

LAKE WATER QUALITY ASSESSMENT REPORT
NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
DIVISION OF WATER RESOURCES

IONA LAKE
FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP, GLOUCESTER COUNTY

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PREFACE

The 1986 revisions to the Clean Water Act requires states to provide the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) with water quality information on public lakes. This information is a prerequisite for eligibility in the USEPA Clean Lakes Program.

The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection obtained a grant to assess the water quality of the State's lakes during 1989. The objectives of the FY 89 Project were to acquire limited limnological data for 21 lakes. The data was analyzed to determine the trophic status for each lake.

Lakes were selected based on several criteria which included; the amount of public access the lake provided, it's recreational usage (e.g. swimming, fishing, ...) and it's value as a local resource. The following lakes were surveyed during 1989:

COUNTY	LAKE
Burlington	Lake Absegami Crystal Lake Evans Pond Indian Mills Lake Jefferson Lake Smithville Lake
Camden	Cooper River Lake
Cape May	East Creek Pond Lake Nummy
Gloucester	Greenwich Lake Iona Lake Narriticon Lake
Mercer	Mercer County Park Lake Rosedale Lake
Middlesex	Brainerd Lake Farrington Lake
Monmouth	Mac's Pond
Morris	Lake Ames Mount Hope Pond
Ocean	Lake Carasaljo
Passaic	Shepherds Lake

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Appendix includes	
-Data	
-Algae identification	
-Map of lake and watershed	
-Map with sampling stations	

SCOPE OF SURVEY

The quality of a lake's water is determined by many factors. These factors may be found within the lake itself or they may come from the watershed surrounding it. The collection of data through sampling and measurements can help to determine what may be influencing the lake's water quality. Although the scope covered by this report is somewhat limited, the following data may be found:

1. Limited Historical Data
2. Geology
3. Morphology and Hydrology
4. Physical & Chemical Data Results
5. Biological Data

All lakes in the program were monitored three times during the year; once each during the spring, summer and fall. Samples were taken at the major inlets and at sites deemed representative of the entire lake. Samples were taken above the outlet when a boat was unavailable. The samples were analyzed for the following parameters:

In-situ analysis:

1. Temperature
2. Dissolved Oxygen
3. pH
4. Depth and Secchi readings
5. Visual check of Macrophytes

Laboratory Analysis (NJ Department of Health):

1. Bacterial Analysis
2. Alkalinity
3. Nutrients

Biological Analysis (Bio-Monitoring Unit of the NJDEP):

1. Chlorophyll a
2. Algal Scan (Microscopic)
3. Macrophyte Survey

EXPLANATION OF PARAMETERS SAMPLED

PHYSICAL AND CHEMICAL PARAMETERS

1. TEMPERATURE AND DISSOLVED OXYGEN (D.O.):

The temperature of a shallow lake generally follows climatic changes. As the temperature of the water increases the dissolved oxygen level of the water decreases. A deeper lake will usually stratify thermally, during the summer. A warmer, less dense layer of water (epilimnion) will float on a cooler, denser layer of water (hypolimnion). These two layers are separated by a zone of rapidly changing temperature and density called the metalimnion. The metalimnion, can form a barrier, which can keep the hypolimnion from being reoxygenated from the atmosphere. In a productive (eutrophic) lake this can cause anoxic conditions in the hypolimnion as oxygen is used up by animals and decomposers (bacteria).

2. ALKALINITY AND pH:

Alkalinity is a measurement that indicates the degree to which an aquatic system can buffer pH changes that can occur during photosynthesis and/or by the introduction of pollutants. The toxicity of certain pollutants can be reduced by this buffering action. A minimum of 20 mg/L CaCO₃ has been recommended, except where natural conditions are lower (Quality Criteria for Water, 1986, EPA 440/5-86-001). The Pine Barrens are an example of an area where natural conditions favor low alkalinity. PH is a measurement of hydrogen ion activity or the acid-base equilibrium in natural waters. The pH can be raised by the photosynthetic processes of algae and/or macrophytes.

EXPLANATION OF PARAMETERS SAMPLED

3. NUTRIENT ANALYSIS:

Phosphorus and nitrogen are the major nutrients required by algae for growth. In New Jersey's lakes, phosphorus is the nutrient most often responsible for limiting algal growth. Dissolved orthophosphorus is believed to approximate the solid reactive phosphorus used by all photosynthetic organisms (aquatic plants/algae). However, all forms of total phosphorus can become reactive through biological decomposition and can be used as nutrients to enhance weed growth and/or algae blooms.

Nutrients can enter a lake or its watershed via point (i.e. sewerage treatment plant) or nonpoint sources (i.e. fertilizer runoff from lawns). Nutrients may also be recycled from the sediments in the lake.

4. SECCHI DISC TRANSPARENCY:

A greater depth of light transmission generally indicates good water quality (low algal growth). However, heavy macrophyte growth can also keep the water clear. The macrophytes may outcompete the algae for nutrients and therefore, restrict most algal growth. Erosion from the watershed or upwelling of the lake's sediments, from adverse weather conditions, could also decrease the water's transparency. To determine the transparency of a lake's water a secchi disk is used. The secchi disk is an 8 inch black and white disk. Measurements are taken by lowering the disk until it is no longer visible.

EXPLANATION OF PARAMETERS SAMPLED

BIOLOGICAL DATA

1. BACTERIAL ANALYSIS:

Bacterial samples for Total coliform, Fecal coliform (FC) and Fecal streptococcus (FS) were taken at the inlets and in-lake. While sources are difficult to determine with 3 sampling runs, the ratio of FC/FS can imply whether the source is from human or animal waste.

FC/FS Possible Bacterial source (Millipore Corp. 1972)

>4	-Human wastes
2-4	-Mainly human wastes and other sources
1-2	-Inconclusive
0.7-1	-Mainly animal wastes and other sources
<.7	-Animal wastes

A lake's water is considered unsafe for swimming when Fecal coliform levels exceed 200 mpn/100ml.

2. CHLOROPHYLL a/ALGAE

Chlorophyll a is a pigment that is present in all types of algae. The chlorophyll a content of the water can indicate the amount of planktonic algae present in the lake. Algae are an important part of a lake ecosystem because they are a vital part of the food chain. However, an excessive amount of algae can negatively impact a lake. Excessive algae growth can inhibit the growth of other plants, cause aesthetic problems and curtail recreational uses. Through the processes of photosynthesis, increased algal growth can raise the dissolved oxygen level in a lake during the daytime (sunlight) and decrease the dissolved oxygen level during the night (dark). Depressed dissolved oxygen levels, if extreme, could cause fishkills.

EXPLANATION OF PARAMETERS SAMPLED

3. ALGAL SURVEY:

As the growing season proceeds, a succession of algal communities typically occurs in a lake. During the spring and fall, diatoms are usually dominant. In the early summer, chlorophytes (green algae) become dominant. As available nutrients change during the summer, filamentous green or blue-green algae may become dominant. These may float to the surface forming mats that can cause aesthetic and recreational problems.

High chlorophyll a levels with little algal species diversity are indicative of nutrient rich water.

4. MACROPHYTE SURVEY:

Macrophytes are also a vital part of a lake. They provide cover for fish and food for wildlife. However, excessive macrophyte growth can limit the recreational uses of a lake including swimming, fishing and boating. A visual survey was done to identify and determine areal coverage of macrophytes.

LAKE TROPHIC STATES

Lake eutrophication (aging) is a natural process resulting from the gradual accumulation of nutrients, increased productivity, and filling in from sediments, silt and organic matter.

Lakes usually follow a progression through a series of trophic states, which are the following:

1. Oligotrophic
-nutrient poor and low biological productivity.
2. Mesotrophic
-intermediate levels of nutrients and biological productivity.
3. Eutrophic
-nutrient rich and highly productive.

Accelerated or cultural eutrophication occurs to a lake when nutrients, silt and organic matter inputs are increased by activity in the watershed. Several examples of increased inputs include; a sewage treatment plant discharging into a lake, runoff of fertilizers from farms or lawns, and erosion from new construction sites. Because of New Jersey's large population, all lakes in the State are considered to be threatened by accelerated eutrophication.

INTRODUCTION

Iona Lake is a 60 acre body of water located in Franklin Township, Gloucester County. The lake has a maximum depth of about four feet and is fed by two main sources. The first is the joining of Still Run Creek and the outlet of Idle Acres Lake before entering the upper part of Iona Lake. The second inlet is an unnamed creek that flows through woodlands and wetlands before entering the eastern side of the lake. Iona Lake has several homes situated on it's shoreline. There is a small beach with guarded swimming area and an area to launch a boat from. The lake is stocked with trout by the State and is accessible to fishing from the shoreline along the lower end.

LAKE NUM. AND NAME: #3256 IONA LAKE

STUDY PERIOD: SPRING, SUMMER, FALL 1989

LOCATION: FRANKLIN TWP., GLOUCESTER CO.

U.S.G.S. QUAD: #31 NEWFIELD

LAKE AREA: 60 ACRES

LAKE MAXIMUM DEPTH: 4 ft.

GEOLOGIC DESIGNATION: TCH COHANSEY SAND

TRIBUTARIES: 1) STILL RUN, JOINED WITH IDLE ACRES LAKE OUTLET.
2) STREAM FROM UPPER PITTS GROVE (UNNAMED).

LAKE USE AND HISTORICAL NOTES: SWIMMING, FISHING AND BOATING.
SAMPLED BY NJDEP IN 1975-1978,
AND 1981.

COMMENTS: MACROPHYTES INCLUDE BLADDERWORT, NITELLA AND WATER MILFOIL.
POTENTIAL RUNOFF FROM SURROUNDING HOMES AND WOODLANDS.

RESULTS

PHYSICAL/CHEMICAL PARAMETERS

Temperature and Dissolved Oxygen

Because of the shallow depth of the lake, the temperature and dissolved oxygen levels were uniform throughout the water column. Dissolved oxygen levels were above 9.0 mg/l except during the summer sampling run (4.2 mg/l).

Secchi Disk

The transparency of the water ranged from 2.5 feet in the summer to 4.0 feet during the fall.

Alkalinity and pH

The alkalinity of the water ranged from 2 mg/l to 9 mg/l and therefore, offered poor buffering capacity. The pH ranged from a 5.17 in the spring to 6.31 during the fall.

Nutrients

Total phosphorus levels in the water column ranged from 0.03 mg/l to 0.07 mg/l.

RESULTS

BIOLOGICAL DATA

Chlorophyll a/Algae

Chlorophyll a levels for the summer and fall were 8.16 mg/m³ and 2.71 mg/m³ respectively. No analysis was performed for the spring due to a lab malfunction. The diversity of algal species was limited with Chlorophytes most prevalent but not dominant.

Macrophytes

Areal coverage of the lake by macrophytes was about 60%. The dominant species included bladderwort (*Utricularia* spp.), *Nitella* spp. and water milfoil (*Myriophyllum* spp.).

Bacteria

Fecal coliform levels were never above 80 mpn/100ml for any sampling run and therefore, the lake had safe swimming conditions on these dates.

CONCLUSION

Because of the heavy growth of aquatic macrophytes, Iona Lake is considered to be in a eutrophic state. The proliferation of macrophytes negatively impact the recreational use of the lake. The macrophytes impede fishing in a majority of the upper region of the lake and along much of it's shoreline. The swimming area is also affected by the macrophytes. Parts of the plants float to and congregate in the swimming area and therefore, become a nuisance to swimmers.

The heavy growth of macrophytes may also have affected the ecology of the lake in several ways. The lake's maximum depth has decreased from 9 feet in 1975 to 4 feet at the present time. Much of this sedimentation problem may be attributable to the accumulation of dead macrophytes. Secondly, the lake's entire water column had a low dissolved oxygen level (4.2 mg/l), during the summer sampling run. The combination of oxygen respiration by plants during the night, respiration by fish and other organisms, and the oxygen demand by bacteria breaking down dying plant material may have led to the low dissolved oxygen level in the morning hours. Dissolved oxygen levels under 4.0 mg/l could stress certain organisms inhabiting the lake, including favorable fish species.

REFERENCES

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APPENDIX

STATION	DATE	TEMP	D O	pH	ALK	ACIDITY	TOT P	ORTHO P	F COLI	F STREP	TOT COLI	FC/FS	SECCHI (feet)
INLET #1	04/06/89	15.0	8.0	5.85	4		.03	<.01	<20	130	<20	NA	
	06/26/89	23.8	6.1	5.26	6		.03	.02	20	23	790	NA	
	10/10/89	11.0	10.2	5.91	4		.03	.02	>20	46	60	NA	
INLET #2	04/06/89	10.5	7.6	4.63	1		.03	<.01	130	920	490	.14	
	06/26/89	17.6	7.0	4.41		56	.02	.02	80	79	5400	1.01	
	10/10/89	9.6	9.8	4.87	1		.03	.03	<20	79	210	NA	
LAKE	04/06/89	14.9	9.0	5.17	9		.04	<.01	80	540	270	.15	3.5
	06/26/89	23.5	4.2	6.04	2		.07	.02	50	23	490	2.17	2.5
	10/10/89	11.0	9.7	6.31	9		.03	.03	<20	94	110	NA	4.0

NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
LABORATORY OPERATIONS SECTION

89/10/10
Sample No. 53449
Lakes Management
Iona Lake, NJ

Plankton Identification

CHLOROPHYCEAE (green)

Closterium sp.
Nannochloris sp.

CRYPTOPHYCEAE (colorless or brownish)

Cryptomonas erosa

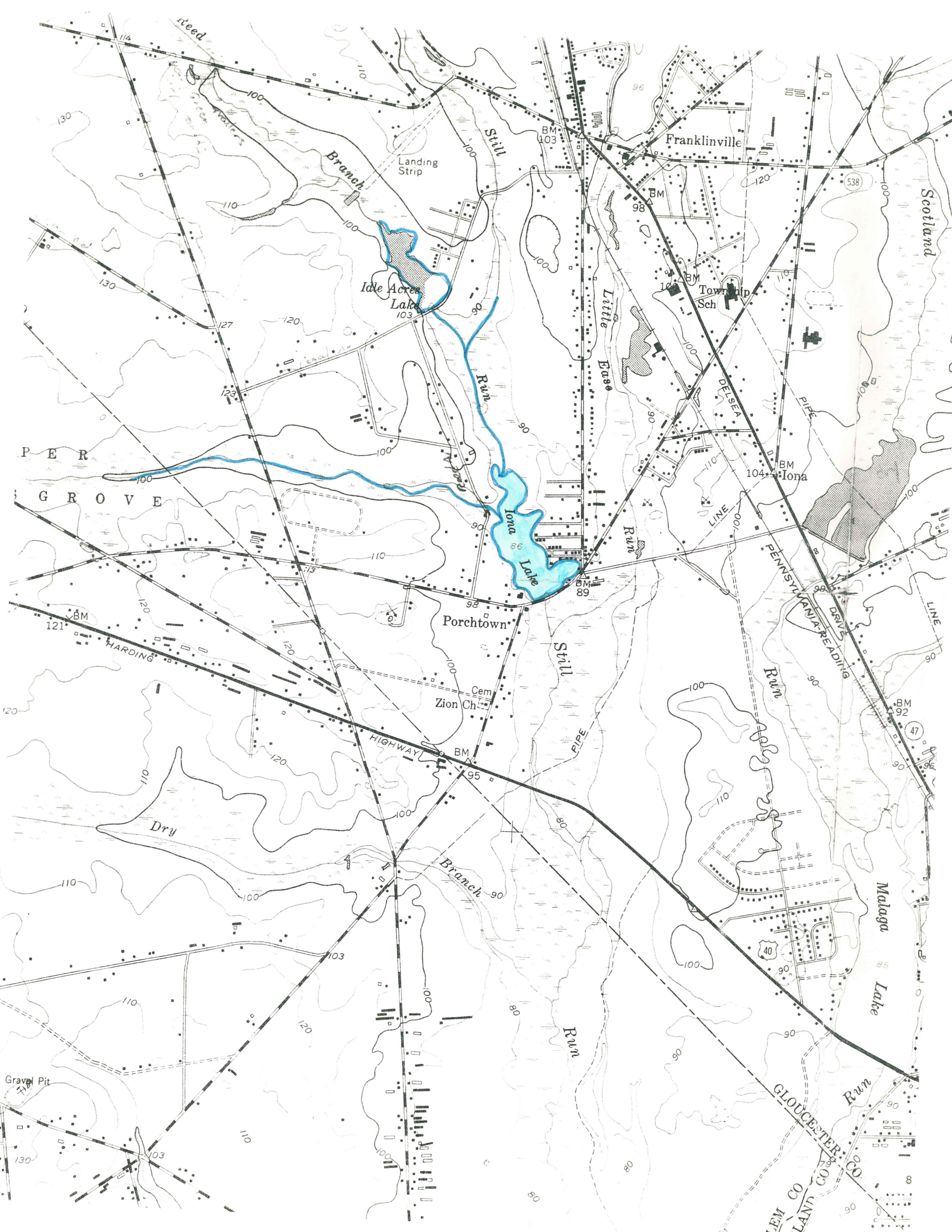
MYXOPHYCEAE (blue-green or other color)

Calothrix braunii

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Chlorophyll Analysis

Chlorophyll "a" (mg/m³) = 2.71

Analyst/Unit _____



IDLE ACRES OUTLET

X
INLET

IONA LAKE

UPPER LAKE

PITTS GROVE

X
INLET

X-Sample Sites

X

LOWER LAKE

BEACH

WILLIAMSTOWN ROAD

