS (OFAH)

Good evening, Mayor Turton, councillors, and everyone in attendance.

My name is Mark Ryckman, and I am the Manager of Policy at the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters. On behalf of our 100,000 members, subscribers, supporters, some of whom live in or within close proximity to the municipality, thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak in support of Sunday gun hunting. I'd also like to thank Jill and Gerald for bringing this to my attention and for leading the charge locally.

In 2005, lobbying efforts from the OFAH and the Ontario Federation of Agriculture convinced the provincial government to liberalize SGH regulations in southern Ontario. After consultation, 67 municipalities across Southern Ontario immediately passed resolutions in support of Sunday gun hunting. In the years since, we have increased that number to 190, with Scugog Township having passed a resolution earlier this month.

Hunting in Ontario is regulated under the *Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act*. The *Act* states that “a person shall not carry or discharge a firearm, other than a long-bow or a crossbow, for the purpose of hunting on a Sunday, in any area lying south of the French and Mattawa rivers except those municipalities listed in Part 7 of the regulation”. This means that gun and archery hunting on Sundays is permitted in Northern Ontario (north of the French River), archery hunting is permitted on Sundays everywhere in the province (including in Minto) and, prior to 2005, Sunday gun hunting was allowed in a few eastern areas of the province.

Minto is located in Wildlife Management Unit 85B. The other 4 municipalities in 85B all permit SGH already, as do the neighbouring municipalities of South Bruce, Southgate, Wellington North, and North Perth.

Let me give you an example to illustrate the current situation. Picture a rural property owner, say a farmer that owns a hundred acres of land in the municipality on the west side of Highway 6. That person can spend a beautiful Sunday afternoon on their property shooting clay targets with a shotgun. That same person is currently prohibited from hunting on their own property on Sundays. But just across the road, on the east side of Highway 6 in Wellington North township, no such restriction exists.

Hunting is associated with the rare triple bottom line of social, economic, and ecological benefits. Specifically, hunting can help with controlling crop and livestock predation, reduce the number of wildlife-vehicle collisions, and generate revenue for fish and wildlife management. In fact, the original proposal to expand SGH in 2005 also included an amendment to expand deer seasons where guns can be used to include Sundays. The proposal specifically highlighted the benefits of hunting, saying “the extended seasons are intended to assist in the control of agricultural damage caused by deer and reduce the number of deer/vehicle collisions as well as enhance hunting opportunities”.

Wildlife populations in Ontario are healthy and, in many areas, increasing in numbers. While this is generally good news, there are a number of cases where populations have reached levels that are resulting in unacceptable impacts on agriculture, the environment and public safety.

According to the Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association, each year approximately over \$50 million in crop damage is caused by wildlife, most notably deer, raccoons, coyotes, and waterfowl. Livestock predation is also quite common. This has resulted in increasing demands from the public for cost-effective and accessible methods to control predators like wolves, coyotes, and bears.

The Ministry of Transportation states that there is a motor vehicle collision with wildlife every 38 minutes in this province, and 90 percent involve white-tailed deer. These collisions result in death, hundreds of serious injuries, and tens of millions of dollars in damage claims.

The MNRF has repeatedly stated that hunting is the most cost-effective wildlife management tool, without which, they could not possibly cope with burgeoning wildlife populations in many parts of Ontario.

Hunting in Ontario generates \$1.5 billion in annual economic activity. There are over 470,000 trained, licensed, and responsible hunters in Ontario who contribute hundreds of millions each year to fish and wildlife programs, including the Special Purpose Account, which funds all fish and wildlife programs in the province from licence revenues.

We no longer live in a Monday-Friday world. I know from speaking with hunters that townships that permit Sunday gun hunting are viewed as more attractive destinations for hunters. If Sunday gun hunting was allowed, many hunters who would not normally think of driving a long distance for only a Saturday hunt might take advantage of the opportunity and bring with them economic activity for the community.

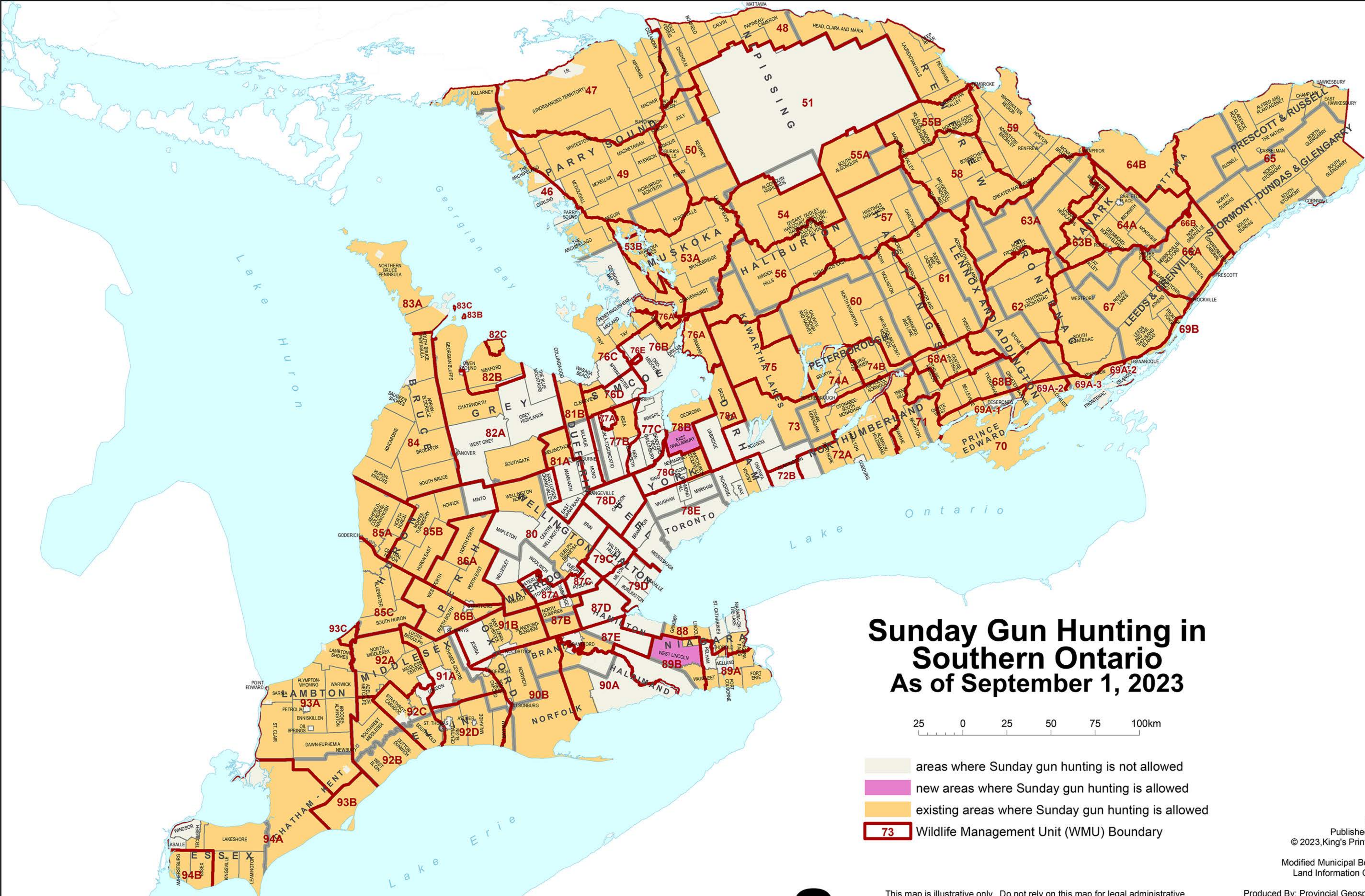
Public safety is often carted out as a reason to oppose hunting. But hunting is one of the few recreational activities that requires proof of competency BEFORE engaging in the activity through both hunter safety and firearms safety courses. The OFAH has been administering the Ontario Hunter Education Program on behalf of the government for 25 years and since the advent of these mandatory training courses, the injury rate for hunting accidents has dropped to virtually nil. Prior to 1968 when hunter education first became mandatory, over 100 incidents occurred every year. In 2018, only 6 incidents were investigated. According to Statistics Canada, hunting in Canada is responsible for only 0.001 percent of accidents, far less than injuries from car accidents, insect bites, and even lightning strikes. And there is no logical reason to think that hunting is any less safe on a Sunday than it is on other days.

Ladies and gentlemen, I think you'll agree that continuing to prohibit Sunday gun hunting is an untenable position given the suite of benefits associated with it. SGH can increase harvest levels, decrease predation on

crops and livestock, provide increased economic activity, and is clearly not a threat to public safety.

Thank you for allowing me to appear before you today. I would be more than happy to answer any questions that you might have.

Thank you.



Sunday Gun Hunting in Southern Ontario As of September 1, 2023



- areas where Sunday gun hunting is not allowed
- new areas where Sunday gun hunting is allowed
- existing areas where Sunday gun hunting is allowed
- 73 Wildlife Management Unit (WMU) Boundary



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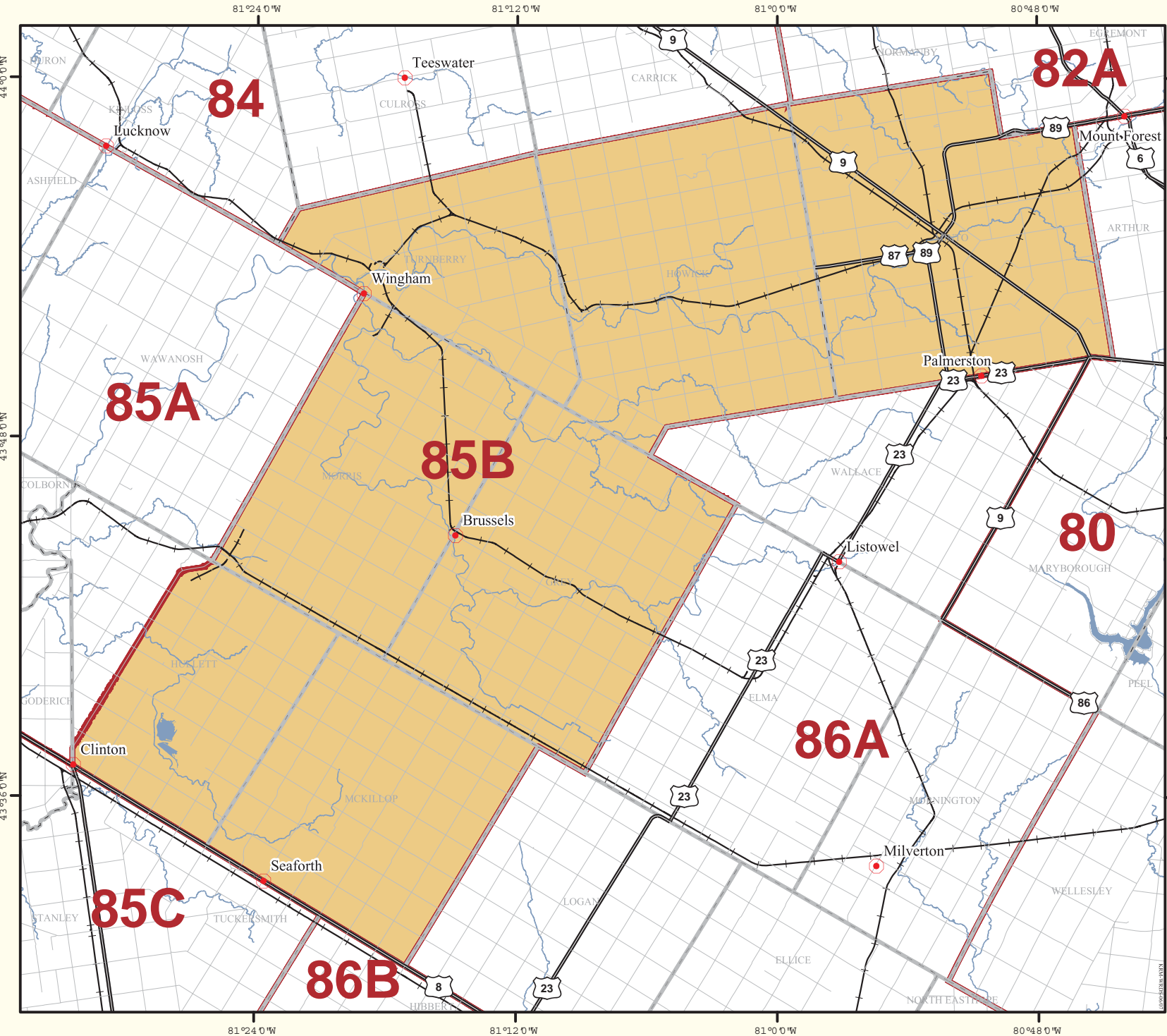
MAP NOTES:
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Modified Municipal Boundary Data:
Land Information Ontario (2023)

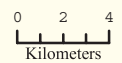
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Projection: MNR Lambert Conformal Conic
Datum: North American Datum 1983

Wildlife Management Unit - 85B



- Legend**
- Settlements
 - Geographic Township Boundaries
 - Provincial Highway
 - Municipal Highway
 - Local Street/Road
 - | Railway
 - Lakes
 - Rivers & Creeks
 - Approximate WMU Boundaries
 - WMU of Interest



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