Ril Lake, File Summary
Ministry of Natural Resources

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Ril Lake Features (from Aquatic Habitat Inventory Database):

Surface Area (ha)	145.9
Perimeter (km)	11.8
Island Shoreline (km)	0.8
Max. Depth (m)	9.1
Mean Depth (m)	3.4
Littoral area (%)	88
Elevation	366
Total Dissolved Solids (ppm)	20.1

Species Recorded:

Smallmouth Bass
Brook Trout
White Sucker
Emerald Shiner
Blacknose Shiner
Bluntnose Minnow
Creek Chub
Yellow Perch
Rock Bass

The first survey of Ril Lake was done in 1963. At that time largemouth and smallmouth bass were reported as occurring in the lake (although no sampling appears to have been done). There is no record of these two species being stocked; however it is very unlikely that either species was native to the lake. They did not naturally occur in any other lakes in the immediate area. The survey notes "bass seem to have been introduced into this lake prior to the 1930, 1940's…"

A more complete survey was done in 1969; including fish sampling, depth mapping, and water chemistry. Smallmouth bass, white sucker, yellow perch, rock bass and one brook trout were caught. The survey recommendation was to manage for smallmouth bass and cease trout plantings due to low oxygen level.

No other studies have been done on the lake by MNR.

Stocking of brook trout and rainbow trout occurred periodically from 1940 to 1962.

The file contains a considerable amount of correspondence dating from the mid 1950's. The dominant and recurring theme is the status of the fishery and the desire by various groups and individuals to have the lake stocked and the response by several different managers that trout stocking would produce poor returns and that bass stocking was not necessary as bass normally reproduce very successfully.

Synopsis:
Brook trout were the native sport fish species in the lake and were probably much more abundant prior to the introduction of bass. Brook trout populations usually become very marginalized or extirpated from competition with and predation by bass. Stocking brook trout in the presence of bass usually yields very poor returns for the same reasons.

Rainbow trout were stocked in the past but there is no record of success. Rainbow trout can survive and yield reasonable returns in the presence of bass if a sufficient amount of deep water habitat is available. As indicated in the 1969 survey, the deeper waters of the lake experience low oxygen during the summer. There is very little cold water habitat available; therefore rainbow trout would probably not perform well in Ril Lake.

The lake provides good habitat for bass in the form of a large littoral area (88% of lake area). Once a bass population is established, further stocking is not required to maintain the population and little benefit can be expected. In small lakes, over-population and stunting is a common occurrence rather than a lack of reproduction.

Small shallow lakes with established bass populations have minimal options for fisheries management. The fact that MNR has not done any work on the lake since the 1969 survey attests to that.