

Questions for Katie Consack - MNR

November 16, 2025

Question 1

!) There is no uniformity across the province for rehabilitators for regulations
Some areas require log book data some accept computer program data.
Some rehabbers have very strict supervisors, abx are almost bullied
Some have very helpful ones who they can turn to for advice.
The MNR are too heavy handed. Some of Malley's raccoons were healthy
vaccinated and ready to go. None of us were contacted to see if we could help take any.
This creates a dangerous situation where rehabbers keep their heads down
and are intimidated to ask for advice.
Also please...

We are Wildlife rehabilitators, not merely custodians.
We are educated professionals. We need more respect.
We really appreciate that you are working to create a better
working environment for all of us.
Sue Meech
Sandy Pines Wildlife Centre
Napane Ontario

Questions: 2

- 1) WHY are updates not sent out to the people they affect? eg. Changes/Updates to the FWCA! Amendments to regulations set out by the MNR for keeping wildlife under care!
- 2) WHY are we not notified of changes to our MNR contacts? All of a sudden the person we've been dealing with is gone and we weren't told and then don't know who to contact anymore. Sometimes the changes are good (eg. Kathy Richardson gone), but sometimes the changes leave us hanging as to who we should be talking to for information.
- 3) WHO has jurisdiction over cage sizes, how many animals can be in a cage, what the cage needs for the animals' "entertainment", etc?
- 4) WHO is being referenced for advice? - GFAS? NWRA? IWRA? MNR? PAWS?
- 5) WHO do we contact if we know our 'representative' is using erroneous information to 'limit us' or using non-existent information that THEY think is right or even made up by them?
- 6) WHO is our contact if our 'representative' won't send us proof of their information that is 'limiting us'?
- 7) WHAT happens when we lose our vets because they don't want us to bring in animals that possibly carry a disease OR they sell their practices and other vets in our area are following the angst of the initial part of this question?

Carol
Open Sky Raptor Foundation
Grimsby, Ontario

Question 3

my only question is about Mally's:
why they took the raccoon?
why cruelly transported?
why killed and how?
where were they housed, in nice outdoor enclosures
that we r supposed to have or inside where/how?
thanks Annette
Mono Wildlife

Question 4

Why has it become so complicated to apply to become an Authorized Wildlife Custodian. It appears that all sorts of people in the MNR now have to approve an application. It can take up to three years now for approval. In a number of cases there has been no response to an application at all, even after multiple emails and calls.
See response to a recent application below.
"Your file is currently under review. Please note that our standard review timeframe for this type of authorization is 4 to 6 weeks. However, it may take longer if additional input or review from other specialists is required. You may receive progress notifications from RIP as the reviewers work through your file, please disregard these automated messages. Our district will contact you directly if we require any additional information, or once a decision has been made regarding your application."
Applicant in South Western Ontario.

Question 5

The [New York State Department of Environmental Conservation \(NYS. DEC\)](#) want rehabbers; they are happy to have them and encourage them. To them rehabbers are the front lines in wildlife as they are 'go to people, they go to learn more about the species, and are informed about wildlife changes, illness etc.

We should be treated the same and used. We are the first line of defence and an early warning system for new viruses, disease and wildlife behavioural changes. Yet here in Ontario Wildlife Rehabbers are not an asset, instead we are treated as a liability by the MNR! Why?

Laurel Beechey
Skunk Haven, Tillsonbury

Question 6

Question: Why are the MNR reps, telling the rehabbers what species they can start out with? If we have the cages and set up ready for inspection and they pass, why are they being told no to other species during the season. Who are they to say someone can only start with songbirds?

We have worked with classifications, I was in 'small mammals' (squirrels, rabbits, ground hogs) or did RVS (skunk, raccoons, foxes and bats). This idea one species at a time is new and a waste the lives of other animals who need help.

New Rehabber who is limited to one species

Question 7

How to we deal with the MNR Priority List (Monique's list) and who do we deal with. It has been out standing from 2017. The list of problems or concerns was put together with the help of the ADM of ROD at the time. Of the 15 items or problems listed only 3 have been delt with. One came back on in 2023 when the right of appeal was gutted.

OWR.

Comment 1

Dear Ms. Consack,

You want to understand the challenges that rehabilitators go through with the MNR.

Trust is a major one!

We know that our concerns do not go 'up the food chain' so to speak.

They get to representatives who may or may not ever come to our facilities and we don't know how far they go from there because seldom do we hear back.

Sometimes, just sometimes, we get someone who responds but can't do anything about our concerns - 'above their pay grade I guess.'

Representation.

Our concerns and challenges are never mentioned in person to a gallery of MNR personnel.

It was tried once with WiRAC (Wildlife Rehabilitators Advisory Committee) but at the first meeting we were asked to sign 'non-disclosure' papers! The whole idea behind the committee was to hold talks with the MNR and then get back to the rehabbers on what was discussed - to be able to keep everyone informed.

How would that have been possible with non-disclosures?

It was obvious this was shut down with two parts of input from the MNR - first being the non-disclosure, the second being the time lapse the MNR took to set up the meeting -2 1/2 years - for a committee that was to be used for 3 years! It was even mentioned that the committee would come to an end within 2 months!

They gave us hope and then just tossed it in the garbage like a joke.

Education of the MNR

It is no secret that the personnel from the MNR are lacking in 'hands-on education' with wildlife. Since 1996 Rehabilitators have offered to give an insight into the world of rehabbing to MNR personnel. Very, Very few have taken us up on our offer. It's like driving a car on Mario Kart and then thinking you can drive one during rush hour in Toronto without ever being in a car in your life! Yet, the MNR personnel think they have all the knowledge with ALL species of wildlife and don't seem to understand what is required from catching up the animal to releasing it or even killing it.

Wildlife

Some of the MNR personnel are happy enough to stand far enough away from cages that contain wildlife, some are stupid enough to want to go into those cages and check on that animal without knowing the consequences. I have had vets come onto my property, ones HIRED by the MNR, and watched as they were harmed by my birds because they "knew what they were doing". One vet had to take a cloacal sample and I had to show him exactly where that body part was, cause he didn't know!

Some MNR personnel will listen to you, but some it just goes in one ear and out the other..

To put it in simplistic terms, Ms Consack, we, the rehabilitators of Ontario, are the front line defense with wildlife. We see the animal at its worst, we see them struggle to live and we see them die. We also see them live and we see them released back to the wild for a second chance at life. We see things that we've learned over the years and can treat.

The key word here is to see!

And our knowledge that has grown with working with the species we chose to work with has grown with each year and each animal that comes in.

These animals are not just wildlife! They are individuals that are the key to human survival and if the governments can't work with what we do, then why are they in that sector of the government?

Sincerely,

Carol Ricciuto

Open Sky Raptor Foundation.