



Ministry of  
Natural Resources and Forestry

Ministère des  
Richesses naturelles et des Forêts

41 Hatchery Lane, R.R. #4, Picton, Ontario K0K 2T0

**March 31, 2015**

**To: FMZ20 Council Members**

This is an update on the Rainbow Trout mortality issue currently being observed in Lake Ontario tributaries.

As you may recall, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) observed distressed Rainbow Trout in the Salmon River (NY) during in the Fall 2014.

NYSDEC tested some fish and found very low levels of thiamine (vitamin B) and they published a press release on January 7, 2015 (<http://www.dec.ny.gov/press/100233.html>) which describes the issue and provided the results of their analysis.

The low thiamine levels are likely related to a diet consisting primarily of Alewife which are known to contain thiaminase, an enzyme that breaks down thiamine.

Lake Ontario Management Unit (LOMU) has been working closely with NYSDEC on this issue.

LOMU is currently conducting an angler survey in ten tributaries to Lake Ontario and field crews are looking for distressed Rainbow Trout and are recording any reports.

To date (as of March 30, 2015) LOMU has received less than 20 reports of distressed fish observed by anglers in Ontario tributaries. In the last week however, the number of reports has increased and with the spring thaw and trout season opening in the tributaries on April 25, we expect to receive more reports.

LOMU will be sampling Rainbow Trout in April at the Ganaraska River fish-way in Port Hope and fish will have their thiamine levels tested. In addition, LOMU will sample distressed fish if possible.

Sampling needs to be done at stream side on live fish and the samples must be immediately stored in liquid nitrogen or on dry ice. Therefore anglers should not collect specimens since these fish would not be suitable for analysis.

Anglers are encouraged to report sightings of distressed Rainbow Trout to the Lake Ontario Management Unit general email account [FMZ20@ontario.ca](mailto:FMZ20@ontario.ca), or to contact 613-476-3200 and to provide the following information:

- Date and time of observation
- Location (name of tributary with the nearest access point or road crossing)
- General description of observation (number of fish observed and condition of fish such as, disoriented/struggling/dead)

Thank you for your continued service to FMZ20 fisheries management.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Andy Todd".

Andy Todd  
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