



PARRY SOUND AREA LAKE SUMMARIES



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Dollars Lake

Created: April 2003

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Location:

MNR District:..... Parry Sound
Geographic Township: Blair and McConkey
Municipal Township: Unincorporated
Watershed: Pickerel River
Angling Division: 15

Basin and Terrain Characteristics:

Lake Survey Year: 1976
Surface Area:..... 970.5 hectares
Maximum Depth: 28.1 hectares
Mean Depth: 5.2 hectares
Perimeter: 88.1 km
Island shoreline: 10.6 km
Littoral Zone: 73% (zone of light penetration to bottom)
Shoreline Development: 122 Cottages, 2 Resorts (1976)
Access Points: Public access – Ess Narrows and Smith Bay
Water Level: Regulated – Outlet to Pickerel River (Dollars Dam)
Crown Land: 70% shoreline

Water Quality:

(Parameters pertain to fisheries habitat only. For information on potability of water or contaminants, contact Min. of Health and Min. of Environment.)

Secchi reading: 2.9 meters
Colour: Yellow Brown
Alkalinity: 6.8 mg/l – Level 3 Moderately Sensitive (MOE, 1989)
pH: 6.0 – 7.0 (mildly acidic)
Total Phosphorus: Average 0.009 mg/l Smith Bay: Bakers Camp, 0.011 mg/l Smith Bay: Narrows

“Guide to eating fish”: Restrictions for Northern Pike, Walleye and Whitefish. Refer to the current “Guide to Eating Ontario Sport Fish”.

Fisheries:

Game Fish Species: Walleye, Smallmouth Bass, Northern Pike, Largemouth Bass, Muskellunge, Yellow Perch, Black Crappie (2000), Lake Whitefish

Other species present: Bowfin, Cisco, White Sucker, Redhorse Sucker, Brown Bullhead, Pumpkinseed, Trout Perch, Bluntnose Minnow

Introduced Species: Black Crappie (first confirmed siting – summer, 2000)

Summary of Fisheries Studies / Reports:

McIntyre, E. 2004. Dollars Lake 2003 synoptic trap-net survey report. 29 p.

Executive Summary:

A *Synoptic Trap-net Survey* (STNS) was conducted on Dollars Lake (Geographic Township of Blair) by the Ministry of Natural Resources in September of 2003. This survey was conducted to help understand significant differences in results and conclusions – especially with respect to walleye, between the 2000 STNS survey and 2001 Fall Walleye Index Netting (FWIN) survey conducted Dollars Lake. We hypothesized there was a strong 1999 walleye year-class that was not vulnerable to capture in the 2000 STNS survey, but was vulnerable in the 2001 FWIN survey. Results of this survey do not support that hypothesis.

Our survey results were very similar to the 2000 STNS survey. Although our index of over-all productivity and the proportion of game fish in the catch – were higher in this survey, we did not consider the increase to be significant. In this survey, these indices were “average”, relative to our STNS database. Indices of abundance and bio-sampling (size) data for all species – perhaps

excepting black crappie, were very similar between surveys. Indices for black crappie suggest an increase in abundance. In this survey, and relative to our STNS database, population status indices for black crappie, largemouth and smallmouth bass were at or slightly above average. Those for pike and walleye were below, or well-below average. We present a hypothetical report card of various fisheries assessment indicators in which we accord Dollars Lake and overall grade of “C”.

Significant discrepancies in various population indices between the 2001 FWIN survey and the two synoptic trap-nets surveys (2000 and 2003) remain unresolved.

McIntyre, E. 2002. Parry Sound Area 2001 Fall Walleye Index Netting (FWIN) Interim Report.

- Species abundance as measured by Catch-Per-Unit-Effort (CUE) was determined for walleye, northern pike and smallmouth bass for 10 lakes surveyed in the Parry Sound Area. Relative to all lakes surveyed in the Southcentral Region (including Parry Sound Area lakes), walleye abundance was high in Dollars, Go Home and Cecebe Lakes. Northern pike abundance was high in Dollars Lake only and smallmouth bass abundance was high in Go Home, Crane, McKellar and Isabella Lakes.
- We also compared relative abundance for these species in Parry Sound Area lakes with those in the Southcentral Region and found Parry Sound Area lakes “average” for walleye abundance, “below average” for northern pike abundance and “above average” for smallmouth bass abundance

McIntyre, E. 2001. Dollars Lake Synoptic Trapnet Survey, Summer 2000

- The primary objectives were to assess the status of walleye and smallmouth bass populations and evaluate the impact of several years of walleye spawning bed enhancement projects under the Ministry’s Community Fisheries Involvement Program (C.F.I.P.).
- A total of 518.7 kilograms of fish comprised of 12 species were caught in 24 overnight, trapnet sets. The Catch-Per-Unit-Effort by weight (C.U.E. wt.) was 21.61 kg/net set. This index of fish productivity is well above average for Parry Sound Area lakes similarly surveyed. However, game fish only accounted for 32.3% of this productivity – well below the 67.7% average for other Parry Sound Area lakes. Coarse fish accounted for 66.5% of the total catch by weight and pan fish accounted for 1.2%. Due to gear selectivity, we caution the reader that catch composition is not representative of species abundance in the fish community.
- Walleye index of abundance (C.U.E no.) was 1.3 walleye per net set, well below the 4.5 walleye per net night average for other Parry Sound Area lakes. Furthermore, this index was down from that observed on Dollars Lake during the 1989 survey (3.1 walleye per net night) and the 1986 survey (4.3). The past walleye management strategy of maintaining harvest while attempting to increase productivity through spawning habitat enhancement and (unauthorized) stocking has not resulted in an increase in walleye abundance. In fact the reverse trend is apparent. We recommend a future strategy of significant walleye harvest

reduction. Walleye stocking and spawning habitat enhancement activities have not resulted in increased abundance and should be discontinued.

- Smallmouth bass abundance was ‘about average’ relative to other Parry Sound Area lakes similarly surveyed, but fish size was considerably smaller. Abundance indices for largemouth bass and northern pike are less reliable due to gear selectivity. Notwithstanding, CUEs for these species were above average. This is probably attributable to habitat availability. Brown bullhead and bowfin indices of abundance were high.
- First documentation of black crappie having colonized Dollars Lake and undoubtedly the Upper Pickerel River system. Crappie abundance appeared to be ‘moderate’. We consider the unauthorized introduction of this species a negative development with respect to walleye management.

Thurston, L. 1992. Acidity measurements taken during the walleye spawning period in the Upper Pickerel River System, Spring 1990.

Over a period of 10 consecutive weeks (March 15 – June 1) water samples were collected from 14 walleye spawning sites in the Upper Pickerel River system and pH levels determined. None of the samples were acidic enough to affect the survival of incubating walleye eggs. (Lowest observed pH was 5.7)

Thurston L. and R. Emerson, 1990. Summary of the 1990 Angler Survey on the Upper Pickerel River System.

- Very extensive creel area that extended from Duck Lake (Wilson Tp.) to Dollar’s Lake including Smith Bay and as far north as the Dollar’s Lake dam in McConkey Twp. (covered approximately 45 km. of the Pickerel River). Creel Period extended from May 19 to Sept. 14, 1990. (Creel data was analyzed as a single area.)
- Total estimated fishing effort was 63, 111 rod hours. 38% of angling effort was directed at walleye, 19% at smallmouth bass and 16% at “anything”.
- Estimated catch: walleye – 5,236; pike – 3,419; smallmouth – 17,382; largemouth – 1,752
- Estimated harvest: walleye – 3,210; pike – 1,112; smallmouth – 3,382; largemouth - 385
- Species Anglers CUE and HUE:
 - Walleye – 9.1 and 14.3 rod hours per fish
 - N. Pike – 6.7 and 25.0 rod hours per fish
 - Smallmouth Bass – 2.1 and 9.1 rod hours per fish
 - Lake trout – 9.1 and 9.1 rod hours per fish

McIntyre E. and L.D.W. Thurston, 1990. A comparative analysis of the Upper Pickerel River Fish Community (Wilson, McConkey and Blair Townships) between 1986 and 1989.

- During the summers of 1986 and 1989, the Ministry of Natural Resources conducted trapnet surveys on the Upper Pickerel River – primarily to assess the planting of almost 350,000 summer fingerlings by the Argyle Fish Enhancement Association (CFIP group) from 1983 to 1988.
- 13% of all walleye captured were assessed as planted fish.
- There was no significant difference in the abundance of walleye between studies: 4.5 walleye per 8' trapnet set in 1986 vs. 4.3 in 1989.
- There was a significant increase in smallmouth bass abundance between surveys: 3.9 smallmouth per 8' trapnets set in 1986 vs. 7.1 in 1989.
- Walleye, large and smallmouth bass and northern pike comprised 49% of the total catch weight in 1986 vs. 44% in 1989.

Thurston, L.D.W. 1988. Results of the 1986 Trap Net Survey on the Pickerel River Watershed

(Survey was stratified into two areas: above and below Dollars Dam. The following summary pertains only to that portion above Dollars Dam.)

- 135 trapnet sets (using 4, 6 and 8' trapnets) were made above Dollars Dam. Approximately 43 sites were fished in Dollars Lake.
- Indices of Abundance (Catch Per Unit Effort CPUE) for major sport species. (Data used was from 84 – 8' trapnet sets.)
 - Walleye – 4.6 walleye per net set
 - Smallmouth bass – 3.9 bass per net set
 - Largemouth bass – 0.2 bass per net set
 - Northern pike – 0.6 pike per net set
 - “All Species combined” – 17.0 fish per 8' net set
- Catch composition by weight: walleye 28%, smallmouth bass 13%, northern pike 5%, largemouth bass 2.5%, bowfin 24%, redhorse sucker 9%, brown bullhead 5%, other – less than 2%.
- Sport fish (walleye, northern pike, smallmouth bass and largemouth bass) accounted for 42.3 percent by number and 49.3 percent by weight of all fish captured during the survey. These percentages are indicative of a fairly well balanced fish community. (It should be noted however that catch results are not directly indicative of fish community structure.)
- Age-classes of the sport species captured during the survey indicate that recruitment has been good. The survey further revealed that planted fingerlings appear to be making a very small contribution to the walleye population.

Management Prescription:

- Manage as a natural, self-sustaining walleye, bass, pike and crappie fishery.
- No exceptions to Ont. Fishing Regulations.