



Our Lake of the Month for November is Lake August (set your GPS to 27.2750 -81.4136). The elevation of Lake August is 102.5'. Lake August is a 52 acre dredge hole lake (man-made from a former wetland; see 1966 photograph below) named after the developer August Tobler. The lake was constructed sometime between 1974 and 1978 making it the youngest lake in the county. When first constructed the developer left an island in the middle however he was later forced to remove it.

Lake August is **located** 3.2 miles west of the town of Lake Placid in Highlands County. There is no bathymetric map for Lake August and therefore depth is unknown except by residents who say the perimeter of the lake is between 6' and 8'. The middle may be 2'-3' when water levels are high. In drought years the middle portion can be exposed. Lake August drains into Lake June via a non-navigable canal when water levels are high enough. Lake June is approximately 2900' to the East. The only inflows into Lake August are from rainfall, stormwater drains, and underground seepage.

Let's go fishing. There are no reports of fishing on Lake August as until recently it has been a private lake (no or very limited public access). The lake has been plagued with Hydrilla so it is possible that largemouth bass fishing as well as pan fish might be good. The new boat public boat ramp is located at 1634 Washington Blvd NW (north side of lake) and should be open in early January 2014. There will be a seawall for bank fishing and the actual ramp for boat launch. The new boat ramp is being constructed by the Highlands County Parks and Natural Resource staff. As with any lake, please be respectful of the residents around the lake. This is especially important on Lake August since they are unaccustomed to seeing non-residents on the lake.

Hydrilla. In December of 2006, residents of the lake noticed Hydrilla growth along the shoreline. Four months later, 60% of the lake was infested with Hydrilla. Hydrilla is a submersed exotic (not from Florida) plant that can grow rapidly in Florida's waters. Hydrilla will "top-out" meaning it will grow to the surface and form dense mats. Navigation and recreation are very difficult once Hydrilla tops out. The lake was chemically treated from September through December 2007. Unfortunately by April 2008 Hydrilla had returned and once again infested just over 50% of the lake. There was another chemical treatment in November 2008 aimed at reducing the topped out Hydrilla in preparation for the addition of grass carp. Fifty grass carp (one fish/acre) were introduced into the lake in December 2008. Monitoring results in 2009 indicated a 75% reduction in Hydrilla. The low number of grass carp was selected because Lake August supported a healthy population of native vegetation. There was a second release (December 2009) of grass carp as carp tend to do a good job only for about five years. Once the carp reach a certain size their consumption of vegetation is drastically reduced. Hydrilla remains a concern in Lake August. The new boat ramp will allow county staff to

include Lake August in their list of herbicide lakes. Once the ramp has been completed staff will be able to locate and treat Hydrilla.

The **water quality** of Lake August is poor compared to most lakes in the county. Data from LakeWatch shows a high concentration of TP (total phosphorus) however the trend is decreasing (still high even with the decrease). TN levels are high and unfortunately showing an increasing trend. Chlorophyll *a* numbers (a measure of the phytoplankton in the lake) are somewhat erratic but appear to have increased dramatically some time in 2008. High Chlorophyll *a* levels result in green water and can be associated with algae blooms. This directly correlates to the decreasing secchi disk readings or how far you can see into the lake. The tropic state index is also showing an increasing trend.



Lake August, November 2013, taken from the site of the new Highlands County boat ramp to be completed in early January 2014.



1966 aerial image of the Platt design for Placid Lakes. The large wetland in the center is the future Lake August. You can see the natural drainage (east/northeast) to Lake June.



1974 aerial image showing that Lake August hasn't been constructed and very little development.



Lake August's Hydrilla (August 2009).



New boat ramp at Lake August; completion date is early January 2014.



Lake August, November 2013.