

# BOW LAKE

## 2020 SAMPLING HIGHLIGHTS

### Station 3 Bennett

Barrington and Northwood, NH



Extension

Water quality data displayed in Tables 1 and 2 are surface water measurements with the exception of the dissolved oxygen data that were collected near the lake bottom.

**Blue** = Excellent = Oligotrophic

**Yellow** = Fair = Mesotrophic

**Red** = Poor = Eutrophic

**Gray** = No Data

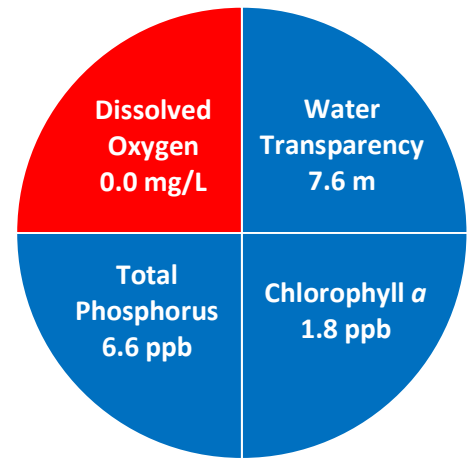


Figure 1. Bow Lake Water Quality (2020)

Table 1. 2020 Bow Lake Seasonal Averages and NH DES Aquatic Life Nutrient Criteria<sup>1</sup>

Parameter	Oligotrophic "Excellent"	Mesotrophic "Fair"	Eutrophic "Poor"	Bow Lake – 3 Bennett Average (range)	Bow Lake – 3 Bennett Classification
Water Clarity (meters)	4.0 – 7.0	2.5 - 4.0	< 2.5	7.6 meters (7.1 – 7.9)	Oligotrophic
Chlorophyll <i>a</i> <sup>1</sup> (ppb)	< 3.3	> 3.3 – 5.0	> 5.0 – 11.0	1.8 ppb (1.3 – 2.4)	Oligotrophic
Total Phosphorus <sup>1</sup> (ppb)	< 8.0	> 8.0 – 12.0	> 12.0 – 28.0	6.6 ppb (6.0 – 7.0)	Oligotrophic
Dissolved Oxygen (mg/L)	5.0 – 7.0	2.0 – 5.0	<2.0	0.0 mg/L (0.0 – 0.1)*	Eutrophic

\* Dissolved oxygen concentrations were measured on September 12, 2020 between 13.0 and 16.5 meters, in the bottom water layer.

Table 2. 2020 Bow Lake Seasonal Average Accessory Water Quality Measurements

Parameter	Assessment Criteria					Bow Lake – 3 Bennett Average (range)	Bow Lake – 3 Bennett 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	11.8 color units (range: 8.9 – 15.1)	Slightly colored
Alkalinity (mg/L)	< 0.0 acidified	0.1 – 2.0 extremely vulnerable	2.1 – 10 moderately vulnerable	10.1 – 25.0 low vulnerability	> 25.0 not vulnerable	4.4 mg/L (range: 4.0 – 4.8)	Moderately vulnerable
pH (std units)	< 5.5 suboptimal for successful growth and reproduction		6.5 – 9.0 optimal range for fish growth and reproduction			Not Sampled	Not Assessed
Specific Conductivity (uS/cm)	< 50 uS/cm Characteristic of minimally impacted NH lakes		50-100 uS/cm Lakes with some human influence	Not Sampled		Not Assessed	Not Assessed

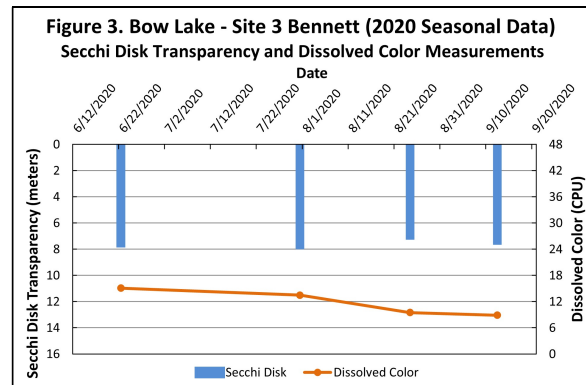
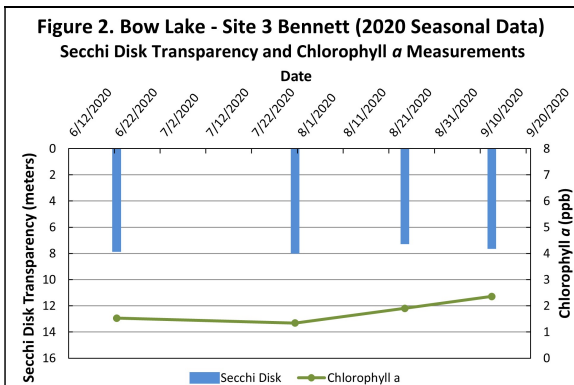


Figure 2 and 3. Seasonal Secchi disk transparency, chlorophyll *a* changes and dissolved color concentrations. Figures 2 and 3 illustrate the interplay among Secchi Disk transparency, chlorophyll *a* and dissolved color. Shallower water transparency measurements oftentimes correspond to increases in chlorophyll *a* and/or color concentrations.

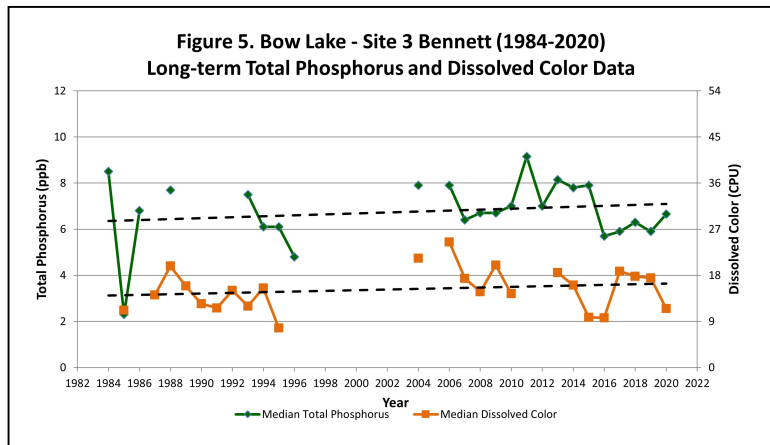
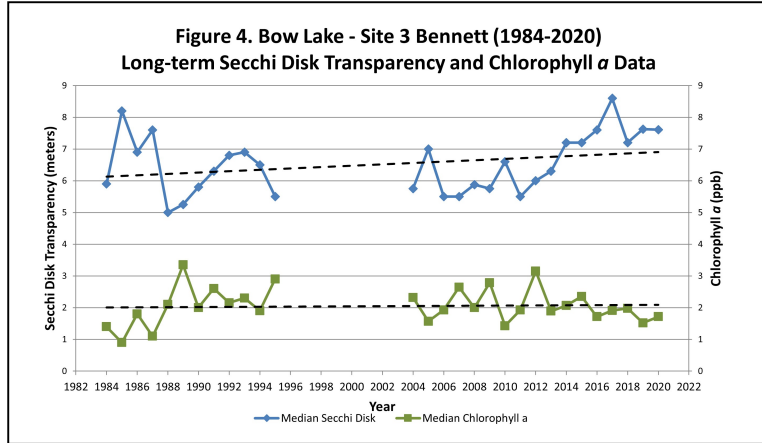
## LONG-TERM TRENDS

**WATER CLARITY:** The Bow Lake water clarity measurements, measured as Secchi Disk transparency, have oscillated among years but do not display a trend of increasing or decreasing water clarity over the twenty-nine years of water quality monitoring conducted between 1984 and 2020 (Figure 4).

**CHLOROPHYLL:** The Bow Lake chlorophyll *a* concentrations, a measure of microscopic plant life within the lake, have oscillated among years but do not display a trend of increasing or decreasing chlorophyll concentrations over the twenty-nine years of water quality monitoring conducted between 1984 and 2020 (Figure 4).

**TOTAL PHOSPHORUS:** Phosphorus is the nutrient most responsible for microscopic plant growth. The Bow Lake total phosphorus concentrations display a trend of increasing concentrations over twenty-four years of water quality monitoring conducted between 1984 and 2020 (Figure 5).

**COLOR:** The Bow Lake color data, the result of naturally occurring “tea” color substances from the breakdown of soils and plant materials, have oscillated among years but do not display a trend of increasing or decreasing color concentrations over the twenty-four years of water quality monitoring conducted between 1984 and 2020 (Figure 5).



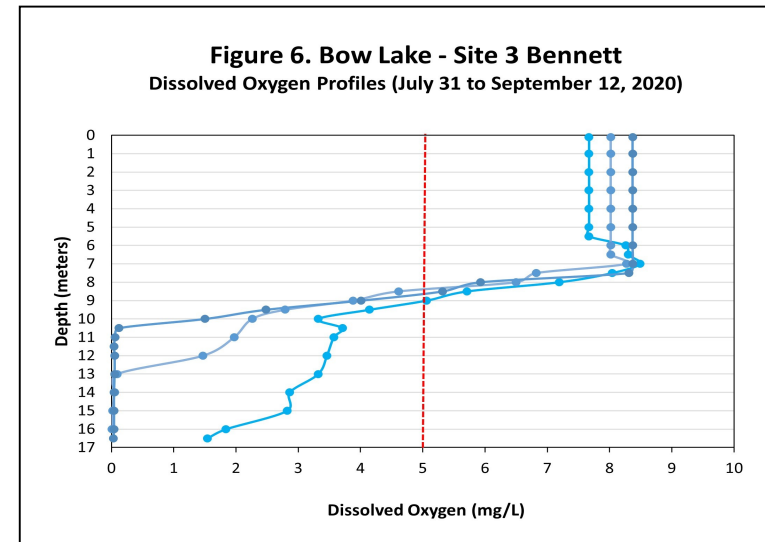
**Table 3. Bow Lake Seasonal Average Water Quality Inter-site Comparison (2020)**

Site	Average (range) Secchi Disk Transparency (meters)	Average (range) Chlorophyll <i>a</i> (ppb)	Average (range) Total Phosphorus (ppb)	Average (range) Dissolved Oxygen (ppm)
1 Ledges	7.5 (range: 7.1-8.2)	1.9 (range: 1.4-2.3)	6.7 (range: 6.1-7.2)	0.2 (range: 0.0 – 0.6)
3 Bennett	7.6 (range: 7.1-7.9)	1.8 (range: 1.3-2.4)	6.6 (range: 6.0-7.0)	0.0 (range: 0.0 – 0.0)

• Dissolved oxygen data were measured on September 12, 2020 in the bottom water layer (hypolimnion).

Figures 4 and 5. Changes in the Bow Lake water clarity (Secchi Disk depth), chlorophyll *a*, dissolved color and total phosphorus concentrations measured between 1984 and 2020. **These data illustrate the relationship among plant growth, water color and water clarity. Total phosphorus data are oftentimes correlated with the amount of plant growth.** Long-term trends are based on the analysis of annual median values.

Figure 6. Bow Lake dissolved oxygen concentrations collected between July 31 and September 12, 2020. The vertical red line indicates the oxygen concentration commonly considered the threshold for successful growth and reproduction of cold water fish. *Notice the decreasing dissolved oxygen concentrations near the lake bottom between July and September.*



## Recommendations

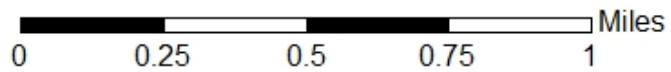
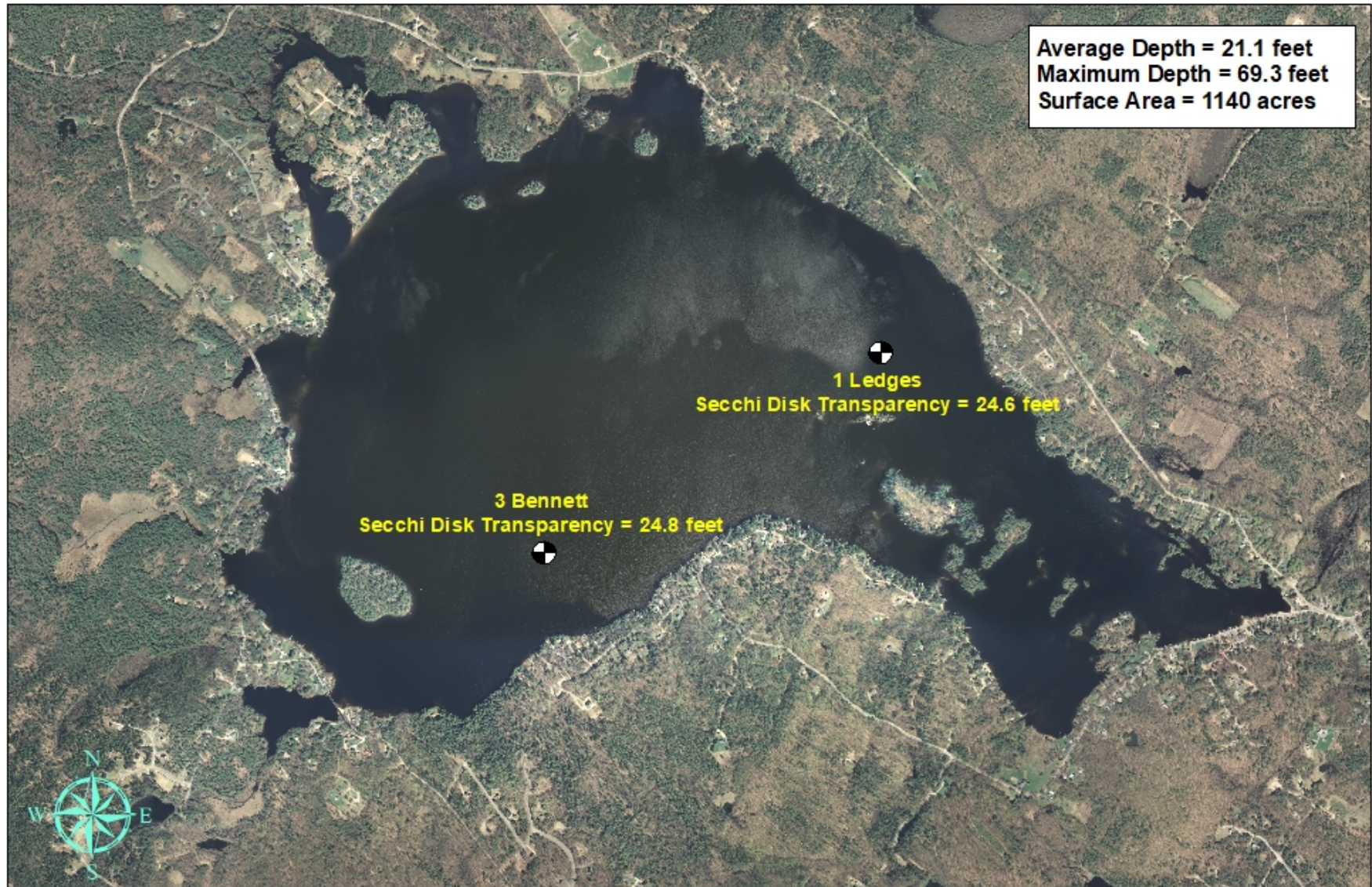
Implement Best Management Practices within the Bow Lake watershed to minimize the adverse impacts of polluted runoff and erosion into Bow Lake. Refer to “Landscaping at the Water’s Edge: An Ecological Approach” and “New Hampshire Homeowner’s Guide to Stormwater Management: Do-It-Yourself Stormwater Solutions for Your Home” for more information on how to reduce nutrient loading caused by overland run-off.

- [https://extension.unh.edu/resources/files/resource004159\\_rep5940.pdf](https://extension.unh.edu/resources/files/resource004159_rep5940.pdf)
- <https://www.des.nh.gov/sites/g/files/ehbemt341/files/documents/2020-01/homeowner-guide-stormwater.pdf>

# Figure 7. Bow Lake

Strafford & Northwood, NH

2020 Deep water sampling locations and the seasonal average water clarity



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



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