

exception to legal methods for subsistence fishing is rod and reel. Because they are used to being allowed to harvest hundreds of fish throughout the year by all other methods it should not be remarkable that they may not even think about it the very few times they may harvest fish with rod and reel. However, some of them have been subject to law enforcement actions over the years due to their lack of a license.

A similar allowance is provided on the northern Seward Peninsula.

PROPOSED BY: Kotzebue Sound Fish and Game Advisory Committee (EF-C15-028)

PROPOSAL 142 – 5 AAC 01.220. Lawful gear and gear specifications. Change the dates gillnet gear may be used in the South Fork and Middle Fork of the Koyukuk River from November 1 through June 30 to August 20 through June 30, as follows:

5 AAC 01.220(f)(8) is amended to read:

Gillnets three and one-half inches, (current size restriction), may be used only from August 20– June 30.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Change the open period for when subsistence gillnet may be used in the Middle and South Fork permit area, from the current November 1 to June 30 season, to August 20 to June 30. This proposal would still protect salmon when present but allow fall harvest of whitefish, grayling, suckers, and pike. I collected salmon samples under ADF&G Commissioner’s permit from 2010 to 2013, for the Genetic Conservation Lab. I found only summer chum and Chinook salmon present in the upper Koyukuk drainages from July 15 to August 15. I found no fall chum or coho in the Middle or South fork drainage.

PROPOSED BY: Jack Reakoff (EF-C15-029)

(OKG. PROPOSAL) JAN 2016 1:50 PM

PROPOSAL 143 – 5 AAC 01.244. Minto Flats Northern Pike Management Plan. Reduce the bag and possession limit of northern pike in the Minto Flats Northern Pike Management Plan, as follows:

Amend 5 AAC 01.244(b)(2)(B) Minto Flats Norther Pike Management Plan to read:

(B) there is no daily or annual bag limit, except that in the area described in (G) of this paragraph, the bag limit is 5 [10] fish and the possession limit is 5 [20] fish and any fish that exceeds 30" will be handled carefully and immediately returned to the river.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? My concern is with the reduced population of pike in Minto Lakes as evidenced by the poor results of summer bait and fly fishing. I'm especially aware of the slow decline over the past 15 years. As a cabin owner and constant visitor to Minto for over 50 years, it's obvious to me that there

Submitted by Reed Moniskey

is an issue. I believe that the main issue is the subsistence fishery in the Chatanika Special Harvest Area (SHA) that is really a glorified sports fishery that occurs during the winter. After the lakes freeze, the pike migrate to the confluence of Goldstream and the Chatanika. Due to this concentration, the fishing is easy and the fish plentiful. Fishermen are high-grading and taking the larger, female pike and that has a large consequence on the overall population of pike in the system. Of the 80 permits that were issued in 2014/15, 300 pike were reported as taken. Since most of these were large pike, those were mostly female spawners. The average catch for the past 15 years, as reported, exceeds 500 fish per year -that's a minimum of 7,500 large fish gone, which increases significantly when you consider that many of these are the spawning females.

Minto used to be a wonderful fishing experience for the hundreds of people from the Fairbanks North Star Borough who fly or boat into the Lakes each summer. Now, 80 people (permit holders) are allowed to effectively destroy the largest pike fishery in the United States. That's not right or o.k. If thru-the-ice fishing isn't reduced, the population will continue to decline from the low it is now, and it will be very difficult to recover based on the fact that it takes 15 to 20 years to grow a large pike.

My ideal solution would be to close the winter pike fishery down in the Chatanika SHA for 10 to 15 years. I understand that you cannot close subsistence fishing without also closing sport fishing, so at a minimum I would like to see the bag limit and possession limit the same as sport fishing and size restrictions in place to help protect the larger females.

PROPOSED BY: Marv Hassebroek

(HQ-F15-086)

PROPOSAL 144 – 5 AAC 01.220. Lawful gear and gear specification. Allow the use of five and one-half inch mesh gillnets across an entire channel in portions of the Koyukuk River for the purpose of targeting northern pike, as follows:

We would like to be able to continue to fish the way we once did, and be able to put a gill net across the entire channel of some waterways. There is a current season that allows us to use smaller mesh nets in the drainage, but we would like to be able to use larger mesh to target larger pike as the smaller mesh does not allow us to effectively catch the larger pike. We would like to do this in the spring when pike are moving out of the lakes and into the rivers.

We would like to be able to use up to a 5 ½ in. mesh until June 15 in Racetrack Slough off of the Koyukuk River as well as sloughs attached to the Huslia River. We would like to be able to use the larger mesh sizes across the entire slough. Since the intent of this is to target larger fish, the idea behind using the larger sized mesh is to allow the smaller whitefish to pass through the net unmolested.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? There are too many pike in parts of the Koyukuk River drainage. Pike are excellent predators and this is leading to a potential decrease in salmon smolt survival, as well as less small mammals and waterfowl.

(STAFF COMMENTS)

11-2016 0556

PROPOSAL 143 – 5 AAC 01.244. Minto Flats Northern Pike Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Marv Hassebroek.

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSALS DO? This would reduce the subsistence bag and possession limit of northern pike in the Chatanika River drainage upstream from the confluence of the Chatanika River and Goldstream Creek to the Fairbanks Nonsubsistence Area Boundary (referred to as Chatanika SHA by proponent) from 10 fish per day and 20 in possession, to five fish per day and five in possession. Additionally, all northern pike 30 inches or longer would have to be returned to the water alive.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The subsistence fishing bag limit is 10 northern pike per day, with 20 in possession in the Chatanika River drainage upstream from the confluence of the Chatanika River and Goldstream Creek to the Fairbanks Nonsubsistence Area Boundary. There is no size limit on northern pike retained in the subsistence fishery.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? Subsistence fishing bag and possession limits for northern pike would mirror the sport fish regulations found in 5 AAC 74.044 (b)(2)(B). This would also require subsistence fishermen to release northern pike over 30 inches long, which is more restrictive than the sport fishing regulations in 5 AAC 74.044 (b)(2)(B). The harvest of northern pike may decrease a small amount.

BACKGROUND: The Chatanika River drainage upstream from the confluence of the Chatanika River and Goldstream Creek to the Fairbanks Nonsubsistence Area Boundary (Figure 143-1) is a popular northern pike subsistence fishing area due to the concentration of an overwintering population and good winter trail access. In 2010, the board established a subsistence bag limit of 10 northern pike per day, with 20 in possession for this portion of the Chatanika River. This area is open to sport fishing from June 1 to October 14, and the sport fish bag and possession limit is five fish per day, only 1 of which may be 30 inches or longer.

The Minto Flats northern pike subsistence and sport fisheries are managed in accordance with the *Minto Flats Northern Pike Management plans* (5 AAC 01.244 and 5 AAC 74.044). The purposes of the plans are to manage stocks consistent with sustained yield principles, provide a reasonable opportunity for the priority subsistence fishery, and provide a sport fishing opportunity. Under the management plan, the exploitation rate of northern pike by all users may not exceed 20% annually. If 750 or more northern pike are harvested from the Chatanika River drainage upstream of the confluence on the Chatanika River and Goldstream Creek after January 1, the sport fishery bag and possession limit will be reduced to two fish for the remainder of the calendar year. If 1,500 or more northern pike are harvested from this portion of the Chatanika River drainage after January 1 until these waters are free of ice, the winter fishery will be

closed for the remainder of the winter season. The majority of the subsistence harvest occurs in mid-February to mid-April.

The most recent population estimate of 16,045 northern pike over 16 inches long in Minto Flats was made in 2008. Based on this estimate, a 20% exploitation rate is equal to a harvest of 3,209 northern pike. The recent 5-year average annual combined subsistence and sport harvest of northern pike was 774 fish (Table 143-1), which is below the maximum 20% exploitation rate specified in the *Minto Flats Northern Pike Management Plan*. Since 2010, when the bag and possession limit was implemented in the Chatanika River drainage upstream of the confluence on the Chatanika River and Goldstream Creek, the subsistence northern pike harvest has not met or exceeded the 750 or 1,500 fish management action trigger points. Therefore, the current subsistence harvest levels and exploitation rate are consistent with the sustained yield principles in the management plan.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on the allocative aspects of this proposal. However, current regulations are maintaining the harvests at a sustainable level and there is no need to further restrict subsistence users. While the proposed harvest bag and possession changes would mirror current sport fishing regulations, the size limit would be more restrictive than sport fishing regulations. The board should consider whether adoption of this proposal still provides a meaningful priority for subsistence fishing, and a reasonable opportunity for success in taking northern pike for subsistence uses.

COST ANALYSIS: Approval of this proposal may result in additional direct costs for a private person to participate in the subsistence fishery if multiple trips are required to harvest similar amounts of pike for subsistence uses.

SUBSISTENCE REGULATION REVIEW:

1. Is this stock in a non-subsistence area? Yes, these northern pike stocks likely migrate through the Fairbanks Nonsubsistence Area (5 AAC 99.015(a)(4)).
2. Is the stock customarily and traditionally taken or used for subsistence? Yes: the board determined that freshwater fish species, including sheefish, whitefishes, lamprey, burbot, sucker, Arctic grayling, northern pike, and chars are associated with customary and traditional uses in the Yukon Area (5 AAC 01.236(a)(2)).
3. Can a portion of the stock be harvested consistent with sustained yield? Yes.
4. What amount is reasonably necessary for subsistence uses? While not in regulation, in 1997, the board found that 133,000 – 2,850,000 pounds of freshwater fishes was the amount reasonably necessary for subsistence uses in the Yukon Area.
5. Do the regulations provide a reasonable opportunity for subsistence uses? This is a board determination.

6. Is it necessary to reduce or eliminate other uses to provide a reasonable opportunity for subsistence use? This is a board determination.

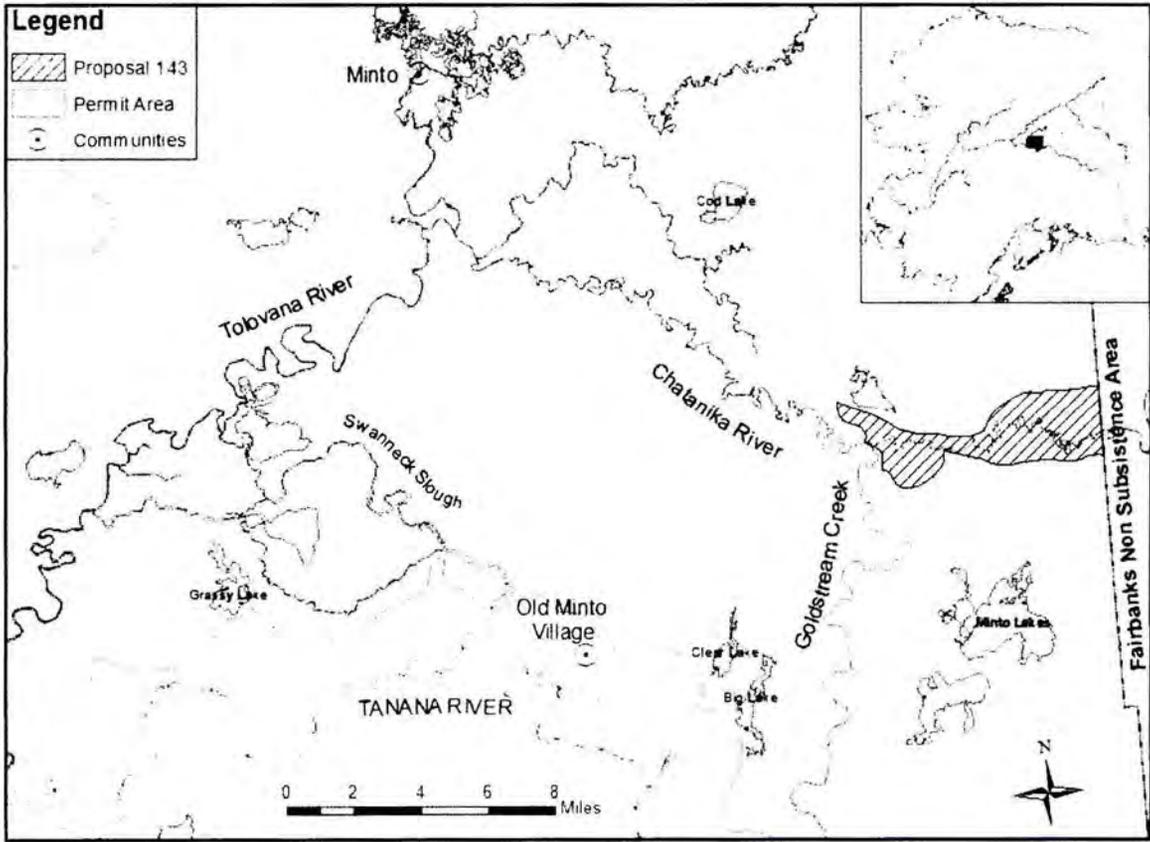


Figure 143-1.-Minto Flats northern pike subsistence fishing area.

Table 143-1.—Subsistence and sport fishing harvest of northern pike in Minto Flats complex^a, 2004–2015.

| Year | Permits Issued | %Permits Returned | Subsistence Harvest | Sport Harvest | Total Harvest |
|-------------------|----------------|-------------------|---------------------|---------------|---------------|
| 2005 | 79 | 87% | 386 | 2,052 | 2,438 |
| 2006 | 101 | 96% | 788 | 1,204 | 1,992 |
| 2007 | 118 | 92% | 1,837 | 1,809 | 3,646 |
| 2008 | 146 | 93% | 1,339 | 386 | 1,725 |
| 2009 | 112 | 96% | 563 | 873 | 1,436 |
| 2010 | 96 | 94% | 115 | 609 | 724 |
| 2011 | 70 | 99% | 100 | 422 | 522 |
| 2012 | 73 | 93% | 525 | 412 | 937 |
| 2013 | 77 | 96% | 231 | 382 | 613 |
| 2014 | 106 | 99% | 478 | 597 | 1,075 |
| 2015 ^b | 104 | 13% | 383 | ND | 383 |
| Total | 1,756 | ND | 14,325 | 12,070 | 26,395 |
| 2010–2014 Average | 84 | 96% | 290 | 484 | 774 |
| 2005–2014 Average | 98 | 95% | 636 | 875 | 1,511 |

Note: ND = no data.

^a Minto Flats complex includes Minto Flats lakes and flowing waters, Tolovana River drainage, and the Lower Chatanika River.

^b Data are preliminary and based on weekly call-ins. Permits expire 12/31/2015.

(4) all finfish other than salmon and herring, in the salt waters of the Yukon Area.

(b) The board finds that in the Yukon Area the following amounts of fish are reasonably necessary for subsistence uses:

- (1) king salmon: 45,500 — 66,704;
- (2) summer chum salmon: 83,500 — 142,192;
- (3) fall chum salmon: 89,500 — 167,900;
- (4) coho salmon: 20,500 — 51,980;
- (5) pink salmon: 2,100 — 9,700. (Eff. 5/15/93, Register 126; am 6/10/98, Register 146; am 6/17/2001, Register 158; am 5/19/2004, Register 170; am 7/13/2012, Register 203; am 4/13/2013, Register 206)

Authority: AS 16.05.251 AS 16.05.258

5 AAC 01.240. Marking and use of subsistence-taken salmon. (a) Repealed 8/14/87.

(b) Repealed 6/10/98.

(c) In Districts 1 — 3, from June 1 through July 1 a person may not possess king salmon taken for subsistence uses unless both tips (lobes) of the tail have been removed before the person conceals the salmon from plain view or transfers the salmon from the fishing site. A person may not sell or purchase salmon from which both tips (lobes) of the tail have been removed.

(d) In the Yukon River drainage, king salmon must be used primarily for human consumption and may not be targeted for dog food. Dried king salmon may not be used for dog food throughout the Yukon River drainage, except that whole fish that are unfit for human consumption, scraps, and fish under 16 inches in length may be fed to dogs. Whole king salmon caught incidentally during a subsistence salmon fishery in the following time periods and locations may also be fed to dogs:

- (1) after July 10, in the Koyukuk River drainage;
- (2) after July 20, in District 6 and the Tanana River drainage;
- (3) after August 10, in Subdistrict 5-D, upstream of Circle City. (In effect before 1986; am 4/18/86, Register 98; am 8/14/87, Register 103; am/readopt 5/15/93, Register 126; am 6/10/98, Register 146; am 7/21/99, Register 151; am 6/17/2001, Register 158; em am 5/29/2001 — 9/25/2001, Register 158; am 8/24/2002, Register 163; am 6/7/2007, Register 182)

Authority: AS 16.05.251 AS 16.05.258

Editor's note: At its February 23 — 27, 1993 meeting, the Board of Fisheries readopted 5 AAC 01.240(b) in its entirety without change, under ch. 1, SSSLA 1992 (the 1992 subsistence law), which repealed and reenacted AS 16.05.258.

5 AAC 01.244. Minto Flats Northern Pike Management Plan. (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 sport fishery is set out in 5 AAC 74.044.

(b) The department shall manage the Minto Flats northern pike subsistence 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 subsistence fishery:

(A) the open fishing season is from January 1 through December 31;

(B) there is no daily or annual bag limit, except that in the area described in (G) of this paragraph, the bag limit is 10 fish, and the possession limit is 20 fish;

(C) a person must obtain an ADF&G subsistence harvest permit before participating in the subsistence fishery and must have that permit in possession when participating in the fishery;

(D) gillnets may be used only from April 15 through October 14;

(E) a hook and line attached to a rod or pole may be used only when fishing through the ice;

(F) in the Chatanika River drainage, from the confluence of the Chatanika River and Goldstream Creek to an ADF&G regulatory marker approximately three river miles upstream of the confluence, subsistence fishing through the ice is closed;

(G) in the Chatanika River drainage, from an ADF&G regulatory marker approximately three river miles upstream of the confluence of the Chatanika River and Goldstream Creek to an ADF&G regulatory marker at the boundary of the Fairbanks Nonsubsistence Area (approximately one mile downstream from Murphy Dome Road).

(i) only single hooks may be used; and

(ii) if the subsistence harvest reports indicate that 1,500 or more northern pike have been harvested during the period from January 1 until these waters are free of ice, the commissioner shall close, by emergency order, these waters to fishing for northern pike through the ice. (Eff. 5/9/98, Register 146; am 6/17/2001, Register 158; am 3/14/2009, Register 189; am 5/19/2010, Register 194; am 5/22/2016, Register 218)

Authority: AS 16.05.060 AS 16.05.258
 AS 16.05.251

5 AAC 01.245. Restrictions on commercial fishermen. (a) Repealed 6/10/98.

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(C) allowing single-hook, artificial lures only or no bait, or both;

(D) allowing catch-and-release fishing only;

(E) a complete closure of the fishery.

(d) Special management waters are waters designated by regulation of the Board of Fisheries, where harvests are within sustained yield levels and where the management objectives include higher stock abundance or a need for a higher percentage of trophy-sized fish. Within special management areas, if the department determines that management objectives will not be met under existing regulatory provisions, the commissioner may, by emergency order, close the fishery and immediately reopen a fishery during which one or more of the following management measures apply:

(1) reduced fishing season;

(2) special gear restrictions;

(3) alternative size limits;

(4) catch-and-release fishing only.

(e) The department shall minimize potential conflicts with a subsistence fishery, or other fisheries that overlap the sport fishery, that harvest other fish within the same body of water. (Eff. 3/14/2009, Register 189)

Authority: AS 16.05.060

AS 16.05.251

5 AAC 74.044. Minto Flats Northern Pike Management Plan. (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 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;

(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 emer-

gency 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

(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. (Eff. 3/14/2009, Register 189; am 5/19/2010, Register 194)

Authority: AS 16.05.060

AS 16.05.251

5 AAC 74.055. Tanana River Area Wild Arctic Grayling Management Plan. (a) By employing a conservative harvest regime, the department shall manage wild Arctic grayling populations in the Tanana River Area for long-term sustained yield. Following sustained yield principles, the department may manage wild Arctic grayling fisheries to provide or maintain fishery qualities that are desired by sport anglers.

(b) In a sport fishery covered by this management plan, the commissioner, by emergency order, may take one or more of the management actions specified in this subsection if there are conservation or biological concerns for the sustainability of the fishery or for a stock harvested by that fishery. The concerns must arise from harvest, effort, or catch data for that fishery which has been derived from statewide harvest survey data, on-site creel survey data, stock status data, stock exploitation rates, or from inferential comparisons with other fisheries. The management actions are as follows:

(1) reduce the bag and possession limits;

(2) reduce fishing time;

(3) allowing only catch-and-release fishing;

(4) modify methods and means of harvest.

(c) To achieve sustained yield and provide diverse fishing opportunities, the board and department will manage wild Arctic grayling fisheries under one of three management approaches. The three management approaches are the

(1) regional management approach;

(2) conservative management approach; and

(3) special management approach.

(d) Regional management approach. Under the regional management approach, sport anglers may use baited or unbaited artificial lures and the bag and possession limit is five fish. The season is open year round, however there are fisheries where catch-and-release is imposed during part or all of the spawning period from April 1 through May 31.

(e) Conservative management approach. Under the conservative management approach, sport anglers may use baited or unbaited single-hook artificial lures. The bag and possession limit is two fish.