

Citizen Lake Monitoring Network (CLMN) by Dave Schiotz

“There is still a lot of snow to melt but gradually brown is replacing white as a ground cover. Once all the snow has melted and run-off is completed, there will be a considerable amount of “foreign” material that has entered our lakes and streams along with excess water. To some extent this happens every year. Obviously an excessive snow pack like we had this winter may have greater influence on our water ways.

Our dedicated group of CLMN volunteers will do their best to accurately sample our lakes as they have done for a number of years. Just how many years has there been water sampling on Connors and Lake of the Pines(LOP)?

Going back in the Connors annual reports we had rather sporadic results in 1973, 74 & 75, then a jump to 1996. Samplers were primarily DNR personnel who were checking for Phosphorus, Chlorophyll and Clarity. Beginning in 2007, we have consistent results through the present time utilizing our CLMN volunteers. LOP had a rather incomplete sampling history until 2010. That year one person did the collecting but only a limited number of times. Beginning in 2011, a “crew” was recruited and we have had complete results each year since. This summer’s data will be the tenth year for consistent, accurate information collected by volunteers and submitted to the DNR.



A piece of equipment that our lake association purchased, which greatly reduced the collection time and improved the accuracy of our data, was a HQD digital meter from the Hach Company. With this instrument, we can sample dissolved oxygen and temperature simultaneously. We do this at the lake’s surface and at five-foot intervals. Samples are always taken in the deepest spot in the lake (Connors is 80 feet and LOP 35 feet).

This leads us to the second big question: How is CLMN data used?

Nationally, CLMN generated information is used every two years to report trends in Wisconsin Lakes and identifying needs to the federal government. CLMN data is used for before & after studies of certain bodies of water as well as to show the severity of any water quality problems and what solutions may be relevant.

Data is summarized to show water quality trends and set priorities for lake protection and funding. In Wisconsin, CLMN data was used to document the need for a ban on Phosphorus in detergents and setting limits on the amount of Phosphorus from wastewater treatment facilities.

Another use for our Secchi data is the Remote Sensing Research: CLMN volunteers take water Clarity measurements on individual lakes. This information is sent to the U. W. Environmental Remote Sensing Center (ERSC). Using satellites and other known data from our lakes the ERSC can extrapolate the Clarity of lakes that were not physically measured thus giving us a much broader view of WI Lake Clarity than if we had to rely only on lakes actually measured.

As one can see the CLMN data we collect not only informs our association members about our lakes but has an important impact beyond the Flambeau River State Forest.

Anyone interested in joining our team, for either lake, or if you have questions, feel free to contact me or any team member.

PS. In the fall newsletter, pg.5 (Comparing Our Lakes. CLMN) there were two errors that I missed!! 1) 2018 Secchi Disc, Regional Average should be 10.5ft., not 105ft. 2) Phosphorus Regional Average should be 20.0, not 200.

See you on the water!!!"