Lake Peekskill Questions and Answers, 2014 CSLAP

Q1. What is the condition of our lake this year?

A1. Water quality conditions in Lake Peekskill have been less favorable in recent years. Water clarity has been lower, probably due to higher nutrient levels and patchy algae growth. Shoreline blue green algae blooms were regularly reported (and open water blooms were occasionally reported) in 2014, but it is not known if this represents a significant change.

Q2. Is there anything new that showed up in the testing this year?

A2. The HABs testing includes information about the types of algae found in the water samples. These results showed high open water blue green algae levels in mid-summer, and high shoreline blue green algae levels at several times throughout the summer.

Q3. How does the condition of our lake this year compare with other lakes in the area?

A3. Lake Peekskill had lower water clarity, and higher nutrient and algae levels, than the typical lake in the area. Aquatic plant coverage was much lower than in these other lakes; this is not likely a remnant of the 1993 grass carp stocking of the lake.

Q4. Are there any trends in our lake's condition?

A4. Phosphorus readings in the lake have increased over the last two decades, probably contributing to a decrease in water clarity over the same period (and despite the lack of a consistent change in algae levels). This may also be related to a long-term increase in conductivity, suggesting nutrient and sediment loading from the watershed.

Q5. Should we be concerned about the condition of our lake? Are we close to a tipping point?

A5. Lake Peekskill is highly susceptible to shoreline blue green algae blooms, consistent with moderate to high nutrient and open water algae levels. The lack of aquatic plant growth in the last few years suggests that the lake may have shifted to dominance by algae, which might create further challenges for long-term reduction of blooms. The lake association should identify and address any shoreline or near watershed sources of nutrients and sediment.

Q6. Are any actions indicated, based on the trends and this year's results?

A6. Individual stewardship activities such as pumping your septic system, growing a buffer of native plants next to the water bodies, and reducing erosion from shoreline properties and runoff into the lake will help to maintain lake health by reducing nutrient and sediment loading to the lake. Visiting boats should be inspected to reduce the risk of new invasive species, since nearby lakes harbor several invasive plants not presently found in the lake.