

**Fairbanks  
Fish & Game Advisory Committee**

**Interior Region  
Fish & Game Advisory Committees**

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Central	Middle Nenana River
Delta Junction	Middle Yukon River
Eagle	Minto-Nenana
Fairbanks	Ruby
GASH	Stony Holitna
Koyukuk River	Tanana-Rampart-Manley
Lake Minchumina	Upper Tanana Fortymile
McGrath	Yukon Flats

November 30, 2021

To: Alaska Board of Fisheries

Re: Proposal #33, Gulkana Rainbow Trout

Members of the Alaska Board of Fisheries.

At its November 17, 2021 meeting the Fairbanks area Fish & Game Advisory Committee (FAC) reconsidered Proposal #33 in light of comments from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

Klaus Wuttig, ADF&G, reported on abundance estimates. The Department believes exploitation rate (from this proposal) may impact catch rates and size composition. The Department numbers are based on 2005 data, with total population estimated at about 12,000. No retention of rainbows has been allowed since 1991. The last rainbow trout survey conducted by ADF&G on the Gulkana River was in 2005.

Member comments centered on the need to have an updated comprehensive survey on the status of Gulkana River rainbow trout and steelhead, noting that 16-year old data is not useful, especially since conditions on the Gulkana have changed significantly with restrictions on Chinook salmon. Historic harvest numbers on the Gulkana suggest that the river can support some rainbow harvest, but reliable data is first necessary. The AC acknowledges an error in the numbers cited in its proposal, likely the result of a simple typographical error.

Members suggested this might be a good project for the newly organized Alaska Board of Fisheries Research Committee to consider. Some members suggested a partnership with private organizations, such as Trout Unlimited, to conduct a survey as soon as possible.

Members further suggested a bag limit of one (1) rainbow might be beneficial in dealing with incidental catch during bait season for kings. A member who has a long history of fishing on the Gulkana noted that clusters of big rainbow, over 20", gathered at the outlet of Paxson Lake where there were spawning kings after the end of the sport fishing season. It was further noted that most years the boat trailers at Sourdough launch are very minimal.

Sincerely,



Kirk Schwalm

Chair Fairbanks Fish & Game Advisory Committee