

Hamilton Harbour Remedial Action Plan (HH RAP) Beneficial Uses

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TAINTING OF FISH AND WILDLIFE FLAVOUR



STATUS

2002 Status	Impaired	Requires Further Assessment	Not Impaired
2012 Status	Impaired	Requires Further Assessment	Not Impaired

APPROVED BY 2012 RAP STAKEHOLDER FORUM:

1. Beneficial Use ii status be updated from “requires further assessment” to “not impaired”.
2. No further assessment of Beneficial Use ii will be necessary prior to the Stage 3 Report.

2002 HH RAP Delisting Objective:

When survey results confirm no tainting of fish or wildlife flavour.

What Was the Original Problem in Hamilton Harbour?

The 1992 Stage 2 Report indicated no known impairment existing in HH fish as there had been no complaints. Tainting of wildlife flavour was also not observed. No formal study of tainting of fish and wildlife had yet been undertaken.

IJC Listing Guideline (1991):

When ambient water quality standards, objectives, or guidelines, for the anthropogenic substance(s) known to cause tainting, are being exceeded or survey results have identified tainting of fish or wildlife flavor.

IJC Delisting Guideline (1991):

When survey results confirm no tainting of fish or wildlife flavor.

How Are Things Today?

Through three lines of evidence (no public complaints, low phenolics loadings, and positive survey of users) this beneficial use can be considered to be not impaired in Hamilton Harbour.

- There are no known records of recent complaints regarding fish or wildlife tainting in Hamilton Harbour (HH) or Cootes Paradise (CP).
- Flavour tainting is traditionally related to phenols and current loadings to HH are likely too low to result in tainting of flavour. The estimated phenolics loadings to HH decreased substantially between 1974 (2600 kg/day) and 1989 (15 kg/day), with further decreases by 2006 (4 kg/day).
- Health Canada funded a survey of fish consumption by people fishing in HH and CP from 1995-1997 which did include a tainting question. There were only 2 reports of “fish taste or smell bad” out of 375 people asked (Scott 1998).

Other AOC Comparisons:

These lines of evidence are consistent with other AOCs. Detroit River AOC and St. Clair River AOC utilize surveys. Ohio AOCs test for water quality standards exceedences of compounds associated with tainting, as well as relying on reports of tainting from wildlife officials. Michigan AOCs rely on reports of tainting to officials followed with an analysis only if there are reports.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Where Can I Learn More?

- HHRAP. 2010. Contaminant Loadings and Concentrations to Hamilton Harbour: 2003-2007 Update.
- Scott, F. 1998. Down by the Bay: a profile of shoreline fishing and fish consumption in the Hamilton Harbour area.
- HHRAP. 1992. Remedial Action Plan for Hamilton Harbour: Environmental Conditions and Problem Definition. Second Edition of the Stage 1 Report.

Most references can be provided by the HH RAP Office as a PDF upon request

REFERENCES