

July 28, 2025

Chief Paul Gladu
Bingwi Neyaashi Anishinaabek
By email only

Re: Namewaminikan (Sturgeon) River
Notification of changes to fish consumption guidelines

Dear Chief,

As part of its Permit to Take Water (PTTW) and Mercury Monitoring Plan (MMP), Namewaminikan Hydro Inc. (NHI) has carried out extensive fish tissue sampling campaigns focused on Northern Pike and Walleye, covering areas from above the Twin Falls hydro facility to downstream of the Long Rapids hydro facility. In keeping with its commitment to monitor mercury levels in fish tissue and assess the potential impacts from the construction and operation of its facilities, NHI conducted sampling campaigns in 2017, 2018, 2019, and 2022/2023, with an additional campaign scheduled for the summer of 2025

The MMPs for both facilities require NHI to notify stakeholders if any new restrictions are introduced in the provincial Fish Consumption Advisories¹ for any species or size class. Accordingly, we are writing to inform your community of the following changes between the 2020/2022 and 2024 advisories:

Twin Falls (Above Twin Falls)

- Northern Pike:
 - General Population: One level more restrictive for 25-30, 40-70 cm
 - Sensitive Population: One level more restrictive for 25-30, 35-40, 50-65 cm
- Walleye:
 - General Population: One level more restrictive for 20-25, 35-45 cm
 - Sensitive Population: One level more restrictive for 30-35 cm

Long Rapids (Twin Falls to Long Rapids)

- Northern Pike:
 - General Population: One level more restrictive for 20-25, 40-60 cm
 - Sensitive Population: One level more restrictive for 20-30, 35-40, 50-55 cm
- Walleye:
 - General Population: One level more restrictive for 20-25, 50-55 cm
 - One level less restrictive for 45-50 cm
 - New “do not eat” advisory for 50-55 cm
 - Sensitive Population: One level more restrictive for 20-25 cm

¹ <https://www.ontario.ca/page/guide-eating-ontario-fish>

Please note that pre-impoundment modeling predictions done in collaboration with the Ministry as part of the Environmental Assessment, suggested the following baseline and peak mercury concentrations:

Table 3.2: Baseline and peak mercury concentrations for Northern Pike and Walleye

		Northern Pike	Walleye
Long Rapids	Baseline [Hg] (µg/g)	0.5	0.7
	Peak @ 296.3 m [Hg] (µg/g)	1.0	1.0

Table 3.2: Baseline and peak mercury concentrations for Northern Pike and Walleye

		Northern Pike	Walleye
Twin Falls	Baseline [Hg] (µg/g)	0.4	0.6
	Peak @ 313.0 m [Hg] (µg/g)	0.9	1.0

The most recent data collected in 2022/2023 (Year 6 post-impoundment) show no clear upward trend in mercury levels when comparing baseline values to current concentrations in standardized Northern Pike and Walleye samples. These encouraging results suggest that current mercury levels are more favorable than initially anticipated. The upcoming 2025 campaign (Year 9 post-impoundment) will provide critical data to further assess whether the hydro projects have had a measurable impact on the river system and to improve our collective understanding of the environmental implications of small-scale hydroelectric projects across the province.

As always, our team remains committed to working closely with your community. Should you have any questions or wish to discuss the information presented above, please do not hesitate to contact us directly. We would also like to extend our offer to hold an in-person meeting with NHI's staff to discuss potential concerns if any.

Sincerely,



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encl. Long Rapids and Twin Falls Mercury Monitoring Plans