

## Lower Stillwater Lake

**Surface Area: 250 acres**

**Maximum Depth: 53 feet (16.2 meters)**

**Drainage Size: 103,490 acres**

**Shoreline Length: 26,400 feet (5 miles)**

**Elevation: 3,199 feet (975 meters)**

### GENERAL INFORMATION

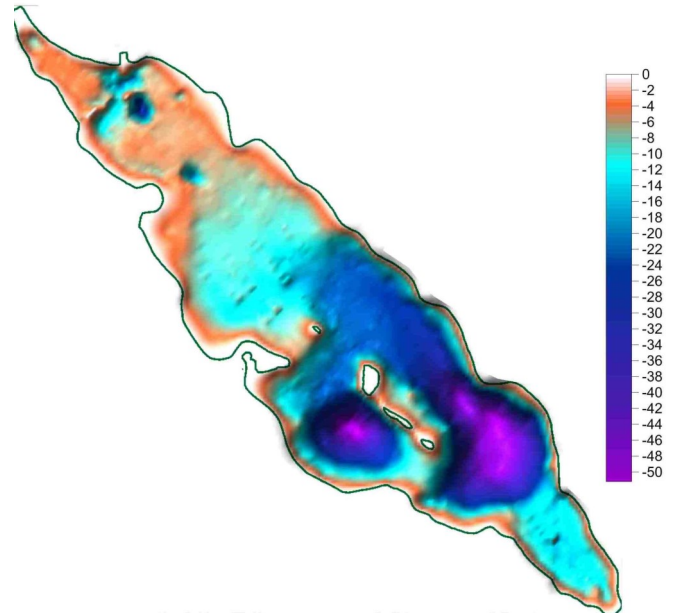
Lower Stillwater is located in Flathead County 12 miles northwest of Whitefish on Highway 93. Surrounding land ownership are State Trust Lands and private. There is one motorized public access site on the south end of the lake. Lower Stillwater Lake has the largest drainage area by far of all the medium sized lakes. The geology of the drainage area is composed of alluvium (37%) and the Piegan group (19%), Ravalli group (19%) and the Wallace formation (23%) of the belt series (Ellis & Craft, 2008).

### FISHERIES INFORMATION

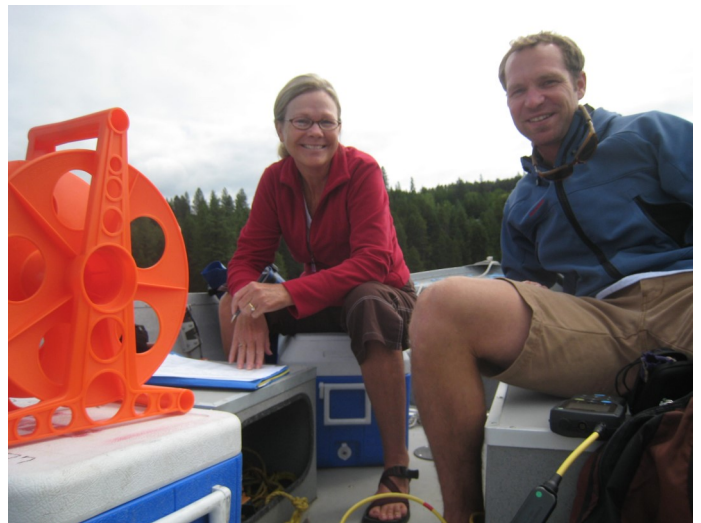
Fish distribution includes lake trout, mountain whitefish, northern pike, pumpkinseed sunfish, rainbow trout, westslope cutthroat trout, and yellow perch. For more information see: <https://fwp.mt.gov/fish/stocking.html>

### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- A macrophyte survey was conducted in 2016.
- Current NMLN citizen volunteers include: Mark Fredinbergh



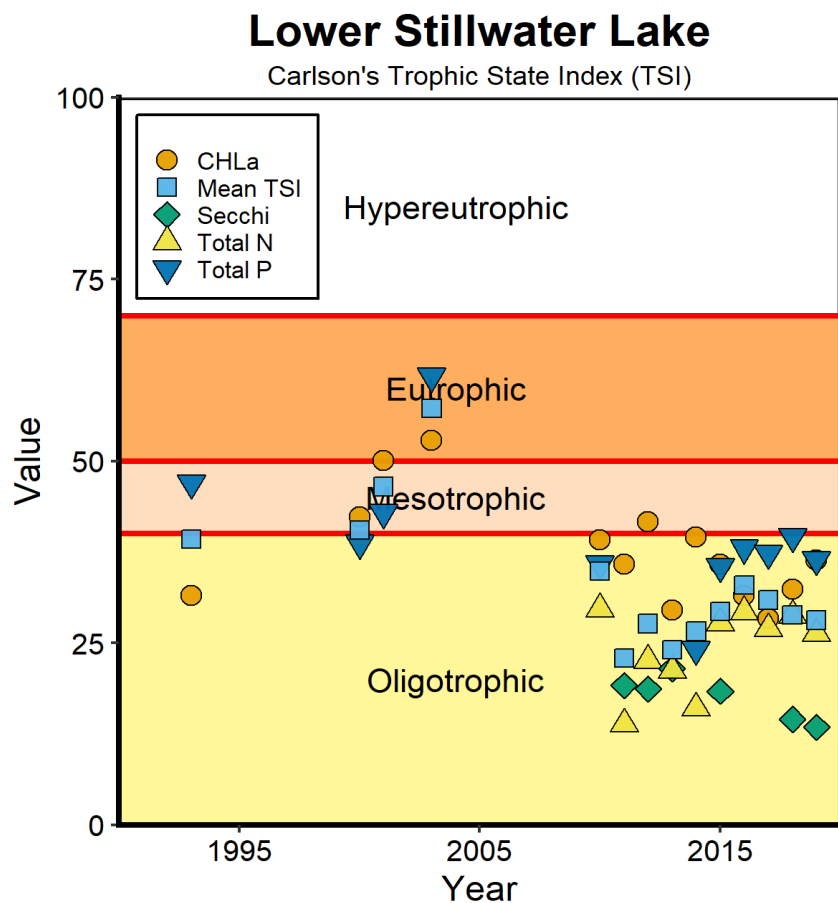
Location: 48.520612 N, 114.556328 W



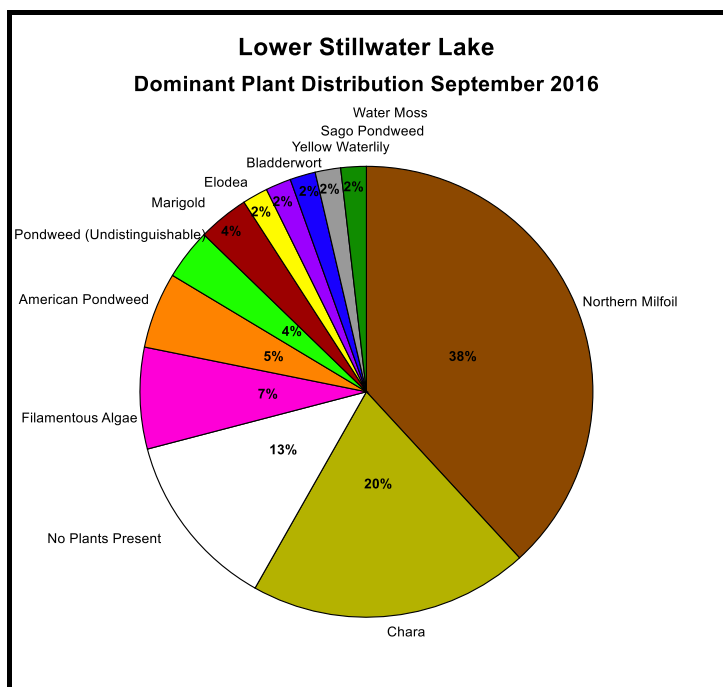
*Linda and Eric Sawtelle on Lower Stillwater Lake.*

## LAKE METRICS SUMMARY AND SCORES

Metric	Score	Description
Cold-water fish habitat	High	Temperature and oxygen profiles show that the lake was stratified or weakly stratified during summer sampling. Temperature profiles show that the lake has been within the avoidance threshold range for salmonids at depths of up to 3 meters during July and August. Oxygen profiles indicate that Lower Stillwater Lake has been between avoidance and anoxic concentration thresholds for salmonids at depths greater than 6 meters. Depth profiles suggest that the ideal depth for salmonid habitation during summer months is between 5-8 meters.
Nutrient Levels	Medium-low	Lower Stillwater Lake often ranks low to medium among medium lakes for total phosphorus, total nitrogen, and chlorophyll ( <i>a</i> ).
Nutrient Trend	Consistent	No trend is apparent.
Trophic Status	Oligo-mesotrophic	Carlson's Trophic Index trend shows Lower Stillwater Lake is consistently oligo-mesotrophic.
Dreissenid Colonization Potential (Calcium)	High	Lower Stillwater Lake's 2010, 2011, and 2016 average calcium concentration was 36.4 mg/L classifying it as a high risk for zebra mussel colonization. The 2012 alkalinity level was reported at 130 mg/L.
Known AIS infestations	None	



A macrophyte survey was conducted on Lower Stillwater Lake on August 27, 2016. A total of 56 sites were surveyed for plants/algae. No EWM was found in the survey, but because northern milfoil is the most dominate plant, it indicates that Lower Stillwater has favorable habitat for EWM. There was more plant diversity found on Lower Stillwater than any of the other lakes monitored in 2016. Dense mats of marigold, chara and pondweed on the north end of the lake were observed. There were also large quantities of filamentous algae observed on the east side of the islands



*Panoramic of Lower Stillwater Lake. Photo courtesy WLI.*