

## Dive Site Report<sup>1</sup> – Lake Clear Turner’s Island North

This is an excellent site on Lake Clear, near Eganville, but it must be accessed by boat.

### Attractions

Underwater landscape (steep skree drop-off), abundant marine life, mine tailings (apatite mine on island), excellent VIS. This is also an excellent snorkelling site.

### Site Overview

Turner’s Island is the largest island on Lake Clear. The dive site is off the north tip, where there’s a shoal that extends from the tip of the island. The west side of the island offers interesting landscape, consisting of a steep skree slope that extends from 3’ to 40’ depth. At the bottom of the slope, the bottom suddenly becomes flat and highly silty, gradually deepening to 50’. The skree slope is interesting because of the large rocks that overhang in places. Some of the rocks contain large crystals of feldspar, hornblende and apatite. It was because of these minerals (apatite really), that a small open pit mine was worked on the island in the early 1900’s. This mine (the Turner’s Island Mine) produced world-class specimens of apatite and zircon crystals. Most mineral displays at natural science museums will have apatite specimens from either this mine or other mines in the area. Because of the proximity of the mine workings to the water, there are several areas along the skree slope where the mine tailings (small crystals and calcite host rock) were thrown or blasted into the water. These tailings make for good fun in trying to bring home your own apatite specimen.

Although this site is popular for diving, and there have been no first-hand accounts of this, legend has it that there is a secret entrance to the mine below the water surface somewhere. It’s hard to imagine how this is possible – but you never know with this Lake, given that in the mid 1980’s there was a large serpent-like creature observed by a number of boaters one afternoon – *not kidding*. While we’re at it, there was one UFO sighting at the west end of the lake in 2003, and a second one a few months later between Eganville and Renfrew. *Lots to watch for at this site!!*

After anchoring your boat on whichever side of the island is calmer (this lake can be very rough at times), the best dive plan is to descend to 35 or 40’, then swim southward along the west side of the island where the skree slope ends at the silty flat bottom. Swim at this depth until your tank is half empty, then ascend to 15 to 20’ and turn back towards the north tip. On the way back you’ll likely encounter at least one area where a large school of rock bass resides (see map below). Smallmouth bass, and occasionally pickerel and pike, also co-exist at this location. The rock bass are very playful, especially if you

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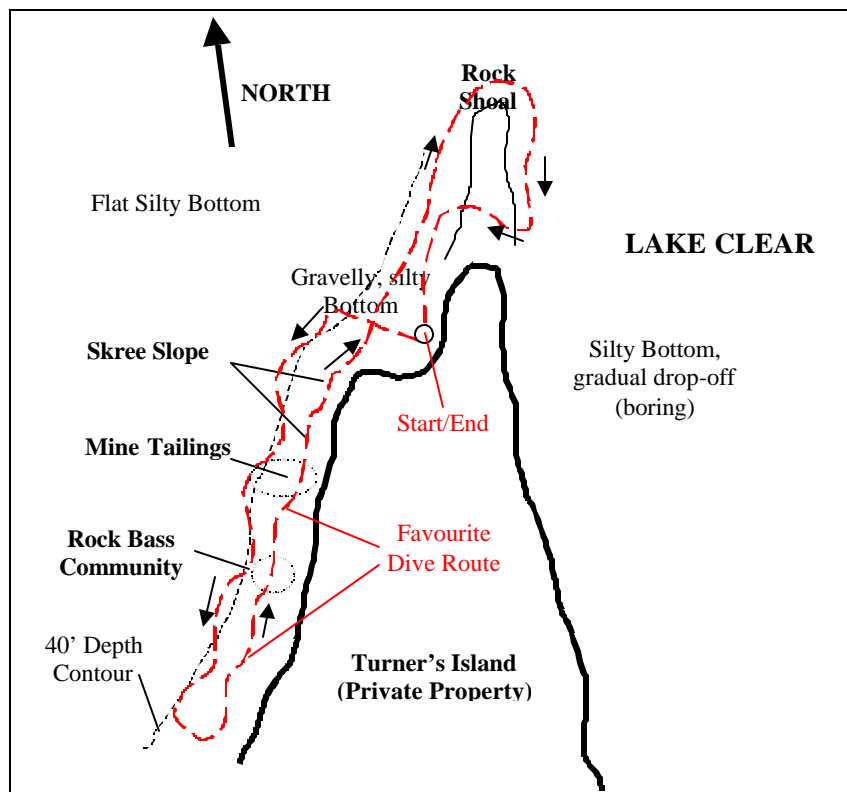
<sup>1</sup> **NOTE:** the DRUC assumes NO responsibility, *direct or implied*, for the safety of diving at this site using this information. The information in this report presents *general* information on conditions and certain known hazards, but conditions are variable and other hazards may exist from time to time. It is every diver’s own/personal responsibility to ensure that the conditions are adequately safe with respect to his/her training and experience – *THIS INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE AT YOUR OWN RISK!*

bring a hand-line with a jig (barbless). Lay on top of one of the large boulders there and spend some quality time with these brothers with fins. Also along the way you'll likely find the mine tailings. If you do any digging, however, *watch for rolling boulders!* If you get back to the north tip with spare air, explore the rocky shoal, but *watch for boats*, which are channelled by the long island.

VIS is normally excellent – 15 to 20', but less in August. Temperature is normally reasonable, ranging from 65 to 75 deg F from June to September, but at this site there's a sharp thermocline at 30 to 40' (~50 deg F).

### Access

Lake Clear is a large lake in the Eganville area. The lake has only private access (no public access). There are several private boat launches where you can pay for day use (e.g., Opeongo Mountain Lodge).



**Turner's Island North Tip Dive Site Map**

### Hazards (refer to footnote 1)

The site has only a few hazards – *rock slides* and *boat traffic*.

**Rock Slides** – if you start sifting through the mine tailings, chances are you'll initiate a small landslide of tailings upslope from your location. There are a few larger boulders poised to slide, so if you're compelled to dig for crystals in the tailings, watch for rock slides – *better still, don't dig*.

**Boat traffic** – Lake Clear can be a busy lake for boat traffic, and the north tip of Turner's Island is a focal point (main channel) for traffic – *surface with care*, and be sure to drag a *diver-down flag* during your dive.

### Recommendations

1. This is an excellent site that you should *visit at least twice* – once in daylight and once at night with lights.
2. ***Bring a toy*** to play with the bass.
3. Wear a ***hood and gloves*** to explore below the thermocline.
4. ***Do not explore the mine workings on the island*** – it's private property, and the property owner isn't eager to share his land.