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BASSETT LAKE/TAILINGS CREEK

History - Bassett Lake was constructed in 1942 for copper mining in McGill. It served as a final settling pond for the sediment from mill tailings over the years and is presently owned by Kennecott Copper Corporation. Bassett's primary source of water is from Tailings Creek. Water management in recent years has changed, resulting in lower than normal water levels in both the creek and the reservoir.

Pertinent Information - Bassett Lake covers 77 surface acres, at capacity, with an average depth of 5 feet. It represents one of only two waters in Nevada that has a fishable northern pike population and also one of two waters in the county with a largemouth bass fishery. It also contains a large population of nuisance carp. Catch rates are unavailable. An electrofishing survey in 1995 resulted in five pike with an average size of 11.8 inches and two largemouth with an average size of 10.4 inches.

Fishing is best in the early spring following ice off to early summer for both the bass and the pike. Fishing from shore can be difficult, so a boat or float tube/pontoon boat is recommended. During the "Dog Days" of summer, biting insects and a thick mat of aquatic vegetation render the lake nearly unbearable and unfishable. Be sure to use steel leaders for the pike in front of red and white Daredevils, Rapalas, spoons and spinners (the flashier the better). Typical bass tackle works for the largemouth, however, weedless and/or surface lures are suggested. For a change of pace, try fly-fishing the sloughs above the lake for cruising carp. Woolly bugger, leech, and streamer patterns work best. Tailings Creek produced trophy sized trout in the past, but recent flows have halted all stocking activities. Camping - Camping is not allowed and no toilets are available. A primitive boat ramp is available on the east shore. Roads can be very sloppy when wet.

Stocking - The largemouth bass and northern pike are self-sustaining and require no stocking. No stocking is planned for Tailings Creek.

Regulations - Open year around, any hour of the day or night. The limit is 10 largemouth bass and 5 trout daily (Tailings Creek) and in possession. There is no limit on northern pike (unlimited possession). Due to a change in regulations in 2006, northern pike are now considered a prohibited species and anglers wishing to keep pike to eat are required to kill them upon capture.

Biologist Forecast for 2009- Fishing should be poor due to an overpopulation of carp, although large pike are occasionally captured. A 44-inch fish was taken in 1999, although the majority of pike captured are stunted (small & thin). Expect a few largemouth bass between 10 and 12 inches in length. Carp fishing should be excellent.

Boating Regulations - Bassett Lake - A vessel must be operated at a speed that leaves a flat wake, but in no case may a vessel be operated at a speed in excess of 5 nautical miles per hour.



No warranty is made by the Nevada Department of Wildlife as to the accuracy, reliability, or completeness of these data for individual use or aggregate use with other data.

Access - Bassett Lake is located 17 miles north of Ely and 5 miles northwest of McGill off Highway 93 via a dirt road.