

# BELLEAU LAKE

## 2023 SAMPLING HIGHLIGHTS

### Station Deep

Wakefield, NH



Blue = Oligotrophic

Yellow = Mesotrophic

Red = Eutrophic

Gray = No Data

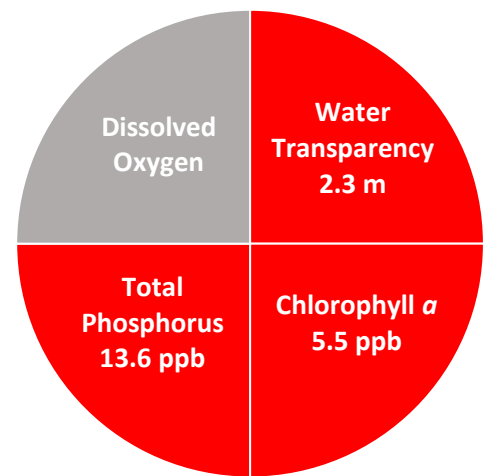


Figure 1. Belleau Lake Water Quality (2023)

Water quality data displayed in Tables 1 and 2 are surface water measurements with the exception of the dissolved oxygen data that are collected near the lake bottom. Summary statistics are provided for samples collected between June 20 and August 21, 2023.

Table 1. 2023 Belleau Lake Seasonal Averages and NH DES Aquatic Life Nutrient Criteria<sup>1</sup>

Parameter	Oligotrophic "Excellent"	Mesotrophic "Fair"	Eutrophic "Poor"	Belleau Lake Average (range)	Belleau Lake Classification
Water Clarity (meters)	> 4.0 – 7.0	2.5 - 4.0	< 2.5	2.3 meters (2.0 – 2.5)	Eutrophic
Chlorophyll <i>a</i> <sup>1</sup> (ppb)	< 3.3	3.3 – 5.0	> 5.0 – 11.0	5.5 ppb (5.0 – 6.5)	Eutrophic
Total Phosphorus <sup>1</sup> (ppb)	< 8.0	8.0 – 12.0	> 12.0 – 28.0	13.6 ppb (13.5 – 13.8)	Eutrophic
Dissolved Oxygen (ppm)	> 5.0 – 7.0	2.0 – 5.0	< 2.0	Not Assessed*	Not Assessed*

\* Belleau Lake did not develop a stable mid or deep water layer that is the basis for the dissolved oxygen classification criteria.

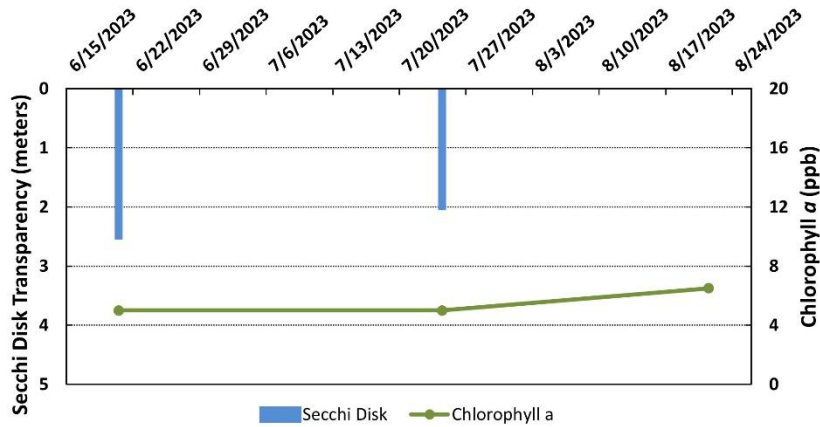
Table 2. 2023 Belleau Lake Seasonal Average Accessory Water Quality Measurements

Parameter	Assessment Criteria					Belleau Lake Average (range)	Belleau Lake Classification
	< 10 uncolored	10 – 20 slightly colored	20 – 40 lightly tea colored	40 – 80 tea colored	> 80 highly colored		
Color (color units)	< 10 uncolored	10 – 20 slightly colored	20 – 40 lightly tea colored	40 – 80 tea colored	> 80 highly colored	71.2 color units (range: 48.1 – 91.7)	Tea colored
Alkalinity (ppm)	< 0.0 acidified	0.1 – 2.0 extremely vulnerable	2.1 – 10 moderately vulnerable	10.1 – 25.0 low vulnerability	> 25.0 not vulnerable	6.8 ppm (range: 6.3 – 7.3)	Moderately vulnerable
pH (std units)	< 5.5 suboptimal for successful growth and reproduction		6.5 – 9.0 optimal range for fish growth and reproduction			6.9 standard units (range: 6.8 – 7.1)	Optimal range for fish growth and reproduction
Specific Conductivity ( $\mu$ S/cm)	< 50 $\mu$ S/cm Characteristic of minimally impacted NH lakes		50-100 $\mu$ S/cm Lakes with some human influence	> 100 $\mu$ S/cm Characteristic of lakes experiencing human disturbances		56.7 $\mu$ S/cm (range: 53.5 – 58.5)	Characteristic of lakes with some human influence

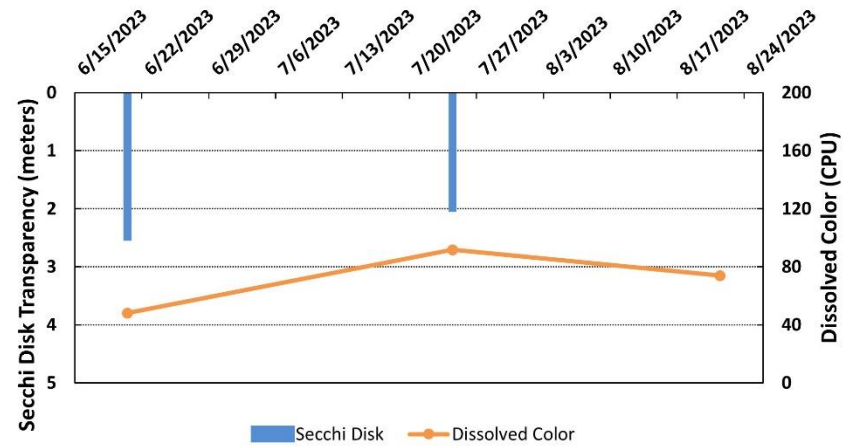
### Strategies to stabilize and improve water quality

Implement Best Management Practices (BMPs) within the Belleau Lake watershed to minimize the adverse impacts of polluted runoff and erosion into Belleau Lake. Refer to "[Landscaping at the Water's Edge: An Ecological Approach](#)" and "[New Hampshire Homeowner's Guide to Stormwater Management: Do-It-Yourself Stormwater Solutions for Your Home](#)" and the [Acton Wakefield Watershed Alliance webpages](#) for more information on how to reduce nutrient loading caused by overland runoff. NH Lakes also provides a series of resources aimed at educating residents and protecting our lakes and ponds.

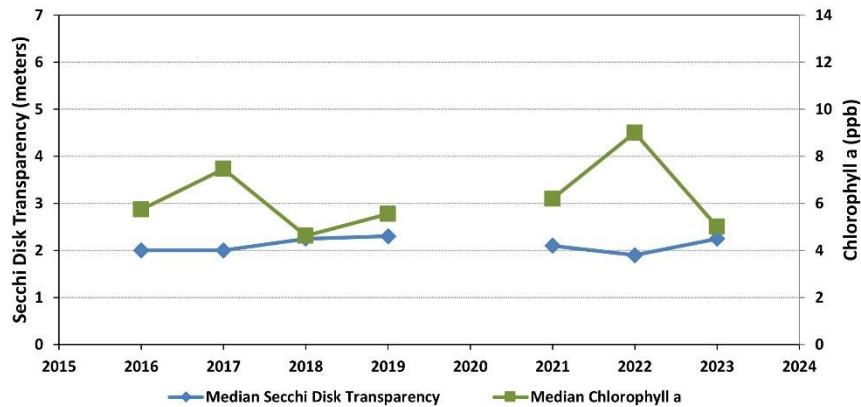
**Figure 2. Belleau Lake (2023 Seasonal Data)  
Secchi Disk Transparency and Chlorophyll *a* Data**



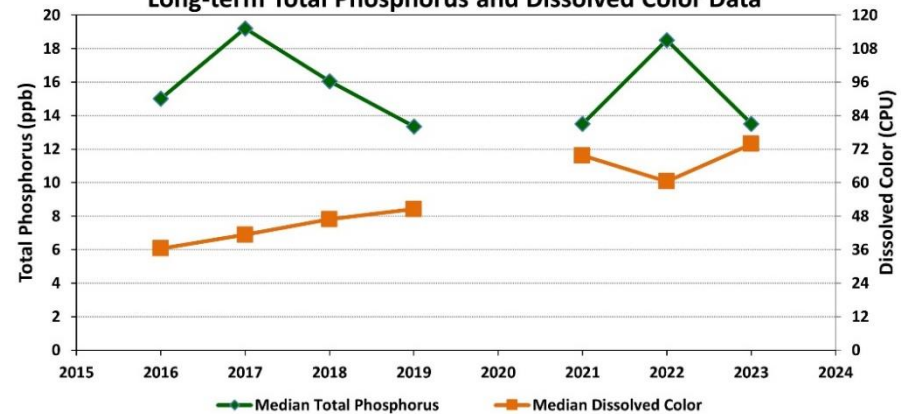
**Figure 3. Belleau Lake (2023 Seasonal Data)  
Secchi Disk Transparency and Dissolved Color Data**



**Figure 4. Belleau Lake - Deep Site (2016-2023)  
Long-term Secchi Disk Transparency and Chlorophyll *a* Data**



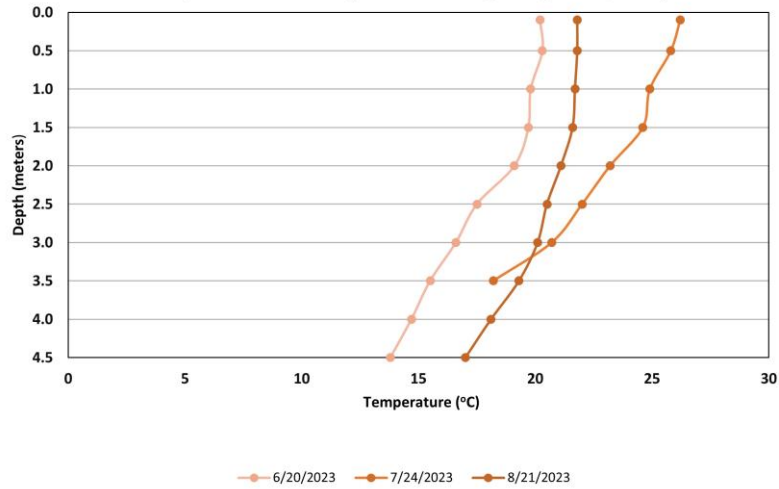
**Figure 5. Belleau Lake - Deep Site (2016-2023)  
Long-term Total Phosphorus and Dissolved Color Data**



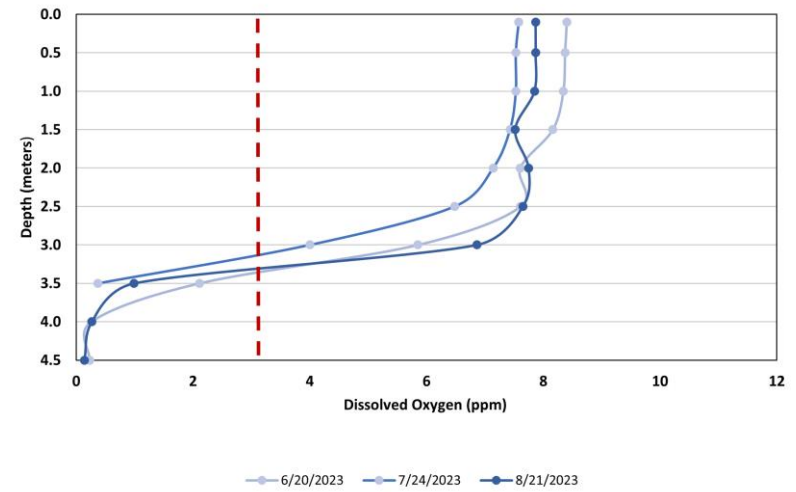
Figures 2 and 3. Seasonal comparison of Belleau Lake water transparency (Secchi Disk depth), chlorophyll *a* and dissolved color for 2023. Shallower water transparency measurements oftentimes correspond to increases in chlorophyll *a* and/or color concentrations.

Figures 4 and 5. Annual median Belleau Lake water transparency, chlorophyll *a*, dissolved color and total phosphorus concentrations measured between 2016 and 2023, through the New Hampshire Lakes Lay Monitoring Program. The long-term data provide insight into the water quality fluctuations, among years, that have been documented in Belleau Lake.

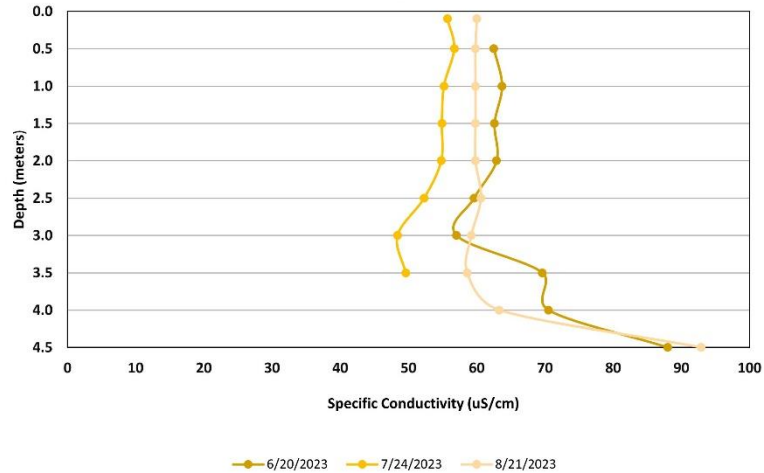
**Figure 6. Belleau Lake - Site 1 Deep**  
Temperature Profiles (June 20 through August 21, 2023)



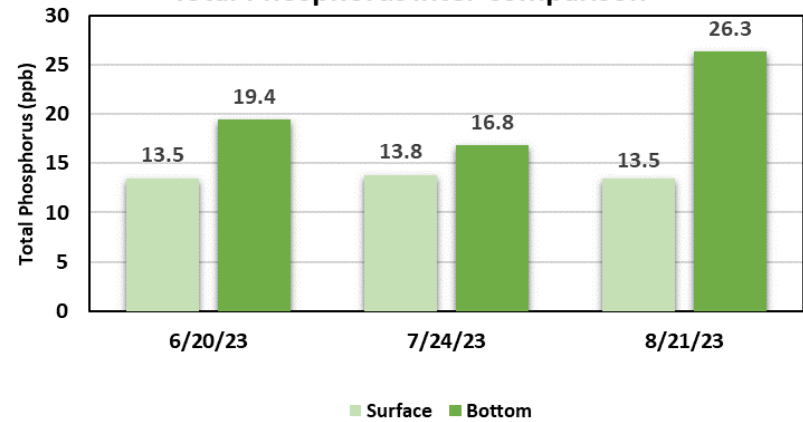
**Figure 7. Belleau Lake - Site 1 Deep**  
Dissolved Oxygen Profiles (June 20 through August 21, 2023)



**Figure 8. Belleau Lake - Site 1 Deep**  
Specific Conductivity Profiles (June 20 through August 21, 2023)



**Figure 9. Belleau Lake - Site 1 Deep**  
Total Phosphorus inter-comparison



Figures 6, 7 and 8. Temperature, dissolved oxygen and specific conductivity profiles displaying the water quality differences in 0.5-meter increments. Notice the decreasing dissolved oxygen concentrations, near the lake bottom, through the season. The dashed vertical red line in Figure 7 displays the dissolved oxygen threshold for the successful growth and reproduction of warm-water fish such as bass and perch.

Figure 9. Total phosphorus comparison between the surface (epilimnion) and bottom water (hypolimnion) zones. Notice the differences in the bottom water total phosphorus concentrations, relative to surface water concentrations.

**Table 3. Saco River Watershed Lakes (Acton ME and Wakefield NH)  
(2023 water quality data collected between May 15 and September 25)**

Lake	Average (range) Secchi Disk Transparency (meters)	Average (range) Total Phosphorus (ppb)	Average (range) Chlorophyll- <i>a</i> (ppb)	Average (range) Dissolved Oxygen (ppm)
Balch Pond	3.6 meters (range: 3.0 – 4.2)	9.3 ppb (range: 8.2 – 11.0)	3.6 ppb (range: 1.1 – 6.8)	Not Assessed
Belleau Lake	2.3 meters (range: 2.0 – 2.5)	13.6 ppb (range: 13.5 – 13.8)	5.5 ppb (range: 5.0 – 6.5)	-----
Pine River Pond	4.2 meters (range: 3.5 – 4.8)	7.2 ppb (range: 6.8 – 8.1)	3.6 ppb (range: 2.6 – 4.9)	0.3 ppm (range: 0.0 – 1.4)
Province Lake	2.8 meters (range: 2.2 – 3.4)	15.0 ppb (range: 12.6 – 17.1)	4.2 ppb (range: 3.2 – 4.5)	-----

- Water quality data are reported for a deep reference sampling location in each water body
- Dissolved oxygen measurements were taken late season and from the bottom water layer
- ----- indicates the site is too shallow to form a bottom water layer

**Data Interpretation: Overview of factors to consider when reviewing the Belleau Lake data**

This highlight report provides a general overview of the current and historical conditions of Belleau Lake. The report is intended to provide a simple assessment of the water quality trends. Should you have additional questions about interpreting your water quality results, we would be happy to discuss the data with you and/or any concerns you may have. In general, some factors that influence the current and long-term water quality results/trends for our New Hampshire lakes and ponds include:

- **Land-use Patterns** within the watershed (drainage basin) – Research indicates land use patterns have an impact on how much phosphorus (nutrient) is washing into our lakes. In general, more urbanized watersheds have a greater degree of phosphorus runoff than highly forested/vegetated drainage areas.
- **Weather Patterns** – Rainfall and temperature can influence water quality. Wet periods, and overland runoff, tend to be a time when elevated nutrients and other pollutants are transported into our lakes. Temperature can also influence water quality conditions since many aquatic plants and algae tend to respond to changing seasonal conditions. Unusually warm periods are sometimes tied to short-term algal and cyanobacteria blooms.
- **Best Management Practices (BMPs)** – The presence/absence of best management practices can have an interplay on water quality. BMPs are measures that are used to manage nutrients and other pollutants that could otherwise make their way into our lakes. Properties that employ BMPs, designed specifically to remove pollutants of concern (e.g. sediments and phosphorus), are less likely to contribute nutrients and other pollutants into our lakes.
- **Temperature (Thermal) Stratification** – Many lakes become thermally stratified during the summer months and may form three distinct thermal layers: upper water layer (epilimnion), middle lake layer (metalimnion) and bottom cold-water layer (hypolimnion). These thermal zones form a barrier to lake mixing, during the summer months, and can coincide with differences in dissolved oxygen and specific conductivity through the water.
- **Internal Nutrient Loading** (nutrients that are introduced from the sediments along the lake bottom) – Some of our lakes experience significant internal nutrient loading. Such lakes generally tend to be well stratified and exhibit increasing deep water phosphorus concentrations, relative to surface levels.

**Figure 10. Belleau Lake  
Wakefield, NH  
Deep sampling site and 2023 seasonal average water clarity**



0 0.1 0.2 0.3 0.4 0.5 Miles

Aerial Orthophoto Source: NH GRANIT  
Site location GPS coordinates collected by the UNH Center for Freshwater Biology



**Extension**

