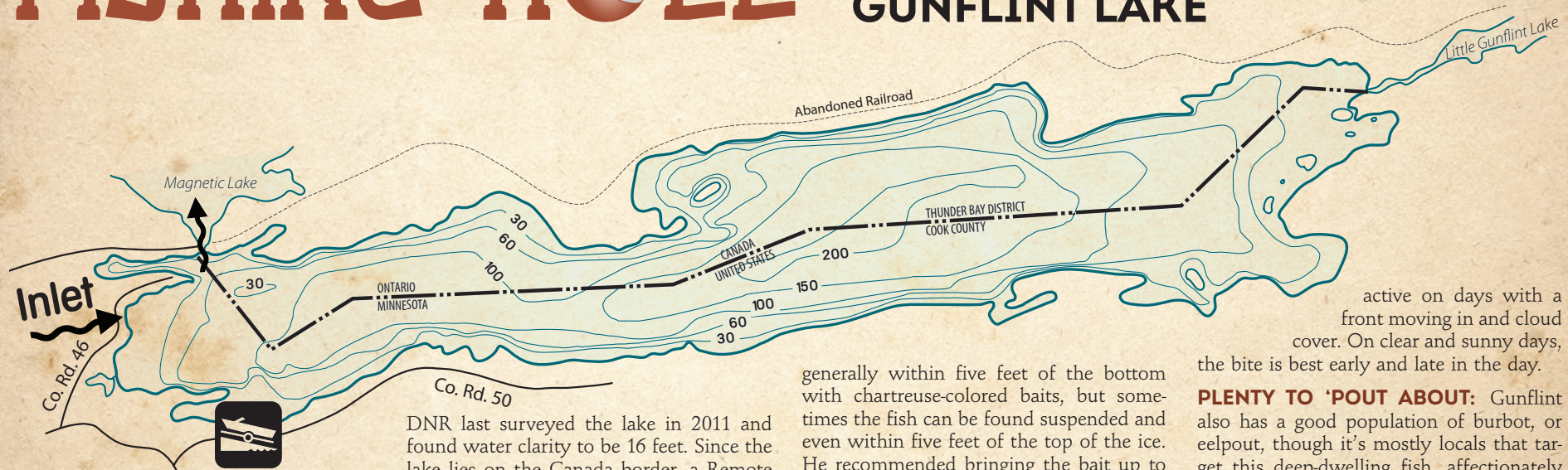


# FISHING HOLE

## GUNFLINT LAKE



**WHY GO:** It is one of the more easily accessible lake trout lakes in the Superior National Forest. Gunflint is known for producing quality lake trout.

**ACCESS:** There is a public boat ramp on C.R. 50, just east of the Gunflint Trail. Several resorts on the lake also offer access to their guests.

**VITALS:** This 4,009-acre lake sits on the border of Canada, with the border generally running down the middle of the east-west-situated lake. It's a deep lake, with a mean depth of 99 feet and a maximum depth of 200 feet. The Minnesota

DNR last surveyed the lake in 2011 and found water clarity to be 16 feet. Since the lake lies on the Canada border, a Remote Area Border Crossing Permit is required to cross the boundary, which runs the length of the lake.

**GAME SPECIES PRESENT:** Lake trout, walleye, burbot, northern pike, small-mouth bass, tullibee, yellow perch.

**LAKE TROUT LUNKERS, NOT NUMBERS:** Bob Baker, owner of Gunflint Pines Resort and a long-time fishing guide, said Gunflint lakers average between three and seven pounds. "You don't catch the numbers, but the size is nice. Every once in a while, you'll get into a flurry of fish."

Baker recommended jigging for lakers

generally within five feet of the bottom with chartreuse-colored baits, but sometimes the fish can be found suspended and even within five feet of the top of the ice. He recommended bringing the bait up to different depths of the water column, if working close to the bottom isn't working.

"They are notorious chasers, especially if the water clarity is good," Baker said.

Lakers can be found in a range of depths, from 20 to 80 feet.

"You want to move often," he said. "If you're not having luck on a spot, move and try something different, a different depth or area....Sometimes they are around, but not feeding. They will come up to your bait but then go back to the bottom."

Baker said lake trout typically stay more

active on days with a front moving in and cloud cover. On clear and sunny days, the bite is best early and late in the day.

**PLENTY TO 'POUT ABOUT:** Gunflint also has a good population of burbot, or eelpout, though it's mostly locals that target this deep-dwelling fish, affectionately referred to as "poor man's lobster." Baker said they are best targeted in the evenings, after dark, with a cut bait on jig, close to the bottom.

**WALLEYE ARE PRESENT BUT TOUGH IN WINTER:** Though stocking efforts have helped the walleye population on Gunflint Lake, they are rarely caught in the winter, Baker said. "I've been up here 20 years, and I've only caught one walleye in the winter....They must spend a lot of time deeper than the trout fishermen fish. They're not getting them. Either the fish are out suspended over deeper water or they are even deeper."