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NOTES ON CERTAIN LAKES IN MARQUETTE COUNTY

SUPPOSED TO HAVE TROUT POSSIBILITIES

by

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On June 29, 1940, I went with Louis Sauheidl, Superintendent of the Marquette hatchery, to inspect several Marquette County lakes. Many of these lakes Mr. Sauheidl considers to have potentialities for the production of trout. Some of them, however, no doubt are overrun with perch or centrachid fishes; and hence would have to be poisoned out in order to make good trout water of them. There follows a few notes on some of these lakes.

Unnamed Lake

Sec. 23, T. 45 N., R. 25 W. (This location may be in error).

This lake is called by Mr. Sauheidl "Airport Lake," since it is near an emergency landing field.

Size -- about 8 to 12 acres.

Maximum depth -- apparently not over 15 feet.

Color and turbidity -- white (very little trace of brown), and remarkably clear (sampler was visible at 14 feet).

Temperature -- Surface 61°, at 14 feet 62°.

pH -- Surface 6.2, at 14 feet 6.2.

A bog lake, with sharp drop-off from a sphagnum-leatherleaf mat. Lies in a pot-hole depression in the jack-pine sand plains, and has neither inlet nor outlet. Presumably its level and its temperature are maintained by ground water.

It has had plantings of brook trout. According to Mr. Sauheitl, it now has quite a few brook trout in it, but they are in very poor condition. Also, he says, it has many small perch in it. Being small and bog-like, the lake probably is fished little; even though it is on a county road.

This lake seems to me to be somewhat on the doubtful list; although if readings later in the summer show its temperature to be not too high, it may have possibilities for supporting trout. Hence, whether the survey party maps and sounds it or not should depend largely upon an initial temperature check.

It would be a simple matter to poison the lake, but because of the character of the shore it would be almost impossible to quantitatively pick up dead fish.

Sleighrunner Lake

Sec. 6, T. 44 N., R. 25 W., Forsyth Twp.

Size -- about 15 acres.

Maximum depth -- apparently about 25 or 30 feet.

Color and turbidity -- white, clear.

Temperature -- Surface 63°, at 25 feet 51°.

pH -- Surface 6.9, at 25 feet 6.8.

In a depression in wooded sandy hills. The drop-off is fairly sharp, and there is very little shoal or weeded area. The bottom is soft.

Supposed to contain perch, bluegills, and perhaps trout.

There is a wood road leading in to a couple of camps on the lake. There is some question as to private ownership and public accessibility; and this matter must be checked before any work is done on the lake.

Sagola Lakes

Sec. 5 and 6, T. 45 N., R. 28 W., Ely Twp.

Size -- each of the two lakes has about 10 or 12 acres.

Maximum depth -- probably not over 8 or 10 feet.

Temperature -- Surface 63°.

pH -- Surface 7.6.

Color and turbidity -- very light brown, clear.

Bottom -- sand, with some softer material.

Vegetation -- scant.

Bordered with leatherleaf and sedge, spruce and cedar.

Two connected basins, with the lower having an outlet into a tributary of the Escanaba River. No inlet stream.

Has been planted with brook trout, and a few have been reported taken. Probably also has perch and bluegills.

There is no question as to public accessibility; since there is an old camp owned by the Enforcement Division. A woods road leads to the lake.

Here again, since the lake is shallow, it seems to be a question of whether or not the temperature remains favorable in spite of advancing summer.

Casey Lake

Sec. 22, T. 45 N., R. 29 W., Humboldt Twp.

Size -- probably about 30 or 40 acres.

Probably this lake is too big to consider poisoning at the present time; and I mention it here merely because it struck me as being a pretty piece of water with good fishing possibilities. It is a lovely lake. Although it is on a county road, it is entirely undeveloped, and is quite "wild."

Helen Lake, a couple of miles north of Casey Lake, is much the same, except that it has a few cabins on it.

Although it is somewhat large for total poisoning, Casey Lake might well be kept in mind for possible further trial of the partial poisoning method; and with this aim in view it might be well, if time is available, for the survey party to make somewhat of a reconnaissance of the lake, and particularly to ascertain its fish species.

Martell Lake

Sec. 22, T. 42 N., R. 29 W., Humboldt Twp.

Size -- about 12 or 15 acres. Long and narrow.

Maximum depth -- probably about 20 or 25 feet.

Temperature and pH -- not measured.

This lake is somewhat of the bog type, bordered by a swampy margin of sedge, leatherleaf, spruce, pine, popple.

No inlet; but an outlet creek flows south into a chain of lakes (described below).

The lake is on a county road, and about a half mile south of Casey Lake.

It is not known what fish are in the lake. It would be advisable for the survey party at least to net the lake, and to run some temperature tests. It seems to me that, depending upon what the survey party finds out about the lake, this may be a good lake to put on the poisoning list.

Unnamed Chain of Lakes

Sec. 27 and 28, T. 45 N., R. 29 W., Humboldt Twp.

Size -- each about 8 to 12 acres.

This chain of about three small lakes receives an inlet stream from Martell Lake, and outlets into a small tributary of the West Branch of the Escanaba River. The lakes can be reached by a short woods road off the county road. They are undeveloped, and probably public access is pretty sure.

These lakes appear to have fairly good depth. If so, they may have the makings of nice trout water. They should at least be inspected by the survey party, and perhaps surveyed, depending upon the discretion of the party and the judgment of Mr. Sauheitl.

Mr. Sauheitl has in mind several other lakes which I didn't have time to look at. Probably the survey party will examine many of these; and the poisoning schedule will depend to a large extent upon their findings.

Of the lakes described above, those that look, offhand, to be the best bets to be poisoned are Martell Lake and the chain of lakes below it, and possibly Sleighrunner Lake.

Possibly a drawback to trout production in most of the lakes of the type of those described above may be lack of much suitable spawning facilities. It may be that even after cleaning out objectionable fish and stocking with trout, the fishing cannot be maintained without continued stocking.

All of the lakes which I inspected, and probably nearly all of the possible trout lakes of the county, have very poor shore-lines for the purpose of getting a complete pick-up of fish. It would be desirable,

if possible, to cast about a bit to try to find at least one lake which should be poisoned from the fish management standpoint, and which at the same time has a decent shore for picking up fish. We badly need a count from such a lake or two, to tie in with our counts from the southern Michigan lakes.

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