

## Lake Partner Program Update

October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020

Hello,

The Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks thanks you for your support of the Lake Partner Program. We are committed to supporting this important inland lake monitoring program and wanted to provide an update on the status of the program for 2020.

As communicated by the Federation of Ontario Cottagers' Associations elert on June 18, 2020, the Lake Partner Program was placed on hold in response to the COVID-19 outbreak and physical distancing requirements, so that the ministry assessed the safest way to continue the program while keeping volunteers and ministry staff safe. This assessment has been completed and the Lake Partner Program is being reinstated with the following temporary modifications for 2020:

- For volunteers who cannot implement physical distancing measures, we recommend that you do not collect samples in 2020.
- If you have already submitted samples for 2020 to the ministry laboratory, please do not submit additional samples this year. The ministry is striving to analyze samples that have already been received.
- For volunteers who can safely collect samples while implementing physical distancing measures and adhering to local COVID-19 guidelines issued by the local Public Health Unit, the ministry will accept one set of samples for water quality analysis at the Dorset Environmental Science Centre laboratory from each volunteer. Please collect and submit a set of samples in October 2020. Instructions for sampling are provided in the sampling kit provided to you.
- To find COVID-19 related guidelines for your area, please visit <http://health.gov.on.ca/en/common/system/services/phu/default.aspx> choose the appropriate Public Health Unit and click on the website link.
- Secchi disc depth measurements collected in 2020 can be submitted to the ministry as per usual.

We appreciate your support for the Lake Partner Program and look forward to continuing our collaboration moving forward. If you have any questions, please contact [lakepartner@ontario.ca](mailto:lakepartner@ontario.ca).

Sincerely,

Melissa Robillard