OBSERVATIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

After reviewing data collected from **Angle Pond**, **Sandown**, the program coordinators have made the following observations and recommendations.

Thank you for your continued hard work sampling the pond this year! Your monitoring group sampled the deep spot **three** times this year and has done so for many years! As you know, conducting multiple sampling events each year enables DES to more accurately detect water quality changes. Keep up the good work!

FIGURE INTERPRETATION

CHLOROPHYLL-A

Figure 1 and Table 1: Figure 1 in Appendix A depicts the historical and current year chlorophyll-a concentration in the water column. Table 1 in Appendix B lists the minimum, maximum, and mean concentration for each year that the pond has been monitored through VLAP.

Chlorophyll-a, a pigment found in plants, is an indicator of the algal abundance. Algae (also known as phytoplankton) are typically microscopic, chlorophyll producing plants that naturally occur in lake ecosystems. The chlorophyll-a concentration measured in the water gives biologists an estimation of the algal concentration or lake productivity. The median summer chlorophyll-a concentration for New Hampshire's lakes and ponds is 4.58 mg/m³.

The current year data (the top graph) show that the chlorophyll-a concentration *increased slightly* from **June** to **July**, and then *decreased* from **July** to **August**.

The historical data (the bottom graph) show that the **2010** chlorophyll-a mean is *less than* the state and similar lake medians, and was the lowest mean chlorophyll-a concentration measured since monitoring began. For more information on the similar lake median, refer to Appendix F.

Overall, visual inspection of the historical data trend line (the bottom graph) shows a *variable* in-lake chlorophyll-a trend since monitoring began. Specifically the mean chlorophyll concentration has *fluctuated between approximately 3.13 and 7.00 mg/m³* since **2005**.

Please note that data from 1987 were not included in the Figure 1.

After 10 consecutive years of sample collection, we will be able to conduct a statistical analysis of the historical data to objectively determine if there has been a significant change in the annual mean chlorophyll-a concentration since monitoring began.

While algae are naturally present in all lakes and ponds, an excessive or increasing amount of any type is not welcomed. In freshwater lakes and ponds, phosphorus is the nutrient that algae typically depend upon for growth in New Hampshire lakes. Algal concentrations may increase as nonpoint sources of phosphorus from the watershed increase, or as in-lake phosphorus sources increase. Therefore, it is extremely important for volunteer monitors to continually educate all watershed residents about management practices that can be implemented to minimize phosphorus loading to surface waters.

TRANSPARENCY

Figure 2 and Tables 3a and 3b: Figure 2 in Appendix A shows the historical and current year data for transparency with and without the use of a viewscope. Table 3a in Appendix B lists the minimum, maximum and mean transparency data without the use of a viewscope and Table 3b lists the minimum, maximum and mean transparency data with the use of a viewscope for each year that the pond has been monitored through VLAP.

Volunteer monitors use the Secchi disk, a 20 cm disk with alternating black and white quadrants, to measure how far a person can see into the water. Transparency, a measure of water clarity, can be affected by the amount of algae and sediment in the water, as well as the natural lake color of the water. **The median summer transparency for New Hampshire's lakes and ponds is 3.2 meters.**

The current year data (the top graph) show that the non-viewscope inlake transparency *increased slightly* from **June** to **July**, and then *decreased slightly* from **July** to **August**. The historical data (the bottom graph) show that the **2010** mean non-viewscope transparency is **approximately equal to** the state median and is **less than** the similar lake median. Please refer to Appendix F for more information about the similar lake median.

The current year data (the top graph) show that the viewscope in-lake transparency *remained stable* from **June** to **July**, and then *decreased slightly* from **July** to **August**. The transparency measured with the viewscope was *greater than* the transparency measured without the viewscope this summer. A comparison of the transparency readings taken with and without the use of a viewscope shows that the viewscope typically increases the depth to which the Secchi disk can be seen into the lake, particularly on sunny and windy days. We recommend that your group measure Secchi disk transparency with and without the viewscope on each sampling event.

It is important to note that viewscope transparency data are not compared to a New Hampshire median or similar lake median. This is because lake transparency with the use of a viewscope has not been historically measured by DES. At some point in the future, the New Hampshire and similar lake medians for viewscope transparency will be calculated and added to the appropriate graphs.

Overall, visual inspection of the historical data trend line (the bottom graph) shows a *relatively stable* trend for in-lake non-viewscope transparency. Specifically, the transparency has *remained* relatively stable ranging between 2.15 and 3.71 meters since 2005

Please note that data from 1987 were not included in Figure 2.

Again, please keep in mind that this trend is based on only **six** years of data. As previously discussed, after 10 consecutive years of sample collection, we will be able to conduct a statistical analysis of the historical data to objectively determine if there has been a significant change in the annual mean transparency since monitoring began.

Typically, high intensity rainfall causes sediment-laden stormwater runoff to flow into surface waters, thus increasing turbidity and decreasing clarity. Efforts to stabilize stream banks, lake and pond shorelines, disturbed soils within the watershed, and especially dirt roads located immediately adjacent to the edge of tributaries and the lake or pond should continue on an annual basis. Guides to best management practices that can be implemented to reduce, and possibly even eliminate, nonpoint source pollutants, are available from DES upon request.

TOTAL PHOSPHORUS

Figure 3 and Table 8: The graphs in Figure 3 in Appendix A show the amount of epilimnetic (upper layer) phosphorus and hypolimnetic (lower layer) phosphorus; the inset graphs show current year data. Table 8 in Appendix B lists the annual minimum, maximum, and median concentration for each deep spot layer and each tributary since the pond has been sampled through VLAP.

Phosphorus is typically the limiting nutrient for vascular aquatic plant and algae growth in New Hampshire's lakes and ponds. Excessive phosphorus in a lake or pond can lead to increased plant and algal growth over time. The median summer total phosphorus concentration in the epilimnion (upper layer) of New Hampshire's lakes and ponds is 12 ug/L. The median summer phosphorus concentration in the hypolimnion (lower layer) is 14 ug/L.

The current year data for the epilimnion (the top inset graph) show that the phosphorus concentration *increased gradually* from **June** to **August**.

The historical data show that the **2010** mean epilimnetic phosphorus concentration is *approximately equal to* the state median and is *greater than* the similar lake median. Refer to Appendix F for more information about the similar lake median.

The current year data for the hypolimnion (the bottom inset graph) show that the phosphorus concentration *increased* from **June** to **August**.

The hypolimnetic (lower layer) turbidity sample was *slightly elevated* on the **July and August** sampling events **(4.33 and 2.23 NTUs)**. This suggests that the pond bottom may have been disturbed by the anchor or by the Kemmerer Bottle while sampling and/or that the pond bottom is covered by an easily disturbed thick organic layer of sediment. When the pond bottom is disturbed, phosphorus rich sediment is released into the water column. When collecting the hypolimnion sample, make sure that there is no sediment in the Kemmerer Bottle before filling the sample bottles.

The historical data show that the **2010** mean hypolimnetic phosphorus concentration is *much greater than* the state and similar lake medians. Please refer to Appendix F for more information about the similar lake median.

Overall, visual inspection of the historical data trend line for the epilimnion shows a *relatively stable* phosphorus trend. Specifically,

the mean annual epilimnetic phosphorus concentration has **remained approximately the same** since **2005**.

Overall, visual inspection of the historical data trend line for the hypolimnion shows a *slightly increasing* phosphorus trend. Specifically the mean annual concentration has *worsened* since **2005**.

Please note that data from 1986 and 1987 were not included in Figure 3.

As discussed previously, after 10 consecutive years of sample collection, we will be able to conduct a statistical analysis of the historical data to objectively determine if there has been a significant change in the annual mean phosphorus concentration since monitoring began.

One of the most important approaches to reducing phosphorus loading to a waterbody is to continually educate watershed residents about the watershed sources of phosphorus and how excessive phosphorus loading can negatively impact the ecology and the recreational, economical, and ecological value of lakes and ponds.

TABLE INTERPRETATION

> Table 2: Phytoplankton

Table 2 in Appendix B lists the current and historical phytoplankton and/or cyanobacteria observed in the pond. Specifically, this table lists the three most dominant phytoplankton and/or cyanobacteria observed in the sample and their relative abundance in the sample.

The dominant phytoplankton and/or cyanobacteria observed in the **August** sample were *Microcystis* (Cyanobacteria), *Tabellaria* (Diatom), and *Chrysosphaerella* (Golden-Brown).

Phytoplankton populations undergo a natural succession during the growing season. Please refer to the "Biological Monitoring Parameters" section of this report for a more detailed explanation regarding seasonal plankton succession. Diatoms and golden-brown algae populations are typical in New Hampshire's less productive lakes and ponds.

> Table 2: Cyanobacteria

A large amount of the cyanobacterium Microcystis was observed in

the **August** plankton sample. **This cyanobacterium, if present in large amounts, can be toxic to livestock, wildlife, pets, and humans**. Please refer to the "Biological Monitoring Parameters" section of this report for a more detailed explanation regarding cyanobacteria.

Cyanobacteria can reach nuisance levels when phosphorus loading from the watershed to surface waters is increased and favorable environmental conditions occur, such as a period of sunny, warm weather.

The presence of cyanobacteria serves as a reminder of the pond's delicate balance. Watershed residents should continue to act proactively to reduce nutrient loading to the pond by eliminating lawn fertilizer use, keeping the pond shoreline natural, re-vegetating cleared areas within the watershed, and properly maintaining septic systems and roads.

In addition, residents should also observe the pond in September and October during the time of fall turnover (lake mixing) to document any algal blooms that may occur. Cyanobacteria have the ability to regulate their depth in the water column by producing or releasing gas from vesicles. However, occasionally lake mixing can affect their buoyancy and cause them to rise to the surface in high concentrations. Wind and currents tend to "pile" cyanobacteria into scums that accumulate in one section of the pond. If a fall bloom occurs, please collect a sample in any clean jar or bottle and contact the VLAP Coordinator.

> Table 4: pH

Table 4 in Appendix B presents the in-lake and tributary current year and historical pH data.

pH is measured on a logarithmic scale of 0 (acidic) to 14 (basic). pH is important to the survival and reproduction of fish and other aquatic life. A pH below 6.0 typically limits the growth and reproduction of fish. A pH between 6.0 and 7.0 is ideal for fish. The median pH value for the epilimnion (upper layer) in New Hampshire's lakes and ponds is **6.6**, which indicates that the state surface waters are slightly acidic. For a more detailed explanation regarding pH, please refer to the "Chemical Monitoring Parameters" section of this report.

The mean pH at the deep spot this year ranged from **6.40** in the hypolimnion to **7.16** in the epilimnion, which means that the

hypolimnion is **slightly acidic** and the epilimnion is **approximately neutral**.

It is important to point out that the hypolimnetic (lower layer) pH was *lower (more acidic)* than in the epilimnion (upper layer). This increase in acidity near the pond bottom is likely due to the decomposition of organic matter and the release of acidic by-products into the water column.

> Table 5: Acid Neutralizing Capacity

Table 5 in Appendix B presents the current year and historical epilimnetic ANC for each year the pond has been monitored through VLAP.

Buffering capacity (ANC) describes the ability of a solution to resist changes in pH by neutralizing the acidic input. The median ANC value for New Hampshire's lakes and ponds is **4.8 mg/L**, which indicates that many lakes and ponds in the state are at least "moderately vulnerable" to acidic inputs. For a more detailed explanation about ANC, please refer to the "Chemical Monitoring Parameters" section of this report.

The mean acid neutralizing capacity (ANC) of the epilimnion (upper layer) was **14.9 mg/L**, which is **much greater than** the state median. In addition, this indicates that the pond has a **low vulnerability** to acidic inputs.

> Table 6: Conductivity

Table 6 in Appendix B presents the current and historical conductivity values for tributaries and in-lake data. Conductivity is the numerical expression of the ability of water to carry an electric current, which is determined by the number of negatively charged ions from metals, salts, and minerals in the water column. The median conductivity value for New Hampshire's lakes and ponds is **40.0 uMhos/cm**. For a more detailed explanation, please refer to the "Chemical Monitoring Parameters" section of this report.

The mean annual epilimnetic conductivity at the deep spot this year was **165.8 uMhos/cm**, which is *much greater than* the state median.

The conductivity continued to remain *much greater than* the state median in the pond and tributaries this year. Typically, elevated conductivity indicates the influence of pollutant sources associated with human activities. These sources include failed or marginally functioning septic systems, agricultural runoff, and road runoff,

which contain road salt during the spring snow-melt. New development in the watershed can alter runoff patterns and expose new soil and bedrock areas, which could also contribute to increasing conductivity. In addition, natural sources, such as iron and manganese deposits in bedrock, can influence conductivity.

It is possible that de-icing materials applied to nearby roadways during the winter months may be influencing the conductivity in the pond. The most commonly used de-icing material in New Hampshire is salt (sodium chloride).

Therefore, we recommend that the **epilimnion** and the **tributaries** be sampled for chloride next year. This additional sampling may help us identify what areas of the watershed are contributing to the increasing in-lake conductivity.

Please note that the DES Limnology Center in Concord is able to conduct chloride analyses, free of charge. As a reminder, it is best to conduct chloride sampling in the spring as the snow is melting and during rain events.

> Table 8: Total Phosphorus

Table 8 in Appendix B presents the current year and historical total phosphorus data for in-lake and tributary stations. Phosphorus is the nutrient that limits the ability of algae and aquatic plants to grow and reproduce. Please refer to the "Chemical Monitoring Parameters" section of this report for a more detailed explanation.

The total phosphorus concentration was *elevated* (87 ug/L) in **North Inlet** this year. This station has a history of *elevated* and *fluctuating* phosphorus concentrations. Watershed wetland systems are likely contributing to the elevated phosphorus concentrations. However, we recommend that your monitoring group conduct a stream survey and rain event sampling along this tributary to determine if additional factors are contributing to the elevated concentrations.

The total phosphorus concentrations in **Sayre Inlet** were *elevated* (130 and 120 ug/L) on the **June and July** sampling events. The turbidity of the samples was also *elevated* (12.8 and 3.12 NTUs).

The total phosphorus concentration in the **Outlet** was **elevated** (180 **ug/L)** on the **July** sampling event. The turbidity of the sample was also **elevated** (40.3 NTUs).

This suggests that the stream bottom may have been disturbed while

sampling or that erosion is occurring in the watershed. When the stream bottom is disturbed, phosphorus rich sediment is released into the water column. When collecting tributary samples, please be sure to sample where the tributary is flowing and where the stream is deep enough to collect a "clean" sample free from organic debris and sediment.

If you suspect that erosion is occurring in this area of the watershed, we recommend that your monitoring group conduct a stream survey and rain event sampling along this tributary. This additional sampling may allow us to determine what is causing the *elevated* levels of turbidity and phosphorus.

For a detailed explanation on how to conduct rain event sampling and stream surveys, please refer to the 2002 VLAP Annual Report special topic article, which is posted on the VLAP website at http://www.des.nh.gov/organization/divisions/water/wmb/vlap/categories/publications.htm, or contact the VLAP Coordinator.

Table 9 and Table 10: Dissolved Oxygen and Temperature Data
Table 9 in Appendix B shows the dissolved oxygen/temperature
profile(s) collected during 2010. Table 10 in Appendix B shows the
historical and current year dissolved oxygen concentration in the
hypolimnion (lower layer). The presence of sufficient amounts of
dissolved oxygen in the water column is vital to fish and amphibians
and bottom-dwelling organisms. Please refer to the "Chemical
Monitoring Parameters" section of this report for a more detailed
explanation.

During this year, and many past sampling years, the pond has experienced a lower dissolved oxygen concentration and a higher total phosphorus concentration in the hypolimnion (lower layer) than in the epilimnion (upper layer). These data suggest that the **process of** *internal phosphorus loading* is occurring in the pond. When the hypolimnetic dissolved oxygen concentration is depleted to less than 1 mg/L, as it was on the annual biologist visit this year and on many previous annual visits, the phosphorus that is normally bound up with metals in the sediment may be re-released into the water column. Since an internal source of phosphorus in the pond may be present, it is even more important that watershed residents act proactively to minimize phosphorus loading from the watershed.

Low hypolimnetic oxygen levels are a sign of the pond's **aging** health. This year the DES biologist conducted the dissolved oxygen profile in **August**. We recommend that the annual biologist visit for the **2011** sampling year be scheduled during **July** so that we can determine if oxygen is depleted in the hypolimnion **earlier** in the sampling year.

> Table 11: Turbidity

Table 11 in Appendix B lists the current year and historical data for in-lake and tributary turbidity. Turbidity in the water is caused by suspended matter, such as clay, silt, and algae. Water clarity is strongly influenced by turbidity. Please refer to the "Other Monitoring Parameters" section of this report for a more detailed explanation.

As discussed previously, the hypolimnetic (lower layer) turbidity was *slightly elevated* (4.33 and 2.23 NTUs) on the July and August sampling events. In addition, the hypolimnetic turbidity has been elevated on many sampling events during previous sampling years. This suggests that the pond bottom may have been disturbed by the anchor or by the Kemmerer Bottle while sampling and/or that the lake bottom is covered by an easily disturbed, thick organic layer of sediment. When the pond bottom is disturbed, phosphorus rich sediment is released into the water column. When collecting the hypolimnion sample, make sure that there is no sediment in the Kemmerer Bottle before filling the sample bottles.

The turbidity in **Outlet** sample was *elevated* (40.3 NTUs) on the **July** sampling event. The turbidity in the **Sayre Inlet** samples was *elevated* (12.8 and 3.12 NTUs) on the **June and July** sampling events. Due to low tributary flow in 2010, this suggests that the stream bottom may have been disturbed while sampling. When the stream bottom is disturbed, sediment, which typically contains attached phosphorus, is released into the water column. When collecting tributary samples please sample where there's sufficient stream flow and depth to collect a "clean" sample free from debris and sediment.

> Table 12: Bacteria (E.coli)

Table 12 in Appendix B lists the current year and historical data for bacteria (E.coli) testing. E. coli is a normal bacterium found in the large intestine of humans and other warm-blooded animals. E.coli is used as an indicator organism because it is easily cultured and its presence in the water, in defined amounts, indicates that sewage **may** be present. If sewage is present in the water, potentially harmful disease-causing organisms **may** also be present.

The **North Inlet** *E. coli* concentration was **slightly elevated** on the **June** sampling event. However, the concentration of **200** counts per 100 mL **was not greater than** the state standard of 406 counts per 100 mL for recreational waters that are not designated public beaches.

If you are concerned about E. coli levels at this station, your

monitoring group should conduct rain event sampling and bracket sampling in this area to help us determine the bacteria source.

For a detailed explanation on how to conduct rain event sampling and stream surveys, please refer to the 2002 VLAP Annual Report special topic article, which is posted on the VLAP website at http://www.des.nh.gov/organization/divisions/water/wmb/vlap/categories/publications.htm, or contact the VLAP Coordinator.

> Table 13: Chloride

Table 13 in Appendix B lists the current year and the historical data for chloride sampling. The chloride ion (Cl-) is found naturally in some surfacewaters and groundwaters and in high concentrations in seawater. Research has shown that elevated chloride levels can be toxic to freshwater aquatic life. In order to protect freshwater aquatic life in New Hampshire, the state has adopted **acute and chronic** chloride criteria of **860 and 230 mg/L** respectively. The chloride content in New Hampshire lakes is naturally low, generally less than 2 mg/L in surface waters located in remote areas away from habitation. Higher values are generally associated with salted highways and, to a lesser extent, with septic inputs. Please refer to the "Chemical Monitoring Parameters" section of this report for a more detailed explanation.

Chloride sampling was not conducted during 2010.

Table 14: Current Year Biological and Chemical Raw Data
Table 14 in Appendix B lists the most current sampling year results.
Since the maximum, minimum, and annual mean values for each parameter are not shown on this table, this table displays the current year "raw," meaning unprocessed, data. The results are sorted by station, depth, and then parameter.

> Table 15: Station Table

As of the spring of 2004, all historical and current year VLAP data are included in the DES Environmental Monitoring Database (EMD). To facilitate the transfer of VLAP data into the EMD, a new station identification system had to be developed. While volunteer monitoring groups can still use the sampling station names that they have used in the past and are most familiar with, an EMD station name also exists for each VLAP sampling location. Table 15 in Appendix B identifies what EMD station name corresponds to the station names you have used in the past and will continue to use in the future.

DATA QUALITY ASSURANCE AND CONTROL

Annual Assessment Audit:

During the annual visit to your pond, the biologist conducted a sampling procedures assessment audit for your monitoring group. Specifically, the biologist observed the performance of your monitoring group and completed an assessment audit sheet to document the volunteer monitors' ability to follow the proper field sampling procedures, as outlined in the VLAP Monitor's Field Manual. This assessment is used to identify any aspects of sample collection in which volunteer monitors failed to follow proper procedures, and also provides an opportunity for the biologist to retrain the volunteer monitors as necessary. This will ultimately ensure samples that the volunteer monitors collect are truly representative of actual lake and tributary conditions.

Overall, your monitoring group did an *excellent* job collecting samples on the annual biologist visit this year! Specifically, the members of your monitoring group followed the proper field sampling procedures and there was no need for the biologist to provide additional training. Keep up the good work!

Sample Receipt Checklist:

Each time your monitoring group dropped off samples at the laboratory this summer, the laboratory staff completed a sample receipt checklist to assess and document if your group followed proper sampling techniques when collecting the samples. The purpose of the sample receipt checklist is to minimize, and hopefully eliminate, improper sampling techniques.

Overall, the sample receipt checklist showed that your monitoring group did a **very good** job when collecting samples this year! Specifically, the members of your monitoring group followed the majority of the proper field sampling procedures when collecting and submitting samples to the laboratory. However, the laboratory did identify a few aspects of sample collection that your group could improve upon, as follows:

Tributary sampling: Sediment and or organic debris was observed in the white sample bottle for **Sayre Inlet** on the **July** sampling event. Please do not sample tributaries that are too shallow to collect a "clean" sample free from organic debris and sediment and do not sample the stream if the stream bottom has been disturbed. You may need to move upstream or downstream to collect a "clean" sample. If you disturb the stream bottom while sampling, please rinse out the bottle and move to an upstream location and sample in an undisturbed area.

USEFUL RESOURCES

Best Management Practices to Control Nonpoint Source Pollution: A Guide for Citizens and Town Officials, DES Booklet WD-03-42, (603) 271-2975 or

www.des.nh.gov/organization/commissioner/pip/publications/wd/documents/wd-03-42.pdf.

Canada Geese Facts and Management Options, DES fact sheet BB-53, (603) 271-2975 or

http://des.nh.gov/organization/commissioner/pip/factsheets/bb/documents/bb-53.pdf.

Cyanobacteria in New Hampshire Waters Potential Dangers of Blue-Green Algae Blooms, DES fact sheet WMB-10, (603) 271-2975 or www.des.nh.gov/organization/commissioner/pip/factsheets/wmb/docu ments/wmb-10.pdf.

How to Identify Cyanobacteria, DES Pamphlets & Brochures, (603) 271-2975 or

http://des.nh.gov/organization/commissioner/pip/publications/wd/doc uments/cyano_id_flyer.pdf

Iron Bacteria in Surface Water, DES fact sheet WD-BB-18, (603) 271-2975 or

http://des.nh.gov/organization/commissioner/pip/factsheets/bb/documents/bb-18.pdf.

NH Stormwater Management Manual Volume 1: Stormwater and Antidegradation, DES fact sheet WD-08-20A, (603) 271-2975 or http://des.nh.gov/organization/commissioner/pip/publications/wd/doc uments/wd-08-20a.pdf

NH Stormwater Management Manual Volume 2: Post-Construction Best Management Practices Selection and Design, DES fact sheet WD-08-20B, (603) 271-2975 or

http://des.nh.gov/organization/commissioner/pip/publications/wd/doc uments/wd-08-20b.pdf

NH Stormwater Management Manual Volume 3: Erosion and Sediment Controls During Construction, DES fact sheet WD-08-20C, (603) 271-2975 or

http://des.nh.gov/organization/commissioner/pip/publications/wd/doc uments/wd-08-20c.pdf

Proper Lawn Care In the Protected Shoreland, The Comprehensive Shoreland Protection Act, DES fact sheet WD-SP-2, (603) 271-2975 or http://des.nh.gov/organization/commissioner/pip/factsheets/sp/documents/sp-2.pdf.

Road Salt and Water Quality, DES fact sheet WD-WMB-4, (603) 271-2975 or

www.des.nh.gov/organization/commissioner/pip/factsheets/wmb/docu ments/wmb-4.pdf.

Vegetation Maintenance Within the Protected Shoreland, DES fact sheet WD-SP-5, (603) 271-2975 or

http://des.nh.gov/organization/commissioner/pip/factsheets/sp/docu ments/sp-5.pdf