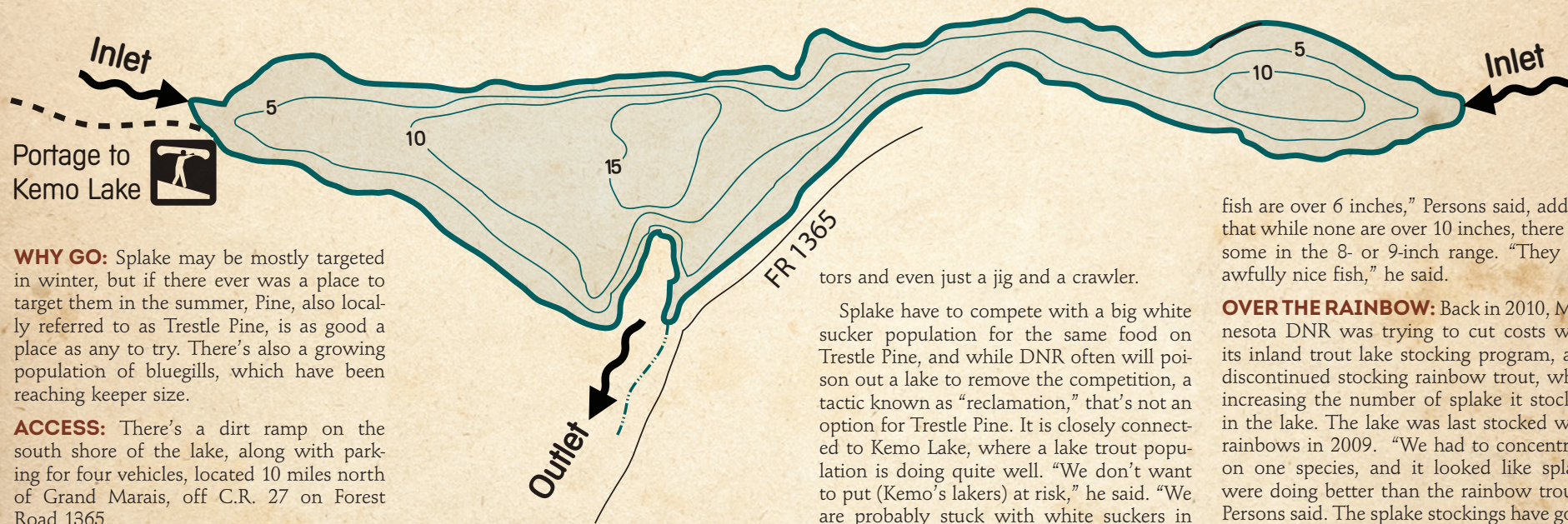


# FISHING HOLE

## PINE LAKE (TRESTLE PINE)



**WHY GO:** Splake may be mostly targeted in winter, but if there ever was a place to target them in the summer, Pine, also locally referred to as Trestle Pine, is as good a place as any to try. There's also a growing population of bluegills, which have been reaching keeper size.

**ACCESS:** There's a dirt ramp on the south shore of the lake, along with parking for four vehicles, located 10 miles north of Grand Marais, off C.R. 27 on Forest Road 1365.

**VITALS:** This 97-acre Cook County lake sits in the Superior National Forest. It has a maximum depth of 34 feet.

**GAME SPECIES PRESENT:** Splake and bluegill.

**BRAKE FOR SPLAKE:** Trestle Pine does not have a lot of big fish, said Steve Persons, DNR's Grand Marais area fisheries supervisor, but it does have a lot of splake in it, and

there are a few bigger fish. "They are doing quite well," he said. "We see fair numbers of fish over 12 inches, and some approaching 20 inches." Persons said splake fishing is a bit different than rainbows, which can often be riding up high in the water column over deep water. "Splake are not as active on the surface as rainbows might be," he said, suggesting fishing in 5 to 15 feet of water with flashy spoons, minnow-imita-

tors and even just a jig and a crawler.

Splake have to compete with a big white sucker population for the same food on Trestle Pine, and while DNR often will poison out a lake to remove the competition, a tactic known as "reclamation," that's not an option for Trestle Pine. It is closely connected to Kemo Lake, where a lake trout population is doing quite well. "We don't want to put (Kemo's lakers) at risk," he said. "We are probably stuck with white suckers in Pine."

**'GILLS GROWING:** It's unclear how bluegills got into the lake, but they are doing pretty good. Unlike most of the handful of area lakes with bluegills, they are growing to keeper size on Trestle Pine, Persons said. The most recent survey of the lake, in 2014, had a pretty high catch rate of bluegills, which are not a species the state biologists would have been targeting. "A lot of those

fish are over 6 inches," Persons said, adding that while none are over 10 inches, there are some in the 8- or 9-inch range. "They are awfully nice fish," he said.

**OVER THE RAINBOW:** Back in 2010, Minnesota DNR was trying to cut costs with its inland trout lake stocking program, and discontinued stocking rainbow trout, while increasing the number of splake it stocked in the lake. The lake was last stocked with rainbows in 2009. "We had to concentrate on one species, and it looked like splake were doing better than the rainbow trout," Persons said. The splake stockings have gone from no more than about 5,000 fingerlings a year, to as many as 8,630 in 2014, and generally at least 7,000 a year. Persons said DNR is looking for a way to restore the rainbow trout stockings to Pine, though it still does not have the funding to do so. "We'd like to bring them back there," he said.

—Javier Serna