

**Ministry of Natural
Resources and Forestry**
Aquatic Research and Monitoring Section
2140 East Bank Drive, 2nd Floor DNA Building
Peterborough, ON, K9L 0G2
Tel: 705-755-1975

October 21, 2020

Chief Donna Big Canoe
Chippewas of Georgina Island First Nation
R.R.2, P.O. Box 12
Sutton West, ON
L0E1R0

Re: Lake Simcoe Acoustic Telemetry Tagging Project

Dear Chief Donna Big Canoe and Council,

We are writing to inform you about a project being undertaken on Lake Simcoe and associated concerns with respect to consuming Lake Trout caught between now and December 1, 2020. We would appreciate this information being distributed to community members who may be harvesting fish at this time of year.

The Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF) is undertaking a research project to provide new information on Lake Trout movement and habitat use in Lake Simcoe. The results will allow us to better understand this important and highly sought-after cold-water species, which in turn will help support management objectives to increase the quality of this dynamic fishery. We have provided more detailed information in the attached document.

This project involves implanting lake trout (up to 50 this fall) with internal acoustic transmitters and releasing them back into the lake. The implanting of the transmitters involves a minor surgery on the fish for which they will be temporarily anaesthetized using MS-222 (Tricaine Methanesulfonate). There is a public health concern if a fish, which was anaesthetized within the last 21 days, is consumed by a person.

Fish implanted with tags will be easy to identify. The internal transmitters are about 3 inches in length and are readily visible within the body cavity of the fish. The fish may also have visible sutures or a scar along the belly. The fish will also be tagged with an external tag by the dorsal fin that is highly visible. The internal and external tags have a unique identification number written on the side.

If any community members happen to catch a fish with a tag, we ask that the fish be released if it is healthy. If the fish is harvested (killed and kept) before December 1st, 2020, we ask that they do not consume the fish to avoid exposure to the fish anesthetic (MS-222) used during the surgery. We also ask that the community member reports the tag number of the fish to the MNRF (705-313-3874), as this information would be highly valuable to our research study.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Elysha Berry, Resource Liaison Specialist, Midhurst District via email at Elysha.berry@ontario.ca.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jason Borwick", is centered on a light blue rectangular background.

Jason Borwick
Manager, Aquatic Research and Monitoring Section

Cc: Elysha Berry, Resource Liaison Specialist, Midhurst District