

FISHING HOLE

ARROW LAKE

WHY GO: It's a large Ontario lake with the chance to catch a trophy lake trout or walleye, thanks to relatively low fishing pressure. It's also a lake with beautiful surroundings, described as diabase cliffs and talus slopes by Ontario Parks.

ACCESS: From Thunder Bay, it's about a 90-minute drive to the lake, where there are two boat accesses. To get to the Arrow Lake Narrows Access from Thunder Bay, follow Hwy. 588, to Arrow Lake Provincial Park, taking a slight left onto W. Arrow Lake Rd. To get to the Arrow Lake East boat ramp, follow Hwy. 588 and take a left onto East Arrow Lake Road. Take a slight left onto Kuusela Rd. down to the access. Technically, the lake can be accessed from the U.S. border via the Rose Lake — a lake inside the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness — with a Remote Area Border Crossing Permit, but more regarding that below.

VITALS: This 8,189-acre Ontario lake sits less than a mile from the U.S. Border and is connected via stream to Rose Lake. It has a maximum depth of 180 feet, and an average depth of 58 feet.

FISH SPECIES PRESENT: Lake trout, walleye, lake whitefish, smallmouth bass, cisco, yellow perch, eelpout, brook trout, rock bass and northern pike.

LAKE TROUT: Jeff Black, management biologist with the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR), said Arrow isn't considered a destination lake by many, with most of the pressure it receives coming from area residents, private camps, and guests of the only resort on the lake. But there's some decent-sized fish in the lake, mostly lake trout and walleyes, he said,

as was shown by the latest survey of the lake conducted in 2008. That survey, using large and small mesh nets, caught lake trout up to 32 inches, with the average laker measuring 22 inches. "There's a few bigger fish in the lake," he said.

In the spring and fall, they can be found shallow, but summer time requires baits that can get down to the depths.

WALLEYE DOING OK: Walleyes were introduced to the lake by the Ontario MNR, probably in the 1960s, according to Black, and they are self-sustaining now. The 2008 survey turned up fish up to 31 inches, with an average size of 21 inches, so the species isn't doing too badly. Both walleye and lake trout likely utilize the cisco population as their main forage, he said.

CROSSING FROM THE BORDER: Nancy Seaton, co-owner of Hungry Jack Canoe Outfitters just north of the Gunflint Trail, said it used to be much easier to cross the border from Rose Lake, where a BWCAW

permit would also be required. Nowadays, a Remote Area Border Crossing permit, from the Canada Border Services Agency, is required, and they aren't available on the Gunflint Trail.

The permits, which require a \$30 application-processing fee, can be obtained through the mail. For those planning in advance, the application recommends mailing it in at least three weeks in advance. The application can also be presented in person at the Pigeon River Port of Entry. For more information on obtaining one of these permits, go to www.cbsa.gc.ca.

CAMPING: Arrow Lake Provincial Park has a 40-site campground on the north shore of the lake, but last year, 30 of those sites were put into a program that allows campers to reserve them for the entire summer season. However, 10 sites can still be rented on a first-come, first-serve basis. To contact park management, call 807-473-9231. — *Javier Serina*

