



Mississippi Valley Conservation

State of the Lake Environment Report 2009

Big Gull Lake



Big Gull Lake

Big Gull Lake is located in the Townships of Central and North Frontenac. Big Gull Lake is at an elevation of 253 metres above sea level. The lake perimeter is approximately 88 kilometres and the deepest point is 26 metres. Big Gull Lake supports a warm water fishery, in particular Lake Whitefish, Lake Herring, Walleye, Northern Pike, Smallmouth and Largemouth Bass. Currently, accurate shoreline development information is not available. However at last count in the early 1970's, there were approximately 280 cottages on the lake.

How Does Big Gull Lake Measure Up?

1975 - 2009 WATER QUALITY RESULTS - Big Gull Lake - West Basin

Sample Year [Various Stations]	Secchi Disc Depth [Metres]	Total Phosphorus Euphotic Zone [Micrograms/Litre]	Total Phosphorus 1 Metre off Bottom [Micrograms/Litre]	Chlorophyll a Composite [Micrograms/Litre]
**1975	2.2	20.0	22.0	7.46
1999	3.9	11.8		1.54
2004	4.2	8.3	8.1	2.73
*2009	4.3	7.2	9	4.4
n	4	4	3	4
Minimum	2.2	7.2	8.1	1.5
Maximum	4.3	20.0	22.0	7.5
Mean	3.7	11.8	13.0	4.0
Standard Deviation	0.98914104	5.802352253	7.768888809	2.568519353

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

Chlorophylla data prior to 1985 has been adjusted to reflect new lab procedures
in filtering resulting in an increase in chla concentrations by 35%

1973 - 2009 WATER QUALITY RESULTS - Big Gull Lake - Main Basin

Sample Year	Secchi Disc Depth	Total Phosphorus Euphotic Zone	Total Phosphorus 1 Metre off Bottom	Chlorophyll a Composite
[Various Stations]	[Metres]	[Micrograms/Litre]	[Micrograms/Litre]	[Micrograms/Litre]
*1973	5.3			2.20
**1975	4.1	14.9	10.0	3.30
1999	4.4	11.0	12.5	2.10
2004	4.2	5.9	6.1	2.61
*2009	5.1	4.8	***1.8	1.80
n	5	4	4	5
Minimum	4.1	4.8	1.8	1.8
Maximum	4.4	14.9	12.5	3.3
Mean	4.6	9.1	7.6	2.4
Standard Deviation	0.53751279	4.693978412	4.695859879	0.579672321

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

Chlorophylla data prior to 1985 has been adjusted to reflect new lab procedures
in filtering resulting in an increase in chla concentrations by 35%

*** Mean based on two samples as third sample was unusable.

1975 - 2009 WATER QUALITY RESULTS - Big Gull Lake - East Basin

Sample Year	Secchi Disc Depth	Total Phosphorus Euphotic Zone	Total Phosphorus 1 Metre off Bottom	Chlorophyll a Composite
[Various Stations]	[Metres]	[Micrograms/Litre]	[Micrograms/Litre]	[Micrograms/Litre]
**1975	3.9	14.2	8.0	7.50
1999	4.3	12.0	18.0	1.80
2004	4.3	4.9	4.5	2.14
*2009	5.5	5.2	***7.0	1.90
n	4	4	4	4
Minimum	3.9	4.9	4.5	1.8
Maximum	5.5	14.2	18.0	7.5
Mean	4.5	9.1	9.4	3.3
Standard Deviation	0.69379992	4.741125042	5.935416301	2.780329717

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

Chlorophylla data prior to 1985 has been adjusted to reflect new lab procedures
in filtering resulting in an increase in chla concentrations by 35%

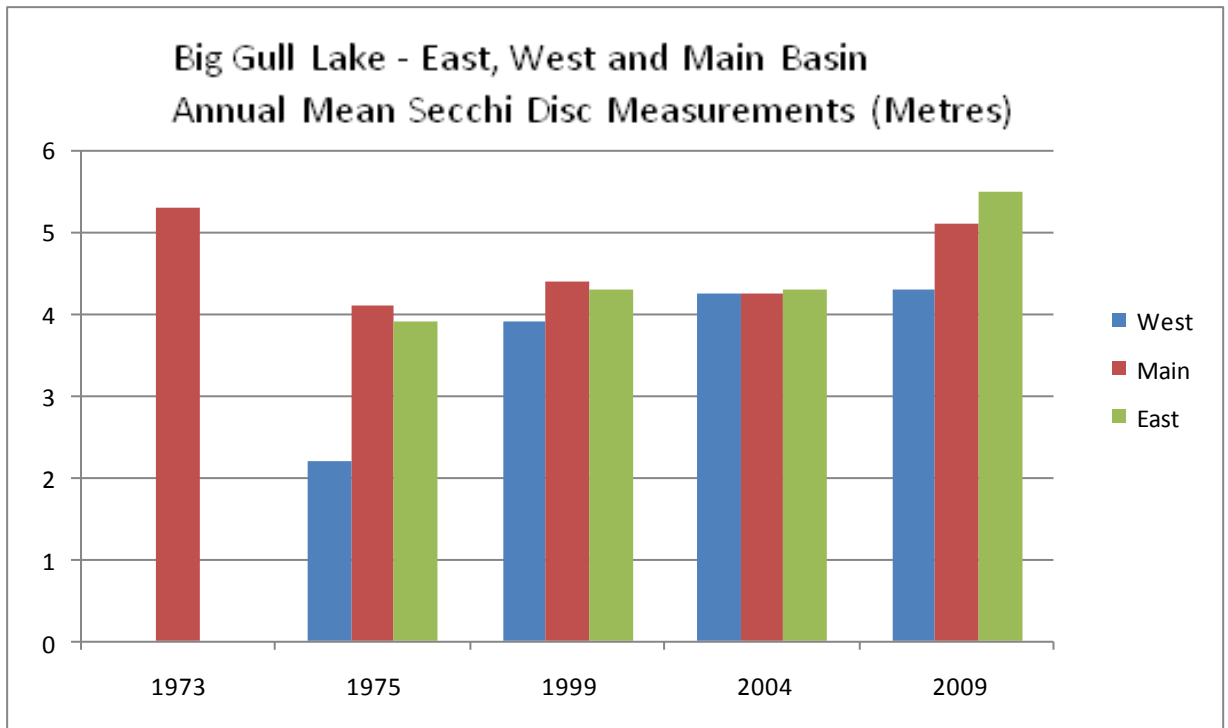
***Mean based on two samples as third sample was unusable.

Interpreting Secchi Disc Readings

Secchi disc is a black and white coloured disc used to determine water clarity. The disc is lowered into the water. The point, at which you can no longer distinguish the black and white, is called the Secchi depth.

The higher the Secchi Disc measurement the clearer

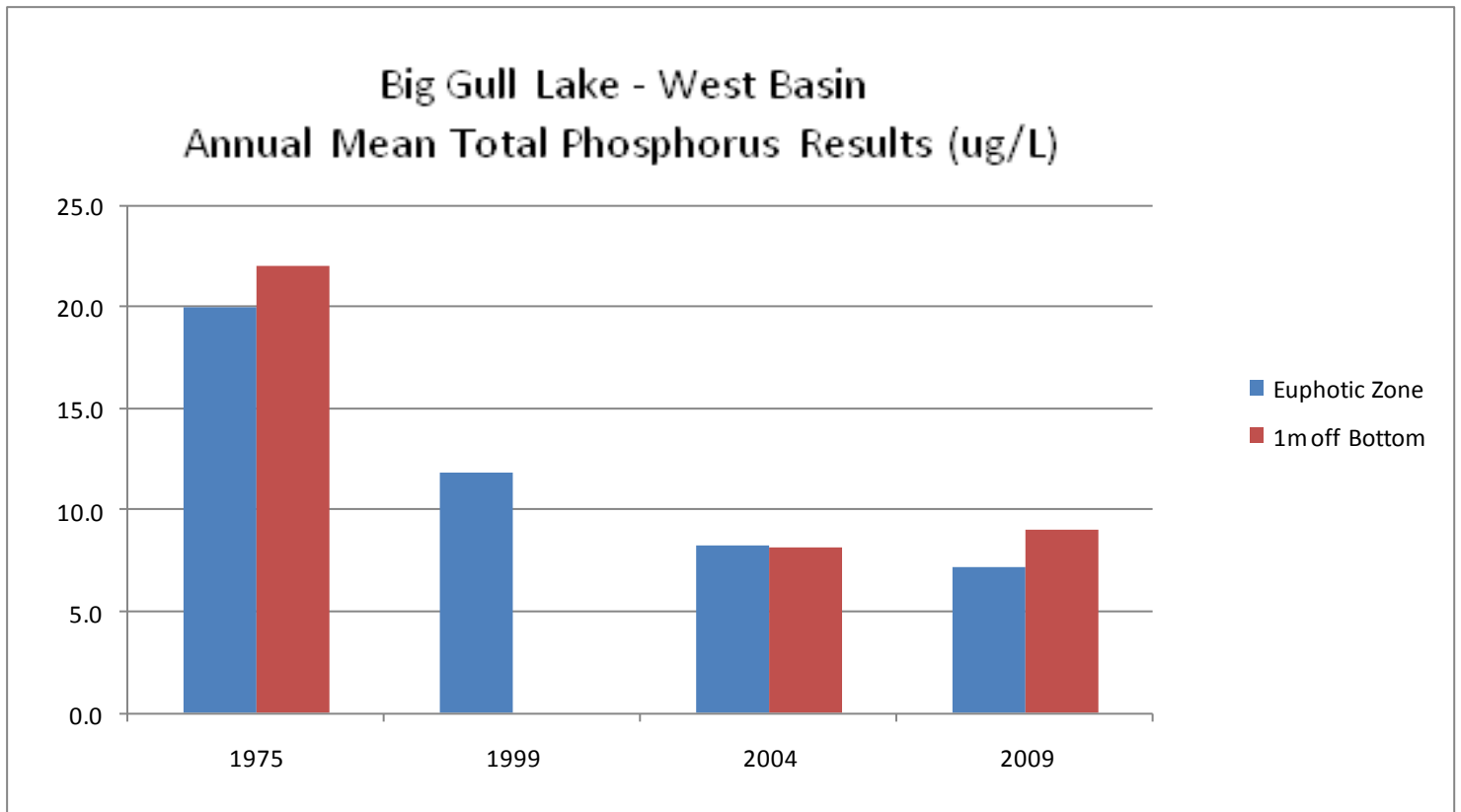
INTERPRETING YOUR SECCHI DISC RESULTS	
Secchi Reading	Lake Nutrient Status
Over 5 metres	Oligotrophic - unenriched, few nutrients
3.0 to 4.9 metres	Mesotrophic – moderately enriched, some nutrients
Less than 2.9 metres	Eutrophic – enriched, higher levels of nutrients



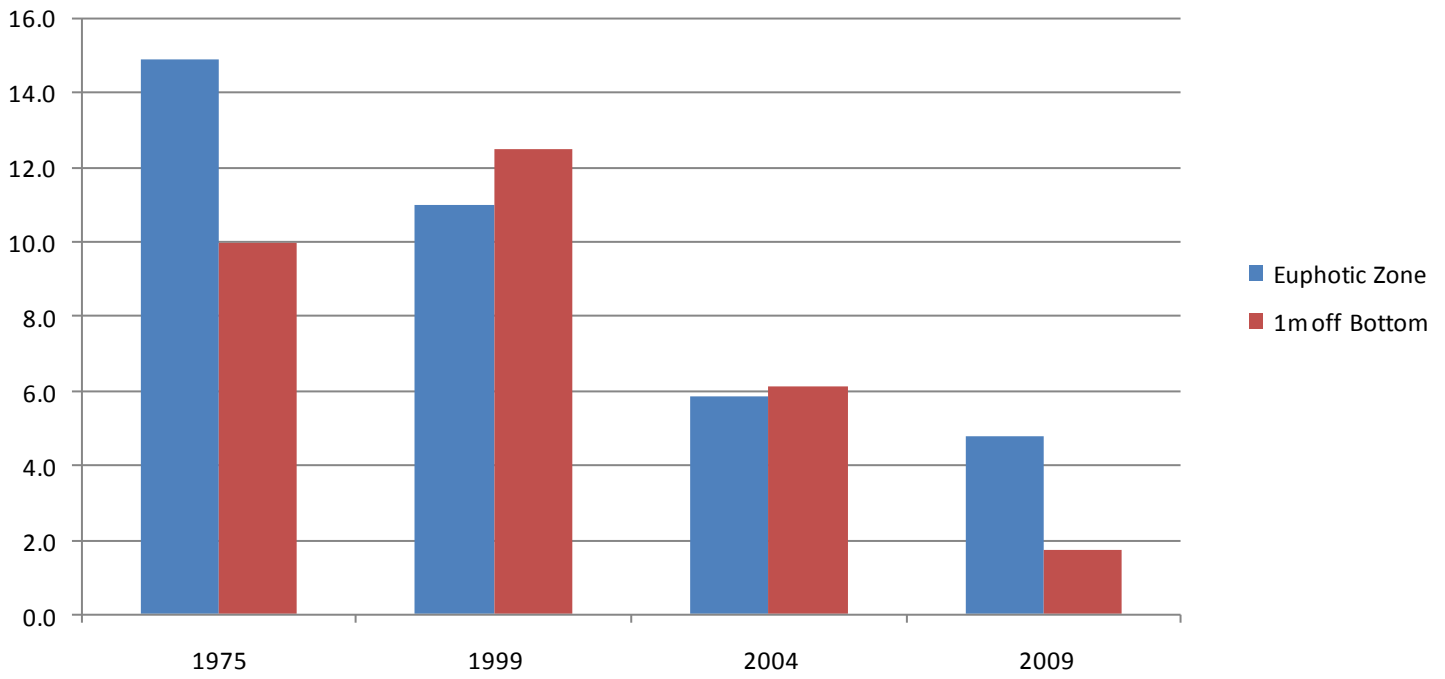
Interpreting Total Phosphorus Results

Phosphorus is the nutrient that controls the growth of algae in most Ontario lakes. For this reason any increase in phosphorus in the lake will increase the quantity of algae that can grow. High levels of phosphorus can lead to algal blooms and in some cases affect the habitat of cold water fish such as lake trout. A general guideline exists to characterize your lake based on the total phosphorus that is measured.

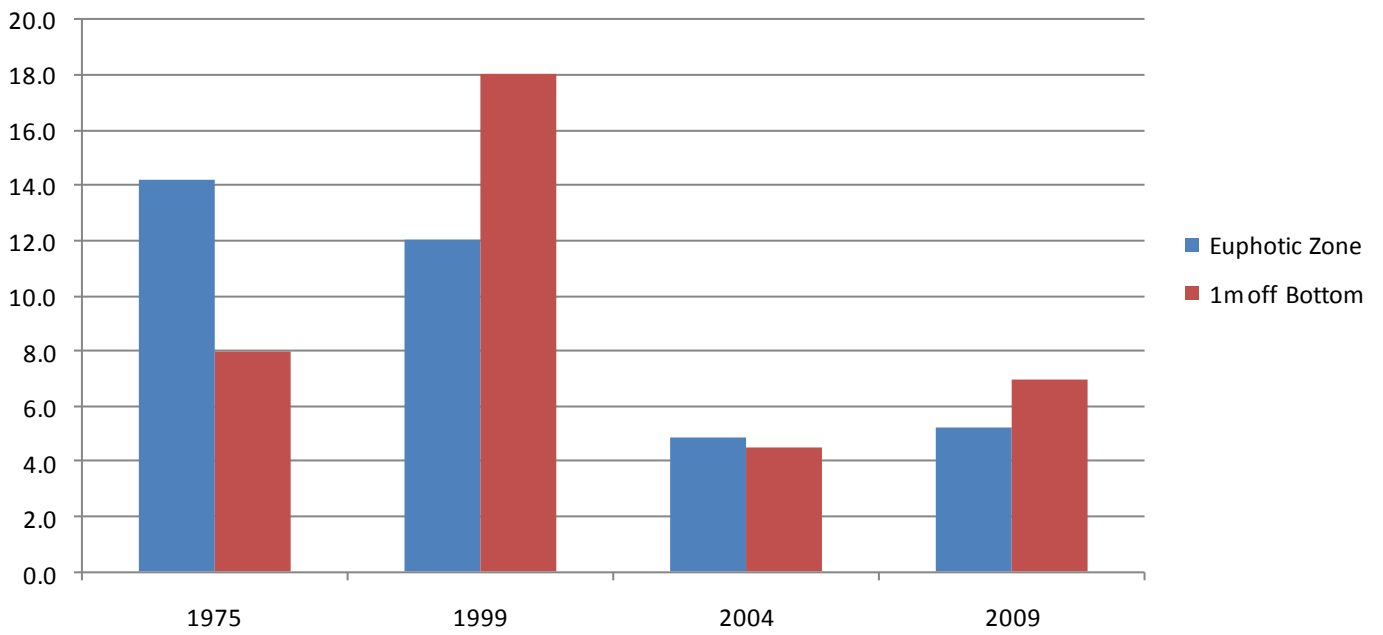
INTERPRETING YOUR TOTAL PHOSPHORUS RESULTS	
Total Phosphorus	Lake Nutrient Status
10 ug/L or less	Oligotrophic - unenriched, few nutrients
11 to 20 ug/L	Mesotrophic – moderately enriched, some nutrients
21 ug/L or more	Eutrophic – enriched, higher levels of nutrients



Big Gull Lake - Main Basin
Annual Mean Total Phosphorus Results (ug/L)

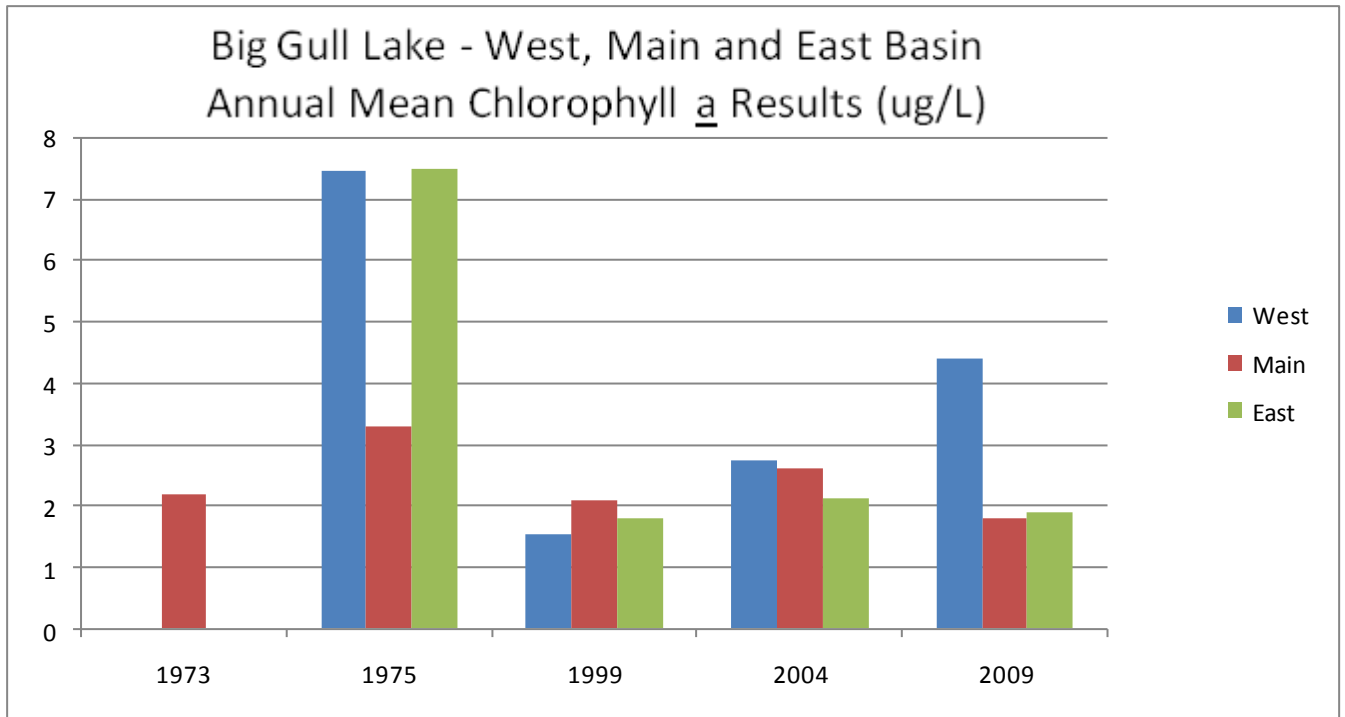


Big Gull Lake - East Basin
Annual Mean Total Phosphorus Results (ug/L)



Evaluating your Chlorophyll a Results:

The lower the chlorophyll a density in your lake, the clearer your lake is. Chlorophyll a is directly affected by the amount of total phosphorus in your lake. The more phosphorus there is in the water, the more algal growth will occur.



MVC and OFAH need your help to Stop the Invasion!

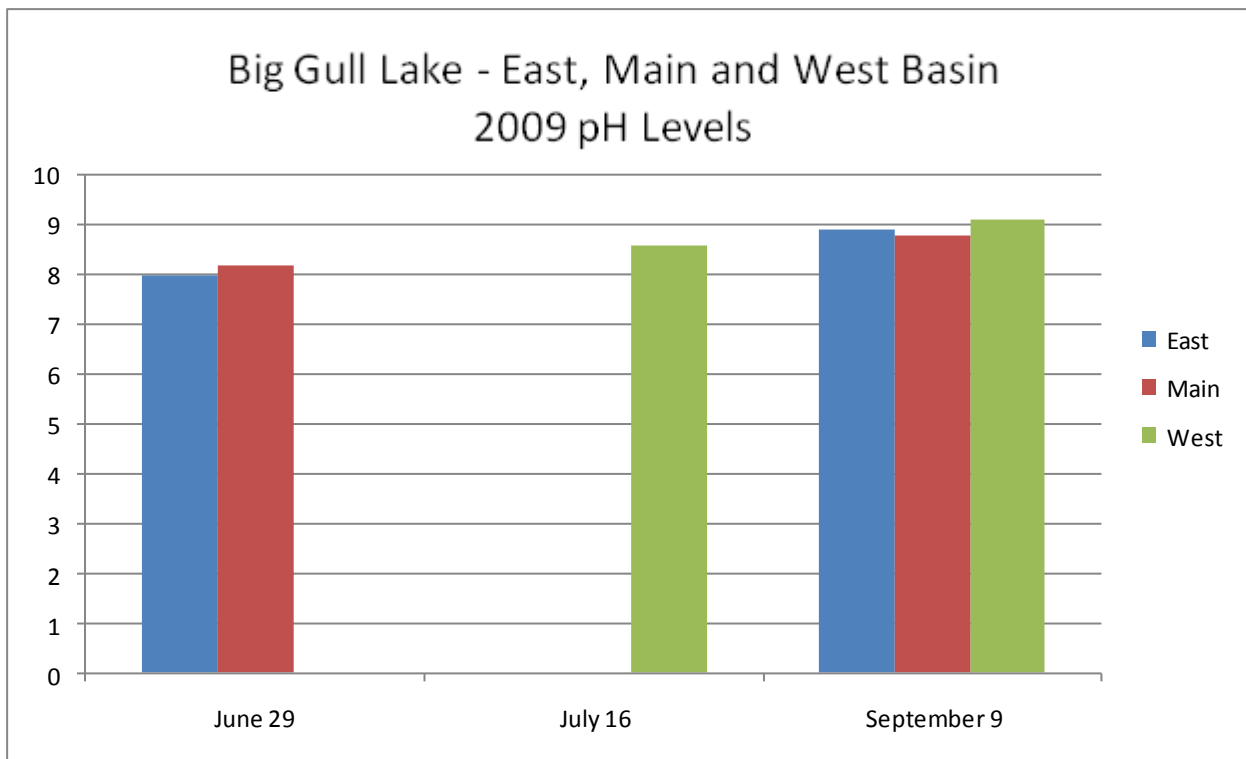
Check & clean your boat every time you change water bodies

Big Gull Lake was also tested for invasive species in 2009, in particular, for zebra mussels and spiny water flea, in partnership with the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters (OFAH). Big Gull Lake did *not* have spiny water flea present however; zebra mussel veligers (larvae) were present in the samples collected. Residents and property owners need to ensure that all access points to the lake have posted signs indicating the precautions they can take to avoid the spread of invasive species into Big Gull Lake. Another recommendation is for residents to begin participation in the invasive species monitoring program through MVC.

*For more information call MVC at (613)259-2421 or
the Invading Species Hotline 1-800-563-7711.*

Evaluating your pH Results

Lakes with pH levels at 7.3 or higher are vulnerable to zebra mussels invasive.



Watershed Watch Seine Netting 2009

Seine netting by hand is a way of sampling fish species that may live or visit near various shorelines. A seine net is a type of fishing net that has floats along one edge and weight along the other edge, to keep it upright in the water. It is then dragged through a section of water, encircling it, thus collecting all the fish within that area. This method is used because it is affordable, easy to do, portable, and has a very limited impact on the health of the fish sampled.

Seine netting was conducted in all off the 2009 watershed watch lakes to help expand our knowledge of each lake beyond just its chemistry. Netting was conducted on Big Gull Lake in July to avoid disturbing sensitive nesting, and breeding sites and at two locations; the boat launch off the Ardoch Road and the boat launch in Earl's Bay near the village of Harlow.

The majority of the individual fish captured on the 2009 watershed watch lakes with the seine net were bait fish such as minnows and cyprinids; some juvenile and adult game fish were also caught. This is understandable because both groups (bait fish and juvenile game fish) tend to stick close to shore to avoid predation from larger fish that can be found in deeper waters. Near shore areas may also contain aquatic vegetation which is ideal camouflage for all sizes of fish that are either hiding from predators, or waiting to surprise prey, explaining why some adult game fish were caught. It is important to note that if something was not caught in the seine we cannot concluded that the fish species is not in the lake; it just means that that fish species wasn't where we were sampling when we were sampling.

Most peoples interest in fish species within a water body have to do with the game fish that they might go catch. However bait fish far outnumber game fish and thus play a critical role in their ecosystem and within the food chain. It is important to take note of their presence, and provide them the same consideration you would for larger fish. If you are curious about learning more about bait fish, as well as learning how to identify the different species, please refer to the Department of Fisheries and Oceans "*Bait Fish Primer*", it is available online, as well as in our office.

Big Gull Lake	Fish Species Caught
	Pumpkinseed
	Largemouth Bass
	Common Shiner

East Basin

Big Gull Lake
East Basin
#09-14
June 29/2009
11:00 AM

Depth (metres)	Temperature (Degrees Celsius)	Dissolved Oxygen (Milligram / Litre)	Percent % Saturation	Thermal Stratification
0.1	23.8	8.3	95	Epilimnion
1	23.2	8.9	100	
2	22.9	9.7	108	
3	22.9	10.0	111	
4	22.8	10.5	117	
5	20.5	10.7	115	Thermocline
6	18.0	10.7	109	
7	16.5	10.1	100	
8	15.2	10.1	98	
9	14.4	9.2	86	Hypolimnion
10	13.5	8.3	77	
11	Bottom	Bottom	Bottom	



Warm Water Fisheries Habitat (Bass, Walleye, Pike, Perch) = DO > 4 mg/L at < 25°C

East Basin

Big Gull Lake
 East Basin
 # 09-14
 July 16, 2009
 12:35 am

Depth (Metres)	Temperature (Degrees Celsius)	Dissolved Oxygen (Milligrams / Litre)	Percent % Saturation	Thermal Stratification
0.1	22.0	8.6	95	Epilimnion
1	21.7	9.5	104	
2	21.5	9.7	105	
3	21.4	10.1	110	
4	21.2	9.9	107	
5	20.8	10.0	107	
6	18.4	8.7	83	Thermocline
7	15.5	8.2	80	
8	14.9	7.8	75	Hypolimnion
9	13.7	7.6	70	
10	13.2	7.3	67	
11	12.5	7.2	65	
12	12.4	7.1	64	
13	12.2	7.1	64	
14	12.1	7.1	63	
15	Bottom	Bottom	Bottom	



Warm Water Fisheries Habitat (Bass, Walleye, Pike, Perch) = DO > 4 mg/L at < 25°C

East Basin

Big Gull Lake
East Basin
09-14
September 9, 2009
10:45 am

Depth (Metres)	Temperature (Degrees Celsius)	Dissolved Oxygen (Milligrams / Litre)	Percent % Saturation	Thermal Stratification
0.1	21.0	11.0	119	Epilimnion
1	21.0	11.2	120	
2	21.0	11.3	123	
3	20.9	11.3	122	
4	20.8	11.3	122	
5	20.7	10.8	115	
6	20.0	10.5	110	
7	19.3	8.8	91	Thermocline 1
8	18.4	6.6	67	Thermocline 2
9	16.5	3.1	30	Hypolimnion
10	14.7	2.6	24	
11	13.2	1.1	10	
12	Bottom	Bottom	Bottom	



Warm Water Fisheries Habitat (Bass, Walleye, Pike, Perch) = DO > 4 mg/L at < 25°C

Main Basin

Big Gull Lake
Main Basin
09-13
June 29, 2009
10:00 a.m.

Depth [Metres]	Temperature [Degrees Celsius]	Dissolved Oxygen [Milligrams/Litre]	Percent % Saturation	Thermal Stratification
0.1	22.7	9.0	98	Epilimnion
1	22.3	10.1	110	
2	22.2	10.3	114	
3	22.1	10.6	117	
4	22.0	10.8	118	
5	18.7	10.8	110	Thermocline 1
6	15.7	10.3	99	
7	14.2	10.7	100	
8	13.7	10.9	100	Thermocline 2
9	13.5	10.7	98	
10	13.2	10.3	95	
11	12.5	10.8	97	
12	12.2	10.7	96	
13	12.0	10.6	95	
14	11.6	10.5	93	
15	11.3	10.6	93	
16	11.0	10.8	94	
17	10.7	10.6	92	
18	10.3	10.5	90	
19	10.1	9.2	78	
20	9.9	9.0	77	
21	8.3	7.9	65	Hypolimnion
22	Bottom	Bottom	Bottom	

Main Basin

Big Gull Lake
Main Basin
09-13
July 16, 2009
11:55 a.m.

Depth [Metres]	Temperature [Degrees Celsius]	Dissolved Oxygen [Milligrams/Litre]	Percent % Saturation	Thermal Stratification
0.1	21.0	9.0	97	Epilimnion
1	20.5	10.2	110	
2	20.4	10.9	119	
3	20.4	10.4	110	
4	20.2	10.3	110	
5	19.9	9.8	103	
6	17.0	9.1	92	Thermocline
7	15.2	8.6	83	
8	14.4	8.4	79	Hypolimnion
9	14.3	8.4	79	
10	13.3	8.4	78	
11	13.1	8.2	75	
12	12.5	7.8	70	
13	12.1	7.8	70	
14	11.8	8.2	74	
15	11.3	8.2	74	
16	11.1	8.0	70	
17	10.7	7.8	67	
18	10.4	7.7	66	
19	10.2	7.4	64	
20	10.0	6.7	58	
21	9.8	6.2	53	
22	Bottom	Bottom	Bottom	

Main Basin

Big Gull Lake
Main Basin
09-13
September 9, 2009
11:45 a.m.

Depth [Metres]	Temperature [Degrees Celsius]	Dissolved Oxygen [Milligrams/Litre]	Percent % Saturation	Thermal Stratification
0.1	20.9	11.1	120	Epilimnion
1	20.9	11.3	123	
2	20.7	11.1	120	
3	20.6	11.0	118	
4	20.5	10.9	116	
5	20.4	10.9	116	
6	20.0	10.7	114	
7	19.7	9.9	104	
8	19.4	8.9	92	
9	16.0	3.8	37	Thermocline
10	13.6	3.8	35	
11	13.2	4.2	39	Hypolimnion
12	12.7	4.3	39	
13	12.3	4.8	44	
14	11.7	5.3	48	
15	11.3	5.5	49	
16	10.9	5.4	47	
17	10.7	4.9	43	
18	10.5	4.2	37	
19	10.3	2.6	22	
20	10.1	1.9	16	
21	Bottom	Bottom	Bottom	

West Basin

Big Gull Lake
West Basin
#09-12
June 29, 2009
10:30 am

Depth (m)	Temp. (°C)	D.O. mg/L	% Saturation	Thermal Stratification
0.1	23.6	8.2	94	Epilimnion
1	23.0	9.0	100	
2	22.6	9.7	107	
3	22.5	10.2	114	
4	22.3	10.6	118	
5	21.6	10.7	116	
6	18.2	11.1	114	Thermocline
7	15.8	10.5	101	
8	Bottom	Bottom	Bottom	

West Basin

Big Gull Lake
West Basin
#09-12
July 16, 2009
11:00AM

Depth (m)	Temp. (°C)	D.O. mg/L	% Saturation	Thermal Stratification
0.1	21.7	9.0	98	Epilimnion
1	21.5	9.5	100	
2	21.1	9.5	99	
3	21.0	9.3	100	
4	Bottom	Bottom	Bottom	

West Basin

Big Gull Lake
West Basin
#09-12
September 9, 2009
12:40AM

Depth [Metres]	Temperature [Degrees Celsius]	Dissolved Oxygen [Milligrams/Litre]	Percent % Saturation	Thermal Stratification
0.1	21.7	9.0	98	Epilimnion
1	21.5	9.5	100	
2	21.1	9.5	99	
3	Bottom	Bottom	Bottom	