

PROPOSAL 135 – 5 AAC 74.010. Seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Tanana River Area. Prohibit the use of set lines in Grizzly and Jack lakes, as follows:

Add **Grizzly Lake** and **Jack Lake** to the list of lakes in the Tanana River drainage sport fish regulations in which “Burbot set lines may not be used”.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? State sport fish general regulations regarding the use of set lines for burbot are not consistent for a localized group of five lakes which are known to support burbot populations. These lakes are located near Nabesna and the geologic divide between the Upper Copper River drainage and the Tanana River drainage. Copper, Tanada, and Sheep Lakes are in the Copper River drainage, while Jack and Grizzly lakes are in the Tanana River drainage. Access is primarily by snowmachine trails originating from the Nabesna Road. Trails then cross and interconnect these lakes.

General regulations of the Tanana River Area (Jack and Grizzly Lakes) allow the seasonal use of set lines in all but five lakes, whereas, the general regulations of the adjacent Upper Copper/Upper Susitna Area prohibit the use of set lines in all lakes (including Copper, Tanada, and Sheep lakes). Fishermen travelling through and among these lakes could easily be confused as to which regulations apply.

Burbot are relatively long-lived and slow growing making them potentially vulnerable to overexploitation in small water bodies. Conservation concerns could arise if sustained trends of increased harvests were to occur on these lakes. Set lines are known to be a highly effective means of catching burbot. Due to conservation concerns, state regulations have banned the use of set lines in all lakes of the adjacent Upper Copper/Upper Susitna Management Area since 1992.

Passage of this proposal will create burbot fishery regulations that are consistent for all lakes of this one localized area that are known to support burbot populations. It will standardize these regulations with those of the management area from which the fishery participants access the

lakes. It will also eliminate the incentive of utilizing unattended lines to target slow growing fish populations in the relatively small Grizzly and Jack Lakes.

PROPOSED BY: National Park Service (EF-C15-065)

PROPOSAL 136 – 5 AAC 74.010. Seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Tanana River Area. Allow only one fishing line per angler during the Fielding Lake winter fishery, as follows:

Under 5 AAC 74.010(7), add the following:

Only one closely attended line may be used when ice fishing

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Since approximately 2007 there has been a no bait restriction at Fielding Lake which has severe implications for those who enjoy ice fishing. The no bait restriction was implemented because harvests were exceeding an 80 fish a year recommended upper limit. A recent 2010-2011 stock assessment reached the conclusion that the 1999 estimate of mature lake trout was biased low resulting in an expanded population estimate. Harvest estimates since 2007 have been under half the upper limit set by the Department. Same years, far lower.

I believe there is room for compromise to allow reasonable ice fishing opportunities at Fielding Lake while limiting harvest to within the fair and appropriate levels set by the department.

If my other submitted proposal allowing a limited winter bait season is implemented, reducing the number of closely attended lines from two to one should also be implemented. The Lake Trout Management Plan indicates studies have shown that two lines can significantly increase catch rates. The Management Plan further discusses this alternative under their gear restriction section to limit harvest. Other studies indicate reducing the number of lines to one, very significantly increases the odds that jigging is the preferred fishing method. This has two very important results: first the catch rate can be significantly reduced, but not the opportunity, and second, mortality is reduced by better insuring lip caught fish.

If nothing changes, those who enjoy ice fishing at Fielding Lake will continue to have very limited opportunities to catch burbot and lake trout.

Other options considered:

- Keeping current regulations intact. My belief is this unreasonably limits fair opportunity when there are creative solutions available to promote opportunity and keep harvest within acceptable limits.

PROPOSED BY: Ethan Birkholz (EF-C15-051)

PROPOSAL 137 – 5 AAC 74.010. Seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Tanana River Area. Allow the use of bait during the winter fishery on Fielding Lake, as follows:

5 AAC 74.010(d)(7)(B) is amended to:

Modify the special regulations concerning bait, for Fielding Lake as follows:

The use of set lines is prohibited April 16-October 31: Only one unbaited, single hook, artificial lure may be used November 1-April 15: Only one single hook, artificial lure, bait may be used.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Since approximately 2007 there has been a no bait restriction at Fielding Lake which has severe implications for those who enjoy ice fishing. The no bait restriction was implemented because harvests were exceeding an 80 fish a year recommended quota. A recent 2010-2011 stock assessment reached the conclusion that the 1999 estimate of mature lake trout was biased low. In addition harvest estimates since 2007 have been under half the target quota. Same years, far lower.

I believe there is room for compromise to allow a limited winter season that allows bait, similar to nearby lakes at Summit and Paxson. A regulation allowing bait, but still prohibiting set lines from November 1 to April 15, will allow a reasonable opportunity to fish for lake trout as well as burbot and, I believe, still keep the lake trout fishery under the recommended harvest quota.

If nothing changes, those who enjoy ice fishing at Fielding Lake will have no opportunity to catch burbot and extremely limited success fishing for lake trout.

Other options considered:

- Keeping current regulations intact. My belief is this unreasonably limits fair opportunity.
- Changing size limit and harvest to one fish any size. My experience fishing since the minimum 26 inch rule went into effect, is the number and size of mature lake trout has increased. I wish to keep this as is.
- Catch and release only. This would be acceptable to me, but I feel is unwarranted given the current sustained fish population.
- Further shortening a proposed winter bait regulation, say from January 1 to March 31. I would be open to this if it would be more palatable, but honestly feel it is not needed.
- Adding a "one tended line" restriction. Studies indicate this greatly increases the odds that jigging is the preferred fishing method which will reduce mortality. This should be added and is in fact mentioned in the lake trout management plan as a possible alternative.

PROPOSED BY: Ethan Birkholz

(EF-C15-050)

PROPOSAL 138 – 5 AAC 74.010. Seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Tanana River Area. Allow retention of Arctic grayling on the Chena River, as follows:

This proposal would allow a limited harvest of Arctic grayling less than 12 inches from June 1 to July 15 from a marker placed by the department 500 yards downstream of the Nordale Road Bridge to the confluence with the Tanana River including Piledriver Slough. From June 1 – July 15 the Chena River would remain closed to grayling retention above the Nordale Bridge. From July 16 to May 31 the entire Chena River would be closed to all grayling retention. The normal gear restrictions would apply. This regulation will sunset after three years.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Retention of grayling in a portion of the Chena River drainage.

The Chena River has been catch and release for Arctic grayling since 1991 (by EO and then regulation). The department has conducted virtually no studies on the population of Arctic grayling since 2005. The last stock assessments and abundance estimates are now 10 years old. The department has no funding for new work. The fishery is touted as one of the best “large” grayling streams on the road system and users report large congregations of fish on several stretches of the river.

The Fairbanks AC has supported the restriction to catch and release, but it was with the expectancy that the department would keep track of this population so that some harvest of grayling could be allowed without harm to the population. Anglers now concentrate the catch and release fishing at access points. The estimated mortality for the catch and release fishery is 5% to 7%. Because a large number of anglers on the lower river are children, visitors and new sports fishermen, some of the fish are treated pretty roughly in the catch and release fishery.

Our proposal would allow a very limited harvest. The limits would be both by season, size and bag limit and a sunset to the harvest regulation. The AC would like the department to have some information on the harvest because it has been so long since harvest was allowed; there is no data on the impact of limited harvest to the population. A three year “trial” would give the managers some information to work with. If this waterway is so popular it can be advertised in numerous “fish Alaska” type publications it should be studied for the potential for a return to some harvest. There is absolutely no need for the entire Chena River to catch and release forever. For example, the new Fairbanks hatchery can add fish to the system if the population starts to drop again.

PROPOSED BY: Fairbanks Fish and Game Advisory Committee (HQ-F15-067)

PROPOSAL 139 – 5 AAC 74.010. Seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Tanana River Area. Update the Tanana River Area stocked waters regulation, as follows:

5 AAC 74.010(c)(29) is amended to read:

(29) in stocked waters, the bag, possession, and size limit for rainbow trout, Arctic char/Dolly Varden, landlocked salmon, and Arctic grayling is 10 of all stocked species combined, of which no more than one fish may be 18 inches or greater in length; for the purposes of this paragraph, "stocked waters" include [ARTILLERY LAKE,] Backdown Lake, Ballaine Lake, Bathing Beauty Pond, Bear Lake (Eielson Air Force Base), Big "D" Pond, Birch Lake, Bluff Cabin Lake, Bolio Lake, Brodie Lake, Bullwinkle Lake, [CAVALRY LAKE,] Chena Lake, Chet Lake, CHSR 25.0 Mile Pit, CHSR 30.0 Mile Pit, CHSR 42.8 Mile Pit (Red Squirrel Pit), CHSR 45.5 Mile Pit, CHSR 47.9 Mile Pit, Coal Mine Road #5, Craig Lake, **Cushman Lake**, Dick's Pond, Doc Lake, Donna Lake, Donnelly Lake, Forrest Lake, Four Mile Lake, Fourteen Mile Lake, Geskakmina Lake, Ghost Lake, Grayling Lake [,] (Eielson Air Force Base), Hidden Lake (Eielson Air Force Base), Hidden Lake (Tetlin NWR.), [HORSESHOE LAKE,] "J" Lake, Jan Lake, Johnson Pit #2, [KENNA LAKE,] Ken's Pond, Kids Fishing Pond, [KIMBERLY LAKE,] Last Lake, Lisa Lake, Little Donna Lake, Little Lost Lake, Lost Lake, [LUKE LAKE,] Lundgren Pond, Manchu Lake, Mark Lake, Monte Lake, Monterey Lake, Moose Lake (Eielson Air Force Base), Mosquito Creek Lake, Mullins Pit, Nenana City Pond, Nickel Lake, [NO MERCY LAKE,] Nordale #2, North Chena Pond, North Pole Pond, North Twin Lake, Olnes Pond, Otto Lake, Parks 261 Pond, Paul's Pond, Polaris Lake, Quartz Lake, Rangeview Lake, Rapids Lake, Richardson Hwy. 28 Mile Pit, Richardson Hwy. 31 Mile Pit, Richardson Hwy. 81 Mile Pit, [ROCKHOUND LAKE,] Shaw Pond, Sheefish Lake, Sirlin Drive Pond, [SOUTH JOHNSON LAKE,] South Twin Lake, Steese Hwy. 28.8 Mile Pit, Steese Hwy. 29.5 Mile Pit, Steese Hwy. 31.6 Mile Pit, Steese Hwy. 33.5 Mile Pit, Steese Hwy. 34.6 Mile Pit, Steese Hwy. 35.8 Mile Pit, Steese Hwy. 36.6 Mile Pit, Stringer Rd. Pond, [STRYKER LAKE,] Triangle Lake, Wainwright #6, Weasel Lake, West Iksgiza Lake, Z Pit (Chena Floodway);

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? In conjunction with each Alaska Board of Fisheries cycle, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game reviews stocked waters to ensure consistency between the *Statewide Stocking Plan for Recreational Fisheries*, Tanana River Area stocked waters regulations, and the *Tanana River Area Stocked Waters Management Plan* (5 AAC 74.065). Stocked waters may be removed from the stocking plan, no longer stocked, and removed from the corresponding regulations due to a loss of public access, poor fish growth or survival, or insufficient fishing effort. As new waters are identified and included in the stocking plan they are added to the regulations.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F15-049)

PROPOSAL 140 – 5 AAC 73.010. Seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Yukon River Area. Repeal Yukon River Area rainbow trout regulations, as follows:

5 AAC 73.010(b)(4) is repealed:
 (b) ...
 ...

(4) **repealed** / / [RAINBOW TROUT: THE BAG AND POSSESSION LIMIT IS TWO FISH, OF WHICH ONLY ONE FISH MAY BE 20 INCHES OR GREATER IN LENGTH];

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Current Yukon River Area sport fishing regulations include a bag and possession limit for rainbow trout. Wild or stocked populations of rainbow trout are not present in the Yukon River drainage. The species has not been captured or observed during department assessment projects or reported in the Statewide Harvest Survey. The current regulation imposes unnecessary language for a species that is not present in the Yukon River drainage and may cause confusion among sport anglers who may expect to catch rainbow trout in the Yukon River drainage since there is a bag and possession limit in regulation.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F15-050)
