

Fisheries Report

By Nels Kramer, Fisheries Biologist

As I have reported in past, last summer IF&W blocked the fishway at Cold Stream to prevent northern pike from accessing the lake. While that has been effective, it is certainly not the best way to prevent infestation of pike into Cold Stream Pond. It was our hope that a more permanent solution would be found that would prevent pike from traveling into the lake, but would also allow trout and salmon to pass above the dam. This September, engineers from IF&W inspected the structure and are presently developing plans for a permanent modification and upgrading of the fishway. Plans are also being formulated for some routine maintenance and improvements of the dam as well. It is our hope that in addition to fixing the fishway next summer, we will also stabilize and riprap the banks around the structure, replace the gate and fix or replace the gearbox.

This fall we set two trapnets at Cold Stream, one in Webb Cove and one by the outlet to assess age, growth and condition of lake trout and landlocked salmon. Warmer water temperatures delayed the onset of fish movements initially in mid-October, but by the fourth week large numbers of fish were showing up in the nets at each tending.

Size and condition of all fish trapped continues to impress. Two year-old salmon are averaging 20" long and 3 pounds! These are salmon that were stocked in the spring of 2006 at around 6 to 8 inches in length. We are observing salmon that were stocked this past May averaging 15" and 1¼ pounds! Lake trout are also showing marked improvement in size and condition as well.



For a couple of years we have been curious as to whether there were any togue spawning shoals in addition to the known site in Webb Cove. Lake trout spawn on rocky, wind-swept shoals in mid-October, usually at night. While there is certainly an abundance of rocks around the shore, suitable spawning habitat should have a northwest exposure. On the 24th of October, we had the opportunity to deploy an electro-fishing boat to investigate additional spawning sites. The boat has a generator that produces a small electric charge that temporarily stuns the fish long enough for us to net. That evening we were able to shock about 6,000 feet of shoreline, documenting lake trout use of approximately 3,500 feet of additional suitable spawning habitat. We were able to observe well over 100 lake trout during the evenings work.

*picture is Nels Kramer & Brian Campbell