

Big Bowman Lake Questions and Answers, 2015 CSLAP

Q1. What is the condition of our lake this year?

A1. Water clarity in Big Bowman Lake was higher in 2015, continuing an increase over the last few years. Despite surface weed growth (probably due to bladderwort), which may have increased in 2015 due to high water transparency, recreational and water quality assessments are favorable (and improved in 2015).

Q2. Is there anything new that showed up in the testing this year?

A2. No new findings were apparent in 2015; continuing testing will help to evaluate “normal” conditions in the lake. Chloride levels were indicative of only minor impacts from road salt runoff.

Q3. How does the condition of our lake this year compare with other lakes in the area?

A3. Big Bowman Lake had similar water quality- comparable water clarity and nutrient and algae levels - to many other nearby lakes.

Q4. Are there any trends in our lake’s condition?

A4. No clear long term trends have been detected- nor would be detectable with only a few years of data. As noted above, water clarity has increased, but these small changes (and small decreases in phosphorus and conductivity) might be within the normal range of variability for the lake.

Q5. Should we be concerned about the condition of our lake? Are we close to a tipping point?

A5. The lake may be susceptible to blue green algae blooms and invasive plants, given moderate nutrient levels and nearby lakes with Eurasian watermilfoil and other highly invasive plants. However, HABs and EWM have not been detected at the lake. Lake residents should be vigilant about reporting observations of either.

Q6. Are any actions indicated, based on the trends and this year’s results?

A6. Individual stewardship activities such as pumping your septic system, growing a buffer of native plants next to the water bodies, and reducing erosion from shoreline properties will help to maintain lake conditions and reduce nutrient loading to the lake. Lake residents should continue to keep outside boats from entering the lake to reduce the risk of new invasive species, since nearby lakes harbor several invasive plants not found in the lake.

