

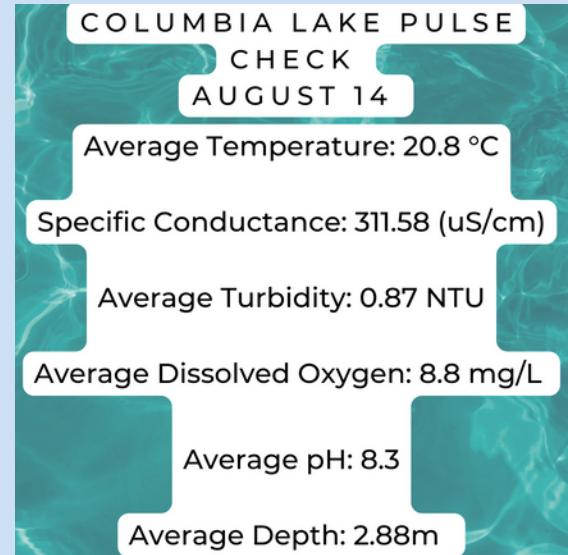
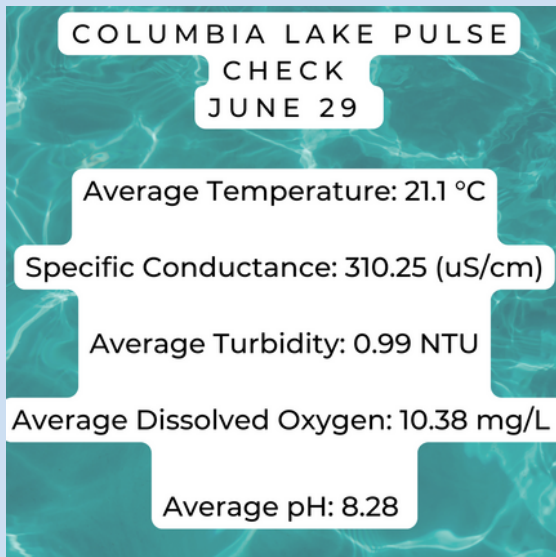
# September Newsletter

## Water Monitoring Updates

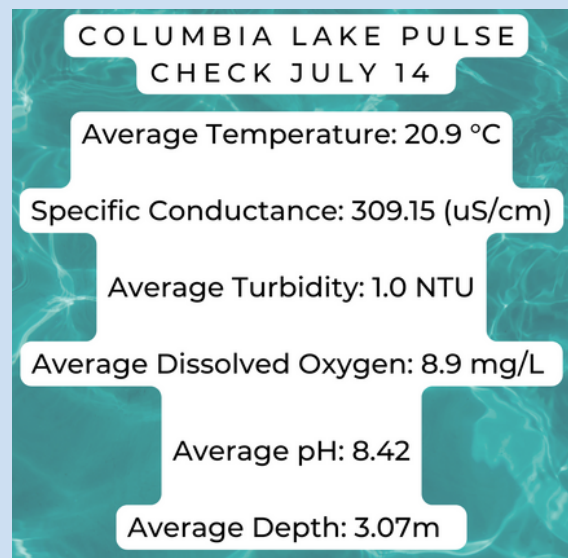
### Summer Monitoring Comes to an End

We successfully completed our 2023 water quality monitoring program and will be finishing up our water quantity program for the year in the coming weeks.

Check out our Pulse Checks below that display water quality data collected on Columbia Lake! The Columbia Lake Pulse Checks display the averages of the data we collected at 4 sites.

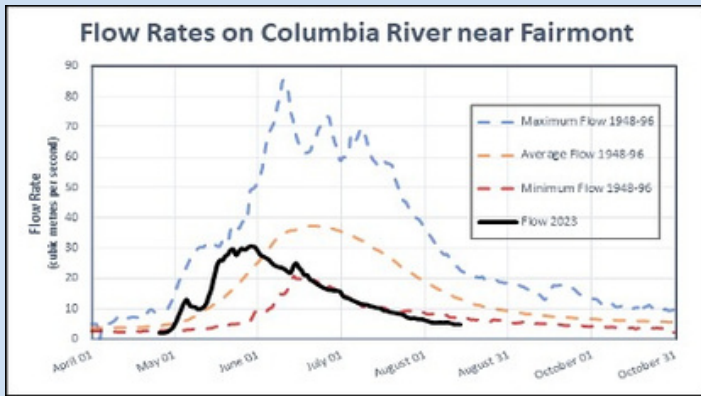


Throughout the summer, we aim to monitor the lake bi-weekly. Our 2023 data contributes to our inventory of baseline data that helps us understand the lake's ecological health. We could not measure depth on June 29 due to wavy conditions on the lake preventing us from using the Secchi disk. An analysis of the data collected this summer will be presented in our 2023 Water Quality Report, which will be published in January 2024.



From May - August 2023 we collected water quality data on Columbia Lake, Columbia River and 4 tributaries. In total CLSS conducted 6 water quality excursions on Columbia Lake, 6 water quality excursions on 4 tributaries, and 3 water quality excursions on the Columbia River. We also had over 8 water quantity excursions. Read more about our water quantity findings on page 2.

## Columbia River Reached Unprecedented Lows in Fairmont During Month of August



In 2015, CLSS re-instrumented the Water Survey of Canada’s shut-down water level monitoring station along the Columbia River near the Highway 93/95 bridge in Fairmont. Since then, the CLSS has collected water level data on the Columbia River. The CLSS Director of Water Quantity and former meteorologist Bill Thompson discovered the Columbia River registered the lowest level ever recorded by both the Water Survey of Canada and CLSS since they began recording data. The graph shows the 2023 flow level of the Columbia River in black, reaching its lowest level below previous minimums in mid-August. The full article on Columbia River and Columbia Lake’s 2023 water levels can be found on our website: <https://columbialakess.com/2023-water-levels/>

In the coming weeks we will continue monitoring the flow of Dutch Creek, the Columbia River and the outlet where Columbia Lake meets the river.

## Sediment Sampling

This summer we completed our first sediment sampling excursion. Sediment samples were collected at 5 sites on Columbia Lake. The samples will be tested for chemicals that may not be detectable in our regular water monitoring program. When sediments from the lake bottom are stirred, chemical compounds found in the sediments can be released into the water column and become exposed to aquatic life and humans. Sediment stirring can occur from many causes including runoff, erosion, and human activity. The data collected from sediment sampling will be discussed in our 2023 Water Quality Report.

## Biomonitoring on Dutch Creek

This September, we joined Living Lakes to conduct Canadian Aquatic Biomonitoring Network (CABIN) sampling on Dutch Creek. CABIN assesses the presence of the benthic invertebrates in the stream, contributing to a better understanding of the stream's health. We plan to initiate a CABIN program of our own in the future and will continue collaborating with other groups conducting work around Columbia Lake.



# Education & Interactions around the Lake

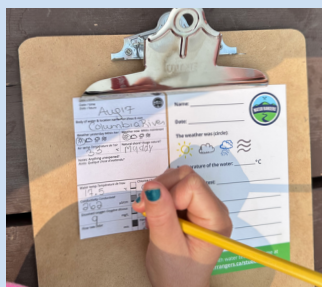
## CLSS Summer Camps were a hit!

Thank you to everyone who participated in our kids' summer camp program. We were pleased to see the number of people interested in this year's free and educational kids' summer camps!



This year we hosted the summer camps around both Columbia Lake and Lake Windermere in collaboration with the Lake Windermere Ambassadors. The camp programs included education on invasive species, water quality, wildlife and fish. We hosted 7 camps in total. Camps were held at Tilley Memorial Park, Columbia Lake Provincial Park, and James Chabot.

CLSS will take the high level of interest expressed during this year's camp registration period into consideration during next year's summer camp planning.



## CLSS connects with the community at large and educates visitors

You may have seen us hosting outreach booths around Columbia Lake or along the Columbia River this year! We have begun hosting booths at the popular put-in and take-out river locations in Fairmont, as there has been a substantial increase in recreation along this stretch of the river.



## Wildlife Sightings around the Lake!

Throughout the summer, we were fortunate to observe some of the wildlife that lives around Columbia Lake. Check out the images we captured on the job below.

The American Badger was spotted near Coy's Golf Course and Columere Park.



The herd of Bighorn Sheep was spotted crossing the road leading to Tilley Memorial Park in Canal Flats.

## Coming Up:

### Upcoming Annual Report

CLSS will publish our 2023 annual report outlining our accomplishments throughout the year and our progress in fulfilling our mission. It will be released in October.

### Join us at our Annual General Meeting on October 21

**Where:** Columbia Ridge Community Hall  
**When:** Saturday, October 21 @ 10 am  
 The agenda for the AGM is provided below:

- Confirmation of Quorum
- Agenda Review
- Minutes of 2022 AGM
- Financial Report
- Report on 2022 / 23 Accomplishments
- Proposed Activities for 2024
- Board of Directors Election
- Adjournment

### Stay tuned for our 2024 Programs and Opportunities for you to Get Involved

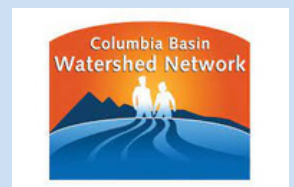
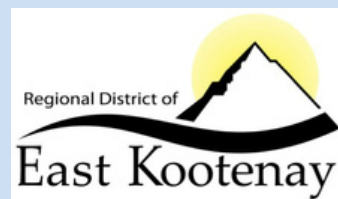
Are you interested in getting involved and supporting our mission? If you or an organization you work with are interested in collaborating with us, contact [info@columbialakess.ca](mailto:info@columbialakess.ca).

### Many thanks to the volunteers & funders who supported our 2023 programs

The work we accomplish through our monitoring and education programs is made possible with the help of our dedicated volunteers and citizen scientists. A big thank you goes out to our water quality volunteers Ed Gillmor, Gary Gray, and our newest volunteer, Rachel Milner. We would also like to thank the Rae family and Living Lakes Canada for their kind donations to our water quantity monitoring program.

### Thank you to our 2023 sponsors, funders, and supporters.

Hoodoo Mountain Resort  
 Spirit's Reach Community Association  
 Fairmont Community Association  
 Fairmont and District Lions Club  
 Columbia Ridge Community Association  
 Columere Park Community Association & Marina



Interested in donating to CLSS? To find out more, visit <https://columbialakess.com/donate/>