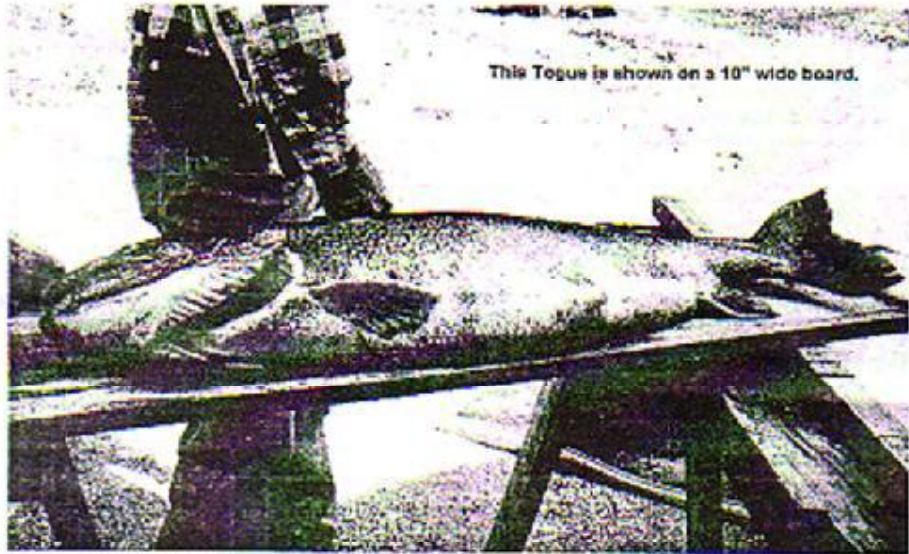


Fisheries Report

By Nels Kramer, Fisheries Biologist

We had a very early ice-out this year at April 2nd, actually the earliest in over 50 years. By the second week in April, boat trailers were filling the parking lot. Although the fishing wasn't as fast as it could have been, anglers did report some excellent size quality in the salmon, togue and brook trout caught this year. Four year old salmon were reported in the 4 to 6 pound category, which were in the best condition since 1995. Anglers also reported some action from the holdover fall yearling brook trout that weren't caught last winter.

Another old baster has been caught out of Cold Stream Pond this spring. A 40 3/4 inch, 21 pound lake trout was caught last week by David Rich from Lincoln. After a hard fight lasting about an hour, the lucky angler brought the fish to the boat for the last time. David is an experienced togue angler and has fished Cold Stream Pond for many years, always looking for that exceptional lunker. David has taken the togue to a local Taxidermist for mounting.



This Togue is shown on a 10" wide board.

A quick look at the picture of his lunker published in the Lincoln News, a missing fin caught my eye. It appeared from the photo that the fish had a left ventral fin clip, which I later confirmed while talking with Mr. Rich. The only stocking of lake trout at Cold Stream with that particular clip was in 1978, when 15,700 spring yearling lake trout were stocked. At the time of stocking, the togue were 20.8 to the pound (or about 4'-6"), very small by today's hatchery standards. At the time of capture last week, David's fish was 29 years old! Many togue from that particular stocking have been caught over the years. Steve Greenleaf has three fish with that clip hanging on his wall. A 9 pounder and a 11 pounder both caught in 1988 as an eleven year old, and a 13 pounder caught in 1994 that was seventeen years old at the time of capture.

During the winter of 2005, another local angler, Rick Leighton, caught an even older togue at Eagle Lake in the Fish River Chain. That fish was 17+ pounds and 35 years old. Rick's fish was stocked in 1971 and had a right ventral fin and a dorsal fin missing. As you can see, lake trout can live a very, very long time. I will not be surprised that if in a couple of years someone brings in a togue caught in Maine over 40 years old!