

FISHING HOLE EAST TWIN LAKE

BY JOE SHEAD

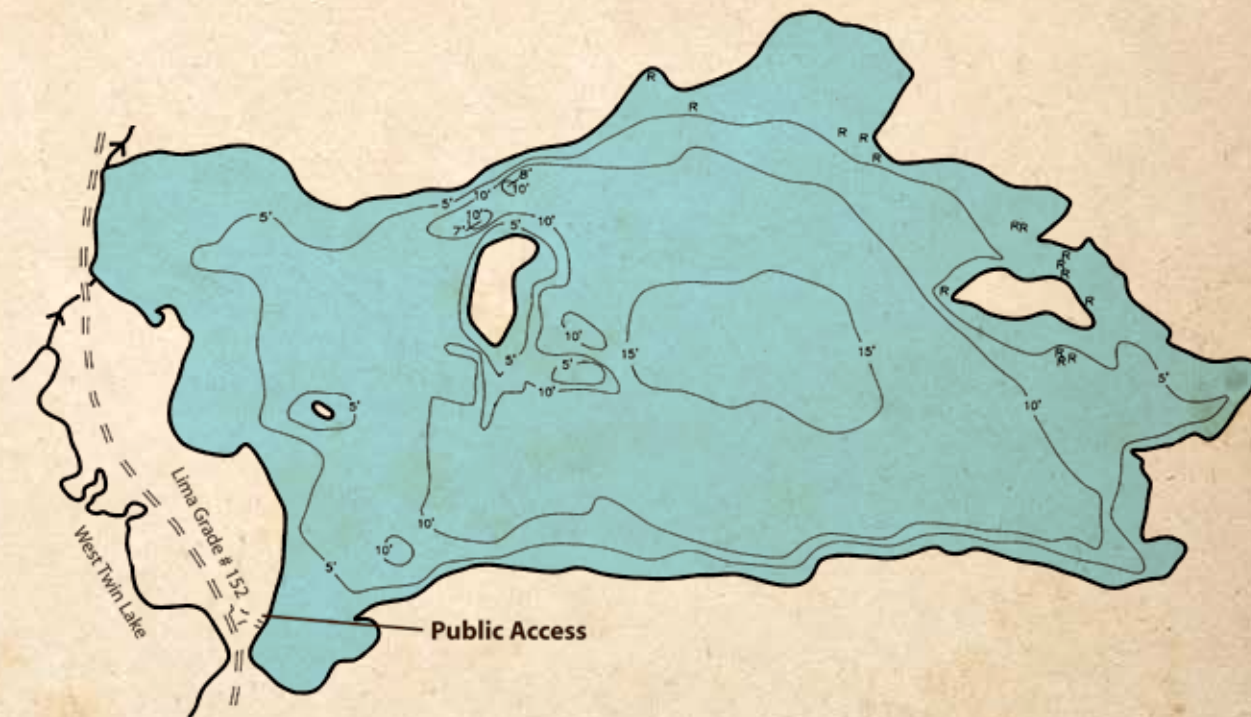
WHY GO: East Twin has a very high, naturally reproducing walleye population, although the fish tend to be small. The lake has no cabins, providing an undisturbed setting without the restrictions of the Boundary Waters.

ACCESS: Head up the Gunflint Trail and turn left onto South Brule Road. Turn left on the Lima Grade. The road runs between East and West Twin. The boat landing is on the west end of the lake, straight across from the access to West Twin. There's a concrete ramp with a dock and parking for about six vehicles with trailers. There's also a three-site campground.

VITALS: East Twin Lake is 172 acres with a maximum depth of 19 feet. West Twin lies adjacent (although you'll have to pull your boat out of the water and re-launch). West Twin is 133 acres with a maximum depth of 37 feet. The water in West Twin is clearer because East Twin sometimes develops algae blooms in summer.

GAME SPECIES PRESENT: Walleye

WALLEYE: East Twin has a simple fish community consisting of walleyes, suckers and some minnow species. That's it. In fact, walleyes weren't even native to the lake. Matthew Weberg, assistant area fisheries supervisor in Grand Marais, says the DNR only knows of one walleye stocking back in 1928, and apparently, they took. Weberg says the lake has always been known as a high-density walleye lake with small average size. "There are high numbers and slow growth," Weberg says. "It kind of indicates they're not only competing with white suckers, but also with themselves. Most of the fish tend to be in the 10- to 15-inch range." Weberg says walleyes likely eat invertebrates and minnow species, the most abundant of which is creek chubs. Due to the high population of small walleyes, they may also cannibalize. There are a few cabins on West Twin, and some



property owners have expressed interest in stocking perch to give walleyes an additional food source, but Weberg says so far, no action has been taken. There's good walleye structure in East Twin, including a few islands and a bottom consisting mostly of rubble and boulder. East Twin gets some algae blooms in summer, which may improve the daytime bite. West Twin doesn't.

SUCKERS, ANYONE? The Twin Lakes also have high populations of white suckers. Generally, they don't have

much appeal to most anglers, but they do provide some harvest opportunity in the spring when they run in the creek between the two lakes. Suckers may be speared or collected by hand during their spring spawning run. At other times, a nightcrawler fished on bottom may take fish. Suckers generally run 15 inches or so in the Twin Lakes.

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