

**Division of Sport Fish**  
Charles Swanton, Director

**Division of Wildlife Conservation**  
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## **PRESS RELEASE**

*For Immediate Release: July 25, 2011*

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### **Illegally Discarded Fish Waste May Draw Bears, Fines for Violators**

(Anchorage) – As the summer fishing season peaks in Southcentral Alaska, anglers and dip netters are reminded not to dispose of fish waste in Anchorage area streams, lakes and neighborhoods. Discarding fish waste on public or private property is against state and municipal law and can draw bears into areas frequented by the public. Violators may be subject to fines ranging from \$300 to \$1,000.

The Divisions of Sport Fish and Wildlife Conservation have recently received numerous reports of salmon waste dumped into Anchorage creeks, lakes and neighborhood areas. This illegal activity is a serious public safety concern; fish waste can draw bears to an area from more than a mile away.

“People may not realize they are putting other people in danger when they illegally dump fish or fish carcasses, but this is a serious public safety issue,” said Jessy Coltrane, area biologist for the Division of Wildlife Conservation. “Fish carcasses attract bears, and bears may defend these food sources if people accidentally come near.”

Moving fish carcasses from drainage to drainage also has the potential to introduce fish pathogens into stream systems, endangering local salmonids, said Dan Bosch, area biologist for the Division of Sport Fish.

To properly dispose of unwanted fish or fish carcasses in a safe manner, please follow these recommendations:

- If fish is not spoiled and is well packaged, it can be donated to Bean’s Café, which serves meals to the homeless (1101 E. 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave between 7 a.m. 5 p.m.)
- The Alaska Zoo, Bird Treatment and Learning Center, and the Alaska Wildlife Conservation Center will usually accept fish donations for wildlife. Fish cannot be spoiled, smoked, flavored or badly freezer-burned. Call each facility prior to donating to learn about hours and specific needs (Bird Treatment and Learning Center, 562-4852; Alaska Zoo, 346-3242; Alaska Wildlife Conservation Center, 783-2025).
- Filleted carcasses and other fish waste should be taken directly to a waste transfer station or to the landfill. Another option is to freeze fish waste to eliminate odors and then place it out with garbage on the morning of trash pickup. Do not put waste out the night before trash pickup.

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