

UPPER and LOWER FIRST ST. JOHN PONDS

T4 R17 WELS, Somerset Co.
U.S.G.S. Saint John Pond, Me.

Fishes

Brook trout (squaretail)
Yellow perch

Minnows
Creek chub
Redbelly dace
Finescale dace

Physical Characteristics

Area - Upper Pond - 30 acres
Lower Pond - 29 acres

Temperatures
Surface - 75° F.

Maximum depth - Upper Pond - 7 feet
Lower Pond - 5 feet

Principal Fishery: Brook trout, Yellow perch

Upper and Lower First St. John Ponds comprise the headwaters of the Baker Branch of the St. John River. Although these two ponds are located less than two hundred yards apart, and both are very shallow ponds, they are quite different in appearance.

The upper pond has a firm shoreline consisting of gravel and rock, with some ledge areas. There are no permanent tributaries. In recent years a beaver dam on the outlet held two feet more water in the pond. That dam is now abandoned, and is a temporary barrier to fish movement upstream from the lower pond.

The lower pond is boggy in nature. Several areas of floating sphagnum mats and their associated bog vegetation extend into the pond along its shore. The shoreline consists of a thick organic muck, rather than the gravel and rocks found along the upper pond. When the pond was surveyed a large beaver dam across the outlet held two feet of water in the pond and blocked the outlet to fish movement upstream. The water behind the dam had flowed back into the forest around the pond and inundated much of the area along the brook which separates Upper and Lower First St. John Ponds.

It is unusual to find populations of yellow perch in the headwaters of a river drainage. In most drainages natural barriers prevent the movement of species such as perch and suckers into the headwaters. Here, however, the yellow perch have become

established and do compete with the trout that are present.

Water quality in both ponds is suitable for trout. Because the ponds are shallow, similar water temperatures are found at all depths. During the warmest periods of the summer, areas influenced by cool springs are important in sustaining the brook trout.

At present, trout reproduction in these ponds is limited to gravel areas along the shore and near the outlet of the upper pond, and in the brook that connects the upper and lower pond. The outlet of the lower pond is flooded by a series of beaver dams which limit its potential to produce wild trout.

Because of the remote location of Upper and Lower First St. John Ponds, access is very restricted. A long hike over old tote roads is required to reach the ponds.

The ponds will be managed for their wild trout populations. General law regulations now in effect are adequate to protect the fishery under present conditions of very light fishing pressure.

Surveyed - August, 1978

Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife

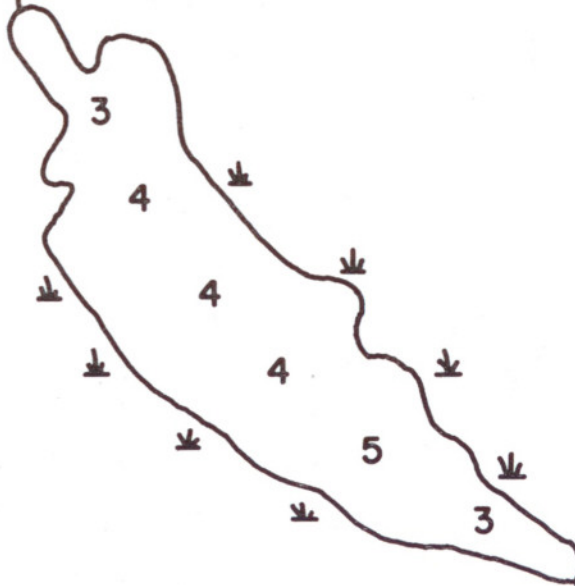
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T4R17 WELS, T4R18 WELS, SOMERSET CO., MAINE

AREA 30-29 ACRES



OUTLET