

January 2013 Lake Lanier Index

The Lake cooled slightly to 48 from an average 51 in December, and one degree warmer than our January 2012 reading. Our Secchi average of 6.5 feet was a full foot above 2012. Our lowest reading of 3.3 feet was near Nix Bridge Rec Center and a dock in Little River. The highest readings were off Chestnut Hill Rd and in Cinnamon Cove 9.8 feet . Our "A" sector averaged 5.2 feet, 0.7 feet above last year. "B" averaged 6.8 feet 0.3 feet above 2012 and "C" 8.8 feet 0.3 feet above 2012. The chlorophyll a readings were very low with only one reading at 2 PPB in the Upper Chestatee Branch the rest at 1 PPB. We will increase our Lake Lanier Index to 6.6 with the better Secchi results.

Adopt-A-Lake divides Lake Lanier into three sections "A" north of Brown's Bridge, "B" the center region south of the Bridge to a line from Six Mile Creek east to Aqualand Marina, and "C" south of this line to Buford Dam. We have 30 stations that volunteers test the first weekend every month. Secchi readings are taken by lowering a weighted disk into the water and measuring the distance it can be seen thus giving a gauge of clarity. Chlorophyll a is used to determine nutrients in the Lake.

The Lake Lanier Index is only a measure of nutrients and clarity and not of water safety.

Thanks to our wonderful Adopt-A-Lake volunteers, AMPRO Labs for our chlorophyll a analysis, and the support of all Lake Lanier Association members.

Smooth Sailing,

Bev Nicholls

February 2013 Lake Lanier Index

We again had the Lake cool to an average of 44 from 48 in January. This was seven degrees colder than last year. The shallower areas were cooler than the deeper testing stations, not unexpected after our cooler temperatures this last month. The Secchi readings dropped to a 5.5 feet average, a foot lower than last month and slightly higher than the 2012 reading of 5.2 feet. This was most likely due to the heavy rains that have also raised the Lake level. "A" section averaged 2.6 feet with the lowest reading in the Wahoo Creek area. "B" had an average of 4.9 feet and "C" had the best readings of 15 feet at Cocktail Cove and off Garrett Rd. Chlorophyll a readings were low with one at 3 PPB and two at 2 PPB these were all north of Brown's Bridge. The rest of the chlorophyll a readings were 1 PPB or lower. Our Lake Lanier Index will drop to 5.5 with a lower a Secchi average than January.

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March 2013 Lake Lanier Index

The Lake has started warming to 47 degrees from our February reading of 44. This is 8 degrees colder than March 2012. Our Secchi average was 6.1 feet 0.6 above last month's reading and 1.2 feet better than in 2012. The lowest reading was 2 feet off a dock in the Wahoo Creek area and the best 15.9 feet near the Dam. "A" section averaged 3.6 feet versus 4.5 in 2012 and 2.6 in February. "B" averaged 6.1 feet, 4.9 feet last month and last year. "C" averaged 10.7 feet an increase from last year. We had higher chlorophyll a readings with two readings of 4 PPB in the upper Chattahoochee branch, two 3 PPB and two 2 PPB all in the area north of Brown's Bridge. We will leave the Lake Lanier Index at 5.5 with better Secchi readings and higher chlorophyll a.

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April 2013 Lake Lanier Index

Our average Lake temperature warmed to 54, seven degrees above our March reading of 47. That is 16 degrees cooler than last year and representative of our cooler than normal spring. The Secchi average was 7.5 feet 1.4 feet better than last month and 1.7 feet better than 2012. Wahoo Creek had a low reading of 2.6 feet and near the dam we had two readings of 15 feet. Section "A" averaged 4.9 feet, "B" 7.8 feet, and "C" 11.4 feet. Our chlorophyll a readings were very similar to last months with readings up to 4PPB in a shallow area off a dock in the Upper Chattahoochee Branch. We will raise our Lake Lanier Index to 6 with the better Secchi average.

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May 2013 Lake Lanier Index

The Lake temperature increased to 61, 7 degrees higher than our April reading. Sixteen degrees below last year's average. Our Secchi average was 6.2 feet, this is 1.4 feet less than April's reading. The best reading was near the dam at 11.1 feet and the low reading of 1.6 feet north of the Rowing Venue. Section "A" averaged 3.9 feet, "B" 6.2 feet and "C" 9.4 feet. These were all lower than April results. We had two chlorophyll a readings at 4 PPB, one at 3, and two at 2 PPB, all in shallow coves. We will lower our Lake Lanier Index to 5.5 with the lower Secchi readings and an increase in the chlorophyll a results.

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July 2013 Lake Lanier Index

Our Lake temperature rose to an average of 79, this is five degrees below the 2012 reading, and a rise of 2 degrees above June's. The average Secchi reading decreased 0.9 feet from last month and 0.6 feet from last year. This was likely due to the heavy rains shortly before our testing dates. The North Lake "A" averaged 3.9 feet 1.3 feet below last months and 0.3 lower than last year. The lowest reading was on the Upper Chattahoochee area north of the rowing venue. "B" section was 0.6 feet better than last year and "C" 11.4 feet 3 feet better than last month. Our best reading was near the dam at 14 feet. We have more testing stations North of Brown's Bridge and most are in shallower areas, so section "A" has more effect on our averages. We had low chlorophyll a readings with only one at 3 PPB at the station at Six Mile Creek and Highway 369.

We will set our Lake Lanier Index at 6 with the lower Secchi results and low chlorophyll a readings.

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August 2013 Lake Lanier Index

83 was the August average two degrees cooler than last year and four degrees above July's reading. The Secchi average rose to 6.8 feet from 5.9 last month and a half of a foot below last year's reading. "A" north of Brown's Bridge averaged 5.9 feet two feet better than last month and 0.4 feet better than last year. The low reading was in the North Chattahoochee Branch. "B" was a foot lower than last year but 1.3 foot better than July at 8.1 feet. "C" was 8.1 feet, 0.2 foot better than 2012 but lower than last month's reading. We had five chlorophyll a readings of 2 PPB the remaining at 1.

With the mixed readings we will give our Lake Lanier Index a 6+.

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Bev Nicholls

September 2013 Lake Lanier Index

The Lake has cooled to an average of 81 degrees. This is two degrees cooler than last month and one degree cooler than September 2012. Our average Secchi reading was exactly the same as August of 6.8 feet. Section A's average was 5.5 feet, 0.4 feet less than 2012 and August. The lowest reading was in the Little River area of 3.9 feet. B averaged 8.1 feet and C had an average of 8.8 feet. We had three readings of 9.1 feet in both B and C. Our best readings were 2 feet lower than the best readings in 2012. The highest chlorophyll a reading was off a dock in the upper Chestatee of 3 PPB and near Bald Ridge of 2 the rest were 1 PPB.

With the similar readings to August we will leave the Lake Lanier Index at 6+.

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November/December 2013 Lake Lanier Index

The Lake temperature was two degrees warmer than 2012 in November and 4 degrees warmer in December. Our average Secchi readings were 7.3 feet in November and 7.1 in December. The lowest readings were at the Shallow Water Marker in the Upper Chattahoochee or 3.3 feet and the best in the deep areas of the South Lake of 11.9 feet. Our chlorophyll a readings ranged from 20 micrograms/liter (PPB) to 4 micrograms/liter in Section A, Section B 3 micrograms/liter to 8 and 3 micrograms/liter to 5.5 in Section C. Our Lake Lanier Index will be 5 considering the chlorophyll a and Secchi readings.

Our Index has been updated using a newer method for chlorophyll a testing. The new method is more sensitive, thus higher readings. We started testing in 2000 and AMPRO labs purchased equipment for the analysis of our samples using the best method available. In fourteen years there have been improvements in chlorophyll a testing and the cost of equipment is expensive. We are very fortunate in that Gwinnett County Water Labs has offered to do our testing using the new method, the same one used by Georgia's EPD and the water lab at UGA.

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Thanks to our wonderful Adopt-A-Lake volunteers, Gwinnett Water Lab for our chlorophyll a analysis, and the support of all Lake Lanier Association members. We are forever indebted to AMPRO Labs for testing our samples for over fourteen years and being professional and delightful to work with.

Smooth Sailing,
Bev Nicholls