

Tanana Drainage Sport Fisheries (10 proposals)

PROPOSAL 18

5 AAC 74.044. Minto Flats Northern Pike Sport Fish Management Plan.

Repeal the bag limit reduction and modify the open season for northern pike in Minto Flats, as follows:

Change **5 AAC 74.044. Minto Flats Northern Pike Sport Fish Management Plan** remove the reductions in bag limits and change the open season:

(a) Northern pike stocks in the lakes and flowing waters of the Minto Flats support both subsistence and sport fisheries. The purpose of this management plan is to provide the department with guidance to achieve the goals of managing these stocks consistent with sustained yield principles, providing a reasonable opportunity for the priority subsistence fishery, and providing a sport fishing opportunity. The Minto Flats northern pike management plan for the subsistence fishery is set out in **5 AAC 01.244**. (b) The department shall manage the Minto Flats northern pike sport fishery as follows: (1) the maximum exploitation rate of northern pike in the lakes and flowing waters of the Minto Flats by all users may not exceed 20 percent annually; (2) the following provisions apply to the harvest of northern pike in the Minto Flats area sport fishery: (A) the open fishing season is from **April 15 through October 14**; (B) the daily bag and possession limit is five fish per day, only one of which may be 30 inches or more in length;

[(C) IF THE SUBSISTENCE HARVEST REPORTS INDICATE THAT 750 OR MORE NORTHERN PIKE HAVE BEEN HARVESTED FROM THE CHATANIKA RIVER DRAINAGE UPSTREAM OF THE CONFLUENCE OF THE CHATANIKA RIVER AND GOLDSTREAM CREEK DURING THE PERIOD FROM JANUARY 1 UNTIL THESE WATERS ARE FREE OF ICE, THE COMMISSIONER SHALL REDUCE, BY EMERGENCY ORDER, THE DAILY BAG AND POSSESSION LIMIT TO TWO FISH PER DAY, ONLY ONE OF WHICH MAY BE 30 INCHES OR MORE IN LENGTH, IN THE LAKES AND ALL FLOWING WATERS OF THE MINTO FLATS AREA FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE CALENDAR YEAR]

; and (c) in the Chatanika river drainage upstream from the confluence of the Chatanika river and Goldstream creek to an ADF&G regulatory marker located at the boundary of the Fairbanks nonsubsistence area (approximately one mile downstream from the murphy dome road), only single hooks may be used.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The Minto Northern Pike Management Plan (5 AAC 74.044) imposes restrictions that unnecessarily limit sport fishing opportunities without providing tangible benefits to sustainability. Specifically, when the subsistence harvest of pike from the special Chatanika winter overwintering area exceeds 750 or 1,500 fish, the sport fishing bag and possession limits are reduced from 5 fish per day (with only one over 30 inches) to 2 fish per day (with only one over 30 inches). This change does not effectively support conservation for either the sport or subsistence fishery, as Fish and Game data has shown that reducing the limit from 5 to 2 fish saves fewer than 100 small pike (“Hammer handles”) in Minto Flats—an area that has arguable over 100,000 small fish. These small fish have a very low chance of surviving to reach 30 inches, rendering the restriction ineffective in terms of sustainability.

Additionally, the management plan closes sport fishing entirely in Minto Flats from October 15 through May 31. This means that residents, including cabin owners, are unable to fish during the

Memorial Day weekend. The closed period is unnecessarily restrictive and deprives local anglers of a valuable opportunity to enjoy the area.

In contrast, the subsistence fishery in Minto Flats remains open year-round without significant restrictions. Anyone can fish in the summer with unlimited use of large mesh gill nets. The only notable restriction is during winter in the special Chatanika overwintering area, where the daily limit is 10 fish (only 2 over 30 inches) to protect the female pike population. These regulations are necessary due to the extreme vulnerability of the entire population concentrated into a couple of river miles. The department recognized this vulnerability back in 1980s when it closed this area and all of Minto Flats to sport fishing in the area in the 1980s.

It should be noted that the Chatanika winter subsistence fishery is now effectively a sport fishery, with many participants unaware they require a permit. This issue has become more prominent since the discovery of the fishery on social media, which has attracted a large number of non-subsistence fishers.

Overall, there are no significant sustainability concerns in the area, and the current management plan only provides minimal conservation benefits while restricting sport fishing unnecessarily. The stipulations in the plan complicate the regulations and result in lost opportunities, particularly during the Memorial Day weekend. Background sport fishing regulations are very conservative by design to protect large female fish.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Explain.

PROPOSED BY: Tony Hollis (EF-F26-019)

PROPOSAL 19

5 AAC 74.044. Minto Flats Northern Pike Management Plan.

Repeal the bag limit reduction and modify the open season for northern pike in Minto Flats, as follows:

(l) Northern pike stocks in the lakes and flowing waters of the Minto Flats support both subsistence and sport fisheries. The purpose of this management plan is to provide the department with guidance to achieve the goals of managing these stocks consistent with sustained yield principles, providing a reasonable opportunity for the priority subsistence fishery, and providing a sport fishing opportunity. The Minto Flats northern pike management plan for the subsistence fishery is set out in 5 AAC 01.244.

(m) The department shall manage the Minto Flats northern pike sport fishery as follows:

(1) the maximum exploitation rate of northern pike in the lakes and flowing waters of the Minto Flats by all users may not exceed 20 percent annually;

(2) the following provisions apply to the harvest of northern pike in the Minto Flats area sport fishery:

(A) the open fishing season is from **MAY 1** [JUNE 1] through October

14;

(B) the daily bag and possession limit is five fish per day, only one of

which may be 30 inches or more in length; AND

[(C) IF THE SUBSISTENCE HADVEST REPORTS INDICATE 750 OR MORE NORTHERN PIKE HAVE BEEN HARVESTED FROM THE CHATANIKA RIVER DRAINAGE UPSTREAM OF THE CONFLUENCE OF THE CHATANIKA RIVER AND GOLDSTREAM CREEK DURING THE PERIOD FROM JANUARY 1 UNTIL THESE WATERS ARE FREE OF ICE, THE COMMISSIONER SHAL REDUCE, BY EMERGENCY ORDER, THE DAILY BAG LIMIT AND POSSESSION LIMIT TO TWO FISH PER DAY, ONLY ONE OF WHICH MAY BE 30 INCHES OR MORE IN LENGTH, IN THE LAKES AND ALL FLOWING WATERS OF THE MINTO FLATS AREA FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE CALENDAR YEAR; AND]

(C)[(D)] in the Chatanika River drainage upstream from the confluence of the Chatanika River and Goldstream Creek to an ADF&G regulatory marker located at the boundary of the Fairbanks Nonsubsistence Area (approximately one mile downstream from the Murphy Dome Road), only single hooks may be used.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The existing sportfish management regulations for northern pike in the Tolovana drainage include:

Bag and possession Limit: 5 fish per day, only one over 30 inches. The bag and possession limit is reduced to 2 fish only one over 30 inches by emergency order when the Chatanika River subsistence winter permit fishery exceeds a harvest of 750 northern pike. .

Seasonal Restrictions: June 1 through October 15

While these regulations have played a role in maintaining pike populations, recent angler reports and biological assessments indicate potential issues, including overabundance of smaller pike, increased competition for food, and reduced trophy-sized fish availability.

Based on ecological assessments, angler feedback, and best practices in pike fishery management, we propose the following modifications to the sportfish management plan:

Eliminate the provision that the sportfish bag limit is reduced when subsistence harvest in the Chatanika over winter area exceeds 750 northern pike.

Change the open season dates for sportfishing to May1 through October 14

Implementing these changes is expected to:

Enhance sport fishing opportunities and satisfaction among anglers

Improve the overall health and size structure of the northern pike population.

Reduce competition among juvenile pike, leading to better growth rates.

Strengthen long-term sustainability of the fishery.

Not impact subsistence fishing which is open year round in Minto Flats, except in the Chatanika permit ice fishery which closes in that area when harvest exceeds 1,500 northern pike

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Explain. The Fairbanks Fish & Game Advisory Committee met on April 9th, 2025 and voted unanimously to submit this proposal.

PROPOSED BY: Fairbanks Fish and Game Advisory Committee Jeff Lucas, Chair

(EF-F26-139)

PROPOSAL 20

5 AAC 74.044. Minto Flats Northern Pike Management Plan.

Repeal the bag limit reduction for northern pike in portions of Minto Flats, as follows:

Since the majority of northern pike harvested in the upper Chatanika winter subsistence pike fishery inhabit that southeast ¼ section of Minto Flats, then any reduction to the summer sport pike fishery should encompass only that southeast portion of Minto Flats and not dictate a reduction in the ¾ remainder, where the sport pike daily bag and possession limit should remain at 5 fish with only one 30” or more in length.

New regulation language for 5AAC 74.044 is in bold.

5AAC 74.044 (c) if the subsistence harvest reports indicate that 750 or more northern pike have been harvested from the Chatanika River drainage upstream of the confluence of the Chatanika River and Goldstream Creek during the period from January 1 until these waters are free of ice, the commissioner shall reduce, by emergency order, the daily bag and possession limit to two fish per day, only one of which may be 30 inches or more in length , **for the southeast ¼ of Minto Flats encompassing Minto Lakes, Golstream Creek and the upper Chatanika River upstream of the confluence with Goldstream Creek** [IN THE LAKES AND ALL FLOWING WATERS OF THE MINTO FLATS AREA FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE CALENDAR YEAR]

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? 5AAC 01.244 identifies the Upper Chatanika winter pike subsistence fishery boundaries as “in the Chatanika River drainage, from an ADF& G regulatory marker approximately one river mile upstream of the confluence of the Chatanika River and Goldstream Creek to an ADF& G regulatory marker at the boundary of the Fairbanks Non-subsistence Area (approximately one mile downstream from Murphy Dome Road)”

Currently under 5AAC 74.044 if the northern pike harvest in the upper Chatanika winter subsistence pike fishery reaches 750 fish, then the daily bag and possession limit for the sports fishery for the whole of Minto Flats is reduced from 5 fish with only one 30” or more in length to a daily bag and possession limit of 2 fish with only one 30” or more in length. The upper Chatanika River winter subsistence fishery boundaries encompass only about ¼ of the whole of Minto Flats and includes only one of three identified Minto Flats major pike overwintering areas. The two other overwintering areas are far downstream on the Tolovana River and Swan Neck Slough. Through tagging programs, F&G determined the majority of the pike overwintering and harvested in the upper Chatanika winter subsistence pike fishery are from the southeast ¼ of Minto Flats, which includes Minto Lakes, Goldstream Creek and the upper Chatanika River. Winter pike harvest in this small portion of Minto Flats should not dictate the summer pike sport daily bag and possession limit for the whole of Minto Flats.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Explain. Fairbanks Fish & Game Advisory Committee Fisheries Subcommittee

PROPOSED BY: Chuck Derrick (EF-F26-053)

PROPOSAL 21

5 AAC 74.010. Seasons, bag, possession, and size limits and methods and means for the Tanana River Area.

Allow a catch-and-release fishery for northern pike and modify gear in Harding Lake, as follows:

To ensure the protection of Harding Lake’s northern pike population, we propose the following regulatory framework:

Fishing Season:

Open year-round or seasonally (May–October) to coincide with peak fishing periods.

Gear Restrictions:

Single-barbless hooks only to minimize injury.

No use of bait to reduce deep-hooking risk.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?

Harding Lake, one of the largest and deepest lakes in Interior Alaska, has historically supported a population of northern pike (*Esox lucius*). Currently, the lake remains closed to sport fishing for northern pike to protect population dynamics. However, based on biological assessments and angler interest, we propose opening Harding Lake to **catch-and-release-only** sport fishing for northern pike. This regulation change would allow recreational fishing opportunities while ensuring the long-term sustainability of the pike population.

Current Management Status

Harding Lake is presently closed to northern pike sport fishing under existing ADF&G regulations. The closure aims to protect and rebuild the pike population after previous declines.

Limited biological studies have been conducted to assess population trends in recent years.

Justification for Catch-and-Release Sport Fishing

Sustainable Recreational Opportunity: Allowing catch-and-release fishing provides angling opportunities without negatively impacting the northern pike population.

Minimal Biological Impact: Research indicates that catch-and-release fishing, when practiced with proper handling techniques, has minimal long-term effects on pike survival rates.

Increased Monitoring and Data Collection: Opening the lake to catch-and-release would encourage data collection through angler reports and ADF&G studies, improving population assessment efforts.

Boost Local Economy and Outdoor Engagement: Expanding fishing access at Harding Lake would benefit local guides, bait shops, and tourism-related businesses while promoting outdoor recreation.

Expected Benefits of Proposed Changes

Conservation-Friendly Access: Maintains protection for pike while offering anglers a responsible way to enjoy the resource.

Improved Fisheries Data: Increases opportunities for ADF&G to assess the pike population and its recovery.

Community and Economic Growth: Generates interest in Harding Lake as a destination for sport anglers, benefiting local outdoor businesses and tourism.

Educational Value: Provides an opportunity to promote ethical fishing practices and conservation awareness among the angling community.

Conclusion and Next Steps

We respectfully request the Alaska Board of Fisheries to review this proposal and consider implementing a trial period for catch-and-release northern pike fishing in Harding Lake. This approach ensures that recreational fishing can be enjoyed while safeguarding the long-term health of the fishery. We welcome discussions with ADF&G biologists, local stakeholders, and angler groups to refine and implement this plan.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Explain. The Fairbanks Fish & Game Advisory Committee met on April 9th, 2025 and voted unanimously to submit this proposal.

PROPOSED BY: Fairbanks Fish and Game Advisory Committee Jeff Lucas, Chair (EF-F26-140)

PROPOSAL 22

5 AAC 74.010. Seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Tanana River Area.

Allow a catch-and-release fishery for northern pike in Harding Lake, as follows:

Several options:

- Allow catch and release fishing in Harding Lake.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Sportfishing for northern pike in Harding Lake has been closed since 2000. However, despite this long-term restriction, northern pike abundance has not increased to a level that can sustain a harvest or bag limit. It is time to finally allow for a catch-and-release pike fishery.

There are several factors indicating that a harvest or bag limit would not be sustainable. First, the abundance of northern pike in Harding Lake is primarily determined by the availability of suitable spawning and rearing habitat, which is directly influenced by water levels. Harding Lake levels are actively managed at a predetermined level, effectively placing a cap on maximum population size. Second, water levels are likely to fluctuate downward over the long term, which will continue to impact population sizes and the availability of suitable habitat. Third, the harvest potential is very high because the lake is a popular recreational area surrounded by cabins. Lastly, any form of harvest would remove the larger fish, leaving behind an undesirable population of “hammer-handles.”

A catch-and-release fishery would be sustainable for several reasons. Northern pike are highly prolific, hardy, and nearly impossible to eradicate. The current regulations allow only a single-hook setup, which is well-suited for catch-and-release fishing. Additionally, studies have shown that northern pike have a high post-release survival rate when handled properly, making catch-and-release a viable management strategy that balances conservation and recreation.

Allowing catch-and-release fishing will provide sportfishing opportunities without depleting the population or creating an overabundance of hammer-handles. It would also establish a much-needed, roadside-accessible northern pike fishery.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Explain. Contacted Fish and Game in Fairbanks and Palmer.

PROPOSED BY: Tony Hollis (EF-F26-020)

PROPOSAL 23

5 AAC 74.010. Seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Tanana River Area.

Repeal special regulations for northern pike in Volkmar Lake, as follows:

5 AAC 74.010 (c)(28) is repealed:

...

(28) repealed / / [IN VOLKMAR LAKE, THE BAG AND POSSESSION LIMIT FOR NORTHERN PIKE IS TWO FISH, OF WHICH ONLY ONE FISH MAY BE 30 INCHES OR GREATER IN LENGTH];

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Volkmar Lake is a remote lake with 15 recreational cabins located 16 air miles to the northeast of Delta Junction. The lake has light fishing pressure due to access and is managed using a restrictive bag, possession, and size limit of two northern pike, only one of which may be 30 inches or greater in length. Access is only by float/ski plane to fly-in or snow machines along a 24-mile winter trail to the lake.

The current regulations are unnecessarily restrictive due to low effort and harvest. Removing the special regulations would default to the general bag, possession, and size limits for northern pike (five fish, of which only one may be ≥ 30 inches in length) and would simplify regulations and increase harvest opportunity.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Explain.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F26-018)

PROPOSAL 24

5 AAC 74.010. Seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Tanana River Area.

Repeal designated youth fishing days for Arctic grayling in the Chena River, as follows:

(3) in the Chena River and its tributaries, including Chena Slough (Badger Slough), (C) downstream from an ADF&G regulatory marker located 300 feet downstream from the Chena River flood control structure, the bag and possession limit for Arctic grayling is one fish, any size from June 1 through March 31, [EXCEPT THAT A PERSON 16 YEARS OR OLDER MAY NOT SPORT FISH FOR ARTIC GRAYLING IN THE CHENA RIVER DOWNSTREAM FROM ADF&G REGULATORY MARKER LOCATED 300 FEET DOWNSTREAM FROM CHENA RIVER FLOOD CONTROL STRUTURE DURING THE EIGHT DAYS DESIGNATED YOUTH FISHING WHICH OCCUR ON FOUR CONSECUTIVE SATURDAYS AND SUNDAYS BEGINNING THE THIRD SATURDAY IN JUNE]

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Youth grayling fishing during the eight designated fishing days, which occur on four consecutive Saturdays and Sundays beginning the third Saturday in June; Currently this opportunity is for youth under the age of 16 years old. An Adult may not assist the youth catching grayling and the adult/s may not fish for grayling during these days. This restriction unfairly does not work for families/parents who may have a handicap child or children who may need assistance while fishing. Since the creation of this youth opportunity and allowing other anglers an opportunity to catch grayling outside the special 8 days. Crowding or competition (combat fishing) has not been an issue. The elimination of this youth only fishing, will not impact youth fishing opportunity. In fact, it may enhance it. By allowing parents to participate as a family unit in a great grayling opportunity and not be at risk of a possible fishing violation and may receive citation. Eliminating this special opportunity will have no biological effect on the grayling fishery in the Chena River below the flood control.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Explain. The Fairbanks Fish & Game Advisory Committee met on April 9th, 2025 and voted unanimously to submit this proposal.

PROPOSED BY: Fairbanks Fish and Game Advisory Committee Jeff Lucas, Chair
(EF-F26-141)

PROPOSAL 25

5 AAC 74.035. Ice house registration.

Repeal registration requirement for ice houses that are not removed from the ice daily in the Tanana River Area as follows:

Several options:

- **Remove the ice-house registration requirement for all ice houses – my preferred choice.**
- **Remove registration, at a minimum for soft sided “pop-up” ice houses and define ice house as “constructed with rigid, load bearing materials for the floor, walls and sides”.**
- **Require the Boroughs to register ice houses.**
- **Remove registration requirements, but require all ice houses and pop up that are left on the ice for more than a month to have label with name and contact information posted by the entrance.**

Repeal: [5 AAC 74.035. ICE HOUSE REGISTRATION. (A) FROM OCTOBER 1 THROUGH APRIL 30, A PERSON USING AN ICE HOUSE THAT IS NOT REMOVED FROM THE ICE DAILY SHALL REGISTER THAT ICE HOUSE WITH, AND RECEIVE A PERMIT FROM, THE DEPARTMENT FOR THAT YEAR. (B) AN ICE HOUSE REGISTERED UNDER THIS SECTION MUST DISPLAY THE DEPARTMENT'S PERMIT NUMBER ON ONE SIDE AND ON THE ROOF OF THE ICE HOUSE IN NUMBERS NOT LESS THAN 12 INCHES HIGH, ONE INCH WIDE, AND PLAINLY VISIBLE. THE NUMBERS MUST BE IN A COLOR THAT CONTRASTS WITH THE COLOR OF THE ICE HOUSE. (C) AN ICE HOUSE MUST BE REMOVED FROM THE ICE BY APRIL 30, HOWEVER, THE DEPARTMENT MAY DESIGNATE OTHER CONDITIONS ON THE PERMIT, INCLUDING OTHER TIME AND AREA RESTRICTIONS].

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? I understand that in order to go fishing and leave my soft-sided pop-up “ice house” set up overnight, I am required to register it with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G). However, this process presents several inconveniences. Not only do I have to go through the time-consuming task of registering my ice house, but I am also required to affix large 12-inch letters to the top, front, and side of my expensive ice house, which feels like an unnecessary defacement of the equipment with tape residue, paint, or punching hole with safety pins. And my number may change from year-to year.

Additionally, if I decide to move my pop-up to a different lake, I am supposed to notify ADF&G about the new location. This becomes particularly challenging when I am out of cellphone range, such as when fishing for lake trout along the Denali Highway. This added step feels burdensome, both for me and for ADF&G, and I question its necessity.

From my understanding, the primary goal of this registration is to ensure that troopers can cite individuals who fail to remove their trash before spring. However, given that ice houses are generally too valuable to simply abandon and are likely to be registered if left behind, this process

seems to be more of an administrative burden than a real solution. For example, I inquired with ADF&G in Fairbanks and they could only recall one instance where an icehouse was left on the ice on (lost Lake), and unsurprisingly it was NOT registered!

In Anchorage and Wasilla, there are no such ADF&G registration requirements for ice houses, and yet these areas seem to manage just fine without them. This suggests that the registration may not be as essential as it is made out to be.

The Matanuska-Susitna Borough provides an Ice House Registration Form, but it is not mandatory. The form highlights concerns about unsanitary conditions and safety hazards if ice houses are abandoned after breakup, but it does not impose a legal requirement for registration. For lakes with a listed management plan; “Registration is required only for ice houses on the following lakes: Big Lake; Diamond Lake; Lake Five; Little Question Lake; Little Lonely Lake and the two unnamed lakes located between Question Lake and the Talkeetna Spur Rd., Sec. 30 7 31, T25N, R4W, S.M.

For lakes with lots of cabins and property owners, let them work with their own local entities if ice house registrations are desired on “their” lake. Please don’t make me duct tape numbers onto my \$400 ice house.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Explain. Contacted Fish and Game in Fairbanks and Palmer.

PROPOSED BY: Tony Hollis (EF-F26-018)

PROPOSAL 26

5 AAC 74.010. Seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Tanana River Area.

Repeal Arctic grayling special regulations and gear restrictions for the confluence area of the Tanana River and Shaw Creek, as follows:

5 AAC 74.010(c)(21), (23) are amended to read:

...

(21) **repealed** / / [IN THE SHAW CREEK DRAINAGE AND ITS TRIBUTARIES, ARCTIC GRAYLING MAY BE TAKEN FROM APRIL 1 THROUGH MAY 31, BY CATCH AND RELEASE FISHING ONLY];

(23) **repealed** / / [IN THE TANANA RIVER AND ITS TRIBUTARIES WITHIN A TWO-MILE RADIUS OF ITS CONFLUENCE WITH SHAW CREEK, ARCTIC GRAYLING MAY BE TAKEN FROM APRIL 1 THROUGH MAY 31, BY CATCH-AND-RELEASE FISHING ONLY];

5 AAC 74.010(d)(16), (18) are repealed:

...

(16) **repealed** / / [IN SHAW CREEK,

(A) ONLY ONE UNBAITED, SINGLE-HOOK, ARTIFICIAL LURE MAY BE USED;

(B) DOWNSTREAM FROM THE RICHARDSON HIGHWAY BRIDGE, BAIT MAY BE USED ONLY ON SINGLE HOOKSWITH A GAP SIZE LARGER THAN THREE-QUARTERS OF AN INCH];

(18) repealed / / [IN THE TANANA RIVER AND ITS TRIBUTARIES WITHIN A TWO-MILE RADIUS OF ITS CONFLUENCE OF SHAW CREEK, BAIT MAY BE USED ONLY ON SINGLE HOOKS WITH A GAP SIZE LARGER THAN THREE-QUARTERS OF AN INCH];

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Shaw Creek is a small tributary of the Tanana River that crosses the Richardson Highway 19 miles northwest of Delta Junction. Shaw Creek and the upland areas adjacent to the Tanana River have limited legal access for anglers. The current regulations for Shaw Creek and the adjacent areas of the Tanana River were originally adopted in February 1987 as a conservative measure for a fishery that had developed on the Shaw Creek Arctic grayling spawning population of Arctic grayling. Radiotelemetry data on nearby Arctic grayling summer populations show that the spawning population of Arctic grayling in Shaw Creek is composed of fish from at least three different drainages all with healthy summer populations. These populations inhabit clear, spring-water streams in the summer, while Shaw Creek has poor summer feeding habitat and is primarily used by Arctic grayling for spawning and juvenile rearing. These changes would simplify regulations and increase opportunity.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Explain.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F26-017)

PROPOSAL 27

5 AAC 74.010. Seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Tanana River Area.

Increase the bag and possession limit of stocked species in Rainbow Lake, as follows:

5AAC 74.010(c)(18) is repealed:

...

(18) repealed / / [IN RAINBOW LAKE, THE BAG AND POSSESSION LIMIT FOR RAINBOW TROUT, LANDLOCKED SALMON, ARCTIC CHAR/DOLLY/VARDEN, AND ARCTIC GRAYLING, COMBINED IS FIVE FISH, OF WHICH ONLY ONE FISH MAY BE 18 INCHES OR GREATER IN LENGTH];

5 AAC 74.010(c)(29) is amended to read:

...

(29) in stocked waters, the bag, possession, and size limit for rainbow trout, Arctic char/Dolly Varden, landlocked salmon, lake trout, and Arctic grayling is 10 of all stocked species combined, of which no more than two fish may be lake trout and only one fish may be 18 inches or greater in length; for the purposes of this paragraph, “stocked waters” include Backdown Lake, Ballaine Lake, Big “D” Pond, Birch Lake, Bluff Cabin Lake, Bolio Lake, Brodie Lake, Bullwinkle Lake, Chena Lake, Chet Lake, CHSR 25.0 Mile Pit, CHSR 30.0 Mile Pit, CHSR 45.5 Mile Pit, CHSR 47.9 Mile Pit, CHSR 56.0 Mile Pit, Coal Mine Road #5, Craig Lake, Cushman Lake, Dick’s Pond, Doc Lake, Donna Lake, Donnelly Lake, Dune Lake, Forrest Lake, Four Mile Lake, Fourteen Mile Lake, Geskakmina Lake, Ghost Lake, Grayling Lake (Eielson Air Force Base), Hidden Lake (Eielson Air Force Base), Hidden Lake (Tetlin NWR), Horseshoe Lake, “J” Lake, Jan Lake, Johnson Pit #2, Kenna Lake, Ken’s Pond, Kids Fishing Pond, Koole Lake, Last Lake, Lisa Lake, Little Donna Lake, Little Harding Lake, Little Lost Lake, Lost Lake, Lundgren Pond, Manchu

Lake, Mark Lake, Monte Lake, Monterey Lake, Mosquito Creek Lake, Mullins Pit, Nenana City Pond, Nickel Lake, Nordale #2, North Chena Pond, North Pole Pond, North Twin Lake, Olnes Pond, Otto Lake, Parks 261 Pond, Parks 285 Pond, Paul's Pond, Pyrite Pond, Quartz Lake, **Rainbow Lake**, Rangeview Lake, Rapids Lake, Richardson Hwy. 28 Mile Pit, Richardson Hwy. 31 Mile Pit, Richardson Hwy. 81 Mile Pit, Shaw Pond, Sansing Pond, Sheefish Lake, Sirlin Drive Pond, South Twin Lake, Steese Hwy. 29.5 Mile Pit, Steese Hwy. 31.6 Mile Pit, Steese Hwy. 33.5 Mile Pit, Steese Hwy. 34.6 Mile Pit, Steese Hwy. 35.8 Mile Pit, Steese Hwy. 36.6 Mile Pit, Stringer Rd. Pond, Triangle Lake, Wainwright #6, Weigh Station Pond #1, Weight Station Pond #2, Weasel Lake, West Iksgiza Lake, Z Pit (Chena Floodway);

5 AAC 74.065(h)(3) is amended to read:

...

(3) ~~repealed~~ __/__/__[RAINBOW LAKE].

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The current bag and possession limits for Rainbow Lake are overly restrictive given the difficulty of access, light fishing effort, abundant population, and the inability of the lake to yield fish larger than 18 inches under the conservative management approach as defined in the *Tanana River Area Stocked Waters Management Plan* (5 AAC 74.065). Rainbow Lake is a remote stocked lake located 12 air miles from Delta Junction, and it is accessible by float/ski plane or by snowmachine along an 11-mile winter trail.

Under the *Tanana River Area Stocked Waters Management Plan* (5 AAC 74.065), the department manages stocked waters to meet demand for diverse fishing opportunities. Since 2013, Rainbow Lake has been managed using the plan's conservative approach which endeavors to provide a reasonable expectation of catching the daily bag limit with a reasonable chance of catching a fish 18 inches or longer in length. Due to existing fishery conditions, the plan's regional management approach should instead be used (bag limit 10 fish, only one fish 18 inches or greater in length) as it increases fishing opportunity and simplifies regulations by aligning it with nearly all stocked lakes within the drainage.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Explain.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game

(HQ-F26-016)
