

# SPORT FISHERIES OF THE BELGRADE LAKES





## BELGRADE LAKES CHAIN, SOME VITAL STATISTICS

1. The Belgrade chain of lakes is part of the Messalonskee Stream drainage, a tributary of the Kennebec River. Messalonskee Stream has a drainage area of approximately 177 square miles.
2. The seven largest waters in the Belgrade chain have a combined surface area of 20,311 acres.
3. All of the major waters in the chain are accessible via publicly owned boat launches.
4. Maximum depths of the chain's seven largest waters range from 113 feet in Messalonskee Lake to 20 feet in North Pond.
5. At least 20 different species of fish occur in the Belgrades. A minimum of 5 of the fish species found in the chain are not native to the state of Maine. The known nonnative species now found in the Belgrade Lakes include largemouth bass, smallmouth bass, Northern pike, and brown trout. The Eastern brook trout and the landlocked salmon, two of Maine's most highly prized native species, are also found in the Belgrades.
6. The major sport fisheries of the chain include black bass (largemouth and smallmouth), landlocked salmon, and brown trout. Chain pickerel are also frequently caught by anglers fishing the Belgrades, particularly during the winter. White perch, an eagerly sought after panfish, are quite abundant in the lakes of the chain.
7. The status of the sport fisheries of these waters have been strongly influenced by human cultural activities that for the most part date from the European colonization. Shoreline development, agricultural and forestry practices, construction of dams, and the introduction of nonnative species have all had profound and long lasting effects on aquatic habitat and sport fisheries. Anglers are reminded that it is illegal to stock any water in the state of Maine without a permit from the Commissioner of the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife.

**NOTE:** The fishery management programs on the major waters of the Belgrades are under evaluation. Major changes in stocking programs, regulations, etc. may be instituted in the near future. For additional information on the current status of the sport fisheries and fishery management programs in the Belgrades call the Belgrade Region Fisheries Management Headquarters in Sidney at 207-547-4164.

# SOME FEATURES OF THE SEVEN MAJOR WATERS OF THE BELGRADE CHAIN OF LAKES

Water	Surface Area (acres)	Depth (ft)		Public Access?	Stocking Program		
		Max	Avg.		Y/N?	Species*	Number**
East Pond	1,823	27	18	Yes	Y	BNT	1,700 FY
Great Pond	8,239	69	21	Yes	Y	LLS	4,100 SY
Long Pond	2,714	106	35	Yes	Y	LLS	2,200 SY
McGrath Pond	486	27	16	Yes***	Y	BNT	750 FY
Messalonskee L.	3,510	113	33	Yes	Y	LLS	2,500 SY
North Pond	2,873	20	13	Yes	N	BNT are stocked occasionally	
Salmon Lake	667	57	23	Yes	Y	BNT	1,000 FY

\* BNT = brown trout, LLS = landlocked salmon

\*\* FY = fall yearlings, SY = spring yearlings

\*\*\* McGrath Pond is accessible via the public launch on Salmon Lake.

NOTE: The stocking programs listed above are subject to revision based on fish availability, public access, and a variety of biological considerations such as growth rate.

A PARTIAL LIST OF FISH SPECIES THAT OCCUR IN THE MAJOR WATERS  
OF THE BELGRADE CHAIN OF LAKES

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Common Name

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American eel  
Eastern brook trout (Square tail)  
Black crappie (Calico bass)  
Brown trout  
Bullhead (Horned pout)  
Chain pickerel (pickerel)  
Fallfish (Chub)  
Four-spine stickleback  
Golden shiner (shiner)  
Largemouth bass (Largemouths)  
Northern pike (Pike, northernns)  
Pumpkinseed sunfish  
Rainbow smelt (smelt)  
Redbreast sunfish  
Slimy sculpin  
Smallmouth bass (Smallmouths)  
Three-spine stickleback  
White perch  
White sucker

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EAST POND  
OAKLAND AND SMITHFIELD

The primary sport fisheries in East Pond are for black bass (smallmouth and largemouth), white and yellow perch, chain pickerel, and brown trout. Black crappies (calico bass) were illegally introduced into East Pond in the 1980's and are now well established. Anglers are reminded that it is illegal to stock any water in the state of Maine without a permit from the Commissioner of the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife.

The lake's brown trout fishery is based on annual stockings of 1,700 fall yearlings. The brown trout stocking program was cancelled in 1988 because of the loss of public access. The program was reinstated in 1991 with the acquisition and development of a publicly owned boat launch off the East Pond Road on the east side of the lake.

REGULATION SUMMARY\*

Brown Trout

Seasons:

Open water - April 1 to September 30  
Ice Fishing - January 1 to March 31

Terminal Tackle: General Law, ie bait, lures, and flies are permitted.

Length Limit: 12 inches

Bag Limit: 2 fish

Black Bass

Seasons:

Open water - April 1 to September 30  
Ice Fishing - January 1 to March 31

Terminal Tackle: Artificial lures only (ALO) from April 1 to June 20. General Law, ie bait, lures, and flies are permitted from June 21 to September 30.

Length Limit: 12 inches

Bag Limit: 1 fish from January 1 to June 20, 3 fish from June 21 to September 30 only 1 of which may exceed 14 inches.

Chain pickerel, white and yellow perch, horned pout(bullheads)

Seasons:

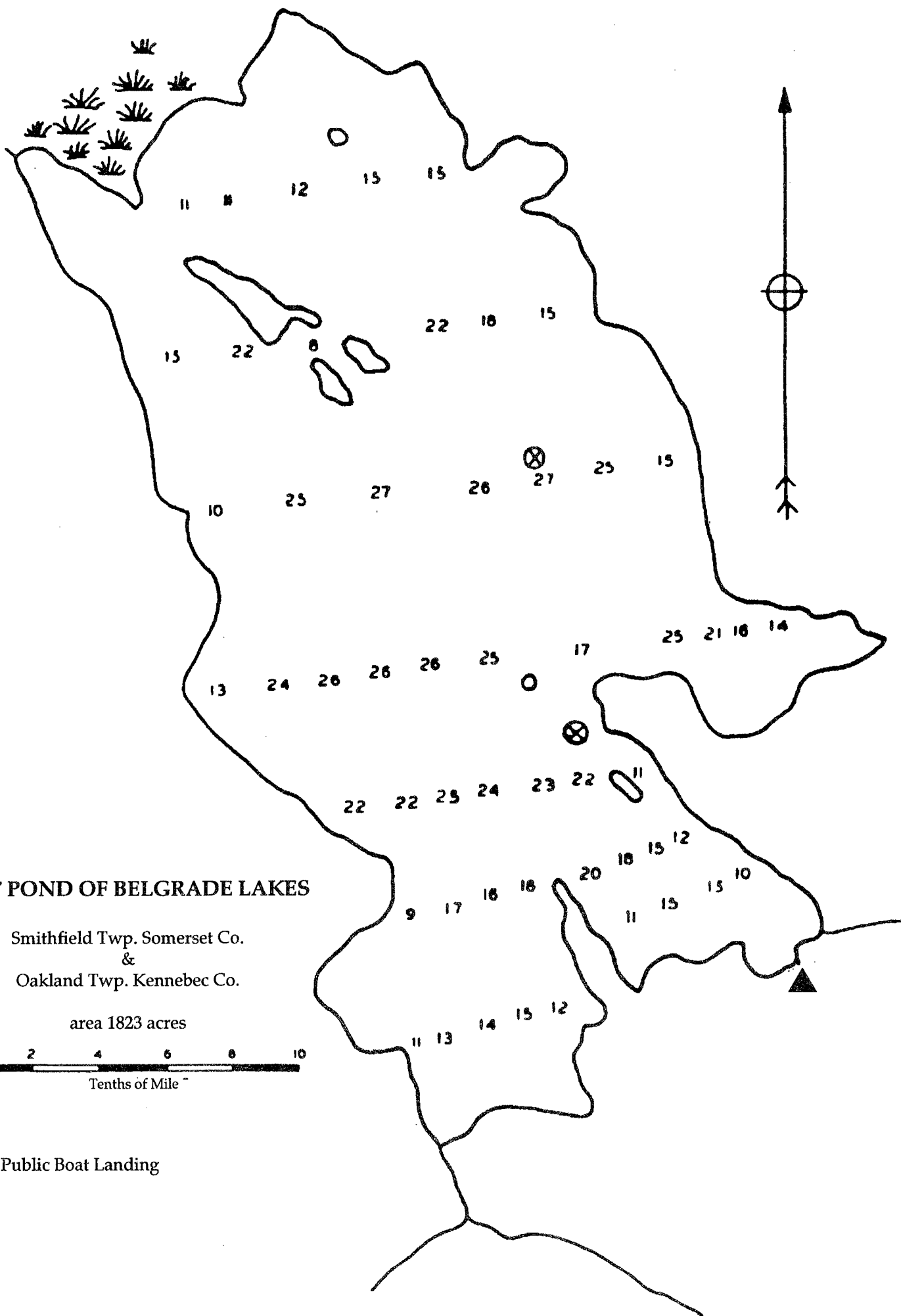
Open water - April 1 to September 30  
Ice Fishing - January 1 to March 31

Terminal Tackle: General Law, ie bait, lures, and flies are permitted.

Length Limit: none

Bag Limit: Chain pickerel = 10 fish, no bag limit on perch and horned pout

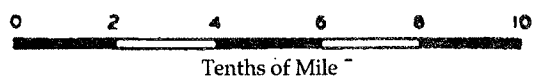
\* NOTE: THIS OUTLINE IS INTENDED AS A SUMMARY ONLY! ANGLERS ARE CAUTIONED TO READ THE REGULATION BOOKLET FOR ADDITIONAL IMPORTANT INFORMATION!



# EAST POND OF BELGRADE LAKES

Smithfield Twp. Somerset Co.  
&  
Oakland Twp. Kennebec Co.

area 1823 acres



▲ Public Boat Landing

GREAT POND  
OAKLAND, BELGRADE, AND ROME

Black bass (largemouth and smallmouth), white perch, chain pickerel, Northern pike and landlocked salmon provide the primary sport fisheries in this water. All of the lake's fisheries, except landlocked salmon, are based on natural reproduction. The illegal introduction and establishment of Northern pike in this water sometime in the late 70's or early 80's have given rise to much controversy. Although this species provides angling for what are very large fish for central Maine, the effects of this voracious predator on existing fish populations have not yet been determined. Furthermore, anglers are reminded that it is illegal to stock any water in the state of Maine without a permit from the Commissioner of the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife.

The lake's landlocked salmon fishery is based on annual stockings of 4,100 spring yearlings. Salmon fishing in Great Pond is mediocre at best. The primary problem is slow growth because of an insufficient supply of smelts. The program is under active review and management changes seem likely in the near future.

Historically, Great Pond has been known for its excellent black bass fishing. The pond still provides fast fishing for smallmouths and largemouths although some anglers complain about a decrease in the size of bass. Fishery biologists report that data taken at bass tournaments indicate a healthy bass population.

REGULATION SUMMARY\*

Landlocked Salmon

Seasons:

Open water - April 1 to September 30  
Ice Fishing - January 1 to March 31

Terminal Tackle: General Law, ie bait, lures, and flies are permitted.  
Length Limit: 14 inches  
Bag Limit: 2 fish

Black Bass

Seasons:

Open water - April 1 to September 30  
Ice Fishing - January 1 to March 31

Terminal Tackle: Artificial lures only (ALO) from April 1 to June 20. General Law, ie bait, lures, and flies are permitted from June 21 to September 30.  
Length Limit: 12 inches  
Bag Limit: 1 fish from January 1 to June 20, 3 fish from June 21 to September 30 only 1 of which may exceed 14 inches.

Chain pickerel, white and yellow perch, horned pout(bullheads)

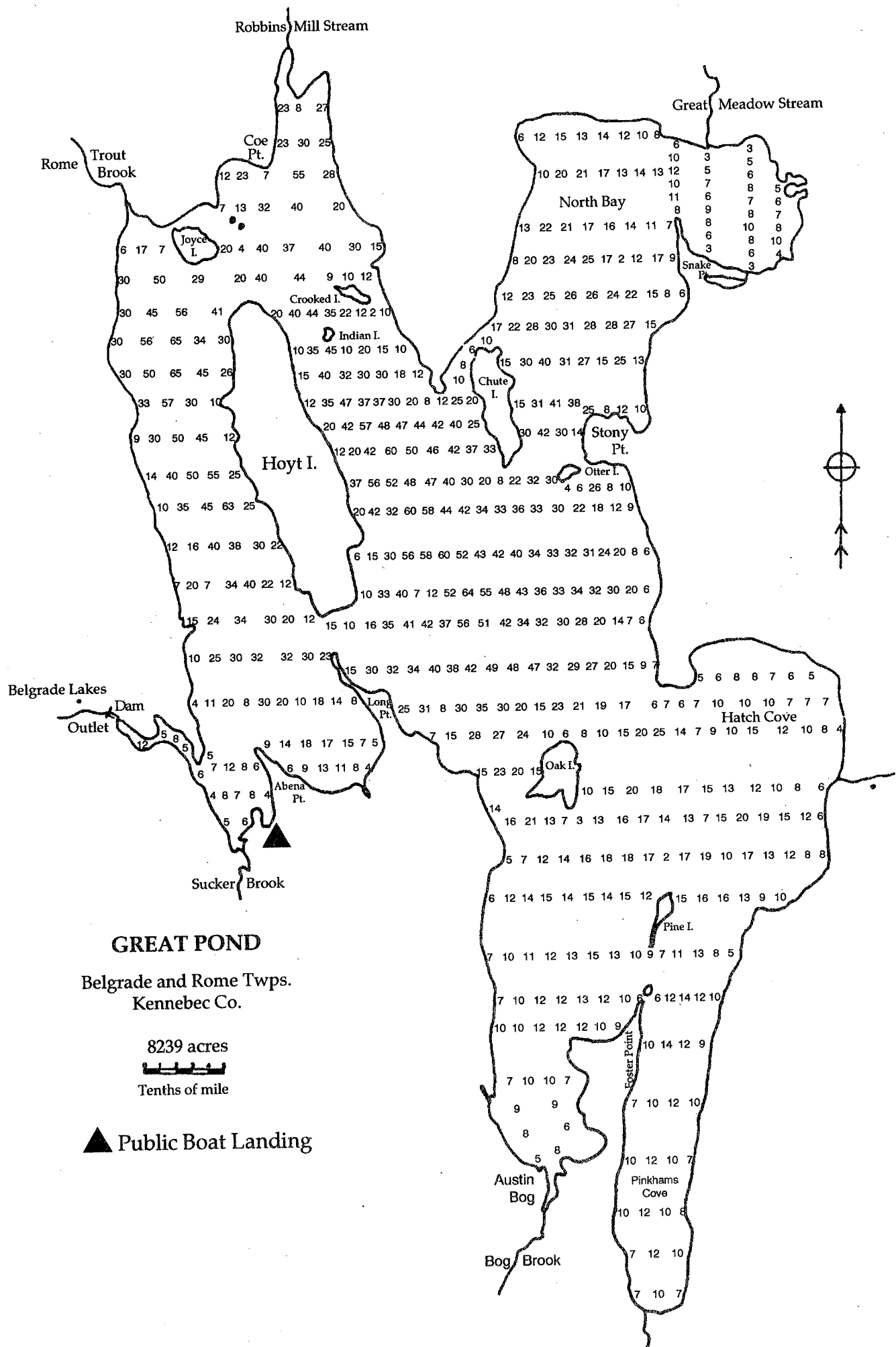
Seasons:

Open water - April 1 to September 30  
Ice Fishing - January 1 to March 31

Terminal Tackle: General Law, ie bait, lures, and flies are permitted.  
Length Limit: none  
Bag Limit: chain pickerel = 10 fish, no bag limit on perch and horned pout

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# **GREAT POND**

Belgrade and Rome Twps.  
Kennebec Co.

8239 acres



Tenths of mile

▲ Public Boat Landing

LONG POND  
MT. VERNON, ROME, AND BELGRADE

The primary sport fisheries in Long Pond are for landlocked salmon, black bass (smallmouth and largemouth), white perch, chain pickerel, and Northern pike. The landlocked salmon fishery is maintained by annual stockings of 2,200 spring yearlings. The pond's warmwater sport fisheries are maintained by natural reproduction.

Long Pond has the deserved reputation of providing the best spring salmon fishing of any of the waters in central Maine. Landlocked fishing in this lake can be fast and occasionally a genuine "tackle buster" is encountered.

Fishing for the pond's warmwater fish species can be rewarding, as well. Black bass fishing continues to be very popular in Long Pond and can provide fast action, indeed! Shore fishing for white perch in Belgrade village continues to attract area anglers each spring as catches of this fine food fish can be quite good in the stream just below the dam on Great Pond. Northern pike, introduced illegally into Long Pond 15 years or so ago have created as much a sensation in Long Pond as they have elsewhere in the Belgrades. As in the case of the others, the long term effect of Northerns on the pond's established fisheries, particularly its salmon fishery, is difficult to predict. Anglers are reminded that it is illegal to stock any water in the state of Maine without a permit from the Commissioner of the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife.

REGULATION SUMMARY\*

Landlocked Salmon

Seasons:

Open water - April 1 to September 30  
Ice Fishing - Closed

Terminal Tackle: General Law, ie bait, lures, and flies are permitted.  
Length Limit: 16 inches  
Bag Limit: 1 fish

Black Bass

Seasons:

Open water - April 1 to September 30  
Ice Fishing - Closed

Terminal Tackle: Artificial lures only (ALO) from April 1 to June 20. General Law, ie bait, lures, and flies are permitted from June 21 to September 30.

Length Limit: 12 inches  
Bag Limit: 1 fish from April 1 to June 20, 3 fish from June 21 to September 30 only 1 of which may exceed 14 inches.

Chain pickerel, white and yellow perch, horned pout(bullheads)

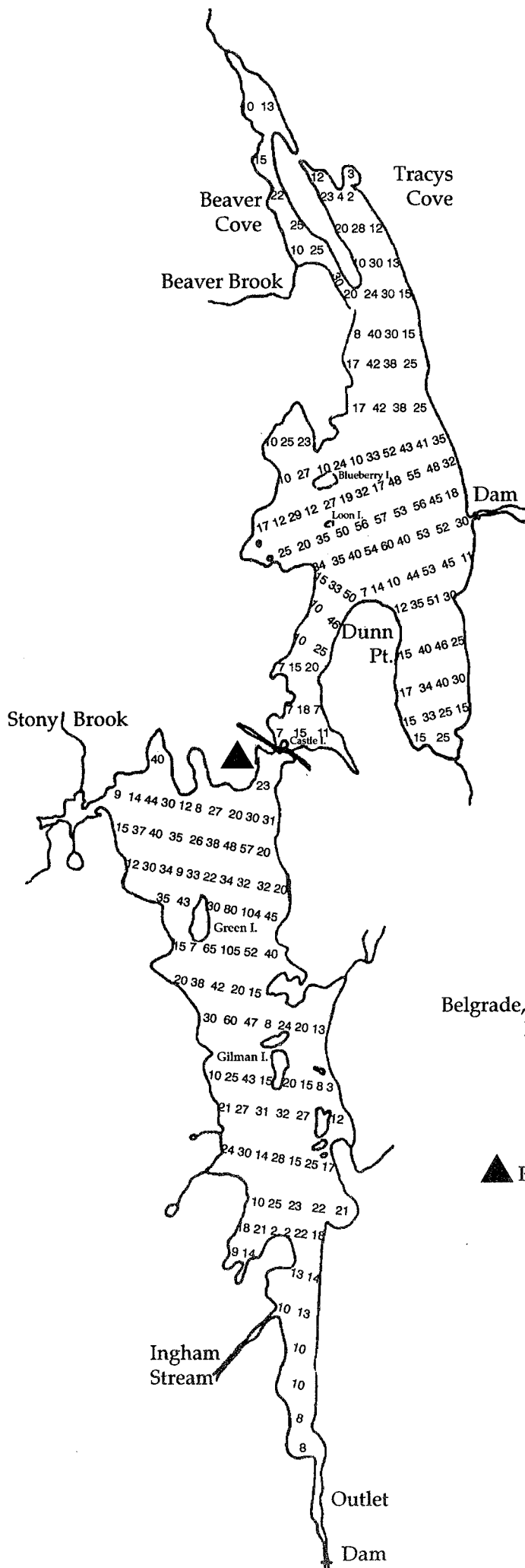
Seasons:

Open water - April 1 to September 30  
Ice Fishing - January 1 to March 31

Terminal Tackle: General Law, ie bait, lures, and flies are permitted.

Length Limit: none  
Bag Limit: chain pickerel = 10 fish, no bag limit on perch and horned pout


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## LONG POND

Belgrade, Mt. Vernon and Rome Twps.  
Kennebec Co. Maine

2714 acres

  
Tenths of mile

 Public Boat Landing

MESSALONSKEE LAKE  
OAKLAND AND BELGRADE

Messalonskee Lake's most significant sport fisheries are for black bass (smallmouth and largemouth), white perch, chain pickerel, and landlocked salmon. Northern pike and rainbow smelt are caught also. Landlocked salmon are stocked at a rate of 2,500 spring yearlings per year. The lake's warmwater sport fish populations are maintained by natural reproduction.

Salmon fishing in Messalonskee Lake continues to be plagued by small fish due to slow growth. Smelts, although reasonably abundant in Messalonskee Lake grow so fast that they rapidly exceed forage size for the lake's salmon. Salmon management at Messalonskee Lake is being evaluated and proposals for management changes are in the offing in the near future.

Black bass, white perch, and chain pickerel offer some excellent fishing in this water. Anglers who fish Messalonskee Lake for warmwater fish species should not neglect Belgrade Stream, the flowage that runs from Long Pond to Messalonskee Lake. Northern pike began to be reported in Messalonskee Lake about the same time as they first appeared in Long Pond, North Pond, and Great Pond. The species does not seem to have become as abundant in Messalonskee Lake as it has in the latter three waters, however, a few specimens are caught in Messalonskee Lake each year and they are often of a large size! The effect of Northerns on the pond's established fisheries is difficult to predict, however, it is reasonable to expect that the introduction of this large and voracious predator will not be entirely without cost. Anglers are reminded that it is illegal to stock any water in the state of Maine without a permit from the Commissioner of the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife.

REGULATION SUMMARY\*  
Black Bass

Seasons:

Open water - April 1 to September 30  
Ice Fishing - January 1 to March 31

Terminal Tackle: Artificial lures only (ALO) from April 1 to June 20. General Law, ie bait, lures, and flies are permitted from June 21 to September 30.

Length Limit: 12 inches

Bag Limit: 1 fish from January 1 to June 20, 3 fish from June 21 to September 30 only 1 of which may exceed 14 inches.

Landlocked Salmon

Seasons:

Open water - April 1 to September 30  
Ice Fishing - January 1 to March 31

Terminal Tackle: General Law, ie bait, lures, and flies are permitted.

Length Limit: 14 inches

Bag Limit: 2 fish

Chain pickerel, white and yellow perch, horned pout(bullheads)

Seasons:

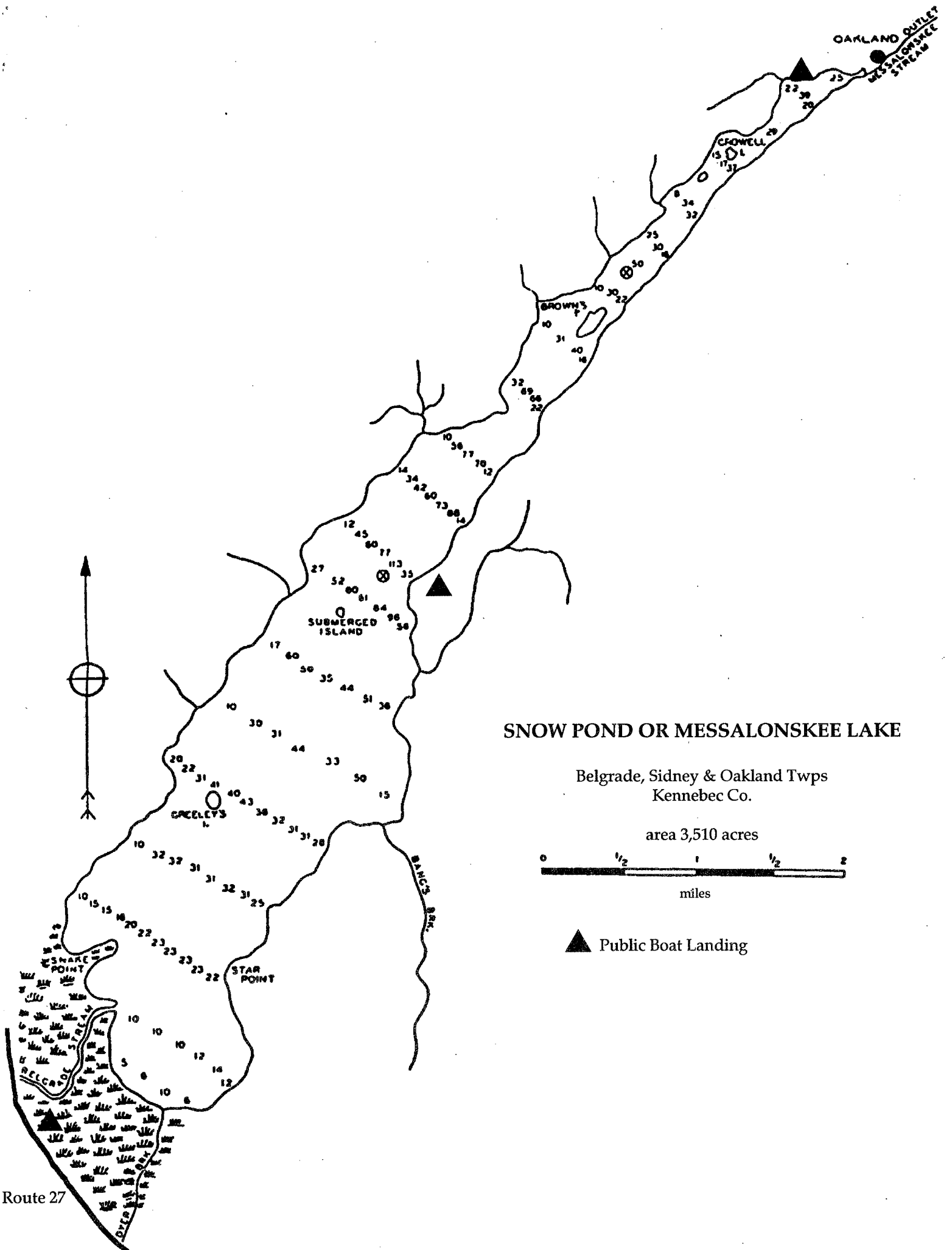
Open water - April 1 to September 30  
Ice Fishing - January 1 to March 31

Terminal Tackle: General Law, ie bait, lures, and flies are permitted.

Length Limit: none

Bag Limit: chain pickerel = 10 fish, no bag limit on perch and horned pout

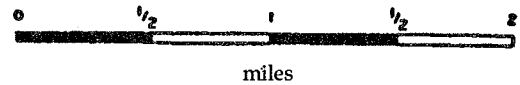
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# SNOW POND OR MESSALONSKEE LAKE

Belgrade, Sidney & Oakland Twps  
Kennebec Co.

area 3,510 acres



▲ Public Boat Landing

NORTH POND  
SMITHFIELD, ROME, AND MERCER

The major sport fisheries in North Pond are for black bass (smallmouth and largemouth), white perch, chain pickerel, and Northern pike. Brown trout and landlocked salmon, migrants from adjacent waters, are sometimes caught, as well. Winter and summer fishing for white perch can be quite fast. The pond's black bass population supports an excellent summer fishery for both of those species.

The illegal establishment of Northern pike in North Pond has created an popular winter fishery. The prospect of taking a large pike has attracted anglers from all over the central Maine area. The effect of Northerns on the pond's established fisheries is difficult to predict, however, it is reasonable to expect that the introduction of this large and voracious predator will not be entirely without cost. Anglers are reminded that it is illegal to stock any water in the state of Maine without a permit from the Commissioner of the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife.

REGULATION SUMMARY\*

Black Bass

Seasons:

- Open water - April 1 to September 30
- Extended Open Water - October 1 to November 30 (open to fishing for all fish except trout, salmon, togue, and bass).
- Ice Fishing - Ice formation to March 31

Terminal Tackle: Artificial lures only (ALO) from April 1 to June 20. General Law, ie bait, lures, and flies are permitted from June 21 to September 30.

Length Limit: 12 inches

Bag Limit: 1 fish from January 1 to June 20, 3 fish from June 21 to September 30 only 1 of which may exceed 14 inches.

Northern Pike

Seasons:

- Open water - April 1 to September 30
- Extended Open Water - October 1 to November 30 (open to fishing for all fish except trout, salmon, togue, and bass).
- Ice Fishing - Ice formation to March 31

Terminal Tackle: General Law, ie bait, lures, and flies are permitted.

Length Limit: 24 inches

Bag Limit: 1 fish

Chain pickerel, white and yellow perch, horned pout (bullheads)

Seasons:

- Open water - April 1 to September 30
- Extended Open Water - October 1 to November 30 (open to fishing for all fish except trout, salmon, togue, and bass).
- Ice Fishing - Ice formation to March 31

Terminal Tackle: General Law, ie bait, lures, and flies are permitted.

Length Limit: none

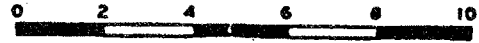
Bag Limit: chain pickerel = 10 fish, no bag limit on perch and horned pout

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Shore Drive

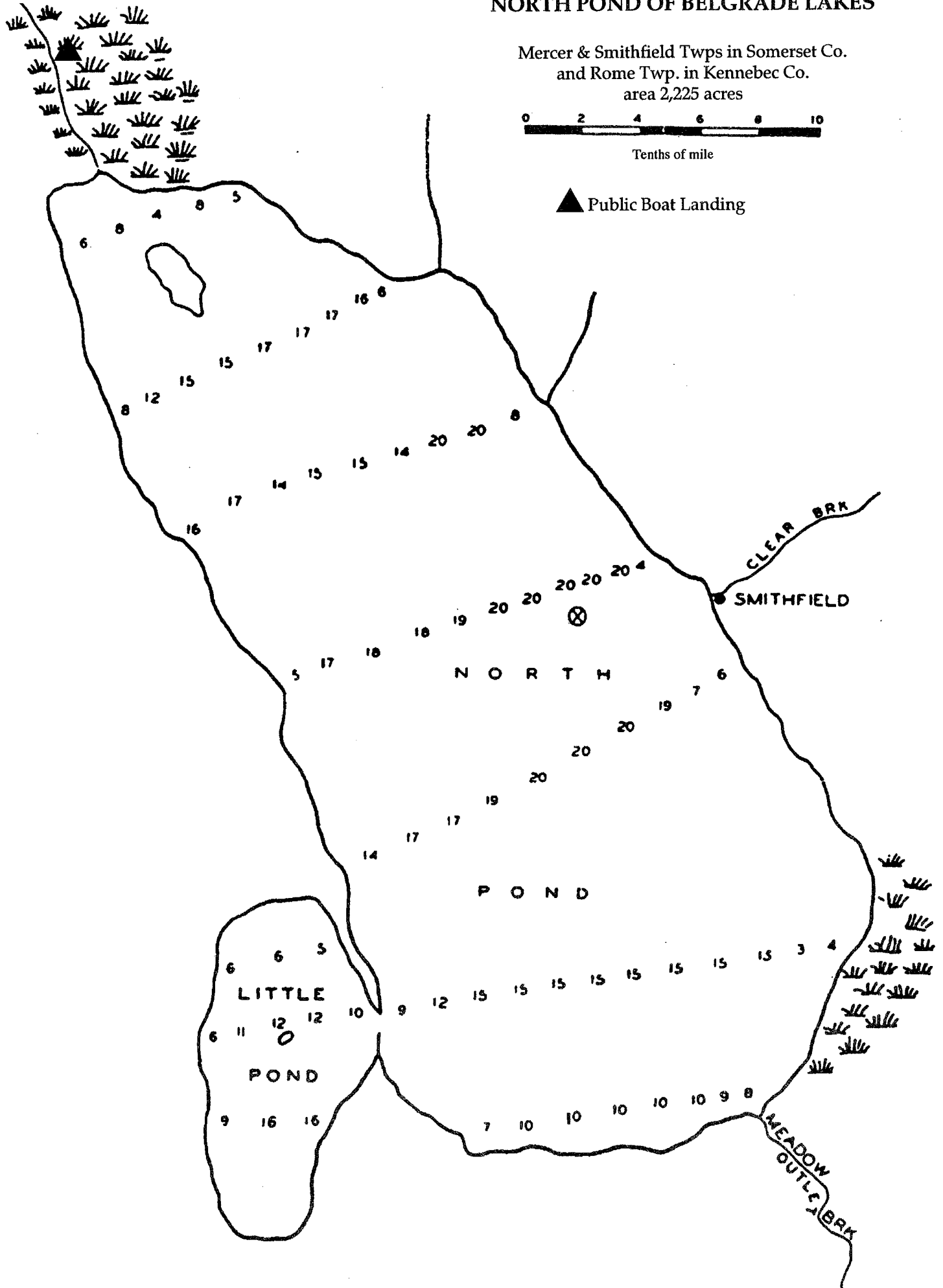
# NORTH POND OF BELGRADE LAKES

Mercer & Smithfield Twps in Somerset Co.  
and Rome Twp. in Kennebec Co.  
area 2,225 acres



Tenths of mile

▲ Public Boat Landing



CLEAR BROOK

SMITHFIELD

NORTH

POND

LITTLE

POND

MEADOW  
OUTLET  
BROOK

SALMON LAKE AND MCGRATH POND  
BELGRADE AND OAKLAND

The primary sport fisheries in these two waters are for black bass (smallmouth and largemouth), white and yellow perch, chain pickerel, and brown trout. Black crappies (calico bass) were illegally introduced into Salmon and McGrath and are now well established. Larger specimens of this species feed quite heavily on small fish, consequently, crappies may pose a serious threat to the smelt population of Salmon Lake. Anglers are reminded that it is illegal to stock any water in the state of Maine without a permit from the Commissioner of the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife.

The two lake's brown trout fisheries are based on combined annual stockings of 1,750 fall yearlings. Recent sampling by Department of Fish and Wildlife fisheries biologists revealed a healthy brown trout population which exhibited good growth and survival.

Salmon Lake is unique among the Belgrades in supporting a major commercial fishery for smelts. This fishery is a matter of some controversy among smelt dealers, sport fishermen, and landowners.

REGULATION SUMMARY\*

Brown Trout

Seasons:

Open water - April 1 to September 30  
Ice Fishing - January 1 to March 31

Terminal Tackle: General Law, ie bait, lures, and flies are permitted.

Length Limit: 12 inches

Bag Limit: 2 fish

Black Bass

Seasons:

Open water - April 1 to September 30  
Ice Fishing - January 1 to March 31

Terminal Tackle: Artificial lures only (ALO) from April 1 to June 20. General Law, ie bait, lures, and flies are permitted from June 21 to September 30.

Length Limit: 12 inches

Bag Limit: 1 fish from January 1 to June 20, 3 fish from June 21 to September 30 only 1 of which may exceed 14 inches.

Chain pickerel, white and yellow perch, horned pout(bullheads)

Seasons:

Open water - April 1 to September 30  
Ice Fishing - January 1 to March 31

Terminal Tackle: General Law, ie bait, lures, and flies are permitted.

Length Limit: none

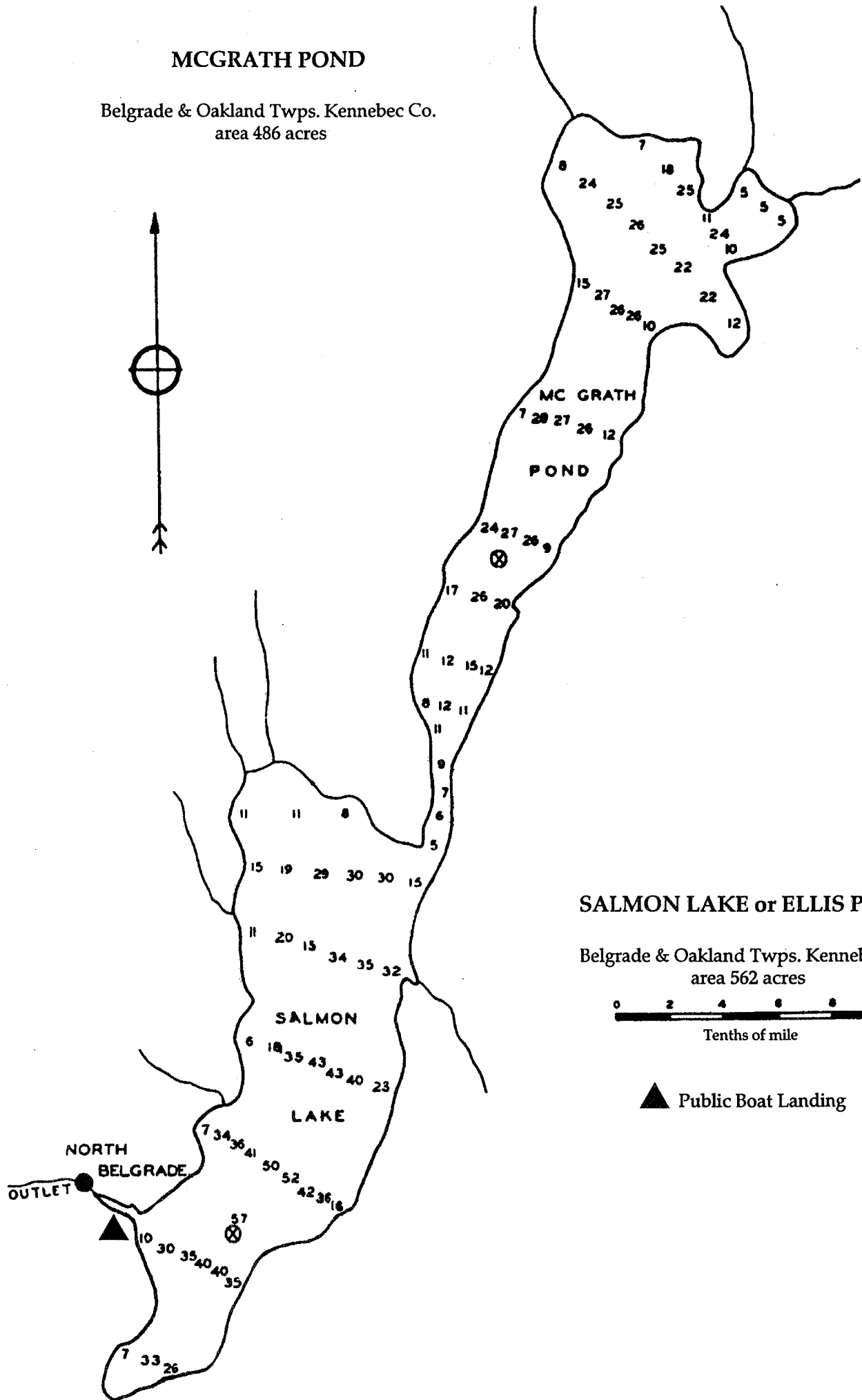
Bag Limit: chain pickerel = 10 fish, no bag limit on perch and horned pout

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# MCGRATH POND

Belgrade & Oakland Twps. Kennebec Co.  
area 486 acres



# SALMON LAKE or ELLIS POND

Belgrade & Oakland Twps. Kennebec Co.  
area 562 acres



Tenths of mile

▲ Public Boat Landing



