



Columbia Lake - Health Update

Each year we monitor the quantity and quality of the water in Columbia Lake. We have done this since 2014 to support our goal of protecting Columbia Lake's ecological health and water supply. The data we collect brings us all informed about the lake we love! It also provides evidence to inform decisions made by those managing the lake. Here are three stories from our data, from Spring 2025 to now.

1. Near record low water levels, May 2025

Because of a number of climate factors in 2024-2025, the lake suffered near record low water levels in late May 2025. Our lake depth measurements show that the lake reached a greatest depth of only 5 meters in late May, when it is normally at its deepest, and for almost the entire summer it was less than 5 meters at its deepest spot. The normal range we have recorded for maximum depth at this spot is 5.5-6.7 m. Many of you know already that Columbia Lake is naturally a very shallow lake, with much of it not exceeding 2m in depth at any time, and this makes the annual spring "top-up" of its water levels very important for its water quality.

2. Fewest recorded days of continuous ice cover for the lake in Winter 2025-2026

As many of you already know, the winter has been an unusual one for Columbia Lake, with the lake freezing briefly in early December but then thawing and remaining ice-free until late December. It then lost its ice in early March.



CLSS has been keeping records of ice-on and ice-off dates for Columbia Lake since 2005. The graph shows the total number of days of continuous ice cover the lake has seen each year.

The days of continuous ice-coverage range from just under 90 in 2005 to over 140 in 2027. This winter (2025-2026) we had only 66 days.

This is important because the duration of ice coverage affects the lake's year-round health significantly.

Data was not recorded in 2006.