A Fishing Guide to Lake Superior and North Shore Trout Streams

Stream Information

Cook County

Stream Name	Miles Above Boundary	Miles Below Boundary	Trout Species	Shoreline Status
Assinika Creek	4.1	0.0	B	G
Bally Creek	5.5	0.0	B	G
Barker Creek	6.5	0.0	B	G
Beaver Dam Creek	5.0	0.0	B	P,G
Blind Temperance Creek	3.0	0.0	B	G
Bluff Creek	2.5	0.0	B	G
Brule River	15.7	1.3	B,R	P,G
Brule River, Little	0.0	3.2	R	P,G
Burnt Creek	1.9	0.0	B	G
Caribou Creek	2.0	0.0	B	P,G
Carlson Creek	5.1	1.2	R	P,G
Cascade River	13.0	0.1	B,Bn,R,C	P,G
Cedar Creek	5.0	0.0	B	G
Cliff Creek	0.0	4.0	B,R	P,G
Colville Creek, East	0.0	2.8	B,R	P,G
*Cross River	23.1	0.3	B,R	P,G
Cut Face Creek	0.0	0.4	R	P,G
Deer Yard Creek	6.6	0.1	R,B	P,G
Devil Track River	7.8	1.3	B,R	P,G
Devil Track River, Little	6.2	0.0	B	P,G
Durfee Creek	4.7	0.05	R,B	P,G
Elbow Creek	3.4	0.0	B	P,G
Farquhar Creek	0.0	2.6	R	P,G
Fiddle Creek	4.3	0.0	B	G
Flute Reed River	8.6	0.6	B,R	P,G
Fox Farm Creek	1.3	0.0	B	P,G
Fry Creek	1.1	0.0	B	G
Gauthier Creek	3.5	0.1	R,B	P,G
Greenwood River	9.0	0.0	B	P,G
Heartbreak Creek	6.5	0.0	B	P,G
Honeymoon Creek	2.7	0.0	B	P,G
Indian Camp Creek	1.1	1.0	R	G
Irish Creek	6.1	0.0	B	P,G
Jackson Creek	1.1	0.0	B	P,G
Jonvick Creek	2.7	0.05	R	P,G
Junco Creek	16.8	0.0	B	P,G
Kadunce Creek	7.3	0.3	B,R	G
Kimball Creek	6.8	1.6	B,R	P,G
Koski Creek	4.0	0.0	B	P,G
Lullaby Creek	2.0	0.0	B	P,G
Mark Creek	3.2	0.0	B	P,G
Mississippi Creek	10.7	0.0	B	P,G
Mississippi Creek, Little	4.1	0.0	B	G
Mistletoe Creek	8.5	0.0	B	P,G
Monker Creek	1.1	0.0	B	P,G
Mud Creek	3.3	0.0	B	G
Murmer Creek	4.0	0.0	B	P,G
Myhr Creek	0.0	0.1	R	P
Nestor Creek	4.8	0.0	B	G
Onion Creek	7.5	0.2	R,B	P,G
Pancake Creek	3.2	0.0	B	G
Pecore Creek	1.6	0.0	B	P,G
Pike Lake Creek	0.8	0.0	B	P,G
Pine Mountain Creek	2.4	0.0	B	P,G
Plouff Creek	11.2	0.0	B	P,G
Poplar River	19.2	0.1	B,R	P,G
Portage Brook	10.4	0.0	B	G
Rollins Creek	0.0	0.05	R	P,G
Rosebush Creek	2.1	0.03	B,R	P,G
Sawbill Creek	1.9	0.0	B	G
Sixmile Creek	6.0	0.0	B	P,G
Stickle Creek	2.0	0.0	B	P,G
Stone Creek	4.2	0.1	B,R	P,G
Stony Creek, Little	3.3	0.0	B	G
Stumble Creek	2.8	0.0	R	P,G
Sundling Creek	6.1	0.0	B	P,G
Swamp River	3.6	0.0	B	P,G
Swanson Creek	2.0	0.0	B	G
Tait River	1.7	0.0	B	P,G
Timber Creek	2.9	0.0	B	G
Temperance River	21.3	0.05	B,Bn,R	P,G
Thompson Creek	2.3	0.0	B	P,G
Torgenson Creek	1.9	0.00	B	G
*Two Island River	12.9	0.1	B,R	P,G
Woods Creek	2.0	0.0	B,R	P,G

*Also in Lake County

Bold indicates streams with fishing sanctuary: refer to current fishing regulations for more details.

Lake County

Stream Name	Miles Above Boundary	Miles Below Boundary	Trout Species	Shoreline Status
Baptism River	8.0	1.0	B,Bn,R,C	P,G
Baptism River, E. Branch	14.0	0.0	B,Bn	P,G
Baptism River, W. Branch	14.5	0.0	B,Bn	P,G
Beaver River	24.1	0.2	B,Bn,R	P,G
Beaver River, E. Branch	23.0	0.0	B	P,G
Beaver River, W. Branch	5.0	0.0	B	P,G
Blesner Creek	2.6	0.0	B	P,G
*Caribou River	18.3	0.2	B,R	P,G
Cedar Creek	2.0	0.0	B	P,G
Crown Creek	15.8	0.0	B	P,G
Dragon Creek	0.0	5.0	R	P
Egge Creek	2.1	0.0	B	P,G
Hefflefinger Creek	2.7	0.0	B	P,G
Hockamin Creek	8.0	0.0	B	P,G
Houghtaling Creek	7.8	0.0	B	P,G
Leppanen Creek	2.8	0.0	B	P,G
Lindstrom Creek	3.7	0.0	B	P,G
Manitou River	25.4	0.2	B,R	P,G
Manitou River, Little	0.0	1.8	R	P
Manitou River, S. Branch	9.0	0.0	B	P,G
Marais River, Little	3.9	0.1	R,B	P
Martin Creek	1.4	0.0	B	P,G
Mile Post Forty-Three Creek	7.0	0.0	B	PG
Moose Creek	4.0	0.0	B	P,G
Nicado Creek	3.2	0.0	B	P,G
Nine Mile Creek	6.5	0.0	B	P,G
Oliver Creek	3.3	0.0	B	P,G
Palisade Creek	3.8	1.2	R,B	P,G
Rock Cut Creek	3.5	0.0	B	P,G
Sawmill Creek	7.0	0.0	B	P,G
Schoolhouse Creek	1.5	0.0	B	P,G
Thirty-Nine Creek, Big	10.0	0.0	B	P,G
Thirty-Nine Creek, Little	5.4	0.0	B	P,G
Tikkanen Creek	2.5	0.0	B	P,G
Tower Creek	2.0	0.0	B	P,G
Wanless Creek	2.8	0.0	B	P,G

*Also in Cook County

Trout Species

- B - Brook trout
- Bn - Brown trout
- R - Rainbow trout
- C - Chinook salmon

Shoreline Status

- P - Private lands
- G - State, federal, and county lands
- SE - Private lands with landowners having granted angling easements

Boat Launch Sites

A. Horseshoe Bay
(DNR) – Located one and one-quarter miles east of Hovland. No gas. Parking. Small boats only.

B. Grand Marais
(DNR/City) – Heading north on State Highway 61 take a right at the stop lights in Grand Marais. Three blocks to launch site adjacent to Coast Guard Station. No gas. Parking.

C. Grand Marais Recreation Area
Follow the road marked "Recreation Area" on the west side of the harbor. Two launch sites with parking. Gas available at campground marina. 218-387-1712.

D. Tofte Municipal Launch
In the town of Tofte. No gas. Parking. Picnic area. Breakwater for small boats.

E. Schroeder Town Launch
Turn off State Highway 61 east of Cross River on road marked "Father Baraga's Cross", west side of Temperance River State Park. The launch is just left of the dead end. No gas. Small boats only. Parking. Picnic area.

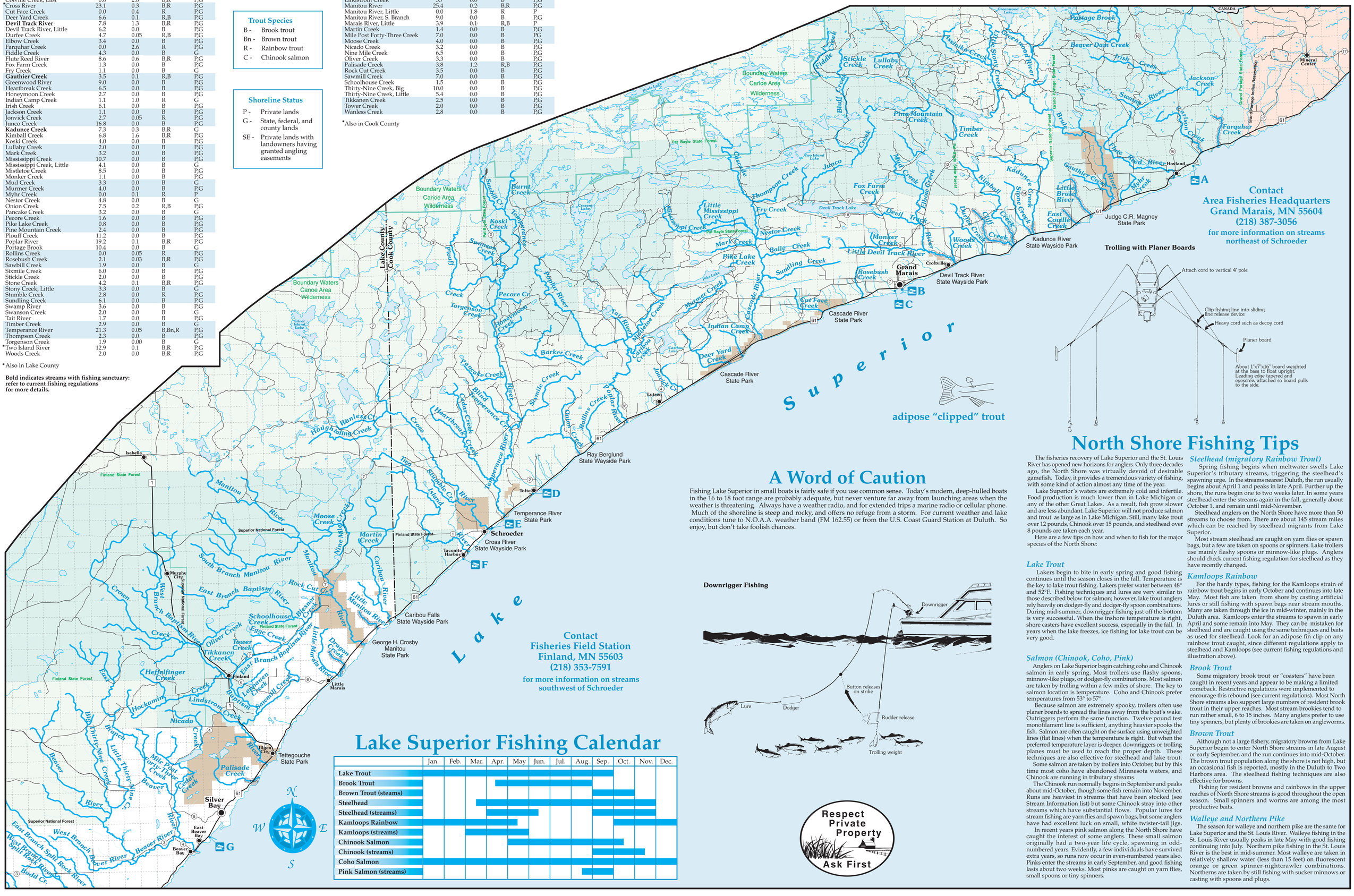
F. Taconite Harbor
(DNR) – Turn at public access sign off State Highway 61 west of Taconite Harbor. Parking. Picnic. No gas. Safe Harbor mooring only.

G. Silver Bay Launch
(DNR/City) – Turn right at public access sign off State Highway 61 just west of Silver Bay. Located on west side of commercial harbor. Parking. Picnic area. Fuel available. Marina facilities. 218-226-3121.

LEGEND

- Seasonal Fishing
- Continuous Fishing except for brook trout
- Boat Access

Scale in Miles: 0 1 2 3 4 5
Scale in Kilometers: 0 1 2 3 4 5



Contact
Area Fisheries Headquarters
Grand Marais, MN 55604
(218) 387-3056
for more information on streams northeast of Schroeder

Contact
Fisheries Field Station
Finland, MN 55603
(218) 353-7591
for more information on streams southwest of Schroeder

Trolling with Planer Boards

adipose "clipped" trout

A Word of Caution

Fishing Lake Superior in small boats is fairly safe if you use common sense. Today's modern, deep-hulled boats in the 16 to 18 foot range are probably adequate, but never venture far away from launching areas when the weather is threatening. Always have a weather radio, and for extended trips a marine radio or cellular phone. Much of the shoreline is steep and rocky, and offers no refuge from a storm. For current weather and lake conditions tune to N.O.A.A. weather band (FM 162.55) or from the U.S. Coast Guard Station at Duluth. So enjoy, but don't take foolish chances.

Downrigger Fishing

Lake Superior Fishing Calendar

North Shore Fishing Tips

The fisheries recovery of Lake Superior and the St. Louis River has opened new horizons for anglers. Only three decades ago, the North Shore was virtually devoid of desirable gamefish. Today, it provides a tremendous variety of fishing, with some kind of action almost any time of the year.

Lake Superior's waters are extremely cold and infertile. Food production is much lower than in Lake Michigan or any of the other Great Lakes. As a result, fish grow slower and are less abundant. Lake Superior will not produce salmon and trout as large as in Lake Michigan. Still, many lake trout over 12 pounds, Chinook over 15 pounds, and steelhead over 8 pounds are taken each year.

Here are a few tips on how and when to fish for the major species of the North Shore:

Lake Trout

Lakers begin to bite in early spring and good fishing continues until the season closes in the fall. Temperature is the key to lake trout fishing. Lakers prefer water between 48° and 52°F. Fishing techniques and lures are very similar to those described below for salmon; however, lake trout anglers rely heavily on dodger-fly and dodger-fly spoon combinations. During mid-summer, downrigger fishing just off the bottom is very successful. When the inshore temperature is right, shore casters have excellent success, especially in the fall. In years when the lake freezes, ice fishing for lake trout can be very good.

Salmon (Chinook, Coho, Pink)

Anglers on Lake Superior begin catching coho and Chinook salmon in early spring. Most trollers use flashy spoons, minnow-like plugs, or dodger-fly combinations. Most salmon are taken by trolling within a few miles of shore. The key to salmon location is temperature. Coho and Chinook prefer temperatures from 53° to 57°.

Because salmon are extremely spooky, trollers often use planer boards to spread the lines away from the boat's wake. Outriggers perform the same function. Twelve pound test monofilament line is sufficient, anything heavier spooks the fish. Salmon are often caught on the surface using unweighted lines (flat lines) when the temperature is right. But when the preferred temperature layer is deeper, downriggers or trolling planes must be used to reach the proper depth. These techniques are also effective for steelhead and lake trout.

Some salmon are taken by trollers into October, but by this time most coho have abandoned Minnesota waters, and Chinook are running in tributary streams.

The Chinook run normally begins in September and peaks about mid-October, though some fish remain into November. Runs are heaviest in streams that have been stocked (see Stream Information list) but some Chinook stray into other streams which have substantial flows. Popular lures for stream fishing are yarn flies and spawn bags, but some anglers have had excellent luck on small, white twister-tail jigs.

In recent years pink salmon along the North Shore have caught the interest of some anglers. These small salmon originally had a two-year life cycle, spawning in odd-numbered years. Evidently, a few individuals have survived extra years, so runs now occur in even-numbered years also. Pinks enter the streams in early September, and good fishing lasts about two weeks. Most pinks are caught on yarn flies, small spoons or tiny spinners.

Steelhead (migratory Rainbow Trout)

Spring fishing begins when meltwater swells Lake Superior's tributary streams, triggering the steelhead's spawning urge. In the streams nearest Duluth, the run usually begins about April 1 and peaks in late April. Further up the shore, the runs begin one to two weeks later. In some years steelhead enter the streams again in the fall, generally about October 1, and remain until mid-November.

Steelhead anglers on the North Shore have more than 50 streams to choose from. There are about 145 stream miles which can be reached by steelhead migrants from Lake Superior.

Most stream steelhead are caught on yarn flies or spawn bags, but a few are taken on spoons or spinners. Lake trollers use mainly flashy spoons or minnow-like plugs. Anglers should check current fishing regulation for steelhead as they have recently changed.

Kamloops Rainbow

For the hardy types, fishing for the Kamloops strain of rainbow trout begins in early October and continues into late May. Most fish are taken from shore by casting artificial lures or still fishing with spawn bags near stream mouths. Many are taken through the ice in mid-winter, mainly in the Duluth area. Kamloops enter the streams to spawn in early April and some remain into May. They can be mistaken for steelhead and are caught using the same techniques and baits as used for steelhead. Look for an adipose fin clip on any rainbow trout caught, since different regulations apply to steelhead and Kamloops (see current fishing regulations and illustration above).

Brook Trout

Some migratory brook trout or "coasters" have been caught in recent years and appear to be making a limited comeback. Restrictive regulations were implemented to encourage this rebound (see current regulations). Most North Shore streams also support large numbers of resident brook trout in their upper reaches. Most stream brookies tend to run rather small, 6 to 15 inches. Many anglers prefer to use tiny spinners, but plenty of brookies are taken on angleworms.

Brown Trout

Although not a large fishery, migratory browns from Lake Superior begin to enter North Shore streams in late August or early September, and the run continues into mid-October. The brown trout population along the shore is not high, but an occasional fish is reported, mostly in the Duluth to Two Harbors area. The steelhead fishing techniques are also effective for browns.

Fishing for resident browns and rainbows in the upper reaches of North Shore streams is good throughout the open season. Small spinners and worms are among the most productive baits.

Walleye and Northern Pike

The season for walleye and northern pike are the same for Lake Superior and the St. Louis River. Walleye fishing in the St. Louis River usually peaks in late May with good fishing continuing into July. Northern pike fishing in the St. Louis River is the best in mid-summer. Most walleye are taken in relatively shallow water (less than 15 feet) on fluorescent orange or green spinner-nightcrawler combinations. Northerns are taken by still fishing with sucker minnows or casting with spoons and plugs.