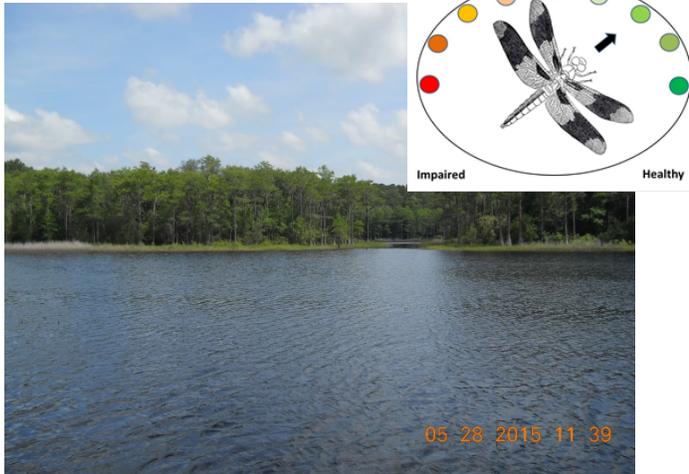


Waterbody: Lake Hiawatha



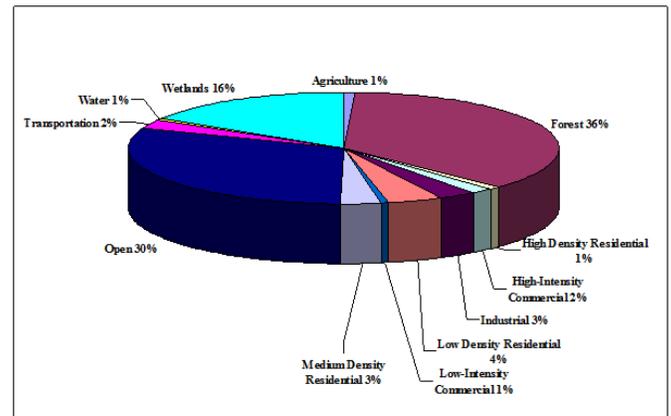
Basin: Lake Munson

The Bradford Brook Chain of Lakes is composed of the cypress rimmed Lakes Bradford, Hiawatha and Cascade and is located in western Leon County. Water typically flows east via Bradford Brook into Lake Cascade. Lake Hiawatha receives flow from Lake Cascade via a culvert beneath Capital Circle Southwest. Much of the water entering Lake Bradford is via Lake Hiawatha, though at times Grassy Lake flows into Lake Bradford. On occasion, flow is reversed and Lake Bradford flows into Lake Hiawatha which then flows into Lake Cascade. In addition, groundwater sources of flow are possible.

As shown in the following pie chart, approximately 17% of land uses in the 11,148 acre Bradford Brook watershed are agricultural, residential, industrial, commercial or transportation. Increases in storm-water runoff and waterbody nutrient loads can often be attributed to these types of land uses.

Background

Healthy, well-balanced lake communities may be maintained with some level of human activity, but excessive human disturbance may result in waterbody degradation. Human stressors may include increased inputs of nutrients, sediments, and/or other contaminants from watershed runoff, adverse hydrologic alterations, undesirable removal of



habitat or riparian buffer vegetation, and introduction of exotic plants and animals. State water quality standards are designed to protect designated uses of the waters of the state (e.g., recreation, aquatic life, fish consumption), and exceedances of these standards are associated with interference of the designated use.

Methods

Surface water, sediment sampling and a Lake Vegetation Index (LVI) were conducted to determine the health of Lake Hiawatha and met the requirements of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP).

Results

Nutrients

The nutrient thresholds and results are found in Table 1. According to FDEP requirements, Numeric Nutrient Criteria (expressed as an annual geometric mean) cannot be exceeded more than once in a three year period. Due to low water, the numeric nutrient criteria data requirements could not be calculated for years 2008 and 2011-2013. When data requirements were met, nutrient values did not exceed the state criteria. However, nitrogen values have more than doubled since 2004.

Table 1. FDEP’s chlorophyll-*a*, total nitrogen and phosphorus criteria for lakes applied to Lake Hiawatha. Due to low water, the numeric nutrient criteria data requirements could not be calculated for years 2008, 2011 - 2013.

Colored Lake	Chlorophyll- <i>a</i> (20 µg/L)	Total Nitrogen Threshold 1.27-2.23 mg/L	Total Phosphorus 0.05-0.16 mg/L
2004	1.6	0.33	0.01
2005	3.4	0.37	0.01
2006	1.9	0.47	0.01
2007	2.4	0.63	0.02
2008	-	-	-
2009	1.9	0.76	0.02
2010	3.2	0.60	0.02
2011-2013	-	-	-
2014	2.2	0.67	0.01
2015	6.7	0.68	0.01

Floral Assessment

The Lake Vegetation Index score for Lake Hiawatha was 92, placing the lake’s vegetative community in the exceptional category.

Twenty-two species were found during the survey. The native species maidencane (*Panicum hemitomon*) and pond cypress (*Taxodium ascendens*) were the most dominant species in the lake. Other native shoreline vegetation included: red maple (*Acer rubrum*), buttonbush (*Cephalanthus occidentalis*) and myrtle dahoon (*Ilex myrtifolia*). The exotic floating plant, water spangles (*Salvinia minima*), was also found during the survey.

[Click here for more information on the Lake Hiawatha LVI.](#)

Other Parameters

Other water quality parameters appear to be normal for the area and no other impairments were noted.

Conclusions

Based on ongoing sampling, Lake Hiawatha met the nutrient thresholds for the East Panhandle Region and the floral community is considered “exceptional” by the LVI. The more of doubling of nitrogen values over the sampling period is disturbing.

Thank you for your interest in maintaining the quality of Leon County’s water resources. Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions.

Contact and resources for more information

www.LeonCountyFL.gov/WaterResources

[Click here to access the results for all water quality stations sampled in 2015.](#)

[Click here for map of watershed – Sample site BOH.](#)

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