



Mississippi Valley Conservation



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*State of the Lake
Environment Report
2006*

Bennett Lake



“THE RIBBON OF LIFE”

Where the Land Meets the Water

Water quality is affected by many things: erosion and runoff from clearing of shorelines, the use of artificial fertilizers and leachate from sewage disposal systems resulting in too many nutrients reaching the lake. Phosphorus is the key nutrient of concern, too many nutrients can cause weed and algae growth and threatens fish habitat by reducing oxygen levels.

The shallow waters and first 10 metres of shore land form a "Ribbon of Life" around our lakes. This ribbon - where the land meets the water - is where much of the lake life is born, raised and fed. Many landowners, unaware of the importance of this area, have cleared the shorelines of native vegetation and replaced it with lawns, non-native ornamental vegetation, retaining walls and boathouses. This has had a negative affect on fish and wildlife habitat and water quality. Natural vegetation retained or restored along the shoreline helps prevent erosion and improves water quality by binding nutrients before they can enter the lake.

Mississippi Valley Conservation has long recognized the recreational and aesthetic value of lakes within the watershed and is committed to maintaining and protecting water quality and fish habitat. Mississippi Valley Conservation has joined together with volunteer Lake Stewards throughout the watershed to take steps to protect and restore water quality by launching the *Watershed Watch* program in 1998. *Watershed Watch* is an environmental monitoring and awareness program. The objectives of the program are to collect reliable environmental data to document current water quality conditions and use the data as an essential educational tool to encourage residents to adopt sound stewardship practices aimed at preserving and protecting water quality. Together we will encourage and assist shoreline residents, both seasonal and permanent, to become personal stewards of their lake by taking an active role in restoring and enhancing their shoreline to maintain water quality and a healthy lake environment.

Recreational water quality is generally expressed in terms of how clear the water appears. Water clarity is influenced by the amount of phytoplankton or microscopic algae present in the water; **chlorophyll a** is the green pigment in the phytoplankton. Water clarity is measured with a **Secchi Disc**, a 20 cm black and white disk attached to a measured line and lowered into the lake until it is no longer visible. The amount of nutrients entering the lake, in particular **phosphorus**, influences the amount of algae growing in the lake. Water clarity decreases with elevated concentrations of algae and therefore Secchi disc values are less. After the spring warming period there is a continuous supply of algae in the surface waters of the lake to the deep water areas where it decomposes and uses up the natural supply of oxygen. In severe circumstances this may eliminate habitat for fish species which require the cold, deep water portions to survive. Through *Watershed Watch* forty-two base lakes in the watershed will be monitored for these key water quality indicators; **total phosphorus, chlorophyll a, dissolved oxygen and temperature profiles and water clarity.**

BENNETT LAKE

Bennett Lake is a warm water lake located in the amalgamated Township of Bathurst Burgess Sherbrooke. According to Tay Valley Township as of 2006 there were 205 properties with lake frontage. The parcels are broken up as follows; 1 conservation area, 4 commercial properties, 2 farm related properties, 50 vacant lots/recreational properties, 1 island, 2 parcels of common land, 22 residential parcels and 103 seasonal/residential parcels.

Bennett Lake Facts

Elevation: 158m. above sea level

Perimeter: 35 kilometres

Deepest Point: 12.2m

Fisheries Include: Small / Largemouth Bass

Northern Pike

Yellow Perch

Rock Bass



Residents of Bennett Lake have volunteered their time in the past, to provide water quality testing in the south basin, through the Ministry of the Environment (MOE) Self Help Program in 1980 and Lake Partner Program in 1997. This data is extremely valuable and provides a general picture of water quality conditions over the past 26 years. Comprehensive testing in 2001 and 2006 through Mississippi Valley Conservation's (MVC) *Watershed Watch Program* provides for a comparison between water quality conditions as they exist now, to results obtained 31 years ago through the MOE Recreational Lakes Program.

In general the water quality in Bennett Lake is good. There are two sampling stations at the deepest points in the north and south basins as indicated on the map included in this report. Each station was sampled three times in 2006. Graphs will follow that show water clarity, as measured by Secchi Disc. The average for the two stations in 2006 is 4.3 metres indicating that Bennett Lake is a moderately enriched (some nutrients) or mesotrophic lake.

Directly related to water clarity is the amount of nutrients, in particular phosphorus, entering the lake. The Provincial Water Quality Objective for Total Phosphorus for Bennett Lake is 20 micrograms/litre (*ug/L*). The average for the two stations in the euphotic zone (penetration of light) for 2006 is 10.7*ug/L* indicating a moderately enriched lake. The mean for the samples taken one metre off the bottom is 24.4*ug/L*, indicating an enriched lake environment.

Chlorophyll a is a measure of the algal density in the lake. The average chlorophyll a densities for the two sampling stations in 2006 was 2.9micrograms/litre indicating a moderate algal density for Bennett Lake in 2006.

Plants and animals are a direct reflection of their environment. The most critical time of year for conducting dissolved oxygen and temperature profiles is after August 31. Profiles are generally conducted at this time of year and at the deepest point in the lake. Aquatic vegetation and algae that has grown over the summer, has died off and settled on the bottom, using the available oxygen necessary to sustain aquatic life in the lower portion of the lake or the hypolimnion.

The dissolved oxygen and temperature data, measured at the deepest points in the north and south basin show that by mid July warm water fish species, such as pike and bass, are squeezed into the upper five metres of the lake. Therefore, residents and users of Bennett Lake cannot afford to be complacent. Every effort should be made to reduce nutrient loading into the lake from land use activities.

Bennett Lake was also tested for invasive species in 2006, in particular, for zebra mussels and spiny water flea, in partnership with the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters. Bennett Lake did *not* have spiny water flea present but zebra mussel veligers (larvae) were detected in the samples collected. Residents and property owners need to ensure that all access points to the lake have posted signs indicating the presence of zebra mussels and the precautions they can take to avoid the spread of invasive species to other lakes.

Residents and users of Bennett Lake need to adopt a stewardship approach to limit the amount of nutrients entering the lake. There are helpful tips throughout this report to help reduce your impact on Bennett Lake. Additional water quality data, current and historic, is available for Bennett Lake and many other lakes in the Mississippi Valley watershed. Contact MVC for more information on how you can become a good lake steward for your lake. We all have a responsibility to preserve this precious natural resource for future generations.

How Does Bennett Lake Measure Up?

1980 – 2006 WATER QUALITY RESULTS – MAIN BASIN

Sample Year Mean	Secchi Disc Depth (Metres)	Total Phosphorus Euphotic Zone (Micrograms/litre)	Total Phosphorus 1 Metre off Bottom (Micrograms/litre)	Chlorophyll <u>a</u> Composite (Micrograms/litre)
**1975 (South)	3.0	22.0	*20.0	6.94
**1980 (South)	3.4	*13.2	*230.0	5.49
1997 (South)	5.0	*18.0	N/A	N/A
2001 (South)	3.5	11.6	138.5	5.73
2001 (North)	3.4	12.9	9.0	4.91
*2006 (South)	4.4	11.3	28.7	2.73
*2006 (North)	4.2	10.0	20.0	3.07
N	7	7	6	6
Mean	3.84	13.6	49.05	4.81
Standard Deviation	0.70677	4.829389	60.17566	1.625404

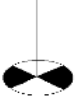
*Mean based on less than 6 measurements **Includes Recreational Lakes Program Data

Chlorophyll a data prior to 1985 has been adjusted to reflect new lab procedures
in filtering resulting in an increase in chl.a concentrations by 35%

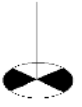
MOE Self-Help Program sampling station located at the deepest point – south basin

Please note that the north basin does not have any historical water quality data available

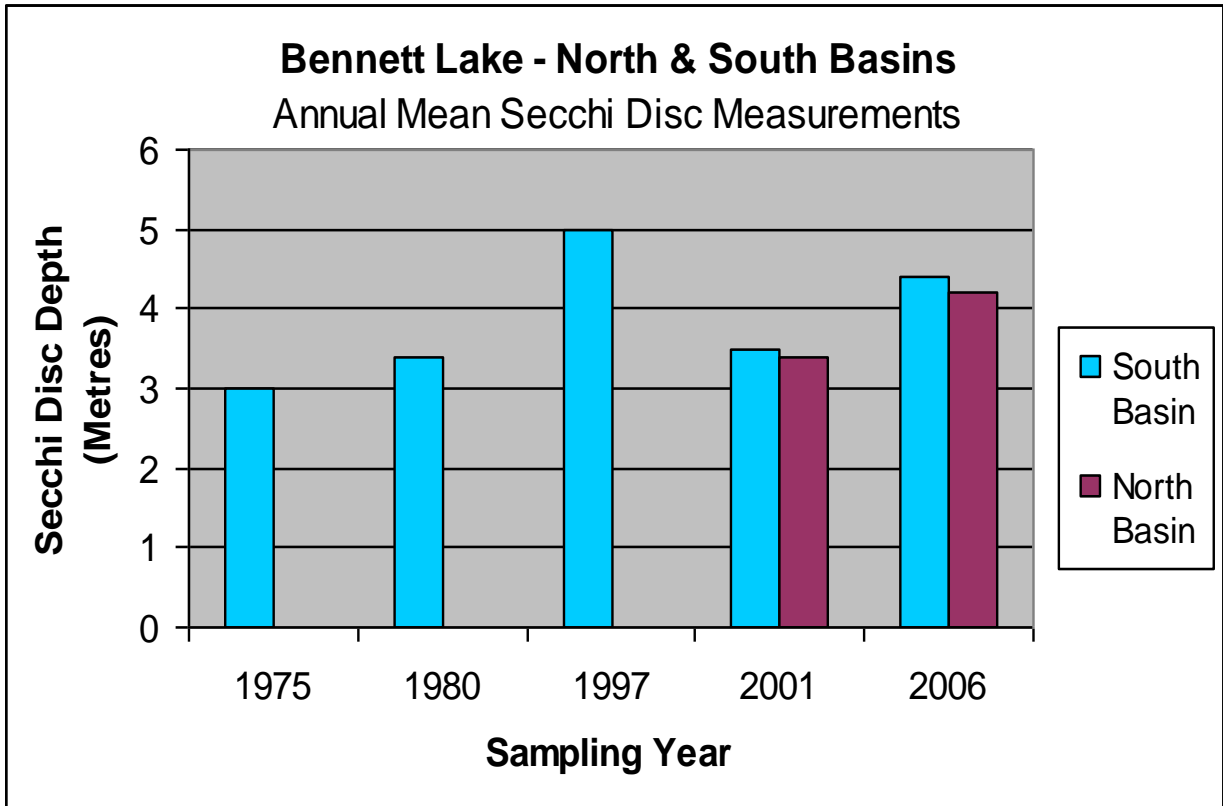
LOW PHOSPHORUS LIFESTYLE	Amount of Phosphorus (grams)	HIGH PHOSPHORUS LIFESTYLE	Amount of Phosphorus (grams)
Human waste	535	Human waste	535
No dishwasher	0	Dishwasher using powdered detergent once per day	650
No fertilizer	0	Lawn fertilized once/year	1960
Trees not cut down	20	Lot cleared of trees	30
Uses phosphate-free products	20	Uses products with phosphate	180
TOTAL	575 grams	TOTAL	3355 grams



The higher the Secchi Disc measurement the clearer your lake is!

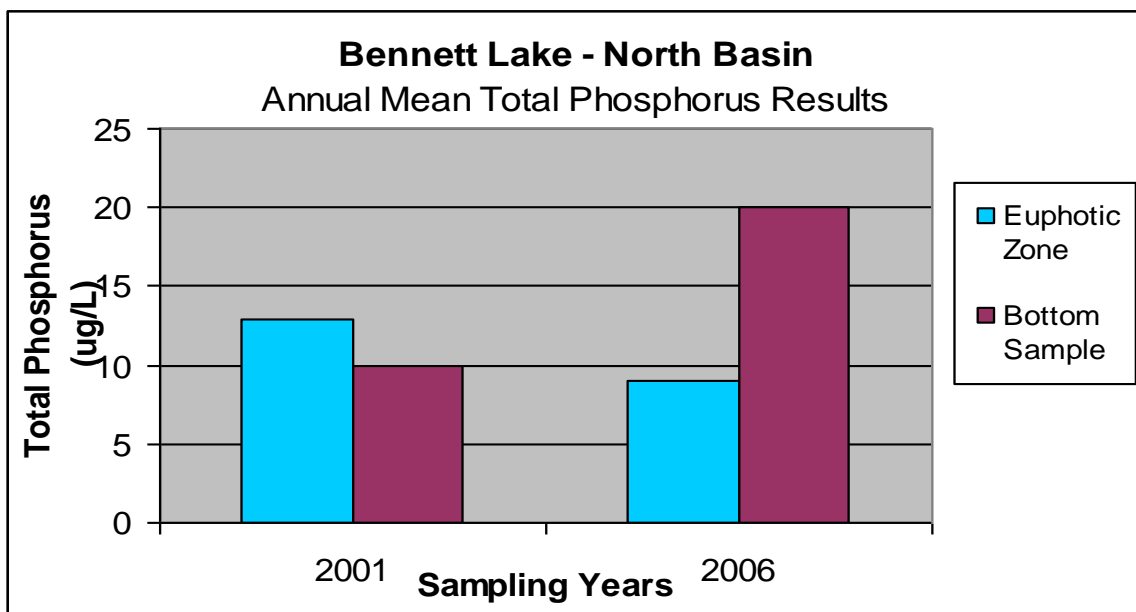
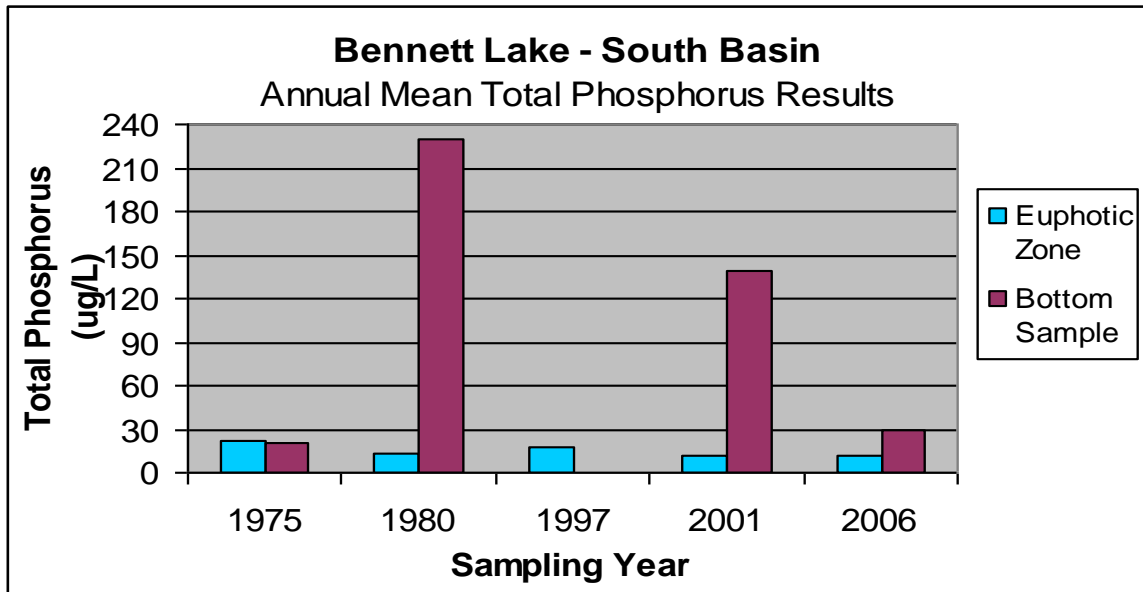


INTERPRETING YOUR SECCHI DISC RESULTS	
Secchi Reading	Lake Nutrient Status
Over 5 metres	Oligotrophic - unenriched, few nutrients
3.0 to 4.9 metres	Mesotrophic – moderately enriched, some nutrients
Less than 2.9 metres	Eutrophic – enriched, higher levels of nutrients



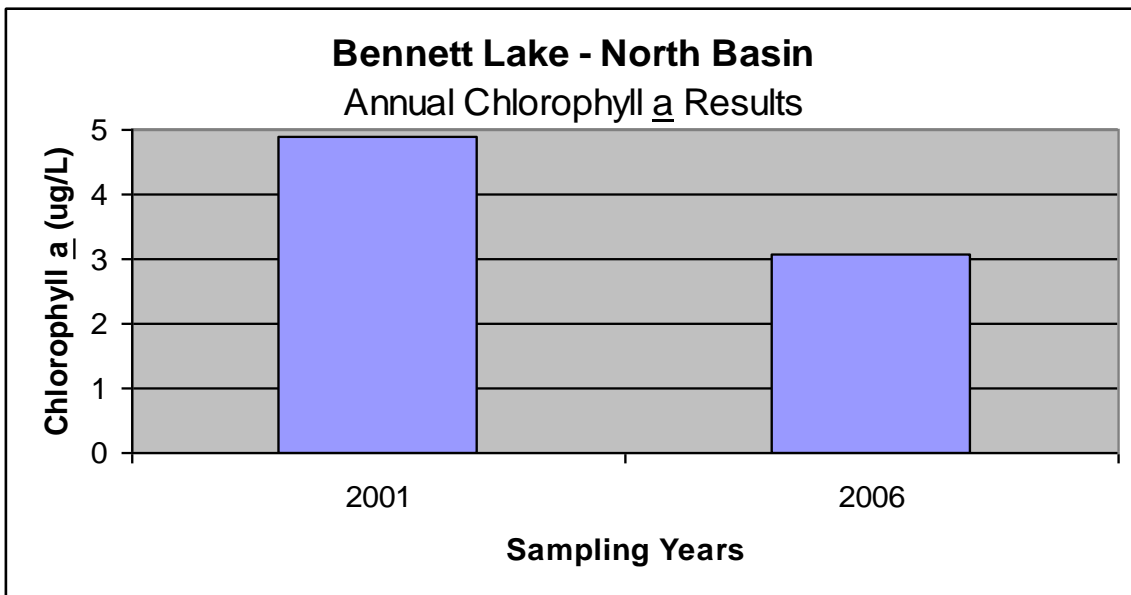
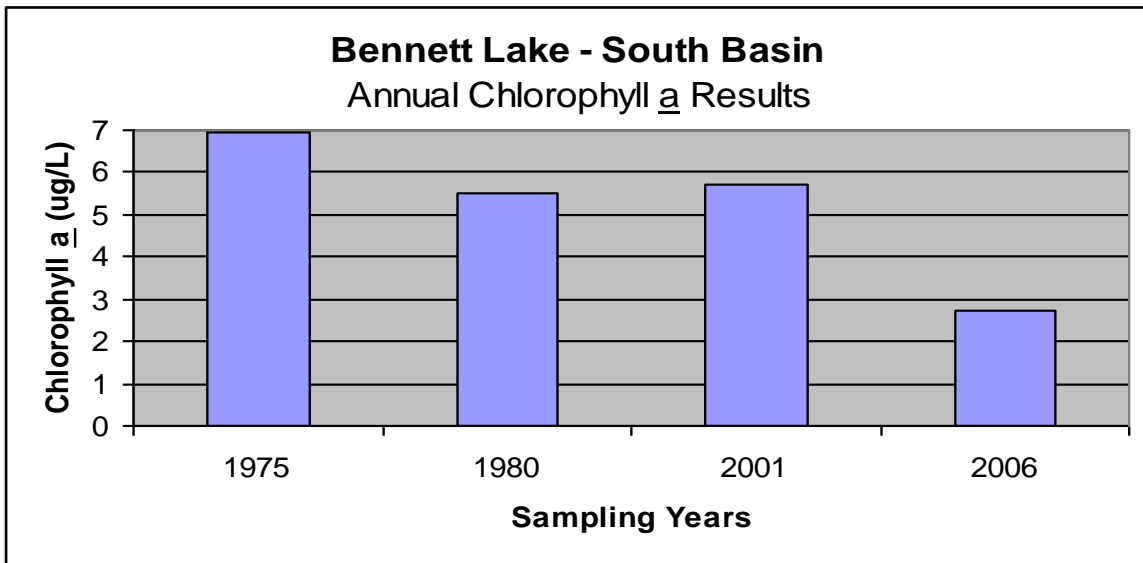
The lower the phosphorus reading, the clearer your lake is!

Nutrient Loading and How to Interpret the Water Quality Result :	
If the Total Phosphorus Reading is...	Your Lake is...
10 ug/L or less	Oligotrophic - unenriched, few nutrients
11 to 20 ug/L	Mesotrophic – moderately enriched, some nutrients
21 ug/L or more	Eutrophic – enriched, higher levels of nutrients

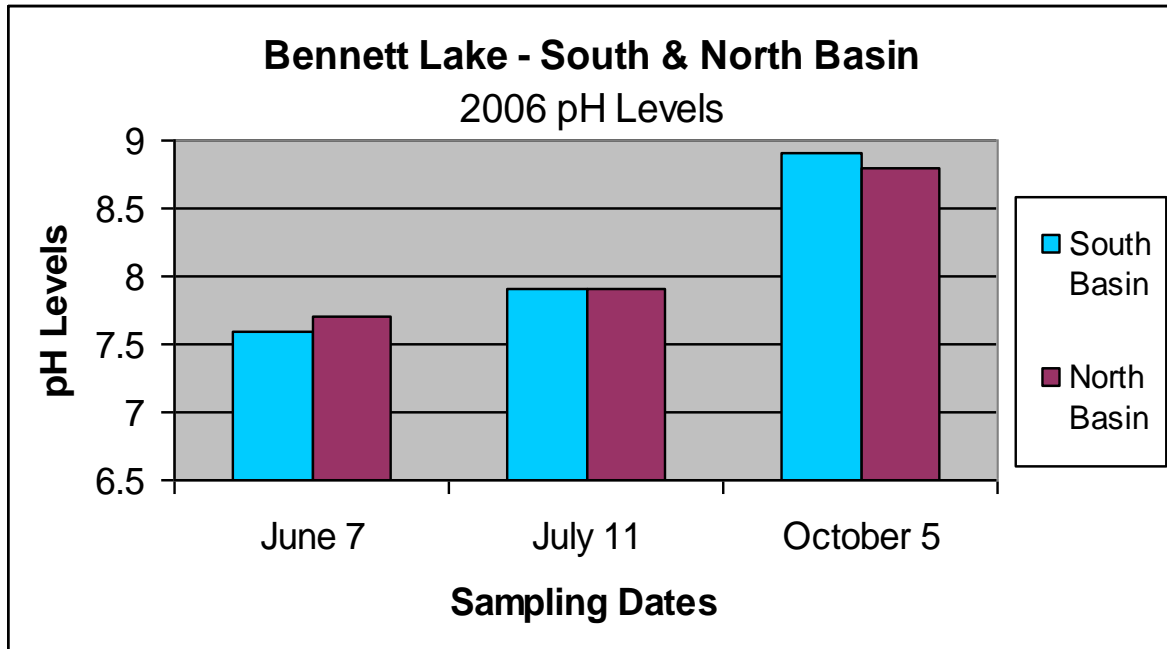


The lower the Chlorophyll a density, the clearer your lake is!

Nutrient Loading and How to Interpret the Water Quality Result :	
If the Chlorophyll <u>a</u> density is...	Your Lake is...
Up to 2 ug/L (low algal density)	Oligotrophic - unenriched, few nutrients
2 – 4 ug/L (moderate algal density)	Mesotrophic – moderately enriched, some nutrients
More than 4 ug/L (high algal density)	Eutrophic – enriched, higher levels of nutrients



Lakes with pH levels of 7.3 or higher are vulnerable to zebra mussel invasives!



For more information on lakes in the
Mississippi Valley Watershed, visit MVC
online at

www.mvc.on.ca



BENNETT LAKE – SOUTH BASIN

DISSOLVED OXYGEN / TEMPERATURE PROFILE

MOE Rec. Lks. Station # 18-3430-727-01 MVC Station # 06-09

Date: June 7, 2006

Depth: 10 Metres

Euphotic Zone (Penetration of Light) = 9 Metres

Depth (Metres)	Temperature (Degrees Celsius)	Dissolved Oxygen (Milligrams/Litre)	Percent % Saturation	Thermal Stratification
0.1	22.6	10.0	110	Epilimnion
1.0	22.5	11.1	123	
2.0	22.0	11.0	120	
3.0	19.9	10.2	107	Thermocline
4.0	17.8	10.0	100	
5.0	15.5	9.0	86	
6.0	13.6	8.6	78	
7.0	12.6	5.4	47	
8.0	10.3	5.2	43	
9.0	9.5	2.6	21	Hypolimnion
10.0	Bottom	Bottom	Bottom	

BENNETT LAKE – NORTH BASIN

DISSOLVED OXYGEN / TEMPERATURE PROFILE

MOE Rec. Lks. Station # Unknown MVC Station # 06-08

Date: June 7, 2006

Depth: 7 Metres

Euphotic Zone (Penetration of Light) = 9 Metres

Depth (Metres)	Temperature (Degrees Celsius)	Dissolved Oxygen (Milligrams/Litre)	Percent % Saturation	Thermal Stratification
0.1	22.1	11.0	120	Epilimnion
1.0	22.0	10.4	113	
2.0	21.8	11.2	122	
3.0	20.8	10.7	114	
4.0	17.9	11.1	112	Thermocline
5.0	16.3	8.4	83	
6.0	16.1	8.0	78	Hypolimnion
7.0	Bottom	Bottom	Bottom	

Warm Water Fish Habitat (Bass, Walleye, Pike, Perch) = Dissolved Oxygen greater than 4 mg/L at less than 25 Degrees Celsius

BENNETT LAKE – SOUTH BASIN

DISSOLVED OXYGEN / TEMPERATURE PROFILE

MOE Rec. Lks. Station # 18-3430-727-01 MVC Station # 06-09

Date: July 11, 2006

Depth: 11 Metres

Euphotic Zone (Penetration of Light) = 9 Metres

Depth (Metres)	Temperature (Degrees Celsius)	Dissolved Oxygen (Milligrams/Litre)	Percent % Saturation	Thermal Stratification
0.1	23.9	8.0	90	Epilimnion
1.0	23.9	7.8	88	
2.0	23.9	7.9	89	
3.0	23.9	7.8	88	
4.0	23.4	7.6	80	
5.0	20.9	5.0	52	
6.0	17.1	3.0	28	Thermocline
7.0	13.0	1.0	10	
8.0	11.3	0.6	3	
9.0	10.3	0.5	2	
10.0	9.7	0.4	2	Hypolimnion
11.0	Bottom	Bottom	Bottom	

BENNETT LAKE – NORTH BASIN

DISSOLVED OXYGEN / TEMPERATURE PROFILE

MOE Rec. Lks. Station # Unknown MVC Station # 06-08

Date: July 11, 2006

Depth: 7 Metres

Euphotic Zone (Penetration of Light) = 9 Metres

Depth (Metres)	Temperature (Degrees Celsius)	Dissolved Oxygen (Milligrams/Litre)	Percent % Saturation	Thermal Stratification
0.1	24.4	7.9	91	Epilimnion
1.0	24.4	8.0	92	
2.0	24.4	8.1	94	
3.0	24.3	8.2	94	
4.0	24.2	8.0	92	
5.0	24.0	7.8	89	
6.0	22.2	2.4	25	Thermocline
7.0	Bottom	Bottom	Bottom	

Warm Water Fish Habitat (Bass, Walleye, Pike, Perch) = Dissolved Oxygen greater than 4 mg/L at less than 25 Degrees Celsius

BENNETT LAKE – SOUTH BASIN

DISSOLVED OXYGEN / TEMPERATURE PROFILE

MOE Rec. Lks. Station # 18-3430-727-01 MVC Station # 06-09

Date: October 5, 2006

Depth: 12 Metres

Euphotic Zone (Penetration of Light) = 8.5 Metres

Depth (Metres)	Temperature (Degrees Celsius)	Dissolved Oxygen (Milligrams/Litre)	Percent % Saturation	Thermal Stratification
0.1	14.9	9.2	86	Epilimnion
1.0	14.9	9.2	86	
2.0	14.7	9.3	87	
3.0	14.7	9.2	86	
4.0	14.7	9.3	87	
5.0	14.6	9.1	85	
6.0	14.6	9.1	85	
7.0	14.6	9.0	84	
8.0	14.6	9.0	84	Thermocline
9.0	13.0	1.6	14	
10.0	11.2	1.4	12	
11.0	9.7	0.8	6	
12.0	Bottom	Bottom	Bottom	

BENNETT LAKE – NORTH BASIN

DISSOLVED OXYGEN / TEMPERATURE PROFILE

MOE Rec. Lks. Station # Unknown MVC Station # 06-08

Date: October 5, 2006

Depth: 5 Metres

Euphotic Zone (Penetration of Light) = 7 Metres

Depth (Metres)	Temperature (Degrees Celsius)	Dissolved Oxygen (Milligrams/Litre)	Percent % Saturation	Thermal Stratification
0.1	14.8	9.0	85	Epilimnion
1.0	14.8	9.2	86	
2.0	14.7	9.2	86	
3.0	14.7	9.2	86	
4.0	14.7	9.1	85	
5.0	Bottom	Bottom	Bottom	

Warm Water Fish Habitat (Bass, Walleye, Pike, Perch) = Dissolved Oxygen greater than 4 mg/L at less than 25 Degrees Celsius

How to protect or restore a shoreline depends on the conditions of the site and the energy and resources of the owner.

There are four main strategies to choose from:

1.) **PRESERVATION** – When purchasing lakefront property, a natural shoreline is retained and access to the lake is designed to avoid shoreline damage.

3.) **ENHANCEMENT** – Native species are planted non-native species are removed.



2.) **NATURALIZATION** – Degraded shorelines are left alone to return to their natural state.

4.) **RESTORATION** – Cleared areas are planted with native species.



Mississippi Valley Conservation

*The **Watershed Watch program** was made possible thanks to the generous support of the Ministry of Environment, Lake Associations, area Stewardship Councils, the Lake Stewardship Network and concerned citizens. A special thanks to Bill Finley who donated his boat and time to help complete our sampling season.*

For more information regarding *Watershed Watch* or for advice on how you can help protect and enhance your lake environment, contact Susan Lee, Watershed Monitoring Supervisor at Mississippi Valley Conservation. (613) 259-2421 or slee@mvc.on.ca

