

**Ministry of Natural
Resources and Forestry
31 Riverside Drive
Pembroke ON
K8A 8R6**

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Richesses Naturelles et des
Forêts
31 Riverside Drive
Pembroke ON
K8A 8R6**



The United Townships of Head, Clara & Maria
15 Township Hall Road
Stonecliffe, ON
K0J 2K0

April 26, 2023

Dear Sir/Madam:

Barbed wire hair trap surveys for bear population information

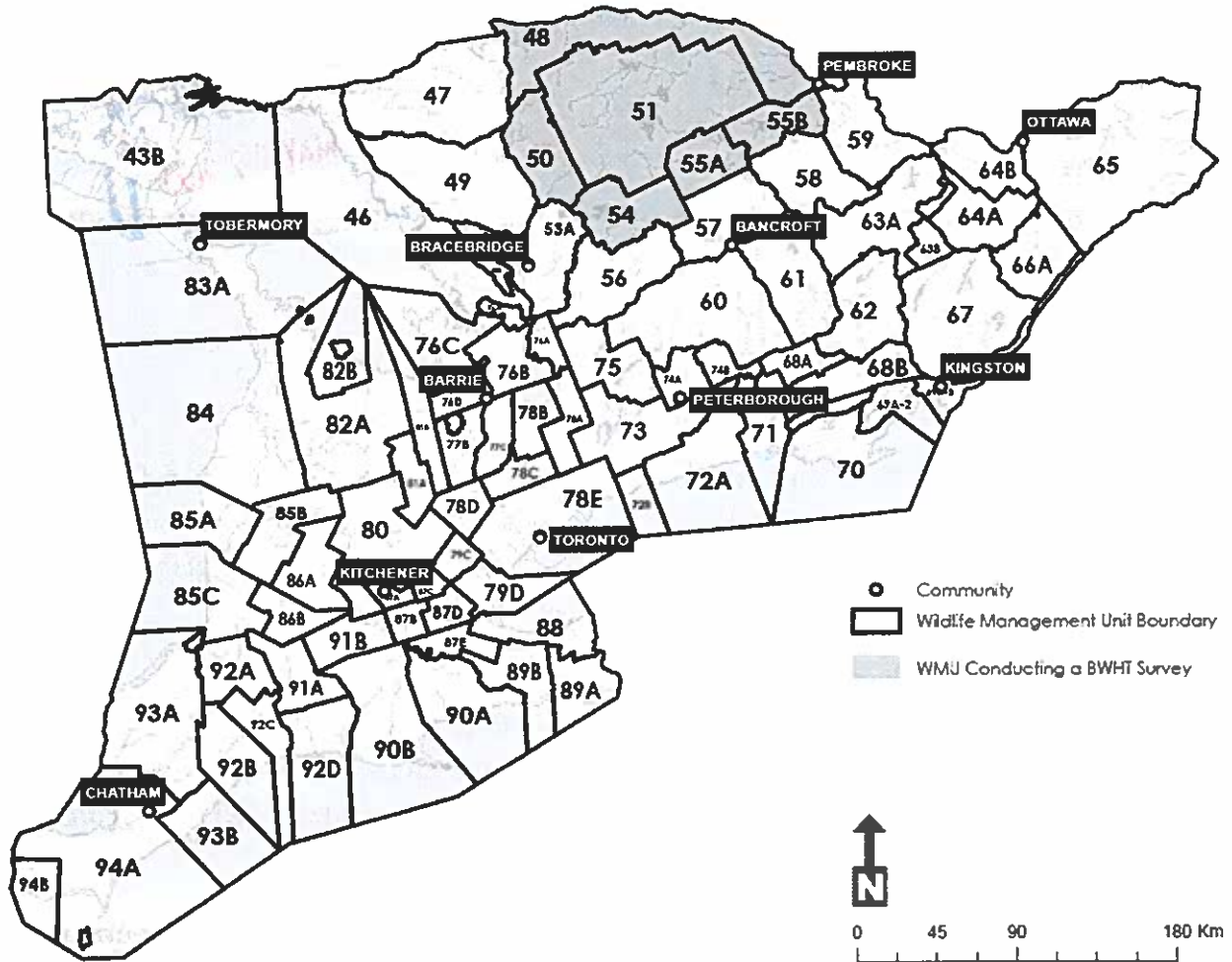
Beginning this year (2023) The Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF) will be conducting ongoing barbed wire hair trap (BWHT) surveys to monitor bear populations within Wildlife Management Units (WMU) that have active bear hunts. Your Bear Management Area (BMA) is in or near a WMU selected for a BWHT survey this year.

The bear hair trapping methodology, used broadly across North America, was introduced in Ontario in 2004 and is considered the most robust method for estimating black bear density. Ministry staff will be setting up survey stations with canned sardines to attract black bears. When the bear comes to the station, they brush past a strand of barbed wire, which captures a small hair sample. The bear is not injured during this process.

Ministry staff return to each station to collect the hair samples once a week for five weeks. The hair samples are submitted for DNA analysis to determine the sex and to identify individual bears. From this analysis we can determine how many bears are visiting the site. This data is used to estimate the density of bears in an area surrounding the BWHT survey line. The information is then used to make density estimates at the WMU and more broadly at a landscape level.

Safety

Safety of the public, your clients, and our staff is a priority for MNR. We want to ensure that you, hunters, and members of the public are aware that ministry staff are working in the area. The following are the general locations of our BWHT lines. We want to share this with you, so you are aware of the survey and duration of the sampling being conducted.



The surveys for 2023 are planned for the following WMUs:

- In Southern Ontario, in Wildlife Management Units 48, 50, 51, 54, 55A and 55B.
- In Northeastern Ontario, in Wildlife Management Units 35 and 38.
- In Northwestern Ontario, in Wildlife Management Units 15A and 15B.

Maps of planned areas are available upon request for each region, in English or French.

To submit teeth to us:

Mail the teeth you collect immediately to:

Big Game Harvest Assessment Program,
Natural Resources Information Section,
Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry
300 Water Street, 2nd Floor, North Tower,
Peterborough, ON, K9J 3C7

Your mailing envelope should have:

Both premolar teeth sealed in a sealed paper envelope and a note with:

1. Your name;
2. Your mailing address;
3. Your Ontario Outdoors Card number;
4. The date the bear was shot;
5. The sex of the bear; and,
6. The Wildlife Management Unit (WMU) number where the bear was shot.

Ontario Bear Hunter Crest

In return for your support, an Ontario Bear Hunter Crest will be mailed to the home address you have provided. MNRF will also mail you information about the age of the bear(s) you submitted teeth for, usually within six months of receiving their teeth and information.



More information

For more information, please contact the MNRF office in the area you will be hunting, or your black bear hunting service provider.

The annual Ontario Hunting Regulations Summary outlines the rules and regulations for hunting in Ontario and provides information about this program:

www.ontario.ca/document/ontario-hunting-regulations-summary

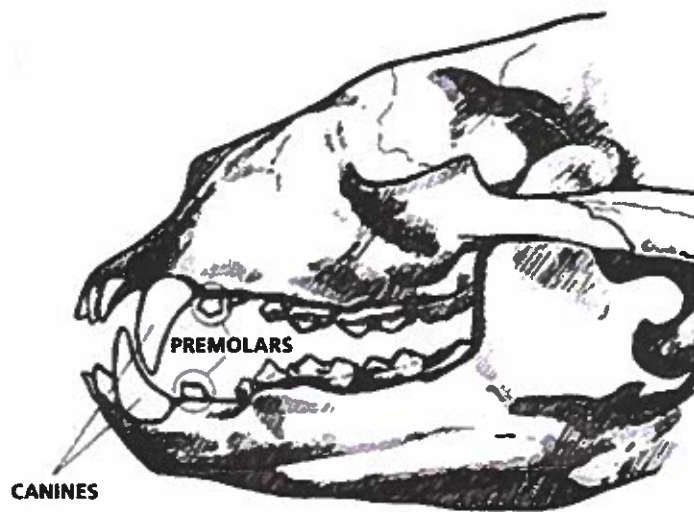
Hunters: You Can Contribute to Ontario's Understanding of the Bear Population

Submit both premolar teeth from each black bear you harvest to provide vital data used by Ontario to make sustainable population management decisions.

Ontario needs your help

Successful black bear hunters can assist the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF) to determine the age structure of local bear populations. This information provides data to assist the ministry to sustainably manage the species.

How to extract and send us teeth



Both premolar teeth should be extracted shortly after the animal has been harvested, while the jaw is still pliable.

The first premolar is a small, single-rooted, peg-like tooth located just behind the canines, on the top and bottom jaws.

To remove the tooth, push the blade of a knife down along all sides of the tooth between it and the gum.

Gently loosen the tooth by rocking it back and forth using the canine for leverage, then carefully remove the tooth using pliers. Care should be taken when extracting the tooth to ensure the root is not broken.

Please retain a small amount of the flesh around each tooth. Air dry the sample so that it is not wet to the touch and place them in a sealed paper envelope.

The beginning and end of survey lines will be marked with large signs, as well as a smaller sign at each sampling station. Ministry staff will be wearing brightly coloured safety clothing while working in the area.

How Can You Help?

Our BWHT project analysis relies on the assumption that bear numbers within the study area don't change during the survey. This is difficult to control in a wild population, and even more so when an active hunt is underway. To help determine which bears from BWHT project trap lines are removed due to hunting, we ask that you continue to submit two premolar teeth from each bear killed during the spring and fall bear hunting seasons.

In addition to using these teeth for aging purposes, we can now extract DNA and determine if these individuals were present in our BWHT surveys. Please see the attached information sheet explaining how teeth can be submitted for analysis.

To age a tooth, a thin section is taken from the root of each tooth. The section is then stained to make it easy to see the rings of the tooth. Just like rings in a tree, the rings visible on the root of the tooth can be counted to indicate the age of the bear.

If you have any questions about this survey, please contact: Katrina McCann – 613-401-3608

Thank you for your contribution to ongoing efforts in assessing black bear populations in Ontario.



Corrie Bourgois
A/District Supervisor
Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry
Pembroke District

Attachment: Information sheet