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## **MEDIA RELEASE - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Kawartha Conservation Responds to Concerns Over Fish Kill**

KAWARTHAS - There have been many sightings of dead fish on Lake Scugog this spring. Bass and sunfish were the first to be spotted, but more recently it is carp that have been seen floating or washed up along the Scugog shoreline.

Kawartha Conservation staff have been fielding several calls a day concerning the fish kills. Since receiving the first call, they have been working closely with the Ministry of Natural Resources, the primary agency responsible for fisheries management. The Ministry has sent samples away for analysis and the results will be shared as soon as they are available, which is anticipated to be some time in July. While Kawartha Conservation has no direct involvement with the fish kills, it has responded through a media release to ensure the public is kept up to date on the situation.

“As environmental managers for our water resources, we are concerned about the large numbers of carp that are dying, but we do not anticipate that it will have an impact on water quality,” says Ian Macnab, chief administrative officer for Kawartha Conservation. “We will certainly assist the Ministry in any way that we can.”

Spring kill occurs in lakes and rivers when fish survive the winter but die as the water warms rapidly in May and June. Spring kill is almost always due to natural causes. In the summer, both an increase in temperature and increase in fish metabolism may cause oxygen depletion. During the spawning season, fish do not sense the danger of low oxygen and do not swim to safety in time. Fishes guarding their nest are usually unwilling to move away from their nests even if it means death. The current carp die off does not appear to be connected to weather conditions, as carp are not typically susceptible to low oxygen levels. No definitive cause of death will be known until the lab analysis is completed.

Many residents have been asking about the removal of fish from their property. The Durham Works department is advising residents to bury the fish. Gloves should be worn and the fish should be buried to a depth of at least a foot to discourage wildlife from digging them up. Durham is asking that the fish not be out for regular garbage pick up or municipal organic kitchen composting, however residents of the City of Kawartha Lakes may dispose of them at their local landfill sites free of charge provided they are double bagged and the bags contain only fish.

Kawartha Conservation is a watershed-based environmental organization focused on providing abundant clean water within a healthy landscape. It is one of 36 conservation authorities in Ontario providing natural resources management. The Kawartha Watershed intersects portions of the City of Kawartha Lakes; Township of Scugog; Township of Brock; Municipality of Clarington; Township of Galway-Cavendish & Harvey; and Township of Cavan-Monaghan.

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