WHITE LAKE CHECKUP: May 26, 2025

The lake was calm when we (Conrad Grégoire and David Overholt) set out for our second water sampling run of the year. The air temperature was about 13°C when we started. We collected plankton samples at each of our 9 sampling sites as well as measured water clarity (Secchi Depth) and temperature. The plankton samples were analyzed later using an optical microscope.

Water Temperature: The water temperature in the deeper parts of the lake was 14.7°C. The temperature last year at this time was a much warmer 18.7°C. We can all acknowledge that we have had a cool spring. Clearly, lake water temperatures are linked to atmospheric temperatures and do vary from year to year.

Water Clarity: Water clarity as expressed as the Secchi Depth was 6.1 metres. Last year at this time, water clarity was an average of 5.0 metres. There many be a trend towards higher water clarity from year to year. This is not necessarily good news because it could possibly indicate that zebra mussels are increasing in numbers or that quagga mussels have entered the lake. We have not identified quagga mussels to be present, but this species of mussel has replaced most of the zebra mussels in the Great Lakes. Unlike their cousins, the zebra mussels, quagga mussels can live on surfaces, like bottom mud, where zebra mussels cannot survive. We will keep you posted.

Water Depth: The depth of the lake as measured at the gauge at the dam was 156 cm (154 cm last year) as compared to the target depth of 152 cm. This is 4 centimetres higher than called for in the water depth plan for the lake. The abundant rain we have received recently is likely responsible for the higher lake level.

Cormorants: We did not observe any cormorants on White Lake during our sampling run. Last year 12 cormorants were counted. The absence of these native birds could be due to the colder weather we have been experiencing this spring.

Bass Fishing: Although the bass fishing season will not be open for several more weeks, we did see 4 fishing parties casting their lines along the shoreline. At a shallow spot on the lake, we saw two very large bass circling and guarding their nests from predators. Everyone should know that if an adult bass is distracted from its nest for even a few minutes, all of its eggs or small fry can be eaten by waiting predators within a minute or two.

To learn more about White Lake please read the State of the Lake Report:

and visit the White Lake Science and Information website:

The website contains everything ever published about White Lake (that we could find) including all of our Annual and Special Reports and Environment Bulletins.

Conrad Grégoire and David Overholt

Environment Volunteers, White Lake Property Owners Association