

**Ministry of the Environment,  
Conservation and Parks**  
*Environmental Sciences & Standards Division*  
135 St. Clair Avenue West  
Toronto ON M4V 1P5

**Ministère de l'Environnement,  
de la Protection de la nature et des Parcs**  
*Division des normes et des sciences de l'environnement*  
135, avenue St. Clair Ouest  
Toronto ON M4V 1P5

**By Email To: The Federation of Ontario Cottagers' Associations Incorporated**  
[trees@foca.on.ca](mailto:trees@foca.on.ca)

May 5, 2020

Terry Rees, Executive Director  
Federation of Ontario Cottagers' Association Inc  
#201 - 159 King Street, Peterborough,  
ON K9J 2R8

**Re: Lake Partner Program in 2020**

Hi Terry,

I hope this email finds you well.

Nothing is more important than protecting the health and well-being of Ontarians.

In support of the current emergency order prohibiting organized gatherings of more than five people and the Chief Medical Officer's direction for physical distancing to help stop the spread of COVID-19, the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks has temporarily restricted laboratory services for routine non-critical samples, which impacts receiving sample collections for the Lake Partner Program.

The ministry is currently assessing the safest way to continue the Lake Partner Program for 2020 while keeping volunteers and ministry staff safe. During this time, we ask that volunteers do not gather or submit any samples to the ministry lab in Dorset.

Temporarily suspending routine environmental water quality sampling by Lake Partner Program volunteers will not significantly impact our ability to track long-term trends determined by data collected over many years of sampling.

In the meantime, we are pleased to inform you that the 2019 Lake Partner Program data has been released and is now available on [Ontario's Open Data Catalogue](#).

The ministry values the work of the Federation of Ontario Cottagers' Associations and volunteers in support of the Lake Partner Program. We want you to know that we are committed to continuing this important inland lake monitoring program as part of our Made-in-Ontario Environment Plan to protect our lakes and waterways. We will be in touch soon to begin discussions about a new funding agreement.

Thank you for your dedication and understanding. We would appreciate if you could pass this message on to Lake Partner volunteers. We all need to work together to stop the spread of COVID-19.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Orna Salamon". The signature is written in a cursive style and is contained within a light blue rectangular border.

Orna Salamon, Assistant Deputy Minister  
Environmental Sciences and Standards Division  
Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks