



# 2023 Data Report for Sturgeon Lake, St. Joseph County

Site ID: 750333

41.9667°N, 85.3304°W

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**EGLE**

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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**

# Sturgeon Lake, St. Joseph County 2023 CLMP Results



## Secchi Disk Transparency (feet)

Year	# Readings	Min	Max	Average	Std. Dev	Carlson TSI
2023	11	3.0	3.5	3.1	0.2	61
2023 All CLMP Lakes	2817	1.0	50.0	12.7	2.9	42

No graph: Not enough data

## Chlorophyll-a (parts per billion)

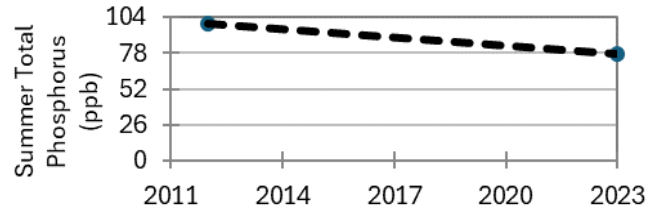
Sturgeon Lake does not have Chlorophyll-a data available. Consider enrolling in this parameter next year. Chlorophyll-a is the green photosynthetic pigment in the cells of plants. The amount of algae in a lake can be estimated by measuring the chlorophyll-a concentration in the water. As an algal productivity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

## Spring Phosphorus (parts per billion)

Sturgeon 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
2023	1	77.0	77.0	77.0	NA	67
2012	1	99.0	99.0	99.0	NA	70
2023 All CLMP Lakes	234	<= 3	150.0	17.4	15.3	45



## 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	2023	2012
Sturgeon Lake	64	70
All CLMP Lakes	44	40

Welcome back to the CLMP! The longer you stay in the program and the more parameters you monitor, the more interesting this report will become.

With an average TSI score of 64 based on 2023 Secchi transparency and summer total phosphorus data, this lake is rated as hypereutrophic. For now, there is too little data to assess long term trends. CLMP recommends eight years of consistent monitoring in order to develop a strong data baseline.

However, given this lake's hypereutrophic status, residents should be encouraged to take measures to reduce nutrient input into this lake, including minimizing the use of fertilizers and having their septic fields examined, if applicable; and to continue monitoring efforts to establish trends and track lake health over time.

\* = Minimum # samples not met for average/median/TSI value

<1.0 = Chlorophyll-a: Sample value is less than limit of quantification (<1 ppb).

W= Value is less than the detection limit (<3 ppb) T = Value reported is less than the reporting limit (5 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.

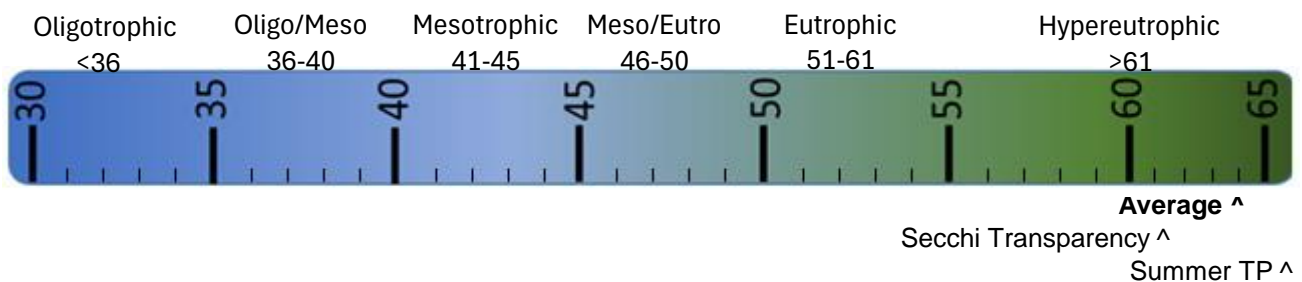
The tables below give the results-to-TSI conversions for the water quality data ranges normally seen in the CLMP. The formulas for this conversion can be found in the CLMP manual (link is on page 2 of this report).

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 Sturgeon Lake in 2023	
Average	64
Secchi Disk	61
Summer TP	67
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.

## **Sturgeon Lake, St. Joseph County 2023 Exotic Aquatic Plant Watch Results**

Sturgeon Lake was enrolled in the Exotic Aquatic Plant Watch, but no survey results were reported in 2023.

### **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 watermilfoil, starry stonewort, European frog-bit 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.

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 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.

COOPERATIVE LAKES MONITORING PROGRAM  
SUMMER TOTAL PHOSPHORUS

**Sturgeon Lake (St. Joseph Co.), 750333**

