



LAC LA RONGE

Depth Soundings in Feet

SOUNDINGS TAKEN BY FISHERIES BRANCH

PUBLISHED BY

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Depth Sounding Maps of Round and Crooked Lakes, Last Mountain and Amisk Lakes also available on request from the

Tourist Branch, Legislative Annex, Regina, Sask.

PREPARED BY

Surveys Branch, Department of Natural Resources

MAY 1957

Hon. A. G. KUZIAK, Minister

J. W. CHURCHMAN, Deputy Minister

LAC LA RONGE

Lac la Ronge, fourth largest lake in Saskatchewan, lies in the Churchill River Valley, about 180 miles north of Prince Albert.

Its location across the southern margin of the Precambrian Shield accounts for the existence of some 600 islands in its northern portion. The rocky terrain north of the lake is believed to have a high base metal potential and several mining developments are now located in the area.

The southern margin is characterized by sedimentary formation with infrequent croppings of limestone.

Main inflow is through the Montreal River in the south, the Nipikamew River in the southeast, and Nemeiben Creek in the northwest corner. These inflowing streams bring into the lake minerals needed for the growth of fish food. The lake enters the Montreal River in the northeast corner and drains into the Churchill River System.

Lac la Ronge, covering an area of 500 square miles, is made up of three natural divisions — the open, shallower area to the south; the northern islands water area; and Hunter Bay, the deepest region, connected to the main lake by a narrow neck of water.

The highly irregular shoreline is about 650 miles long. Abundant coniferous stands add to the scenic beauty of this northern lake.

Nineteen species of fish have been found in Lac la Ronge. Lake trout, the most popular game species, grows to a large size and is a major attraction to anglers. Almost on a par with the trout for popularity is the great northern pike. Whitefish is gaining popularity as a game species, as it will take artificial flies during the caddis fly season in late June and early July. The art of fishing for whitefish was practised and jealously guarded by Indians in the early days of Saskatchewan's history.

For 30 years, Lac la Ronge has supported a commercial fishery, but the value of this industry is now greatly exceeded by the tourist business which attracts thousands of anglers to the area annually.

Commercial fishery in Lac la Ronge is carried out in order that the fishery resources may be properly harvested. Species such as whitefish and mullets are of little or no value to the sport fisherman, and in the interests of good management it is considered advisable that the annual increment of these species be harvested. It is also considered good management to put fishery pressure on all fish species in the lake so that a balance may be maintained between the predator and the forage fish.

Average commercial catch from Lac la Ronge is approximately 200,000 pounds annually. Combined anglers' catch of trout, pickerel and northern pike is about 150,000 pounds a year.

Completion of No. 2 Highway to La Ronge in 1946 brought immediate recognition of the big lake's sportfishing potential. Rapid development of sportfishing followed.

Since angling is considered the prime attraction and mainstay of tourist business in the La Ronge area, an effective management program to conserve fish resources has been set up. A biological survey was carried out between 1948 and 1952 to determine how to get the best yield under the most desirable circumstances. It was found that this could be achieved through annual harvesting by both sport and commercial fishermen.

The village of La Ronge, boasting a population of 639, is fast becoming one of the major tourist centres of northern Canada. Sixteen tourist outfitters are located in and around the townsite, ready and able to cater to the needs of the sport fisherman. Cabins, motors, boats, and guide service are available. A fully modern hotel with hot and cold running water, coffee bar and beverage room is also located in the village.

A fish processing plant is operated by the Saskatchewan Fish Marketing Service, where an angler may have his catch quick-frozen for a small fee.

Saskatchewan Government Airways operates a non-scheduled air service and charter trips from Prince Albert and north from La Ronge. Charter service is also provided by Athabasca Airways. A landing strip is located adjacent to the townsite to accommodate wheeled aircraft.

Radio wire service is provided by the Department of Natural Resources Radio Branch.

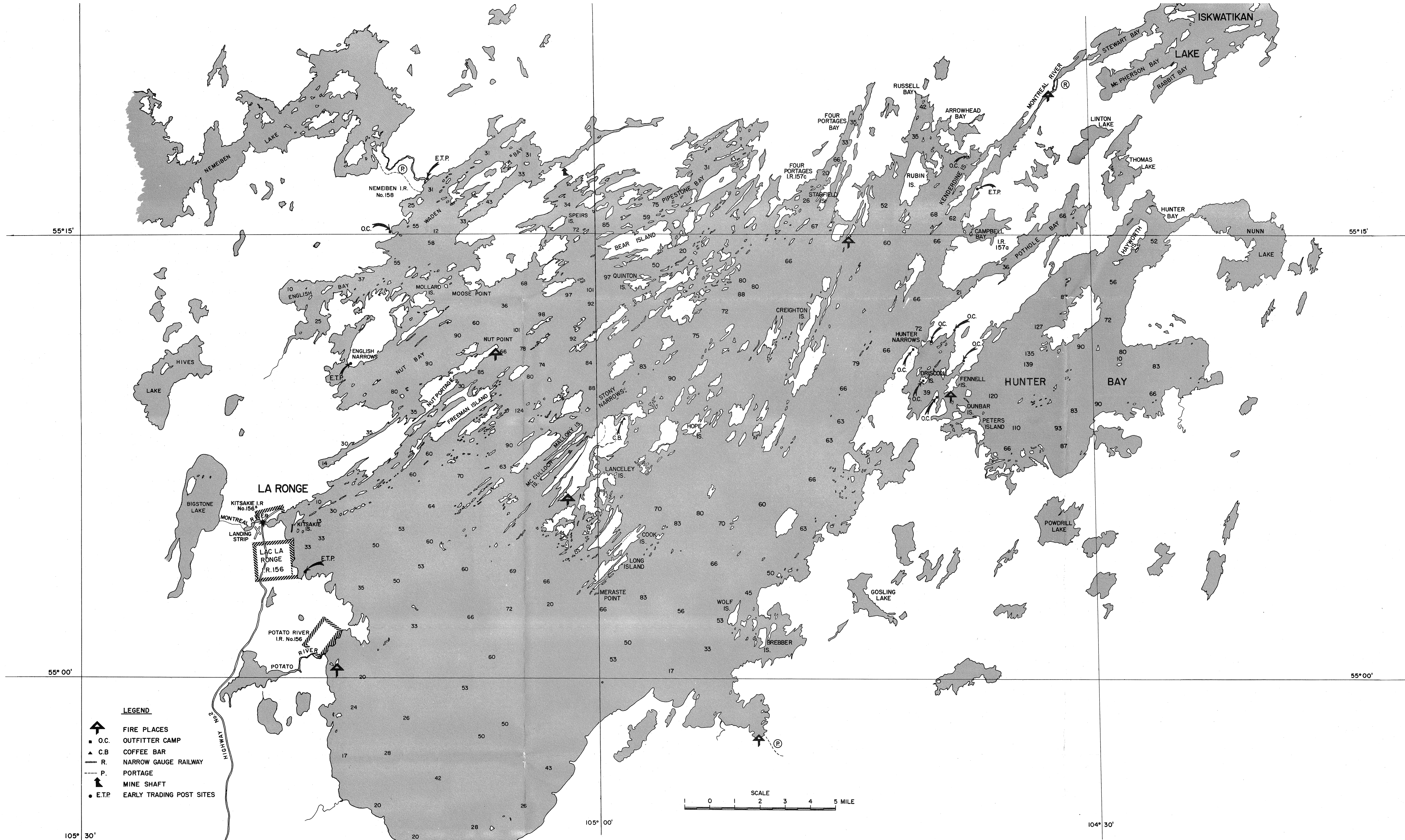
A public campsite is maintained by the Department of Natural Resources for the convenience of the travelling public. Camp kitchens, toilet facilities, electrical outlets for trailers, well water, and tent sites are available.

Other services at La Ronge include stores, cafes, service stations, post office, pool room, nursing station and three churches (Catholic, Anglican and Evangelist).

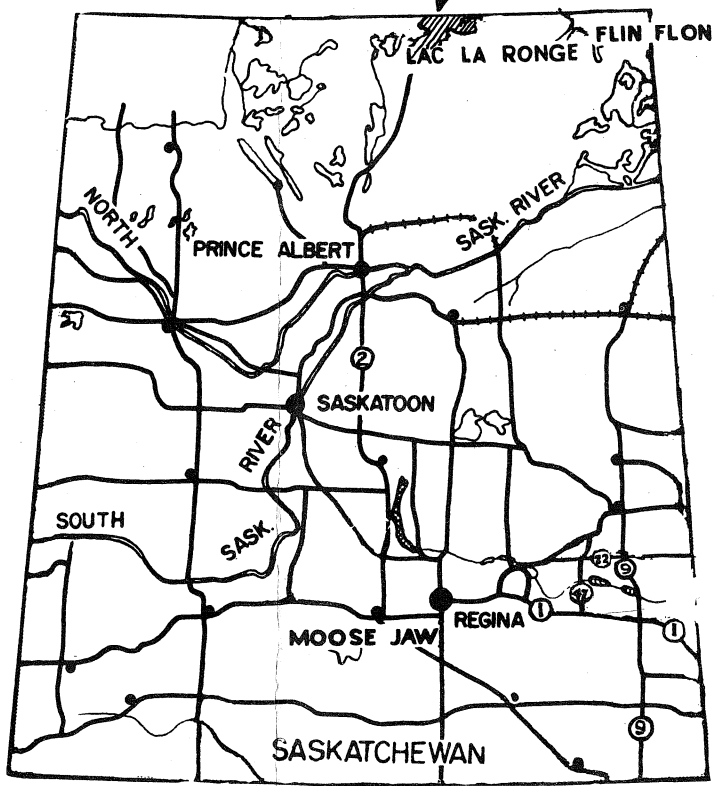
Trips to scenic Nistowiak Falls and up the Churchill River can be arranged through tourist outfitters in the area.

Lac la Ronge has been for many years the focal point for the fur trade from east to west, and north into the Athabasca country. History records violence and bloodshed, as rivalry flared for supremacy in the western fur trade. It was on the shores of Lac la Ronge, at Waden Bay, that Etienne Waden, a Swiss fur trader, met a tragic end by shooting in 1781, following a quarrel with the famous fur trader and adventurer, Peter Pond. The trial was held in Montreal, but no trace of a trial is recorded.

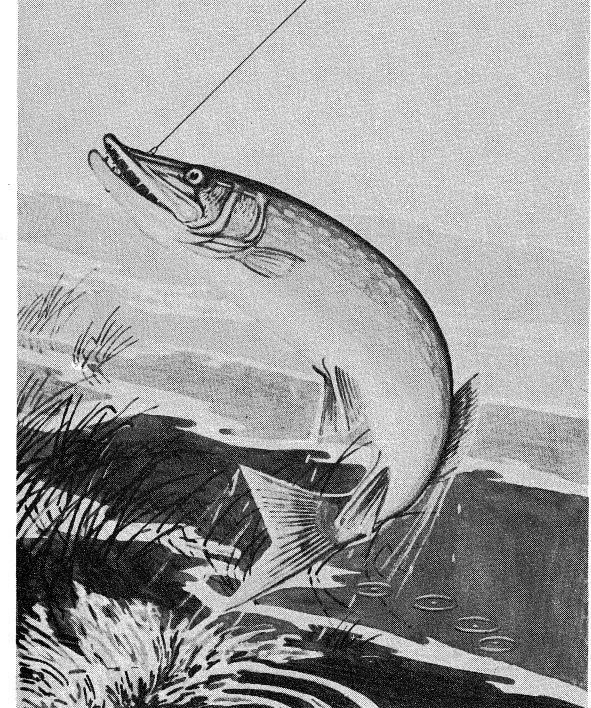
There is no doubt that fish from Lac la Ronge played an important part in the diet of early white traders in the area. It was readily available along the trade routes, dispelling fear of starvation when game was scarce. Three whitefish of ordinary size were considered equivalent to two geese or eight pounds of solid moose meat. Fish was, and still is, a staple food for Indians and their dogs.



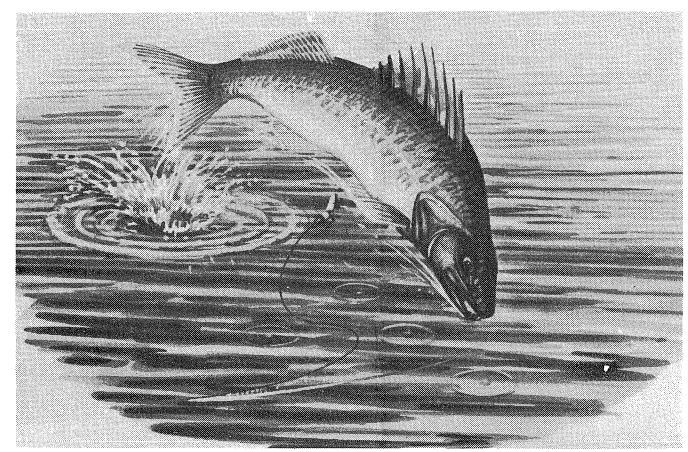
Lac la Ronge



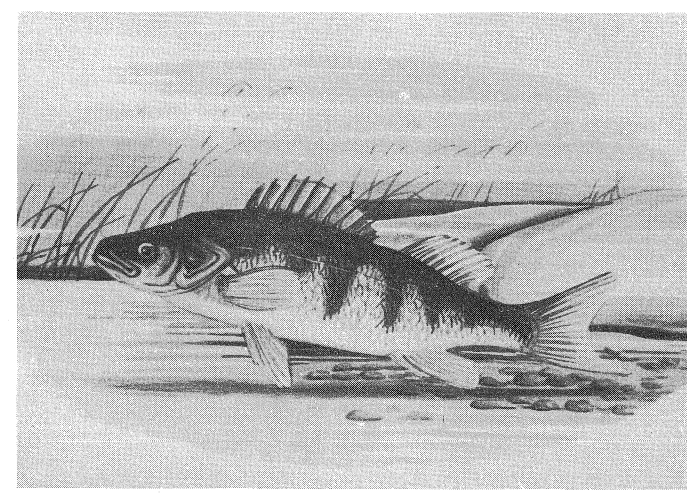
Main Angling Species



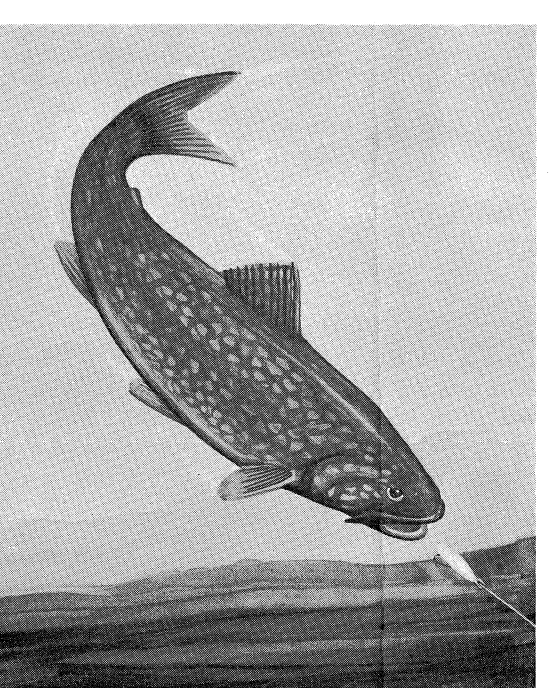
NORTHERN PIKE or JACK FISH—Only the largest water creatures are safe from his well-toothed jaws. A heavy bait or weighted one will reach the eight foot depths he prefers, and this fiendish fighter will bite at almost any artificial or natural bait.



PICKEREL or WALLEYE — average three pounds, but thirteen pounders have been known. Piscivorous in habit, taking tremendous toll of minnows, live baits and a variety of lures attract this highly-prized fish. In casting, heavy lures must be reeled in faster to prevent dragging. Pickerel (also known as pike-perch and walleye) bite readily at artificial baits too, and fight vigorously when hooked.



LAKE TROUT—variable size, feed on tullibee, whitefish and minnows. A light 20 pound test braided nylon line, and lures nickel on one side and copper or gold on the other, with both natural and artificial bait, are most effective. In deep water trolling, 300 feet or more of monel or copper line and lead weight, with same type of lure.



PERCH — average weight under a pound. Nevertheless much sought after as both game and pan fish. Swims in schools in moderate depths and ready to sample any bait amateur or expert has to offer.

DO NOT REMOVE

COMPLETE INFORMATION

on

LAC LA RONGE

and other resorts in Saskatchewan available

from the

TOURIST BRANCH

Department of Travel and Information

Legislative Annex

Regina, Sask.

Telephone LA 2-0047