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Export date: Fri Oct 30 3:13:37 2026 / +0000 GMT

Ontario government tables proposal to allow hunting in Boyne Valley Provincial Park

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LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

Ontario's Ministry of Natural Resources and Forests (MNRF) has put forward a proposal to change the Boyne Valley Provincial Park's size and hunting rules.

In a document titled ?Supplemental Document Supporting Environmental Registry of Ontario Proposal Notice Number 019-9306,? the provincial government is planning a large overhaul of parks across the province, including here in Dufferin County.

The Boyne Valley Provincial Park is set to have 496 hectares added to its regulated area, almost doubling its size. This land was previously acquired by the Ontario government in other deals.

However, the Ontario government, through the MNRF, is also considering permitting hunting within the regulated areas, which include trails managed by the Dufferin Hi-Land Bruce Trail Club.

In the proposal, the MNRF plans to continue permitting hunting in the new additions to the park, while beginning to permit hunting in the park's original, regulated area. The proposal will permit hunting of non-furbearing game mammals, migratory game birds, and game birds during normal hunting seasons.

This raises concerns among local residents and trail users, as sections of the Bruce Trail managed by the Dufferin Hi-Land Club see heavy foot traffic that passes directly through the area that could be opened to hunting.

Tom Thayer, a local resident and trail user, said that the proposal puts thousands of lives at risk if hunting is allowed.

?You've got a lot of people that use that park, and not just on the Bruce Trail,? he said. ?You've got people on horses, hikers on other trails, and explorers who just go in regularly. There are thousands of people who go out there every year to enjoy the park.?

?The province needs to realize that they're putting people's lives in danger. Beyond the trail, the park, which will become a hunting zone, comes right up to Primrose Public School and all the residences in the area,? Thayer added.

He said he hopes the MNRF is open to discussing different approaches for the area that can accommodate everyone safely.

?I've so far heard that the province is open to alternative ways of doing this, which I'm happy for. I have hope that we can actually stop this,? said Thayer.

While Thayer is president of the Bruce Trail Conservancy's Dufferin Hi-Land Club, his comments are not affiliated with the official position of the Bruce Trail Conservancy or his club, and are entirely personal.

Currently, the MNRF is accepting public comments on the proposal, so those with input are welcome to share their thoughts. That link can be found at https://ero.ontario.ca/notice/019-9306.

Commenting is open until 11:59 p.m. on Nov. 24, 2025.