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Anglers' Guide
to the
LAKES AND STREAMS
of the
TRINITY DIVIDE

TRINITY, SISKIYOU AND SHASTA COUNTIES
CALIFORNIA
Revised January 1967



Little Castle Lake

PDF Courtesy of HighCountryFlyfisher.com



STATE OF CALIFORNIA
The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

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to the
LAKES AND STREAMS
of the
TRINITY DIVIDE
Trinity, Siskiyou and Shasta Counties
California

This map was prepared by the California Department of Fish and Game to assist in guiding anglers and campers to the numerous trout waters of the Trinity Divide area. This area, in Northern California, lies within the boundaries of the Klamath and the Shasta-Trinity National Forests.

The lakes shown on the map on the reverse side generally lie along the crest of a rugged mountain range separating Trinity County from Shasta and Siskiyou Counties. This area is dominated by Mt. Eddy, more than 9,000 feet elevation. The streams flowing down the west slope are tributary to the Trinity River. Those flowing down the east slope are tributary to the Sacramento River, while a smaller number flow northward into the Scott and Shasta Rivers.

Millions of years ago the Trinity Divide area was a broad, flat expanse. Violent volcanic upheavings and the erosive, cutting action of glaciers and rivers have since transformed the area into the rugged region of deep canyons and steep mountainsides that we know today. Almost all the lakes in this region were formed by ancient glacial activity.

Fir, spruce, pine, and cedar constitute the predominant forest cover. Brush of various species is abundant and poison oak is present.

CLIMATE

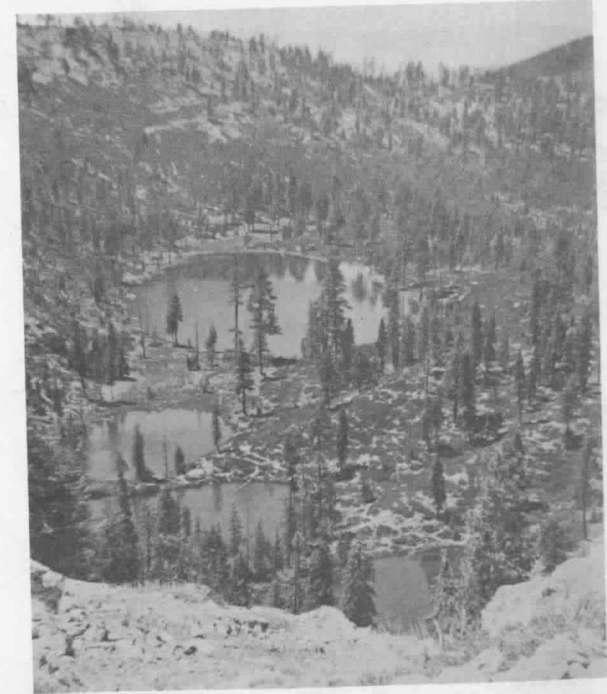
Normally, the lakes are free of ice by the end of June, although a few patches of snow may remain along some trails. The weather through the summer is warm and mild, with an occasional brief thundershower. Snowstorms do not usually occur until after October 1, but should be anticipated any time after the middle of September.

ACCESSIBILITY

The Trinity Divide area is bordered by good roads with a main highway, Interstate 5, on the eastern side. Forest Service and logging roads, ranging from good to poor, penetrate this region. U.S. Forest Service trails are indicated on the map and continued maintenance keeps these trails open and well signed. Unsigned trails are usually temporary and are not indicated on the map. For lakes accessible by trail, travel time is listed under the individual lake description and reflects moderate hiking speed. Many Trinity Divide lakes are accessible by road, and it is possible to fish several Trinity Divide lakes in a day.

Pack stock is available from licensed packers and guides in the vicinity. A list of these packers can be obtained by writing to the Department of Fish and Game, P.O. Box 1480, Redding, 96001, from the Klamath National Forest, 1215 South Main Street, Yreka, 96097, or from the Shasta-Trinity National Forest, 1615 Continental Street, Redding, 96001.

It is advisable for those not familiar with the area to check with the U.S. Forest Service regarding trail and road conditions, campsite locations, and pasture conditions for stock.



Highland Lakes

CAMPING

The Forest Service has several public campgrounds around the perimeter of this area. A number of campsites have been built up and maintained over a period of years by deer hunters or anglers. Campfire permits are required and can be obtained at Forest Service installations.

Pack all cans (flattened) and bottles out when you leave; the empties are lighter than when you brought them in full. Don't bury them, because bears and other animals will only dig them up.

The area is yours to enjoy; please help to preserve it in its natural state by maintaining and leaving a clean camp and taking every precaution against fire.

LAKE FISHING

Although the legal opening of trout season may vary slightly, Mother Nature usually does not open the Trinity Divide lakes much before June.

Fifty-eight lakes are described which vary in size from one-half acre to 47 acres. Elevations range from 5,400 feet to 7,800 feet, although most lakes are below the 6,500-foot level. Six of these lakes are either known or suspected to be incapable of supporting fish life and are not regularly stocked by the Department of Fish and Game. The remaining 52 lakes support trout and are stocked with either rainbow trout, eastern brook trout, brown trout, or some combination of these three species.

Angling is best in September and October, but is rated good early in the season. At times during warm spells in late July and August, fly fishing is apt to be slow as the fish seek the cooler depths.

STREAM FISHING

The upper Sacramento River is one of the most popular fishing streams in Northern California. Rainbow trout is the principal species taken, although some large brown trout have been caught here. Many of the tributaries such as the Middle and South Forks, and Wagon, Castle, Shotgun, and Slate Creeks support good populations of pan-sized trout.

The Trinity River above Engle (Trinity) Lake is a popular fishing stream. Most of the fish

taken are rainbows, but an occasional brown trout is caught. Two campgrounds are located on the river. The East Fork of the Trinity River provides rainbow fishing, but access is difficult.

A significant portion of the East Fork Scott River and its tributaries flow over private land. Populations of small rainbow trout are present in the East Fork Scott River and such tributaries as Mtn. House, Cabin Meadow, and Grouse Creeks.

Many of the smaller streams in the Trinity Divide area are frequently passed by or overlooked by anglers. Often such streams can provide some interesting angling and a nice mess of pan-sized trout.

ANGLING REGULATIONS

Angling is permitted in accordance with State laws and regulations. The latest angling regulations are obtainable at offices of the Department of Fish and Game and the U.S. Forest Service, or from most sporting goods dealers.

A good sportsman takes only as many fish as he can use and uses what he takes. Trout he can't use he carefully releases and returns to the water. He may even remove the barbs from his hooks to do less damage to the fish he does not intend to keep.

FOR BETTER FISHING

In cooperation with sportsmen, the Department is trying to manage the State's trout fisheries to provide the best possible angling for the greatest number of anglers. To accomplish proper management, accurate information about individual waters is required. This is obtained through special surveys of the lakes and streams.

The principal objectives of this work are to learn whether or not a water should be stocked and how it should be stocked. The size and depth of a lake and its richness determine to a large extent the number of fish which should be planted. Overstocking results in large numbers of stunted fish which are too small to provide good sport. Understocking results in a few large fish which are hard to catch. In between lies the happy medium, wherein correct stocking allotments provide maximum numbers of nice-sized fish in good condition.

DESCRIPTION OF THE LAKES

In the following descriptions, "winter kill" refers to the usually complete, occasionally partial, fish mortality in a lake due to freezing of a major portion of the lake or by a snowslide entering the lake.

Bluff Lake. Elev. 6,300 ft., 4 acres, 8 ft. deep. From U.S. 99—Interstate 5 Highway, go up Parks Creek logging road to the first Trinity River crossing. Follow the marked trail up the Trinity River to Bluff Lake outlet, thence up the creek to the lake. Fat brook trout to 13 inches are present.

Bull Lake. Elev. 6,530 ft., 8 acres, 20 ft. deep. Bull Lake is on the Sisson trail from Kangaroo Creek to the upper Trinity River. It is less than a two-hour hike from Kangaroo Lake. Normally has a good population of brook trout to 12 inches.

Cabin Meadow Lake. Elev. 6,900 ft. Shallow pond. Subject to winter kill. Not presently stocked.

Caldwell Lakes. The three Caldwell Lakes have often been called the Parks Creek Lakes, but it is appropriate that they be named in honor of John Caldwell, a pioneer of Edgewood (Siskiyou County), who hunted and fished this area in the early days. Although these are small bodies of water they provide good brook trout fishing, especially the two upper lakes, which are adjacent to each other. Some work has been done by the department to provide a live inlet stream to the lower lake. From the Parks Creek logging road a faint trail follows up the outlet stream to the lakes.

Lower Caldwell Lake. Elev. 6,800 ft., 2 acres, 12 ft. deep.

Middle Caldwell Lake. Elev. 7,100 ft., 1½ acres, 8 ft. deep.

Upper Caldwell Lake. Elev. 7,100 ft., 2 acres, 13 ft. deep.

Carmen Lakes (Big and Little). Elev. 5,600 ft. Very shallow, boggy ponds. Subject to winter kill. Not presently stocked.



Brook Trout from Bull Lake



Kangaroo Lake

Castle Lake. Elev. 5,400 ft., 47 acres, 120 ft. deep. Castle Lake is the largest, deepest, and most attractive lake in the entire area. It is situated 11 miles from the Town of Mt. Shasta and is accessible by automobile. The road leading to the lake is comparatively good; however, the last two miles have deteriorated in recent years. Despite this, a large number of people visit the lake each year for fishing, boating, swimming, and picnicking. A Forest Service campground, with all the unusual conveniences, is located one-quarter mile below the lake.

Rainbow and brook trout are abundant and provide good angling, especially during May, June, and October. The brook trout population maintains itself by natural reproduction; the rainbow are planted as fingerlings each year from the Mt. Shasta Fish Hatchery. Both species average about 8 inches in length, with a few specimens attaining a length of 12 inches. In 1959, a husky 20-inch, 4½ pound brook trout was landed. This is an exceptionally large brookie for California.

The Department of Fish and Game has conducted trout management experiments at Castle Lake since 1938. The facts obtained from these experiments are utilized in the management of other high mountain lakes throughout the State. Better angling and lower management costs have been the result. Prior to 1946 the lake contained lake (mackinaw), brown, brook, and rainbow trout. Fishing was generally poor and plants of fingerling trout did little to improve it. It was found that the large, predatory lake and brown trout devoured most of the planted fingerlings. Anglers caught only 1 percent of the planted fish. The entire fish population was removed by chemical treatment in 1946 and only brook trout fingerlings were planted from 1947 to 1951. The quality of angling increased, and as many as 35 percent of the planted fish eventually ended up in the anglers' creels. Since brook trout are capable of spawning in springs along the lake bottom, a self-sustaining population was established. In 1952, annual plants of rainbow fingerlings commenced. A greater poundage of fish per acre and more fishing pleasure was provided with both rainbow and brook trout than with brook trout alone. Satisfactory angling has now been produced at Castle Lake at a reasonable cost. It would cost 4 times more to provide the same level of angling quality if catchable trout were planted exclusively.

The present experimental program at Castle Lake is aimed at developing a technique of increasing the production of the lake through fertilization. A new and promising field method, involving the use of radioactive isotopes, is being tested. If successful, even better fishing at Castle Lake can be expected in the future.

Little Castle Lake. Elev. 5,600 ft., 2 acres, 9 feet deep. This lake is one and one-half miles by fair trail from Castle Lake. Contains brook trout to 15 inches.

Cedar Lake. Elev. 5,700 ft., 6 acres, 90 ft. deep. Accessible by a road up the South Fork of the Sacramento River from the Town of Mt. Shasta, a distance of about 15 miles. Aquatic vegetation is gradually filling in and eventually the lake will become a bog. Stocked with brook trout.

Chipmunk Lake. Elev. 6,400 ft. Not presently stocked.

Cliff Lake. Elev. 5,800 ft., 15 acres, 90 ft. deep. Accessible by a Jeep road from the South Fork of the Sacramento River. One of the most beautiful lakes in this area. Many snags are present. Brook trout, rainbow trout and brown trout are in the lake.

Lower Cliff Lake. Elev. 5,700 ft., 3 acres, 11 ft. deep. This lake has a continual flow from the outlets of Cliff, Upper Cliff and Terrace Lakes so that its level is maintained throughout the summer. A productive brook trout lake. The road to Cliff Lake goes right by it.

Upper Cliff Lake. Elev. 6,350 ft., 2½ acres, 11 ft. deep. In the high rock wall which rises abruptly from the south shore of Cliff Lake is a pocket containing this small lake, reached by a short but steep climb around the northwest shore of Cliff Lake. Stocked with brook trout.

Lower China Crater Lake. Elev. 7,500 ft., 5½ acres, 50 ft. deep. The best route is to take the forest road to the left below the Mountain House on the Gazelle-Callahan road, which goes up Crater Creek. The trail up Crater Creek is somewhat steep and traveling time is at least two hours. Besides average-sized brook trout this lake has produced some flashy, silvery rainbows to 16 inches.

Upper China Crater Lake. Elev. 7,500 ft., 2½ acres, 26 ft. deep. This lake is only separated from the lower lake by a small rocky ridge. Stocked with brook trout.

Little Crater Lake. Elev. 7,580 ft., 20 acres. Since this lake is situated in a deep rocky crater it is not visible from a distance. No outlet. Go up the Dale Creek logging road for about four miles. (Jeeps only advisable.) At this point a spur road turns to the left and ends below the lake. There is no trail and the lake is about one mile away with a steep, 1,000-foot climb. Brook trout to 12 inches fairly abundant.



Bull Lake



Upper Deadfall Lake

Lower Deadfall Lake. Elev. 7,150 ft., 5 acres, 25 ft. deep. It is possible to hike into the three Deadfall Lakes and out again in a day. The most popular approach is via logging road up Parks Creek and trail to the lakes. Hiking time is about half an hour. Fat brook trout to 11 inches fairly abundant. Pan-sized rainbows abundant in Deadfall Creek below the lakes.

Middle Deadfall Lake. Elev. 7,300 ft., 25 acres, 40 ft. deep. Second largest lake in the Trinity Divide. Has a good natural population of brookies. Brown trout have also been caught. Fairly open for fly fishermen.

Upper Deadfall Lake. Elev. 7,800 ft., 2½ acres, 15 ft. deep. This tarn lies very close to timberline and is generally bordered by grassy meadow. Good natural reproduction for brook trout.

Devils Lake. Elev. 6,100 ft., 2½ acres, 15 ft. deep. From U.S. Highway 99 it is 14 miles over a rough, steep road and then a two and one-half hour hike to the lake. This seldom-visited lake has a good population of brook trout.

Dobkins Lake. Elev. 6,750 ft., 3½ acres. A good trout lake although food is not as abundant as in some lakes. Rainbow trout, brook trout and brown trout are present and appear to do well. Fish to 20 inches have been caught. It is reached by trail from the Dale Creek logging road. (Jeeps only advisable.) Outlet provides some good stream fishing.

Durney Lake. Elev. 7,000 ft., 3½ acres, 15 ft. deep. Permanent inlet and outlet streams provide natural spawning conditions. Brook trout to 10 inches. Shores all open, ideal for fly fishing. About a 20-minute hike from Dobkins Lake.

Echo Lake. Elev. 5,900 ft., 13½ acres, 70 ft. deep. Largest in the Seven Lakes Basin. Reached by going up the Whalan Road from Castella about 10 miles, then three and one-half miles by trail, or by going up the spur road past Whalan Station to Red Fir Camp, then over the ridge to the Seven Lakes Basin. Brook trout, rainbow trout and brown trout have been caught and some very large fish, presumably brownies, have been seen. The lake is on private property, but open to the public.

Lower Gray Rock Lake. Elev. 5,950 ft., 11 acres, 20 ft. deep. It is about 11 miles from the Town of Mt. Shasta up the South Fork of the Sacramento River logging road to the trail to the Gray Rocks and Timber Lakes. An hour's hike up a steep trail. Brook trout present.

Upper Gray Rock Lake. Elev. 6,300 ft., 4½ acres, 20 ft. deep. Fishing ranges from very poor to very good. Far better in the spring and fall than in mid-summer. Stocked with brook trout. Fly fishing conditions are excellent.

Grey Rock Lake. Elev. 5,500 ft., 4½ acres, 11½ ft. deep. A good producer of fat brookies to 9 inches. A spur road turning to the left from the road to the Tamarack Lakes goes within one-half mile of the lake.

Grouse Lake. Elev. 5,900 ft., 3 acres, 15 ft. deep. This shallow lake has fat brook trout. The hiking distance is about the same as to Devils Lake. For the last one-half mile there is no well-marked trail.

Grouse Creek Lake. Elev. 6,200 ft., 3 acres, 12 ft. deep. A trail up Grouse Creek goes very close to the lake. Also accessible by trail from the summit of the Scott Mountain road. Fat brook trout to 12 inches.

Lower Gumboot Lake. Elev. 6,050 ft., 7 acres, 15 ft. deep. Typical productive meadow-type lake. Easily accessible by 15 miles of road from the Town of Mt. Shasta. In 1955 a small dam was constructed at the outlet by sportsmen's groups to increase the area of the lake. Stocked with rainbow trout. Brookies occasionally caught. Fly fishing very good at times.

Upper Gumboot Lake. Elev. 6,350 ft., 3½ acres, 8 ft. deep. Easily accessible from Lower Gumboot Lake, about 300 yards away. Nice brook trout are present. Subject to winterkill.

Heart Lake. Elev. 6,050 ft., ¼ acre, 11 ft. deep. This little pothole is located far up in a pocket in the cliff at the south end of Castle Lake. Contains a few brook trout.

Helen Lake. Elev. 6,700 ft., 2½ acres, 46 feet deep. This small productive brook trout lake is open enough around the shore to make it good for fly fishing. It is one of the attractive Seven Lakes Basin group. About a 45-minute hike from Red Fir Camp.



Middle Deadfall Lake



Lower Deadfall Lake

Highland Lake. Elev. 5,700 ft., 7 acres, 15 ft. deep. There is one good-sized lake with three small, shallow ponds nearby. The large lake is excellent brook trout water and easy to fish with a fly. During the summer the fish usually congregate in the center, the deepest part of the lake. Road goes within a quarter mile of the lake, but it is a long, rough 14 miles from U.S. Highway 99. In 1957 the department dammed the main outlet stream from the larger lake so that the outlet would flow through the ponds, hoping that this operation would increase the fish productivity of the lakes.

Kangaroo Lake. Elev. 6,050 ft., 21 acres, 110 ft. deep. One of the most popular lakes in this area. Known to produce weight limits of both rainbows and browns. Brook trout also present. A good logging road up Rail Creek goes to the lake. Also accessible by jeep trail. There is a Forest Service campground at this lake.

Lily Pad Lake. Elev. 5,950 ft., 2½ acres, 9 ft. deep. This small productive brook trout lake is accessible by logging road, about one mile below and on the way to Kangaroo Lake.

Lost Lake. Elev. 5,600 ft., ½ acre, 9 ft. deep. No trail, but may be reached by bearing southeasterly about one mile from Masterson Meadows. Populated with average-sized brook trout.

Masterson Meadow Lake. Elev. 6,200 ft., 1½ acres, 5 ft. deep. This pretty little lake is situated on the east slope of Scott Mountain. It is about an hour's hike from the summit of the Scott Mountain road. Shallow, subject to occasional winter-kill but usually has a good population of brook trout.

Mumbo Lake. Elev. 6,100 ft., 5½ acres, 16 ft. deep. About 19 miles by road from the Town of Mt. Shasta. The last one-half mile of road, which parallels the outlet, should not be attempted in a passenger car. Brown trout to 10 inches are present.

West Parks Lakes. These lakes support a limited number of fish. About two miles up Parks logging road, a faint steep trail goes to the lower lake. Lower and Middle Parks Lakes stocked with brook trout. The Upper Lake is subject to winter kill and has not been planted since 1961. Wary brookies to 12 inches present in a bog meadow about one-half mile below the lower lake.

Lower Parks Lake. Elev. 7,250 ft., 2 acres, 12 ft. deep.

Middle Parks Lake. Elev. 7,400 ft., 2½ acres, 22 ft. deep.

Upper Parks Lake. Elev. 7,800 ft., 1 acre, 12 ft. deep.

Picayune Lake. Elev. 6,100 ft., 11½ acres, 27 ft. deep. This privately-owned lake is 16 miles from the Town of Mt. Shasta. It is situated over the ridge from the road up the South Fork of the Sacramento River. Brook and rainbow trout present. Locked gate ½ mile from lake. Easy walk from gate to lake.

Pond Lily Lake. Elev. 5,800 ft., 2 acres, 10 ft. deep. An attractive lake well stocked with brook trout. Surrounded by thick timber, brush and meadows. From the Highland Lakes road it is an easy one-mile walk to the lake by a good trail.

Porcupine Lake. Elev. 7,250 ft., 8½ acres, 50 ft. deep. This lake is set well down in a depression resembling a crater. The surface never rises high enough to overflow. The shore is generally a jumble of granite rocks. Some good-sized rainbows have been caught here along with brook trout. About a 30-minute hike over the ridge from Tard Lake over well-marked trail.

Rock Fence Lake. Elev. 6,600 ft., 5½ acres, 20 ft. deep. A good logging road goes up Rock Fence Creek within a 30-minute walk to the lake. Also accessible by jeep trail. Stocked with brook trout.

Scott Lake. Elev. 6,200 ft., 2½ acres, 10 ft. deep. Scott Lake was formerly classed as one of the Gray Rock Lakes, but it is at the head of Scott Camp Creek, so the present name seems appropriate. Good brook trout lake. Surrounded by timber and brush. It lies just over the ridge from the Gray Rock Lakes or about a 45-minute hike up Scott Camp Creek.

Lower Seven Lake. Elev. 6,200 ft., 2 acres, 10 ft. deep. A good brook trout producer. A trail from the Whalan Road out of Castella goes to the Seven Lakes Basin. Also can be reached by going over the ridge from Red Fir Camp.

Upper Seven Lake. Elev. 6,300 ft., 4½ acres, 35 ft. deep. At the upper end of the Seven Lakes Basin, surrounded by rather dense brush and trees. Good population of brook trout.

Slide Lake. Elev. 5,400 ft., 2½ acres, 21 ft. deep. No trail to the lake, but it may be reached after a stiff climb following the outlet from the Parks Creek Road. Fat brook trout to 12 inches are usually present.

Big Tamarack Lake. Elev. 5,900 ft., 21 acres, 16 ft. deep. A popular and comparatively large lake. Good producer and stocked with rainbows. Brook trout also present and it is not unusual to catch both species to 12 inches in length. A spur road just past Whalan Station on the Whalan Road goes very close to the lake.

Little Tamarack Lake. Elev. 5,900 ft., 2 acres, 9 ft. deep. A very good brook trout lake. Surrounded by low brush and trees. Only a few minutes' walk from Big Tamarack Lake.

Terrace Lake. Elev. 6,200 ft., 3½ acres, 37 ft. deep. Water flows out of Terrace into Cliff Lake at all times of the year. It is a short steep climb up from Cliff to Terrace Lake. Contains brook and rainbow trout.

Timber Lake. Elev. 6,000 ft., 2 acres, 15 ft. deep. A particularly beautiful little lake and a fine producer of brook trout. Adjacent to the Gray Rock Lakes and only a 20-minute walk from Lower Gray Rock Lake.

Toad Lake. Elev. 6,950 ft., 23½ acres, 40 ft. deep. One of the most productive and popular lakes in the area. Accessible by road up the Middle Fork of the Sacramento River. Two-hour hike on trail from Picayune Road. Contains brook trout, rainbow trout and brown trout. Trolling with flasher lures from rafts has produced some very large fish.

Lower Twin Lake. Elev. 5,800 ft., 8½ acres, 14 ft. deep. A very good brook trout lake. It is thickly surrounded by trees and brush and is somewhat difficult to fish. Spur road from the Tamarack Lakes road goes within a quarter mile of the lake.

Upper Twin Lake. Elev. 5,800 ft., 12 acres, 40 ft. deep. This deep lake is adjacent to Lower Twin Lake and produces a good number of brook trout. It takes about 10 minutes to walk from Lower Twin to Upper Twin Lake.