



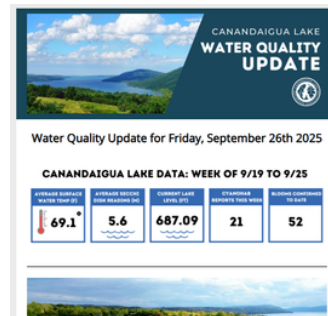
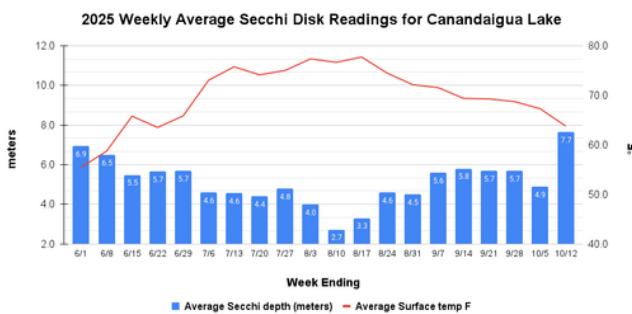
Secchi Disk Sampling Protocol

Thank you for signing up to be a secchi disk volunteer. This citizen science program started collecting water clarity data from Canandaigua Lake in 2014.

A secchi disk measures the transparency and turbidity of the water - acting as a simple yet effective indicator of overall lake productivity and water quality. It assesses light penetration - which can be effected by both algal abundance and suspended sediments - helping to track long term trends.



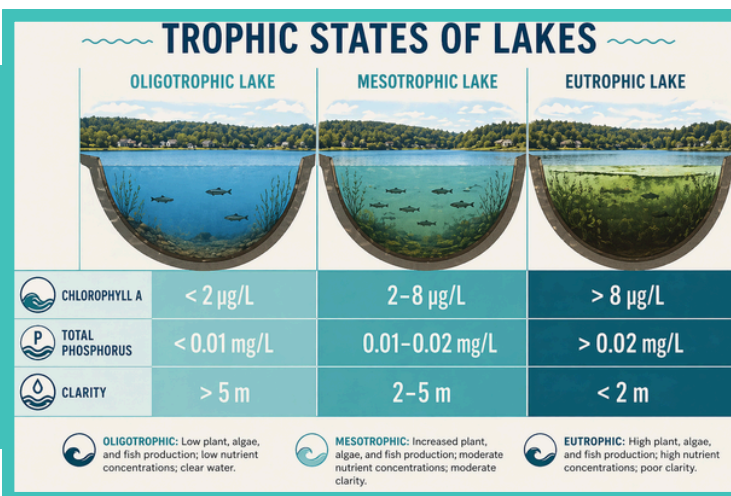
A few of our volunteers in action!



Far left: This graph shows a summary of our 2025 secchi and temp data. Near left: We use this data in our weekly water quality updates all season long!

How the program works

Volunteers record weekly secchi disk readings and surface water temperatures. They navigate to the same location on the lake every week as consistently as possible from May through October. We use this data in our weekly water quality updates all summer and share it with researchers doing work on our lake and other partners.



The Science of the Secchi

Secchi disks are often used to help assess the trophic status of a lake by indicating the biological productivity of a lake. Higher transparency (greater depth) often indicates lower nutrient levels (oligotrophic), while low transparency suggests higher nutrients (eutrophic).

Sampling Protocol:

You will have two readings, one while lowering the disk until it disappears, and then recording when it appears while raising the disk. The secchi disk reading is actually the average of these two numbers.

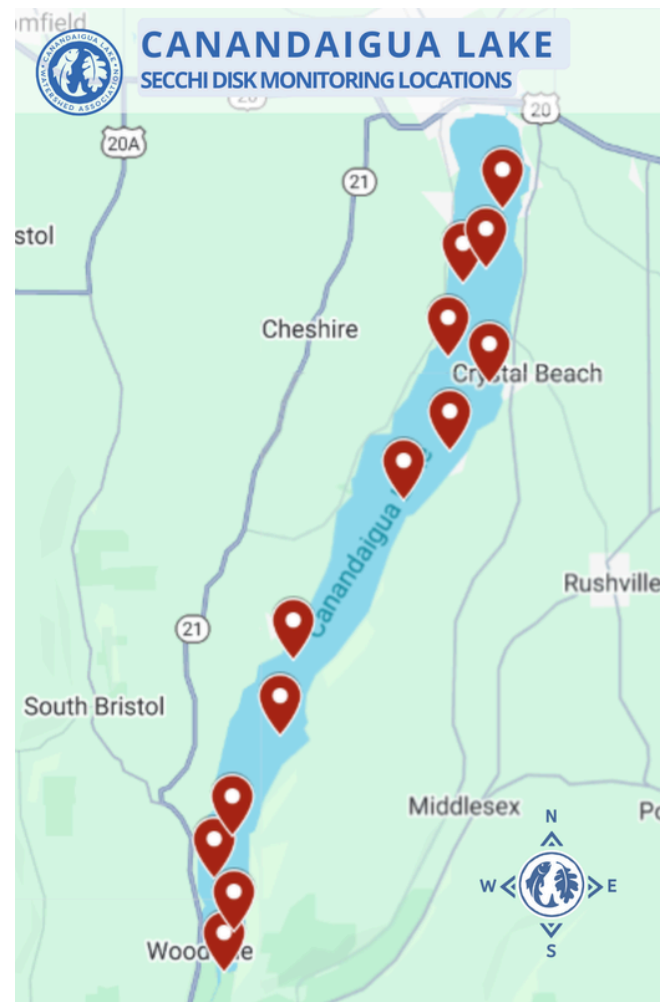


Do not use dark glasses or polarizing lenses while observing the Secchi disk. While these might improve your reading, it reduces the accuracy of the comparison of your reading with previous measurements from our lake by other volunteers, or readings from other lakes.

Slowly lower the disk into the water on the shady side of boat, watching it continually. When the disk completely disappears from sight, use the tape to measure the depth. Record the depth to the nearest tenth of a meter (from the surface of the water) as Secchi Reading 1 in the survey 123 app. Let out an additional length of tape (about a meter) so that the disk won't reappear immediately. Then slowly raise the disk and measure when the disk appears again as you are pulling it up. Record the depth on the tape to the nearest tenth of a meter as Secchi Reading 2 in the survey.

Secchi Reading 1 and Secchi Reading 2 may not be the same number, but neither should they be far apart. These readings should be within a meter of each other. Average these two readings then record in the survey 123 app. You can repeat the procedure to double check, but only record one set of readings.

Learn More: Watch this quick video about how to use a secchi disk: bit.ly/4uaco26



Volunteers monitor all across our lake in many locations.



Questions, reach out to:
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