

Water Quality

Lake water quality is monitored by the Ministry of the Environment which operates a Lake Partner Program out of the Dorset Environmental Science Centre. Lake partners are volunteers who receive from the centre, in January or February, a kit allowing them to test for phosphorus concentration and water clarity. As long as water samples are returned to the centre each summer, a new kit is sent out for use the following summer. According to Vicky Jackson, responsible for the program, the last kit sent to a B.L.A. volunteer was in 2005, no samples were returned and therefore no further kits were provided. Arrangements have been made with her to resume the testing on Lake Baptiste in the spring of 2012. Our lake ID number is 196-1 and my volunteer ID number is 1407.

Along with a half dozen other B.L.A. members, I attended the 11th Annual Lakeland Conference on September 10. The presentations were focussed to a considerable degree on cold water "lake trout lakes" which is the current designation for Lake Baptiste. This restricts development to lots of record, i.e. no further severances. Exceptions are possible if the applicant can prove that the "new" will have an impact on lake water quality that is equal to or less than the "old". According to Paul Walsh, Hastings County Planner, only two exceptions have been approved in the years he has been in office. One of these was on Lake Baptiste.

The lake trout lake designation depends on the dissolved oxygen concentration of the water and therefore this data is very important. The Ministry of Natural Resources does this testing for only a few lakes in which it has a particular interest in a given year. It is apparently time consuming to do and the instrumentation is expensive. I will explore with M.N.R. whether if I am willing to provide the time, they would be willing to provide the instrumentation so that Lake Baptiste could be tested regularly.

The Chandos Lake representatives at the Lakeland Conference shared a process they have developed for involving more of their membership in monitoring water quality. At their A.G.M. they post a large map of their lake and invite those present to use the coloured stickers provided to indicate areas of observed aquatic plant growth and algae blooms. Everyone gets a striking visual representation of the sensitive areas. They have also done a boat traffic count to underpin their position that further development on their lake is ill advised.

John Jared