

# Lollipop Lake



## Background, Long Term Issues & Trends

- Lollipop Lake is located in the Cherry Creek watershed in southeast Denver.
- There is a limited amount of inflow to the lake via storm runoff. Most of the inflow is supplied from a deep groundwater source pumped from the north side of Garland Park. Outflow from the lake flows only during storm events. This discharges to Cherry Creek.
- Streams and lakes in the southeast metro area often have slightly elevated selenium levels attributable to the regional underlying geology.
- Lollipop water quality is typical of most of Denver's lakes with: marginal water clarity, elevated phytoplankton densities, but with limited rooted plant and filamentous algae growth. The groundwater source contributes to higher ionic content as exhibited with elevated total dissolved solids (see figure below).

## Developing Issues

**Avian botulism** was first noted in the lake in 2010. While there have not been large waterfowl die-offs, botulism has likely impacted the summer resident bird populations at the lake.

There have been two documented **fish kills** over the past eight years (2007, 2015). Both appear to have been winter-kill (loss of oxygen below extended ice-snow cover). This is a common periodic occurrence for ponds in this region.

## Fish, Wildlife, & Habitat

**Fish:** Lollipop was stocked in 2013 and 2014 with trout, catfish, bluegill, and bass. The 2015 fish kill impacted a variety of species including bass, bluegill, and catfish. It is not known what survived the 2015 winter-kill.

**Wildlife:** Canada geese, mix of waterfowl, cormorants, egrets, and other wildlife that utilize the Cherry Creek corridor (such as kingfishers, herons, turtles) are common visitors and inhabitants of the lake. Amphibians and reptiles are often noted as well.

**Habitat:** The lake water column is typically dominated by phytoplankton with light growth of rooted pond weed and filamentous algae. Additional habitat is limited to a small cattail stand on the east end, and a shallow perimeter that provides feeding opportunities for wading birds. The proximity to Cherry Creek enhances habitat opportunities in the area, but is fragmented by Cherry Creek Drive.

## Recommendations

- Aeration will improve variable oxygen levels. However, aeration during the winter may attract even more geese and their subsequent waste;
- Conduct routine surveillance for botulism impacted birds during the warm season to minimize chances of an outbreak;
- The lake perimeter is currently 100% turf grass. An increase in a naturalized buffer around the perimeter would decrease the need to apply fertilizer and pesticides that indirectly impact lake water quality. Diversifying the perimeter will also provide much needed enhancement to habitat opportunities for a variety of species;
- A long term goal should include seeking opportunities to tie the Cherry Creek corridor more directly to the lake and its improved perimeter habitat.

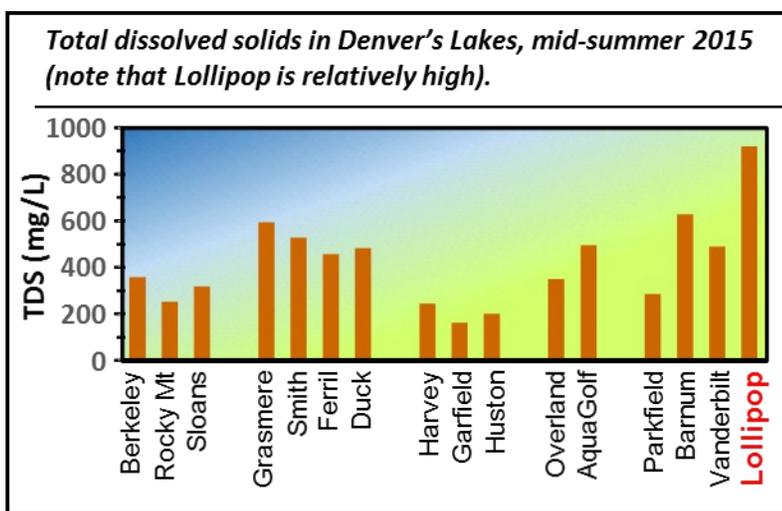
**Location:** Garland Park @  
6301 E Cherry Creek North Dr  
**Surface Area:** 4.1 acres  
**Max Depth:** ~ 8 ft  
**Primary Source Water:** Actively pumped groundwater

**Intended Lake Uses:**  
Wildlife habitat, aesthetics, fishing

**Current Regulatory Issues<sup>1/</sup>:**  
dissolved oxygen

1/ Conditions exceeding state water quality standards.

Updated **December 2015**; questions to: [alan.polonsky@denvergov.org](mailto:alan.polonsky@denvergov.org)



*Total dissolved solids in Denver's Lakes, mid-summer 2015  
(note that Lollipop is relatively high).*

