

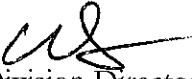
MEMORANDUM

State of Alaska

Department of Fish and Game
Division of Sport Fish

TO: Glenn Haight, Executive Director DATE: July 16, 2014
Board of Fisheries, Juneau

PHONE NO: (907) 465-6095

FROM:  Charles O. Swanton, Division Director SUBJECT: Request Consent to use Rotenone
Division of Sport Fish, Juneau

Per Alaska Statute (AS 16.35.200), the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Sport Fish, requests Alaska Board of Fisheries (board) consent to use rotenone to eradicate non-indigenous northern pike from the Soldotna Creek Drainage on the Kenai Peninsula. Division personnel plan to apply rotenone to the drainage beginning in October 2014 and continuing during the summers of 2016 and 2017. Under the above statute, northern pike are considered "predatory animals" that have eliminated most other native fish from the drainage. Removing the illegally-introduced pike from the Soldotna Creek drainage will allow restoration of native fish populations and prevent this non-native species from spreading to other Kenai River tributaries where it would likely cause irrevocable harm to salmon and trout fisheries. To date, the Division has successfully used rotenone to remove invasive northern pike populations from Cheney and Sand lakes in Anchorage, a series of ponds in Yakutat, Arc and Scout Lakes near Soldotna, and most recently, from Stormy Lake near Nikiski which was ADF&G's first open-system treatment.

Several division biologists received formal training in the correct application of rotenone from the National Conservation Training Center and are also certified to apply pesticides in Alaska. Use of this chemical for fish removal is widespread in the lower 48, is not dangerous for non-gill breathing organisms at treatment concentrations, does not enter groundwater and does not persist in the aquatic environment. Rotenone kills fish by inhibiting a biochemical process that allows fish to utilize oxygen during cellular respiration.

The Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation has approved and issued a "pesticide use permit" for this project. Pending approval by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and receipt of a 'Finding of No Significant Impact' document to conclude the NEPA process, the Division proposes to apply rotenone from ~October 6-10, 2014. These first treatments will take place in East and West Mackey Lakes, Union Lake, Derks Lake, and the streams linking these lakes. These waters currently contain no other fish besides northern pike. This section of the drainage is separated from the remainder of the drainage by a fish passage barrier at the outlet of Derks Lake. In the summer of 2015, the lakes treated in 2014 will be monitored to make sure they are free of northern pike. Upon confirming that the northern pike have been eradicated, native fish that still occur in the Soldotna Creek system outside the treated area will be relocated to these lakes. This will begin the process of restoring native fish populations in the drainage. Beginning in 2016, the remainder of the Soldotna Creek drainage which includes the mainstem of Soldotna Creek and two lakes, Tree Lake

and Sevena Lake, will be treated. Because a large portion of this section is flowing water, this entire section will be treated again in 2017 to ensure complete eradication of the northern pike. After monitoring this section and confirming that all pike have been eradicated, the fish passage barrier separating the two Soldotna Creek drainage sections will be breached to restore native fish passage to the entire drainage. The intention is to restore the native fish community and recreational fishing opportunities in the Soldotna Creek drainage and prevent the spread of this invasive species to the highly vulnerable Moose River drainage which is a significant overwintering area for Kenai River coho salmon.

Please inform members of the board that the Division requests their consent to use rotenone in the Soldotna Creek drainage. If approved, please ask the Chairman to provide a memo of their consent.

Please contact Rob Massengill (260-2928), Kristine Dunker (267-2889), or Tom Vania (267-2131) if you or board members have any questions or want additional information. Thank you.

cc: Tom Vania

Attachments (2)