

Becks Pond

25.6 acres

Bear

An active management program has been in effect at Becks Pond for a number of years. Through it, the largemouth bass population rebounded following a restricted size and bag limit imposed in the early 1990s. Electrofishing catches of larger bass (those larger than 15 inches) increased from 2.4 per hour in 1990 to 21/hour by 2006 as a result of the regulation change. The average weights of largemouth bass have also improved over the same time period while growth rate remains average.

Black crappie and bluegill have varied in abundance from year to year, but have not been notably changed by the improvement in the bass population. However, growth of black crappie has increased substantially from 3 inches at one year old in 1999 to 4.5



inches at the same age by 2005. Both black and white crappie (photo above) are present here and at Lums Pond, another sizeable New Castle County pond. Occasional yellow perch are caught by anglers who have familiarity with the pond.

Becks is the most heavily fished pond in Delaware due to its location within heavily-populated New Castle County. Development within the watershed has resulted in some water quality problems due to a thick layer of sediment on the pond bottom. A Becks Pond Work Group was initiated in 2000 with representatives from state, federal, and county agencies plus local residents to address this issue [for more information go to www.fw.delaware.gov/Info/FisheriesResearch.htm, and click on Becks Pond]. An informational brochure about it can be found at various locations in the Bear area.

VEGETATION

Spatterdock, an aquatic plant, dominated open-water areas of the pond both in Belltown Run and Salem Run. A portion of the spatterdock in the lower end of Belltown Run was treated with aquatic herbicide in 2007 to increase the open water area. Swamp loosestrife provided a buffer along much of the undeveloped shoreline. Some rooted submerged aquatic plants grew in the shallow water areas in the upper end of Belltown Run and along the old swimming area. High turbidity (muddiness) and the thick silt layer on the pond bottom have undoubtedly impacted the aquatic plants.

SPECIAL CONDITIONS

Becks Pond was leased to New Castle County by the Game and Fish Commissioners in the mid-1950s. It is now jointly managed by New Castle County and the Division of Fish and Wildlife. The County has developed a park on the eastern shoreline and provides

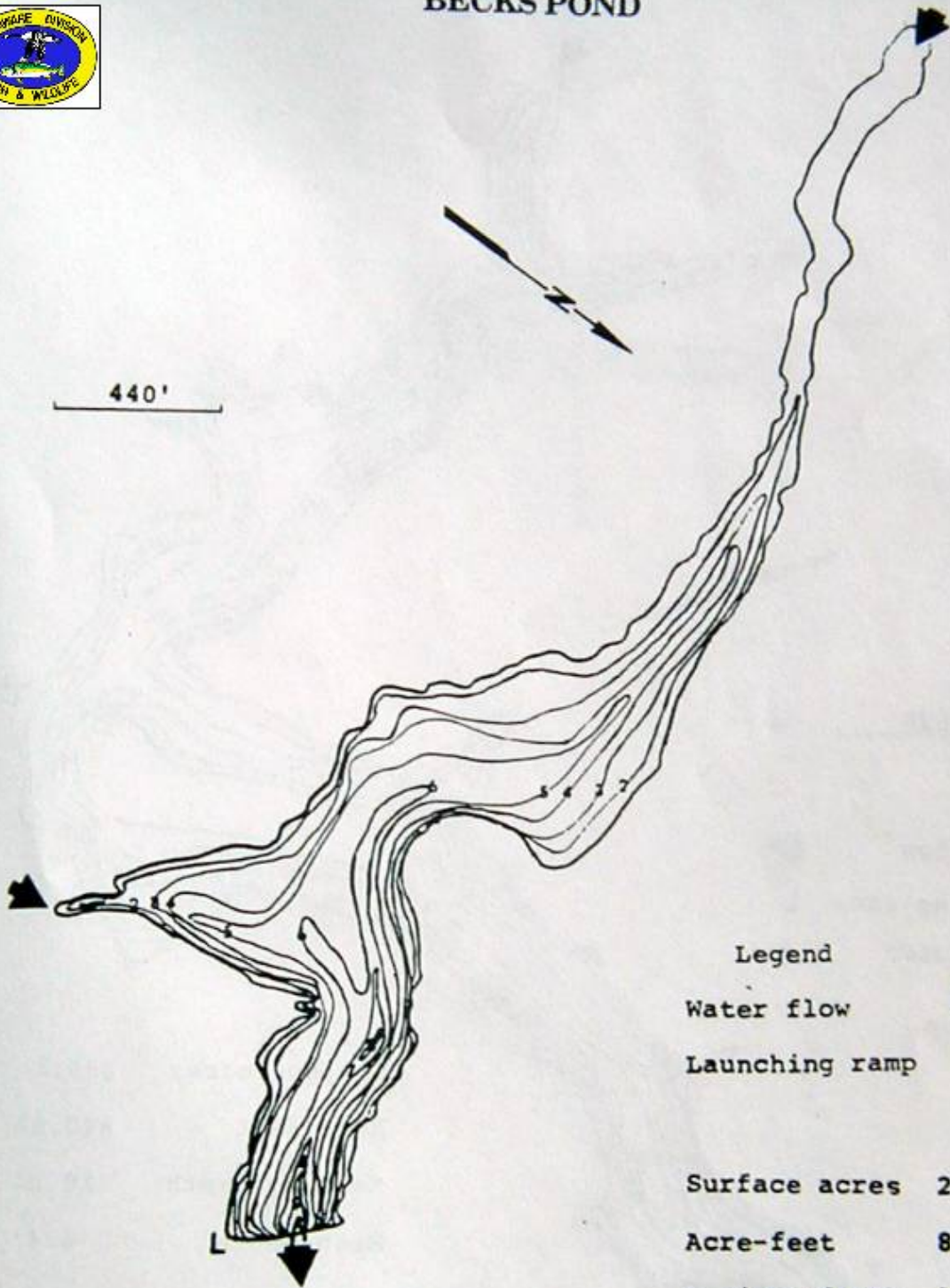
recreational facilities there. The area is maintained by the County for parking, mowing and trash collection. Note that the county prohibits gasoline motors on the pond.

The Division of Fish and Wildlife manages fish populations within the pond, including establishing size restrictions and bag limits for largemouth bass. Currently, there is a minimum size limit of 15 inches and possession limit of 2 bass daily. A [fish consumption](#) advisory has been listed for Becks Pond due to concerns about contaminants (primarily PCBs and mercury). The Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC) and Department of Health and Social Services advise anglers to eat no more than one 8-ounce meal per year of any fish taken from Becks Pond. Fish advisories are posted as a precaution and are based on long-term health risks associated with eating fish year after year from specific locations.


BECKS POND



440'



Legend

Water flow 

Launching ramp L

Surface acres 25.6

Acre-feet 83.83

Maximum depth 10.0'

Mean depth 3.3'