

May 8, 2008

Good Morning:

In response to the carp die-off in the Kawartha Lakes last summer, the Peterborough District Ministry of Natural Resources has been working closely with agency partners to develop a protocol for responding to large scale fish die-offs. We are pleased to provide you with a copy of the Fish Die-Off Response Protocol, and are confident this will facilitate communication and coordination between agencies in the event this happens again.

Fish die-offs are natural events that often have multiple causes. We've included a copy of the technical report my staff prepared that summarizes the events and factors leading to the die-off, and we encourage you to review it. A combination of stressors including changes to water/air temperatures, storm events, spawning stress, and high population abundance have likely combined to increase the stress and susceptibility of carp to a disease outbreak. The bacterium *Flavobacterium columnare* was the first confirmed pathogen found in carp sent to the laboratory for testing.

Last month, the Government of Canada confirmed Koi Herpesvirus (KHV) in two fish samples from last summer. Columnaris and KHV do not pose any risk to human health. KHV is an invasive fish virus that only affects carp, koi and goldfish, and is presumed to be spread through the tropical fish trade. The attached fact sheets provide more information.

To protect our native fish populations, the ministry is taking steps to enhance the province's capability to monitor, detect and research invasive species and pathogens like KHV. We now have an enhanced fish testing program which will provide more rapid results on testing of fish samples from the Kawartha Lakes; we've implemented a Fish Die-off Hot line, 1-866-929-0994, for the public to report new occurrences anywhere across the province; and we are investing in the development of an Invasive Species research facility in Sault Ste. Marie.

My staff will continue to work closely with our district partner agencies, stakeholders, and the public to increase awareness regarding the health and protection of our native fish populations, and the actions we can take together to conserve and sustain this valuable natural resource.

If you have questions or comments on the attached materials, please feel free to contact our Peterborough Area Supervisor: Tammy Tellier, at (705)755-3293.

Sincerely,



Jane Ireland
District Manager, Peterborough District