

FISHING HOLE

CASCADE LAKE

BY JOE SHEAD

WHY GO: Cascade Lake is located just outside the Boundary Waters and provides good fishing in a scenic setting, where anglers can still fish with small motorboats. The lake is known as a good walleye fishery.

ACCESS: Cascade Lake is located near the intersection of the Caribou Trail and The Grade. From Lutsen, proceed about a mile northeast up Highway 61. Turn left onto Cook County Highway 4 (Caribou Trail) and head north about 17 miles to the intersection with Cook County Highway 165 (The Grade). Turn left and after a quarter-mile, turn right into the road to the lake. There is a gravel ramp suitable for small boats, an outhouse, and parking for about six trucks and trailers.

VITALS: Cascade Lake is 451 acres with a maximum depth of 17 feet. Overall, most of the lake is relatively shallow. The water clarity is about 8 feet. There's only one cabin on the lake and you'll find two free campsites on a first-come, first-served basis. The campsites feature a picnic table, fire ring and a latrine.

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

WALLEYE: Walleyes are the main draw for most anglers on Cascade Lake. "The lake's still looking like a high-quality walleye fishery," said Matthew Weberg, assistant area fisheries supervisor, after conducting a survey of the lake earlier this fall. "Our gillnet catch of walleyes was among the highest we've seen in the last 30 years." Weberg noted that the average walleye length was just under 16 inches, but anglers will find a variety of sizes, from juvenile fish to those surpassing 20 inches. "We've seen walleyes over 20 inches in all of our surveys," he said. "The lake's been really steady as for walleye relative abundance." Walleye growth rate is slightly below the area average.

NORTHERN PIKE: Anglers will also likely tangle with a few northern pike on Cascade. They're not overly abundant, Weberg said, but their numbers have remained steady over the years. "The gillnet catch was a little lower than we've seen in the past, but size was similar," Weberg said of the 2023 survey. Most pike run 18 to 24 inches. Rarely would a pike approach 30 inches in Cascade. There are a few weedy areas that are best



suited to pike. Northern pike growth rate is slightly above the area average.

YELLOW PERCH: Yellow perch, along with white suckers, round out the fish community in this lake. Perch don't get very large; usually not exceeding 8 inches. They serve primarily as forage for pike and walleyes.

WATCH FOR WOOD: Some logs from the logging era remain lodged in the lakebed, so boaters should watch for them, in addition to rocks. Logs are located right in front of both campsites.

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