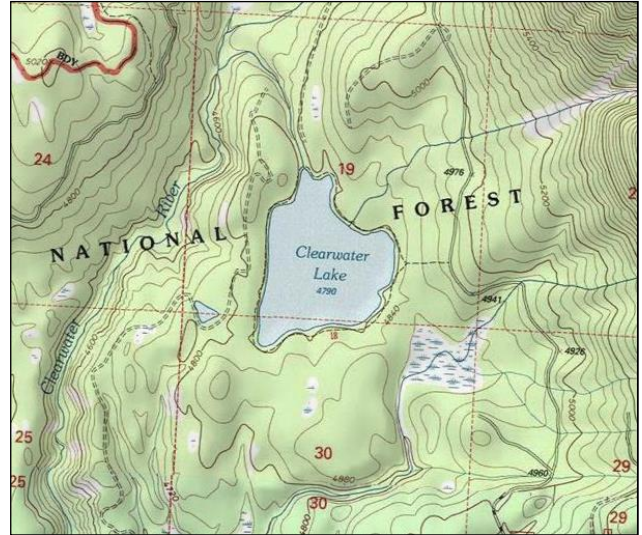


Clearwater Lake



Description: Clearwater Lake is a large (103 acres), mid-elevation (4,786 ft) mountain lake located at the head end of the Clearwater Valley near the Clearwater-Swan drainage divide ~14 miles north of Seeley Lake. Clearwater Lake is known both for its outstanding scenery and trout fishery.

Location: T19N, R15W, Section 19; Latitude N47.3855°, Longitude W113.5589°

Nearest Town: Seeley Lake, MT. Surrounding land ownership: Lolo National Forest (Seeley Lake Ranger District).

Access: Clearwater Lake is accessed from a well-marked trailhead (USFS Trail 18T) off of the Clearwater Loop road. To reach the lake, turn east off of U.S. Highway 83 either 0.5 or 1.3 miles north of Rainy Lake onto USFS Road #4370/4353. The trailhead is located ~ 7 miles from either end of the loop road's junction with Hwy 83. The lake lies ~ 0.5 miles straight west of the trailhead on a well used foot trail that is closed to motorized use.

Campsites and Use: There are two primary camping areas adjacent to Clearwater Lake. The primary site lies where USFS Trail 18T intersects the lake. The second site lies ~0.25 miles to the northwest along the lake shoreline along the trail which encircles the lake. Clearwater Lake receives consistent use during open water months from May-October and inconsistent use by ice-fisherman during winter.

Angling Opportunity: Clearwater Lake has historically been considered one of the finest westslope cutthroat trout fisheries in Montana. Fishery quality has subsided somewhat in the last 15 years since brook trout were illegally introduced. However, it still provides a quality fishery with reasonable shoreline access around most of the lake perimeter. Motorized watercraft are prohibited on the lake, with the exception of those powered by electric motors.

Stocking History: Clearwater Lake has been stocked regularly with fingerling westslope cutthroat trout for more than two decades. There is evidence of some natural reproduction by cutthroat trout. However, brook trout spawn successfully each year and high densities have compromised the lake's trophy fishery.

Angling Pressure: Clearwater lake is a popular fishery that receives high angling pressure relative to other mid-elevation lakes in western Montana. Estimated angling pressure from Montana state-wide mail surveys indicate that the lake has supported > 2,000 angler-days per year since 2009.

Other Nearby Lakes: Lakes in the vicinity of Clearwater Lake include Summit Lake (3 miles to west), Rainy Lake (3.5 miles southwest), Colt Lake (4.5 miles west), Pierce Lake (3 miles west), and Holland Lake (4 miles north). Please see Lolo National Forest (Seeley Ranger District) map for routes.



Montana Fish,
Wildlife & Parks

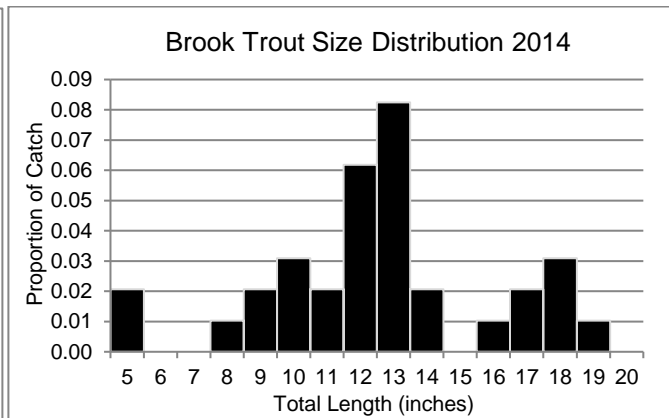
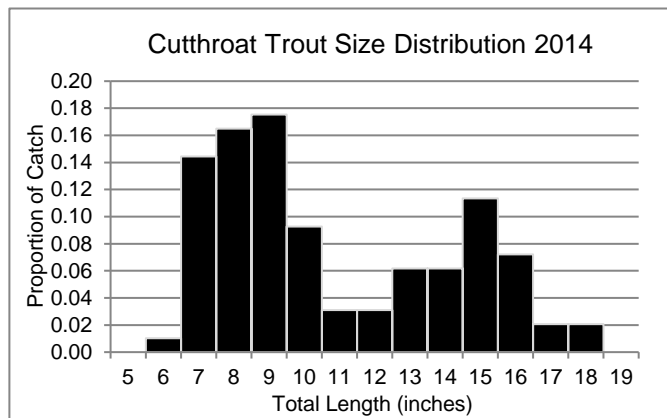
Clearwater Lake: Biological & Physical Information

Date Sampled: 9/9/2014

Fish Species Present: Westslope Cutthroat Trout, E. Brook Trout
Size Range Captured WCT: 6.7-18.0 in (170-456 mm), EBT: 5.3 – 18.8 in (135-478 mm)
Trout Condition (Wr): WCT: 102 (high), EBT: 122 (very high)
Natural Recruitment: WCT - low, EBT - high
Trout Diet Composition: No data
Management Objectives: Quality/Trophy Fishery
Currently Stocked: Yes
Amphibians Observed: No survey

Sampling Methods: Floating & Sinking Gill Nets
Gill Net Catch Rate: 1.2 trout/net/hr (high)
Juvenile Abundance: WCT – low, EBT - high
Inlet/Outlet Spawning Habitat: Abundant in both

Species: Westslope cutthroat trout
Recommended Frequency: Biannual



Elevation: 4,786 ft
Secchi Depth: No Data
Surface Area: 103 acres
PH: 8.95
Volume: 2,087 acre-ft
Conductivity: 231 uS
Max Depth: 42 ft
TDS: No Data
Aspect: Southwest

