

White Lake Checkup: August 16, 2025

August 16 marked the 7th water sampling session of the year. It was a beautiful day on the lake. It was sunny but hazy probably from forest fire smoke. There was no wind. We visited nine sampling sites (using GPS) and measured water temperatures, water clarity and water depth at the Waba Creek dam. Water samples were also taken for analysis of phosphorus, calcium and chloride. These samples were mailed to the Ministry of the Environment Labs for processing. Also collected were plankton samples using a specialized net. These samples were analyzed later using an optical microscope.

Water Temperature: The water temperature in the deeper parts of the lake was 25.2°C, about 1.6 degrees warmer than last year at this time. In the shallower parts, the temperature was about the same at 25.0°C.

Please note that we measure water temperatures away from shorelines and at a depth corresponding to the Secchi depth which is about 4 metres. Water temperatures at the shoreline can be several degrees higher especially if there is no wind to help mix lake waters. For example, the temperature along the shoreline at 9 am this morning was 27°C.

Water Clarity: Water clarity as expressed as the Secchi depth was 4.5 metres which was 0.5 metres more (clear) than last year. Water clarity ranged from 4.1 to 5.1 at the deeper sampling sites. This indicates that biological activity varied considerably in different parts of the lake.

Water Depth: The depth of the lake as measured at the gauge at the dam was 130.0 cm as compared to the target depth of 131.1 cm. For the last two years, lake levels have been relatively high. The current drought has influenced lake levels, but at the moment, levels are high enough to support the lake and a required minimum outflow to support ecosystems in Waba Creek.

Cormorant Count: Nine cormorants were observed on the lake. There were twelve last year at this time. White Lake continues to support a stable very small number of cormorants.

Tape Grass: During this time of year, large mats of tape grass, also known as eel grass, can be found floating on the lake. This occurs every year and is most noticeable when lake levels begin to drop. To find out more about tape grass and how it forms floating mats, please read the Environment Bulletin entitled "Tape Grass":

https://wlpp.ca/linked/tape_grass_env_bulletin.pdf

Note that all of this year's White Lake Checkups are available for download from the homepage of the White Lake Science website: <https://wlpp.ca>

Contact us at envwlpoa@gmail.com if you have questions or concerns or if you would like to be added to our emailing list and receive all of our reports, bulletins, and checkups.

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