

Lake Conservation Notes

Northeast Glacial Lakes Watershed Project
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Enemy Swim Lake

Enemy Swim Lake was named “Toka nu-we-ya-pi or Enemy, where they swam” by the Dakota Sioux Indians who lived along the lakes shoreline. The most commonly told version of how the lake acquired its name (according to a local historian there are thirteen versions of the story) relates how a group of Dakota Sioux encamped along the lakes shore were attacked by a party of Chippewa warriors. A battle ensued and the Sioux forced the retreating Chippewa into the lake. The Chippewa were forced to swim for their lives as the victorious Sioux shouted, “Enemy Swim, Enemy Swim” from the shoreline.

In the late 1800’s, Enemy Swim Lake was known as Lake Parker, probably named after the surveyor who originally platted this area.

The Wabe’ (Waubay) Scout Camp, an important outpost of the Fort Wadsworth (Sisseton) Military Reservation, was established at Enemy Swim Lake in the mid-1860s. The camp was located where Sandy Beach Resort stands today.

Enemy Swim Lake is one of South Dakota’s cleanest water bodies, and one of the states few mesotrophic lakes. The word trophic means nutrition or growth. Lakes are placed into one of four trophic categories based on total in-lake phosphorus levels, chlorophyll *a* (a measurement of algae present in the water), and water clarity as measured with a secchi disc. An oligotrophic lake has low nutrient concentrations with low plant and algae growth. A eutrophic lake has high nutrient levels and high plant growth including occasional algae blooms. A mesotrophic lake falls between oligotrophic and eutrophic states. Unfortunately, most South Dakota lakes are hypereutrophic. Hypereutrophic lakes have severe algae blooms annually that inhibit recreation, are dominated by rough fish, and often have winter and occasionally summer fish kills.

Water quality data collected from Enemy Swim Lake over the last decade shows the lake is very sensitive to land use changes in its watershed. Currently, the majority of cropland in the lakes watershed is planted to grass through the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). As this program expires, and CRP acres are planted back to row crops, it is expected the lakes trophic status will change for the worst. Local resource agencies and conservation organizations are working hard to identify critical areas or buffer zones in the watershed that should be protected to maintain Enemy Swim Lake’s excellent water quality.

Facts & Figures

Maximum Depth: 26 ft.
Mean Depth: 16 ft.

**Ordinary High Water Mark
(OHWM): 1854.4 ft. msl**

Highest recorded lake levels:
1918: 1857.1
April 1997: 1856.3

Lowest recorded lake level:
October 1940: 1838.0

**Average elevation
1933-99: 1849.1**

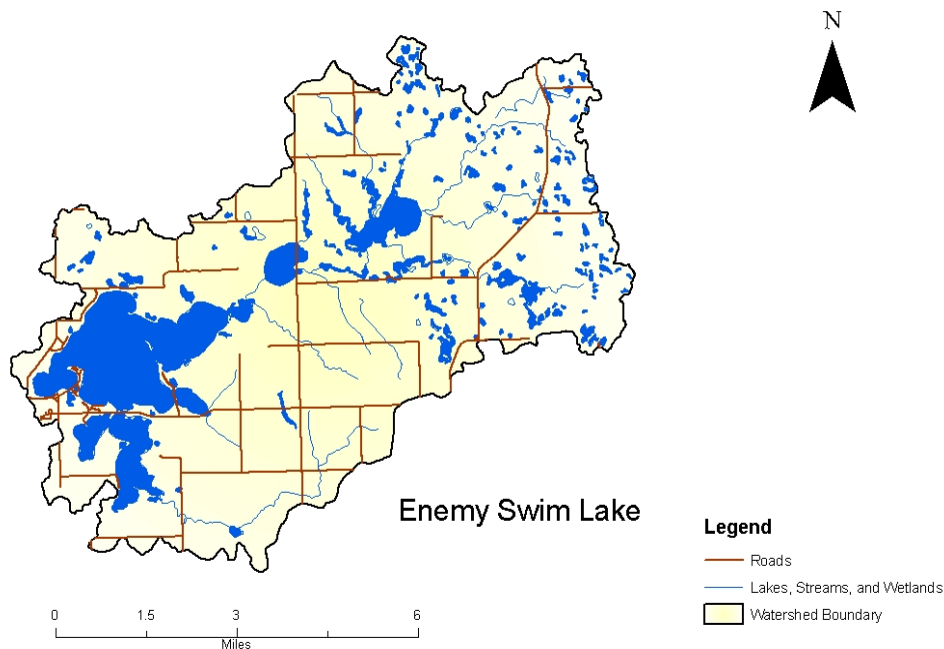
Outlet elevation: 1853.6

**Lake Volume:
33,792 acre/ft.**

Surface Area: 2,146 acres

Shoreline: 11.8 miles

Watershed: 24,774 acres



Species of Fish Found in Enemy Swim Lake

Species

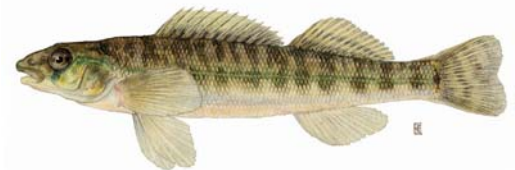
Common Carp
 Spottail Shiner
 Fathead Minnow
 White Sucker
 Channel Catfish
 Black Bullhead
 Northern Pike
 Brook Stickleback
 White Bass
 Rock Bass
 Pumpkinseed
 Orangespotted Sunfish
 Bluegill
 Smallmouth Bass
 Largemouth Bass
 Black Crappie
 Iowa Darter
 Johnny Darter
 Yellow Perch
 Logperch
 Walleye

Enemy Swim Lake Fisheries

Most South Dakota lakes are categorized as simple basins. However, Enemy Swim is described as a complex lake basin with an irregular bottom and highly variable substrates that include rock, boulders, gravel, cobble, sand, and silt. Complex basins provide varied habitat types that support a diverse population of fish.

Seventeen species of native fish are found in Enemy Swim Lake. Three species of fish have been introduced to the lake, smallmouth bass, black crappie, and channel catfish. Channel catfish were stocked in the lake in 1952. A recent proud angler record from Enemy Swim reported to be a flathead catfish was most likely a channel catfish. The common carp is an exotic species native to Eastern Europe that was released into many North American lakes and rivers in the late 1800s. Carp were probably released into Enemy Swim inadvertently with baitfish in the early 1900s.

Enemy Swim Lake has produced many large fish. One of the largest fish ever reported from the lake was a northern pike weighing 33 ½ lbs and measuring 47 ¾ inches in length caught in 1939. The lake currently produces many proud angler panfish and walleye.



Logperch

(*Percina caprodes*)

One of Enemy Swim's non-game fish, the Logperch lacks a swim bladder and cannot remain buoyant, thus they can only dart around the bottom. Found near rocky shorelines where they feed on small invertebrates. (Artwork provided by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation.)