



# 2021 Data Report for Grass Lake, Gladwin County

Site ID: 260158

44.11682°N, 84.5844°W

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**EGLE**

MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF  
ENVIRONMENT, GREAT LAKES, AND ENERGY

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**About this report:**

This report is a summary of the data that have been collected through the Cooperative Lakes Monitoring Program. The contents have been customized for your lake. The first page is a summary of the Trophic Status Indicators of your lake (Secchi Disk Transparency, Chlorophyll-a, Spring Total Phosphorus, and Summer Total Phosphorus). Where data are available, they have been summarized for the most recent field season, five years prior to the most recent field season, and since the first year your lake has been enrolled in the program.

If you did not take 8 or more Secchi disk measurements or 4 or more chlorophyll measurements, there will not be summary data calculated for these parameters. These numbers of measurements are required to ensure that the results are indicative of overall summer conditions.

If you enrolled in Dissolved Oxygen/Temperature, the summary page will have a graph of one of the profiles taken during the late summer (typically August or September). If your lake stratifies, we will use a graph showing the earliest time of stratification, because identifying the timing of this condition and the depth at which it occurs is typically the most important use of dissolved oxygen measurements.

The back of the summary page will be an explanation of the Trophic Status Index and where your lake fits on that scale.

The rest of the report will be aquatic plant summaries, Score the Shore results, and larger graphs, including all Dissolved Oxygen/Temperature Profiles that you recorded. For Secchi Disk, Chlorophyll, and Phosphorus parameters, you need to have two years of data for a graph to make logical sense. Therefore if this is the first year you have enrolled in the CLMP, you will not receive a graph for these parameters.

Remember that some lakes see a lot of fluctuation in these parameters from year to year. Until you have eight years worth of data, consider all trends to be preliminary.

To learn more about the CLMP monitoring parameters or get definitions to unknown terms, check out the CLMP Manual, found at: [https://micorps.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/CLMP-Manual-2019update2\\_2021.pdf](https://micorps.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/CLMP-Manual-2019update2_2021.pdf)

**Thank you!**

The CLMP leadership team would like to thank you for all of your efforts over the past year. The CLMP would not exist without dedicated and hardworking volunteers!

The CLMP Leadership Team is made of: Jo Latimore, Erick Elgin, Jean Roth, Tamara Lipsey, Mike Gallagher, Melissa DeSimone, and Paul Steen

**Questions?**

If you have questions on this report or believe that the tabulated data for your lake in this report are in error please contact:

**Paul Steen (psteen@hrwc.org), CLMP Data Analyst**

# Grass Lake, Gladwin County 2021 CLMP Results



## Secchi Disk Transparency (feet)

Year	# Readings	Min	Max	Average	Std. Dev	Carlson TSI
2021	9	3.0	5.0	4.1	0.8	57
2021 All CLMP Lakes	2817	1.0	50.0	12.7	2.9	42

No graph: Not enough data

## Chlorophyll-a (parts per billion)

Grass Lake does not have Chlorophyll-a data available. Consider enrolling in this parameter next year. Chlorophyll-a is the green photosynthetic pigment in the cells of plants. The amount of algae in a lake can be estimated by measuring the chlorophyll-a concentration in the water. As an algal productivity indicator, chlorophyll-a is used to determine the trophic status of a lake.

## Spring Phosphorus (parts per billion)

Grass Lake does not have spring total phosphorus data available. Consider enrolling in this parameter next year. Phosphorus is one of several essential nutrients that algae need to grow and reproduce. An increase in phosphorus over time is a measure of nutrient enrichment in a lake. A surface water sample taken in the spring, shortly after spring turnover, will be a representative sample for estimating the total amount of phosphorus in the lake.

## Summer Phosphorus (parts per billion)

Year	# Samples	Min	Max	Average	Std. Dev	Carlson TSI
2021	1	15.0	15.0	15.0	NA	43
2021 All CLMP Lakes	281	<= 3	65.0	12.8	9.3	38

No graph: Not enough data

## Dissolved Oxygen and Temperature Profile

This lake does not have recent (within 5 years) dissolved oxygen/water temperature data available. Consider enrolling in this parameter next year. Fish, insects, mollusks, and crustaceans need dissolved oxygen to live in water. By late summer, many lakes stratify, with cold anoxic water on the bottom and warm, oxygen rich water on the surface. Anoxic (oxygen-depleted) water occurring too close to the surface is a sign of nutrient enrichment. Understanding the pattern of dissolved oxygen and water temperature in a lake is important for assessing nutrient problems as well as the health of the biological community.

## Summary

Average TSI	2021	2016-2020	1974-2015
Grass Lake	50	NA	NA
All CLMP Lakes	42	40	43

With an average TSI score of 50 based on 2021 Secchi transparency and summer total phosphorus data, this lake is rated between the mesotrophic and eutrophic lake classification. The lake leans slightly more eutrotrophic than mesotrophic.

Welcome to the CLMP! The longer you stay in the program and the more parameters you monitor, the more interesting this report will become. Once you have eight years of data there will be enough history to analyze the long-term trend.

\* = No sample received W= Value is less than the detection limit (<3 ppb) T= Value reported is less than the reporting limit (5 ppb).  
<1.0 = Chlorophyll-a: Sample value is less than limit of quantification (<1 ppb).

# Trophic Status Index Explained

In 1977, limnologist Dr. Robert Carlson developed a numerical scale (0-100) where the numbers indicate the level of nutrient enrichment. Using the proper equations, we can convert results from Summer Total Phosphorus, Secchi Depth, and Chlorophyll-a to this Trophic Status Index (TSI). The TSI numbers are furthermore grouped into general categories (oligotrophic, mesotrophic, eutrophic, and hypereutrophic), to quickly give us a way to understand the general nutrient level of any lake.

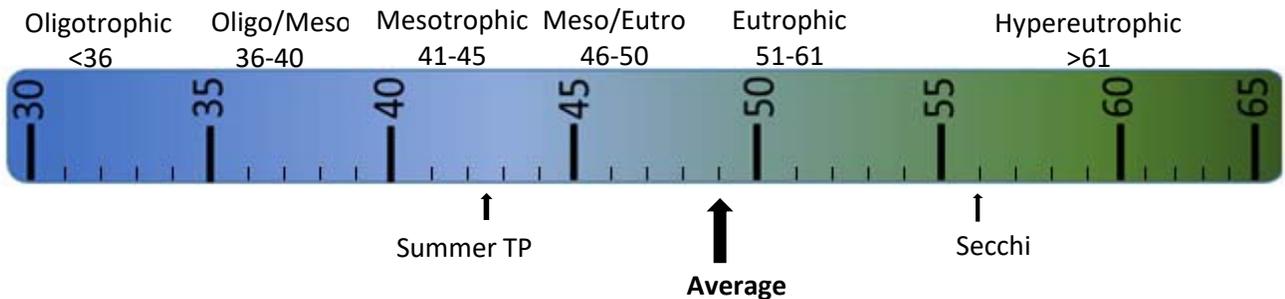
The tables below give the results-to-TSI conversions for the water quality data ranges normally seen in the CLMP. The formulas for this conversion can be found in the CLMP manual (link is on page 2 of this report).

Phosphorus (ppb)	TSI Value
<5	<27
6	30
8	34
10	37
12	40
15	43
18	46
21	48
24	50
32	54
36	56
42	58
48	60
>50	>61

Secchi Depth (ft)	TSI Value
>30	<28
25	31
20	34
15	38
12	42
10	44
7.5	48
6	52
4	57
<3	>61

Chlorophyll-a (ppb)	TSI Value
<1	<31
2	37
3	41
4	44
6	48
8	51
12	55
16	58
22	61
>22	>61

TSI for Grass Lake in 2021	
Average	50
Secchi Disk	57
Summer TP	43
Chlorophyll-a	



**Oligotrophic:** Generally deep and clear lakes with little aquatic plant or algae growth. These lakes maintain sufficient dissolved oxygen in the cool, deep-bottom waters during late summer to support cold water fish, such as trout and whitefish.

**Mesotrophic:** Lakes that fall between oligotrophic and eutrophic. Mid-ranged amounts of nutrients.

**Eutrophic:** Highly productive eutrophic lakes are generally shallow, turbid, and support abundant aquatic plant growth. In deep eutrophic lakes, the cool bottom waters usually contain little or no dissolved oxygen. Therefore, these lakes can only support warm water fish, such as bass and pike.

**Hypereutrophic:** A specialized category of eutrophic lakes. These lakes exhibit extremely high productivity, such as nuisance algae and weed growth.

## Grass Lake, Gladwin County 2021 CLMP Aquatic Plant Results



Grass Lake does not have aquatic plant data available for 2021. Consider enrolling in an aquatic plant parameter next year.

### **Why is monitoring aquatic plants important?**

A major component of the plant community in lakes is the large, leafy, rooted plants. Compared to the microscopic algae the rooted plants are large. Sometimes they are collectively called the “macrophytes” (“macro” meaning large and “phyte” meaning plant). These macrophytes are the plants that people sometimes complain about and refer to as lake weeds.

Far from being weeds, macrophytes or rooted aquatic plants are a natural and essential part of the lake, just as grasses, shrubs and trees are a natural part of the land. Their roots are a fabric for holding sediments in place, reducing erosion and maintaining bottom stability. They provide habitat for fish, including structure for food organisms, nursery areas, foraging and predator avoidance. Waterfowl, shore birds and aquatic mammals use plants to forage on and within, and as nesting materials and cover.

Though plants are important to the lake, overabundant plants can negatively affect fish populations, fishing and other recreational activities. Rooted plant populations increase in abundance as nutrient concentrations increase in the lake. As lakes become more eutrophic rooted plant populations increase. They are rarely a problem in oligotrophic lakes, only occasionally a problem in mesotrophic lakes, sometimes a problem in eutrophic lakes, and often a problem in hypereutrophic lakes.

However, sometimes a lake is invaded by an aquatic plant species that is not native to Michigan. In these cases, even nutrient poor oligotrophic lakes can be threatened. Some of these exotic plants, like Curly-leaf Pondweed, Eurasian Milfoil, Starry Stonewort, and Hydrilla can be extremely disruptive to the lake’s ecosystem and recreational activities.

To avoid a takeover by exotic plants, it is necessary to use Integrated Pest Management (IPM) strategies: monitoring, early detection, rapid response, maintenance control, and preventive management. For more information on these strategies, check out Integrated Pest Management for Nuisance Exotics in Michigan Inland Lakes (MSU Extension Water Quality Publication WQ-56, available at <https://micorps.net/lake-monitoring/clmp-documents/>)

The CLMP offers two parameters on aquatic plants. In the Exotic Aquatic Plant Watch, volunteers concentrate on monitoring and early detection of exotic invasive plants only. In Aquatic Plant Identification and Mapping, volunteers identify all native and non-native plants. In both parameters, volunteers create lake maps or use digital tools to georeference where the plants are found.

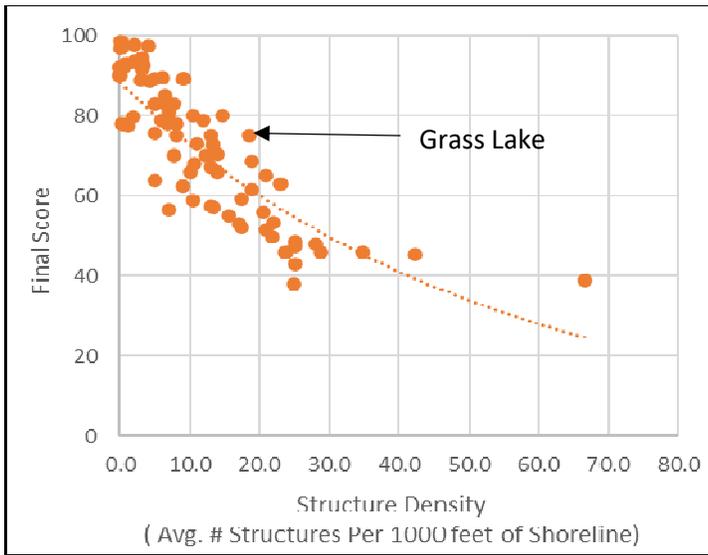
# Grass Lake, Gladwin County 2021 Score the Shore Results



The Score the Shore Habitat Assessment was conducted on Grass Lake in 2021.

This assessment involves rating 1000 foot sections of shoreline for aquatic vegetation, shoreline vegetation, erosion, and erosion control practices (like sea walls). Each shoreline section is given three scores ranging from 0-100 for the categories of Littoral, Riparian, and Erosion Management. The three scores are averaged to produce a average section score. Then a total score is given to the entire lake by averaging all of the average section scores. A score of 0 indicates a shoreline that has been extremely disturbed by human impacts and no natural shoreline remains. A score of 100 indicates a shoreline that is nearly pristine.

**How does your lake compare to others in the program?**



Grass Lake	
Number of Sections:	4
Number of Structures:	74
Structure Density:	18.5
Final Score:	75

All 78 Participating Lakes from 2015-2021:	
Avg. Number of Sections:	16
Avg. Number of Structures:	214
Avg. Structure Density:	12.2
Avg. Final Score:	72

Note about graph to the left: The dotted line sets your average expectation of the score of your lake. If your lake is lower than the dotted line, then your shoreline health is lower than average compared to lakes with similar amount of shoreline development. And vice-versa in regards to a lake above the dotted line.

**Analysis specific to Grass Lake:**

Overall, the lakeshore habitat of Grass Lake is doing well and scored slightly higher than average when compared to all other lakes in the program. All of the 1000 foot sections scored either Fair or Good: 2 fair, and 2 good. Compared to other lakes with the same amount of development, Grass Lake is significantly better than average. That being said, there is room for improvement.

The riparian zone was the weak point in the lake's score (scoring an average of 64). Reduce the amount of mowed grass and increase the amount of unmowed native vegetation along the lakeshore to boost this aspect of the shoreline habitat. You can get plenty of ideas for improving shoreline health from the Michigan Natural Shoreline Partnership (<https://www.mishorelinepartnership.org/>).

The other two categories (Littoral and Erosion Control) have scores in the "Good" range and the emphasis on these features should be maintenance and prevention of disturbance.

