

Lake Level Monitoring Form

Lake Level Monitoring

Water levels fluctuate at all our lakes, which can adversely affect lakeshore development, recreation use, as well, as the many lake shore creature living in the riparian zone. It's important to document our lake levels on a regular basis to create a permanent public record. Fluctuations are primarily a response to changes in precipitation (rain or snow). Some lakes that have dams may use the water for a downstream use. Depending on the need for the water and the amount of replenishment from precipitations the lake with dams may experience wide swings in lake surface levels. Keeping track of lake levels that have a dam with controlled releases may be helpful information when discussing the lake level management with the dam's manager. Lake level information can be used by local zoning officials to locate buildings and to establish low floor elevations for new construction. Watershed managers use historic lake levels for water management plans and model water quality characteristics. Lake level Impacts on property are useful information for property owners to know.

Setting up Staff Gauge

A staff gauge is simply a long ruler that can be installed either permanently (bridge pier, or dam abutment), or a temporary (dock leg. or steel fence post) for seasonally gauge installation. Site selection is very important. Do not install your gauge to near to the shore, the staff may be dry during summer months if you do. If you attach the staff gauge to your dock, or drive a steel fence post into the lake bed in an area that is convenient for the reader, it's important to calibrate the gauge from year to year. Be sure if you use your dock, that it is anchored to the lake bottom, a floating dock will not work. A temporary gauge needs to be calibrated or reset each spring to a fixed permanent point. Using an inexpensive laser level to calibrate your staff to a fixed (non moving) permanent point on land is an easy way to ensure your lake level gauge will read the same year to year.

Reading Your Gauge

You should read your lake gauge at least once per week the same day of the week, unless you experience perception of greater than two inches within 24 hours. Readings taken after a large rainfall event shows the interaction of the lake and the watershed. Lake level readings should be attached to the blank lake level spreadsheet, found with your CSLAP paperwork. For the lakes not participating in CSLAP, please e-mail lake levels data to Nancy Mueller at folo@nysfolo.org or Stephanie June at stephanie.june@dec.ny.gov

Lake Data Storage

Water level readings are stored at the NYSDEC lake database, where they can be analyzed and retrieved with ease. Observers will receive an annual report with a summary and graph of the water levels. The New York State Federation of Lake Associations web site <http://www.nysfolo.org/> has links to each lake that has collected water quality data within the CSLAP lake monitoring program.

Lake Level Record

Lake Name _____ Year _____ Recorders Name _____

Ice out Date _____

Week	Lake Level	Water Temp.	Inches of rain	Comments _____
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				
11				
12				
13				
14				
15				
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28				
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30				

Ice on Date _____