

# Side Lake Area Lakes

## 2013 Monitoring Summary

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### *Executive Summary*

In 2013, seven Side Lake area lakes were sampled by local volunteers (funding provided by French Township) in order to assess their current water quality and review historical trends. Overall, water quality for Big Sturgeon, Perch, Beatrice, Side, and Little Sturgeon was within expected ranges for the Northern Lakes and Forest Ecoregion and within their individual expected annual variation. South Sturgeon and West Sturgeon however had elevated levels of phosphorus and chlorophyll-a (measurement of algae) in 2013. West Sturgeon currently lacks sufficient data to run long term trend analysis to determine if the elevated levels were natural or not, and therefore continued secchi monitoring is highly recommended at a minimum on a consistent basis. Of the seven lakes, Beatrice and South Sturgeon indicated declining trends in water clarity, which puts both lakes at a level for concern and are recommended to be monitored closely to determine if water quality is declining. Itasca County SWCD and the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency have been working with local volunteer Neil Gardner to determine the cause of declining water clarity in Beatrice Lake, and are committed to further study in 2014 as to whether the decline is due to development or natural causes.

