

PROPOSAL 194 - 5 AAC 57.122. Special provisions for the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Middle Section of the Kenai River Drainage Area.
Create a size limit for lake trout in Hidden Lake, as follows:

In Hidden Lake, the bag and possession limit for lake trout is one fish **under 16 inches of length** [with no size limit]

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Lake Trout are an extremely slow growing fish with a long life span that need a substantial amount of time to naturally grow. These fish are easily susceptible to population declines through changes in the environment and over-fishing. Hidden Lake was a top destination on the Kenai Peninsula for Lake Trout fishing that is in a steady decline in fishing quality, especially with fish in the 24 to 30-inch classes during the last couple of decades.

There has been little biological data available to manage the Lake Trout population within Hidden Lake. It would be more prudent to manage this fishery conservatively until further research and studies can be done to more accurately measure the overall population and sustainability of this fishery.

With the continued harvest of the largest fish within Hidden Lake the breeding stock will continue to be heavily diminished. This hardship on the overall Lake Trout population has resulted in a lower sustainable yield for recreational sport fishing purposes.

By allowing current regulations to continue the Lake Trout population will have very unfavorable conditions for older fish to properly grow and propagate. Without changes to the current regulations there is almost no chance to have a positive outcome in future Lake Trout populations within Hidden Lake.

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(EF-F16-012)
