

Report to White Lake Town Board
October 2021

September was relatively dry, with most of the rainfall for the month occurring in one big rain of 3 inches. The lake level is holding relatively steady, at 64.35 feet NAVD (a drop of less than 2” compared to the end of August).

Water temperatures have started their seasonal decline; as air temperatures start to drop substantially, water temperatures will quickly follow suit and algal declines should start to be more noticeable.

Sampling in the middle of the lake last week, it was possible to document the trail of brown in the wake of a wave board boat with water in its ballast bag (presumably the two individuals in the boat were simply “testing it out”):



Much of the sediment that is stirred up remains suspended, and eventually makes its way to shallow areas. When the water is calm, the sediment forms a distinctive bottom layer, particularly at the western shoreline:



Also noticeable in this area are floating mats of decomposing vegetation and algae (they float because the decay process produces bubbles, keeping them afloat), often coated with brown sediments:



In some places this material can be netted up with a fine mesh net (although it breaks apart easily) or raked up when it washes up on sandy beaches.

A proposal for a pilot project was developed but appears to be in limbo at present.

Suggestions for good boating practices (and development of a flyer) do not appear to be effective at changing behaviors. Disturbance of the muddy lake bottom is a concern not just for aesthetic reasons, but also because the sediments have been proven to be a source for the nutrient phosphorus, which fuels algal and plant growth. According to manufacturers of the big wave board boats, the minimum depth for operation with the ballast bag filled is 20 feet—and the maximum depth of White Lake is 10 feet or less.

