

FISHING HOLE SWAMP LAKE

WHY GO: This off-the-beaten-path Boundary Waters lake is a decent option for walleye angling during the open-water season, and also with early ice.

ACCESS: The quickest way to get to Swamp is via a 100-rod portage in the southeast corner of Poplar Lake. The portage crosses the Banadad ski trail. There's also a 150-rod portage from Caribou Lake. Entirely in the Boundary Waters, it is officially considered one-half of the Entry Point No. 47 Lizz/Swamp. Most canoe trippers opt for the easier portages to and from Lizz.

VITALS: Swamp Lake is 181 acres. This Cook County lake is fairly shallow, with a maximum depth of 10 feet, according to the Minnesota DNR. It has four miles of shoreline.

GAME SPECIES PRESENT: Walleye, northern pike and yellow perch.

WALLEYE: Ted Young, whose Poplar Creek Guesthouse bed and breakfast business sits right along the portage, said the walleye fishing is solid at Swamp early and late in the open-water season.

"It's natural production," Young said. "I don't know the last time the DNR has done anything with it."

Steve Persons, DNR's Grand Marais area fisheries supervisor acknowledged that the lake was originally stocked with walleyes by the DNR. He thought the lake was next scheduled to be surveyed in 2022. It was scheduled to be surveyed last year by fisheries crews, but DNR did not get around to it. It was last surveyed in 1993.

That survey did find a single walleye that was tallied in the 25- to 29-inch category.

It's currently known as a lake to catch numbers of keep-

er-sized walleyes, with the chance for something a little bigger.

Some locals also like to fish the lake at early ice, when there is less

than four inches of ice on the lake. Swamp is one of the few Cook County lakes where anglers have had some success fishing for walleyes early in the ice fishing season.

PIKE: There aren't a lot of northern pike in the lake, but Young said an occasional northern is picked up by ice anglers in the winter.

At least one local angler has spoken of catching a nice pike, nearing trophy length, on the lake.

The 1993 fisheries survey didn't turn up any pike over 24 inches.—*Javier Serna*

