



Thursday, September 25, 2014

RCMP replaces muskrat fur hat in cold-weather conditions

Animal advocates applaud Mounties over cruelty-free option

Wednesday, September 17, 2014

HAMILTON – Muskrats in Canada can breathe easier now that the Royal Canadian Mounted Police have found an alternative to their traditional fur hats for cold-weather conditions.

In a letter received by The Association for the Protection of Fur-Bearing Animals (APFA), an RCMP official stated that:

“We have listened to the views of external interested parties and of our employees. Through this, the RCMP has tested a winter toque as a potential replacement to the fur hat. The field testing of this item provided very positive results in providing adequate protection against standard cold weather conditions.”

The letter went on to state that the Uniform and Equipment program is in the procurement/contract phase to introduce the toques.

“Since the 1970s, we have tried to tell the RCMP that there are alternatives available to their traditional – and cruel – muskrat fur hat,” says Michael Howie, a spokesperson for APFA. “We are extremely pleased to hear that the RCMP is phasing out muskrat fur hats for regular cold weather conditions, and expect that ongoing research into alternatives for extreme weather conditions will also yield a humane solution.”

Muskrats are caught in the wild in body-gripping traps, which can leave them exposed to the elements, dehydration, starvation, predators and numerous self-inflicted injuries prior to their deaths. It is believed that a single fur hat, as worn traditionally by RCMP officers, requires at least three muskrat pelts.

APFA has since requested more information from the RCMP regarding the new toque, the comments of members and cost-savings, but no response has been forthcoming.

“As Canadians, we’re proud of our first responders who would put themselves in harm’s way to protect the public,” adds Howie. “Today, we can be even more proud, knowing that they are making a humane, cruelty-free decision with their equipment.”