

There is really not much of a hurry to see phosphorus results. One main purpose of the program is to establish a long term mean for each lake which will be derived as the average of three or four years of spring turnover concentrations. This average will describe the trophic status of the lake and from there we can watch for trends in the long term data. There are almost never large changes between years that can be interpreted as flags or as warnings that things are getting worse. Phosphorus is a trace element that is in high demand in the environment and there is just not enough of it around to change the lake's concentration much more than about plus or minus 20% between years. Most lakes in Ontario are losing phosphorus due to drought and or watershed chemistry changes and we are mostly now observing these downward trends.

There is a document on our website regarding the interpretation of Secchi and TP data that might help you.

GENERAL INQUIRY						
LAKE_NAME	STN	Site ID	Site Description	Date	TP1	TP2
SKOOTAMATTA LAKE	4986	1	Upper Basin	07-Jul-02	14.30	15.00
SKOOTAMATTA LAKE	4986	2	Jacques Bay	20-May-02	13.20	12.50
SKOOTAMATTA LAKE	4986	2	Jacques Bay	19-May-03	22.08	10.81
SKOOTAMATTA LAKE	4986	2	Jacques Bay	24-May-04	11.21	11.02
SKOOTAMATTA LAKE	4986	2	Jacques Bay	07-Jun-06	10.42	12.48
SKOOTAMATTA LAKE	4986	2	Jacques Bay	17-Jun-07	20.99	
SKOOTAMATTA LAKE	4986	3	Sheldrake Bay	19-May-03	9.31	8.68
SKOOTAMATTA LAKE	4986	3	Sheldrake Bay	24-May-04	9.35	9.53
SKOOTAMATTA LAKE	4986	3	Sheldrake Bay	07-Jun-06	7.25	7.65
SKOOTAMATTA LAKE	4986	3	Sheldrake Bay	17-Jun-07	13.97	10.61
SKOOTAMATTA LAKE	4986	4	Lower Basin, deep spot	07-Jun-06	10.64	8.04
SKOOTAMATTA LAKE	4986	4	Lower Basin, deep spot	17-Jun-07	15.22	12.00
SKOOTAMATTA LAKE	4986	5	Foot of Narrows	19-May-03	7.97	8.78
SKOOTAMATTA LAKE	4986	5	Foot of Narrows	23-May-04	6.90	10.61
SKOOTAMATTA LAKE	4986	6	Upper lake	20-May-02	10.72	8.69
SKOOTAMATTA LAKE	4986	6	Upper lake	19-May-03	10.50	11.19
SKOOTAMATTA LAKE	4986	6	Upper lake	24-May-04	10.23	9.03

Your data indicate that Skootamatta has around 10.5 ug/L total phosphorus. This indicates a lake on the border between oligotrophic and mesotrophic which means that your water quality is fine and you should not have nutrient related algal blooms (weather related blooms are another issue). There are a few fliers in the data (the 20's are most likely due to contamination) and the data is a bit spotty but there is enough to characterize the lake. You should try to arrange to take the phosphorus samples in the month of May (more reliable data). Hope this helps.

Rev. Clark

Coordinator - Lake Partner Program