

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

Cora Campbell, Commissioner



DIVISION OF SPORT FISH

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For Immediate Release

**2011 BOARD OF FISHERIES CHANGES TO THE SUBSISTENCE,
PERSONAL USE, AND SPORT FISHING REGULATIONS IN THE UPPER
COPPER/UPPER SUSITNA RIVER DRAINAGES**

During the December 2 – 7 Board of Fisheries meeting in Valdez, the Board considered 35 proposals that would change subsistence (17), personal use (6) or sport fishing regulations (12) within the Upper Copper River and Upper Susitna River drainages. The Board voted to support 6 proposals, oppose 17, and took no action on 12 of the proposals. As a result of the Board rulings on these proposals, there will be some changes to the subsistence, personal use, and sport fishing regulations within the Upper Copper River and Upper Susitna River drainages. If a regulation is not listed in this news release, that regulation remained unchanged.

The Board amended and adopted one proposal specific to the freshwater finfish subsistence fishery in Lake Louise, Sustina and Tyone lakes. The channels between Lake Louise and Susitna Lake and between Susitna Lake and Tyone Lake were closed to subsistence fishing. Coordinates for these closed areas will be included in the new regulation.

A proposal was adopted that changed the opening date of the Chitina Subdistrict Personal Use Dip Net Fishery. The fishery can open on June 7 and must open on or before June 15, previously the fishery could open on June 1 and had to open on or before June 11. This action was taken in conjunction with the Board allowing only one fishing period within the inside closure area in the Copper River District commercial fishery during the first two weeks of the season. The Board also ruled there was no new information and no errors in previous rulings in the C&T determination for the Chitina Subdistrict. As a result, the Chitina Subdistrict remains a personal use fishery.

The Board adopted a proposal that amended the *Copper River King Salmon Management Plan* to include management guidance to the department specific to the Chitina Subdistrict personal use and Glennallen Subdistrict subsistence fisheries which provides authority to the department to restrict king salmon harvest for conservation.

A department proposal was adopted by the Board that prohibits the use of bait in Lake Louise, Susitna, Tyone, and Crosswind lakes from April 16 – October 31. The bag and possession limit for lake trout was changed from one fish, 24 inches or greater to one fish, no size limit. These actions were taken to reduce hooking mortality and maintain harvests within sustainable levels. Another department proposal was amended and adopted for the rainbow trout fishery in Summit Lake (Tebay River drainage). The spawning closure (June 1 – 30) was removed and the size limit was changed from 10 fish, 12 inches or less to 10 fish, of which only one may be greater than 18 inches in length.

The Board adopted a department proposal to add one day to the Arctic grayling spawning closure from April 1 – May 30 to April 1 – May 31 in the *Wild Arctic Grayling Management Plan*. This aligned the dates in the plan with the dates in regulation and was the intent when the plan was adopted in 2004. The Board also adopted a department proposal opening Tolsona Lake to sport fishing for burbot with a bag and possession limit of two fish. Tolsona Lake had been closed to burbot fishing since 1998 and the burbot population had recovered sufficiently to allow harvest.

These regulations will take effect in the new regulatory year, beginning April 15, 2012. To find the outcome of specific proposals please check the Department of Fish and Game Board of Fisheries website at: <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=fisheriesboard.main>. Any questions regarding these changes to the fishing regulations in the Upper Copper River and Upper Susitna River drainages can be directed to either Mark Somerville (907) 822-3309 at the Glennallen Fish and Game office or Tom Taube (907) 459-7225 at the Fairbanks Fish and Game office.

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