

RAINBOW DEADWATERS
T2 R11 (Rainbow Twp.), Piscataquis Co.
U.S.G.S. Harrington Lake, Me.

Fishes

Brook trout (squaretail)

Minnows

Blacknose dace

Golden shiner

Physical Characteristics

Area - 58 acres

Temperatures

Surface - 68°F.

Maximum depth - 22 feet

20 feet - 64°F.

Principal Fishery: Brook trout

There are four deadwater areas on Rainbow Stream, three of which may be considered ponds. The first two, the largest and deepest ones, are located a short distance below the outlet of Rainbow Lake. These are connected by a shallow, rocky thoroughfare. One quarter mile of stream separates the second and third deadwaters. Though the third deadwater is a pond, it is less than 10 acres in area and therefore not a great pond. The fourth deadwater, located one-half mile below the third one, consists of a beaver flowage in a small open area in the forest along Rainbow Stream. The area and depth of standing water in it depends on the state of repair of the beaver dam on the outlet.

Natural barriers on Rainbow Stream below these deadwaters have limited the distribution of fish in the entire drainage upstream. Presently, only brook trout and two minnow species are found in the Rainbow Deadwaters.

Water quality investigations and fish sampling procedures are concentrated on the two largest deadwaters. There, conditions are excellent for brook trout. Though water temperatures are similar from top to bottom, the influence of springs maintains temperatures cool enough to support a thriving trout population. The growth rate and condition of the trout reflect the quality of their habitat and the limited amount of competition from other fish species.

Good spawning and nursery areas in Rainbow Stream are available to these trout. The population is sustained through natural reproduction.

At present, access to the Rainbow Deadwaters is limited to a foot trail. The Appalachian Trail closely follows their western shoreline.

These waters will be managed for their wild trout populations. A five-fish limit has been recommended, as well as a regulation prohibiting the use or possession of live fish as bait. Introductions of new fish species into the drainage would be detrimental to the trout populations.

A dam at the outlet of Rainbow Lake presently blocks the upstream movement of fish from the deadwaters, and the return of fish that drop downstream when the splashboards are pulled out. Provisions for fish passage through this dam to allow free movement between the Rainbow Deadwaters and Rainbow Lake would benefit the trout populations in these waters.

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