



OUTDOORS CAUCUS PLEIN AIR

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MEDIA RELEASE

Outdoors Caucus comes indoors on Parliament Hill

M.P.s give unanimous approval for new heritage foundation

(Ottawa – December 21, 2007) – The Parliamentary Outdoors Caucus came indoors on December 4 when some 50 members of Parliament and senators voted unanimously to endorse the creation of an independent, all-party Canadian Outdoor Heritage foundation.

At a breakfast meeting on Parliament Hill, M.P.s and senators agreed to support a foundation that will act as a liaison between the Canadian hunting, fishing, trapping and recreational shooting community, related business sectors, and the Outdoor Caucus. The foundation will also keep the public and media informed of Outdoor Caucus activities and efforts related to federal legislation and policy.

Garry Breitkreuz, Conservative M.P. and Outdoors Caucus co-chair explains, “This unprecedented evolution will provide a permanent means for the Outdoors Caucus to ensure the outdoors community has a conduit directly into Parliament. Together, we can protect our outdoors heritage.”

The foundation will play an important communications role by keeping M.P.s and senators apprised of the legislative, policy and issue priorities that arise in the outdoors community. Created in March 2006, the non-partisan Outdoors Caucus is evolving as part of an information network to receive recommendations from the outdoors community and provide legislative updates in return.

Bob Izumi, the gregarious television host of The Real Fishing Show, was guest speaker at the Parliament Hill breakfast. He stressed that the millions of Canadians who fish and hunt are a significant constituency for members of Parliament in every region of the country. They contribute millions of volunteer hours to fish and wildlife conservation. Izumi’s TV career spans 24 years and together with his brother, Wayne, he has created Fishing Forever, a non-profit organization committed to preserving and enhancing Ontario fisheries.

“It was great to see the support from Bob Izumi and the outdoors community for this important meeting,” says Larry Bagnell, Liberal M.P. and Outdoors Caucus co-chair. “Urban and rural citizens of all regions, political affiliations, ages, backgrounds and abilities take part in these outdoor sports. Parliament is a vital link in promoting and monitoring management of public lands, waterways, fish, wildlife and habitat.”

Phil Morlock, representing the Canadian Sportfishing Industry Association and a proponent of the new Canadian Outdoors Heritage foundation, addressed the crowd at the December 4 meeting: “It is up to us to inform our federal representatives in Parliament of the significance of the outdoor heritage community as a major constituency, as leaders in fish and wildlife conservation and as a significant national economic entity. We promote safety, conservation and the enjoyment of Canada’s great natural beauty.

“Millions of Canadians from coast to coast spend more than \$10 billion a year on these outdoor heritage activities,” he adds. “No one takes a greater active role in conserving our natural heritage than those who use it responsibly. Improved communication between the Outdoors Caucus and the outdoor community made possible through a permanent foundation is a major breakthrough for all Canadians who hunt, fish, shoot and trap.”

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