

Introduction



The 2008 VLAP Sampling Season

The Volunteer Lake Assessment Program (VLAP) set a new participation record for the third straight season. A total of 175 lakes were sampled, 6 new lakes joined the program, and approximately 500 volunteer monitors participated in the program!

We extend a special welcome to the volunteer monitoring groups that joined VLAP for the first time this year. These volunteers represent the following waterbodies: Chapman Pond, Sullivan; Horseshoe Pond, Concord; Little Diamond Pond, Stewartstown; Mirror Lake, Whitefield; Pleasant Pond, Henniker; and Spectacle Pond, Enfield.

And, we welcome back our friends and new monitors at Shellcamp Pond, Gilmanston who rejoined VLAP during the 2008 season.

2008 Weather Conditions in New Hampshire

The 2008 New Hampshire sampling season was marked by above average wetfall. According to the National Weather Service climate data, May was colder and drier (2nd driest ever recorded for Concord, NH) than normal; June was warmer and wetter; July was warmer and much wetter (experiencing nearly twice the normal rainfall for the month); August was cooler and wetter; and September was warmer and very wet (6th wettest September on record for Concord, NH). Overall, total annual rainfall exceeded 46 inches by the end of September, making it the 17th wettest year on record (past 140 years) for Concord, NH. The abnormally wet season increased nutrient loading to many lakes/ponds that may have led to increased plant, algal and bacterial growth. Increased wetfall and higher runoff likely elevated turbidity and decreased water clarity.

The increased stormwater runoff to our lakes/ponds provided the nutrients required for accelerated cyanobacteria growth. Eleven VLAP lakes experienced cyanobacteria bloom conditions that resulted in public health warnings to lake residents. At least two lakes experienced cyanobacteria blooms for several months.

2008 Program Updates

Sara Sumner was married in October, 2008. She has changed her name to Sara Steiner; please mark the name change in your address books and also note the change in email address.

The DES rolled out a new version of its website in September, 2008. Please note the URL address for VLAP has changed to www.des.nh.gov/organizations/divisions/water/wmb/vlap/index.htm.

VLAP was awarded a grant from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). The grant is targeted for the North Country to increase program participation and volunteer monitoring for VLAP, VRAP and Weed Watchers (VLAP's sister pro-

grams). Volunteer groups already established in the North Country, please stay tuned for additional information.

2008 Report Updates

The changes initiated in the 2007 Interim and Biennial reports will remain in affect. The Interim reports now contain an Executive Summary section, graphics and current year data only. The Biennial Reports will continue to provide historical data and statistical trend analysis for lakes with greater than 10 years of data. Transparency graphs have been updated to include both viewscope and non-viewscope current year data on the bar graph. The historical non-viewscope graph will remain the same while the historical viewscope graph was eliminated.

Concluding Remarks

Carerfully read the “Observations and Recommendations” and “Data Quality Assessment and Quality Control” sections of your report, and *pay special attention to our suggestions* to improve lake quality and how improvements can be made to the current sampling program.

This year’s Special Topic Article “Storm Events on the Rise: What You Can Do to Minimize Water Quality Impacts” is found in Appendix C of the Interim Report and Appendix D of the Biennial Report. This will provide you with a useful tool to evaluate your own shorefront property and implement stormwater best management practices. Please share the information with your neighbors and town officials. Remember, we can all make a difference, one rain garden at a time.

We realize that a vast amount of information is presented in the following report. If you have any questions regarding your 2008 report, please feel free to contact us. And finally, please contact the VLAP Coordinator this spring to schedule the annual biologist lake visit or to schedule a summer lake association meeting speaker.

Sincerely,

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