

Chatanika Northern Pike Subsistence (2 proposals)

PROPOSAL 63

5 AAC 01.244. Minto Flats Northern Pike Management Plan.

Establish an annual bag limit of 20 northern pike and modify daily bag limit of fish greater than 30 inches in the Chatanika Harvest Area subsistence fishery, as follows:

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2 (B) There is no daily or annual bag limit, except that in the area described in (G) of this paragraph, the daily harvest limit per permit is 10 fish only one [TWO] of which may be 30 inches or greater in length, and the possession limit per permit is 20 fish only two [FOUR] of which may be 30 inches or greater in length, **and the annual bag limit is 20 fish only two of which may be 30 inches or greater in length;**

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The Chatanika River Winter subsistence Northern Pike fishery (CHA) harvests a significant number of Northern Pike from the Minto Flats complex. Fish harvest is biased heavily towards large females (fish > 30 inches), which provide a disproportionate contribution of eggs to the population (Gutierrez and Tyers 2020). In addition, the number of fish harvested in the CHA has led to restrictions in the sport fisheries during 2007, 2008, 2016, and 2021 (Gleason and Estensen 2018). Anecdotal reports from local cabin-owners suggests that fishing pressure has increased during the winter subsistence fisheries due to greater accessibility via snowmachine, and the likelihood of catching large pike has decreased in recent years. Increased selective harvest in the CHA has reduced the quality of sport fishing in the Minto Flats complex, yet sport fisheries pay the price for this selective harvest in the form of fishery restrictions and reduced likelihood of trophy fish. Additionally, excessive selective harvest can reduce the long-term resilience of a fishery, and the current harvest levels may not remain sustainable under future conditions (e.g., different water levels).

Gleason, C., and J. Estensen. 2018. An overview of Minto Flats northern pike subsistence and sport fisheries: a report to the Board of Fisheries. Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Special Publication No. 18-20, Anchorage.

Gutierrez, L., and M. Tyers. 2020. Investigations of length and sex in northern pike subsistence harvest from the Chatanika Harvest Area. Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Fishery Data Series No. 20-31, Anchorage.

PROPOSED BY: Will Samuel (HQ-F22-042)

PROPOSAL 64

5 AAC 01.244. Minto Flats Northern Pike Management Plan.

Modify the daily bag limit to require retention of the first 10 fish caught and length limit for northern pike in the Chatanika Harvest Area subsistence fishery, as follows:

I recommend the that the size restriction is done away with and replaced with the regulation stating: "Daily limit 10 pike, the first 10 fish over 24" must be kept; possession limit 20 pike."

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? I would like the board to address the size restriction of only keeping 2 pike over 30 inches for the Tolovana River drainage pike subsistence fishery.

My family can usually afford to make this 60 mile roundtrip journey once a year in the late winter or early spring. While the days are longer it is still usually still very cold and time is not a luxury we have on the river. Having to release fish because they exceed 30" after we already have two of this size is burdensome and restricts my families ability to harvest this important source of food.

PROPOSED BY: Ben Dobrovolny

(EF-F22-042)
