

MEDIA RELEASE

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NORTHERN INTERESTS TAKE HIGH PRIORITY AT PC PARTY CONVENTION Spring Bear Hunt Receives Support

Cochrane, Ontario - September 24, 2013: – This weekend northern representatives for the PC Party of Ontario had the opportunity to attend the Ontario PC policy convention in London Ontario, where the party debated and adopted key political issues. Northern Ontario is clearly an area that the PC Party and its members appreciate and want to work with. PC Party leader Tim Hudak stated during one of his speeches to all delegates in attendance “I want to make Ontario the economic engine in Canada again, and Northern Ontario will be the fuel that keeps it running”. Tim Hudak has also committed to working with candidates like vocal northern advocate Peter Politis in Timiscaming-Cochrane, on game changing policy that will finally put northern Ontario in the driver seat for itself where it belongs. Clearly the PC Party has a leader that understands and appreciates what our great region has to offer.

The key issues for northern Ontario at the convention were to secure a second vice president to help serve our region better and to begin the process of seeking support to rethink the whole spring bear hunt controversy while securing policy to more effectively manage black bears.

With regard to the additional vice president, the membership of the party overwhelmingly supported the addition of a second representative from the North to it's executive, again showing that they appreciate Northern Ontario and recognize we need strong representation.

The pinnacle of the convention turned out to be the Spring Bear Hunt debate on the final day. An innovative policy proposal that provides for municipal and provincial partnerships on bear management, including a spring bear hunt targeting male bears. For this proposal to eventually become policy the convention was the first big test and hurdle. The northern group, including M.P.P. candidates Peter Politis, Steve Black and Randy Nickel came organized and prepared with colour flyers and “Ask Me About Bears” buttons that were handed out to over 900 delegates. Individual debates took place in lobby's and hallways all weekend culminating with the final passionate debate on Sunday. The final tally was resounding support for the northern policy of black bear management which includes reinstating the spring bear hunt.

While the first major hurdle has been cleared, the proposal must now survive a series of internal tests to check against its fit with other party values, such as the PC Party's value to allow the families, small businesses and local leaders make choices for their regions and its value on ensuring that all wildlife decisions are based on sound science. “While the process moves to the next steps, I will continue to advocate and fight for the province to rethink black bear management in the north that includes a spring bear hunt. Although the final policy direction will be determined in the future, it's clear that the Ontario PC Party won't ignore the issue and hope it goes away on its own like the Liberals and NDP are doing now”, stated Timiscaming-Cochrane candidate and Cochrane Mayor, Peter Politis. Premier Kathleen Wynne has repeatedly stated that the Liberal Party does not support a spring bear hunt, and Timmins-James Bay NDP representative Gilles Bisson stated at last week's North Eastern Ontario Municipal Association meeting that the NDP would not support the Spring Bear Hunt either. So far only the Ontario PC Party has remained open to the concept and is working on a more progressive and practical outcome than what exists today.

When asked about his thoughts on the Party and northern direction after having faced the party as a whole at the convention, Peter Politis said, “This was my first opportunity to really test my thoughts around the need for us as northerners to take it upon ourselves to do our work, create our own plans and effectively convince the rest of the province of our value. I really wasn't sure what to expect, but can honestly say after seeing the overwhelming support from a convention that consisted of mostly

southern representatives that I'm completely energized. This is proof positive that when logical, intelligent discussion is passionately articulated around the value our great region has, the PC Party of Ontario will not only listen, it is prepared to act."