

# MEMORANDUM

## State of Alaska

Department of Fish and Game  
Division of Sport Fish

TO: Glenn Haight, Executive Director  
Board of Fisheries, Juneau

DATE: January 17, 2020

PHONE NO: (907) 267-2150

FROM: David Rutz, Division Director  
Division of Sport Fish, Anchorage

SUBJECT: Request Consent to use Rotenone

Per Alaska Statute (AS 16.35.200), the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Sport Fish, requests Alaska Board of Fisheries consent to use rotenone to eradicate non-indigenous northern pike from Anderson and Kings Lakes in Wasilla. Division personnel plan to apply rotenone to these lakes in October 2020. Under the above statute, northern pike are considered “predatory animals” that have eliminated all sport fish species in these lakes. Removing the illegally introduced pike from these lakes will allow for fishery restoration in these lakes and prevent this invasive species from spreading and causing irrevocable harm to salmon and trout fisheries throughout the Cottonwood Creek drainage and other vulnerable waters in the Knik Arm basin. To date, the Division has successfully used rotenone to remove invasive northern pike populations from over 20 water bodies on the Kenai Peninsula and in Anchorage.

Several division biologists received formal training in the correct application of rotenone from the National Conservation Training Center and the American Fisheries Society and are also certified to apply pesticides in Alaska. Use of this chemical for fish removal is widespread in the lower 48, is not dangerous for non-gill breathing organisms at treatment concentrations, does not enter groundwater and does not persist in the aquatic environment. Rotenone kills fish by inhibiting a biochemical process that allows fish to utilize oxygen during cellular respiration.

The Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation issued a general permit for the use of rotenone in Alaska last August which provides authorization for treatments such as these. Pending, also, the approval by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and receipt of a ‘Finding of No Significant Impact’ document to conclude the NEPA process for this project, the Division proposes to apply rotenone in early October of this year. These treatments will take approximately two days to complete. Northern pike are the dominant species in these two lakes, although threespine stickleback and longnose sucker are also present. Upon confirming that the northern pike have been eradicated from the rotenone treatments, native sticklebacks and suckers will be relocated to these lakes from other Cottonwood Creek drainage lakes, and hatchery-produced rainbow trout and/ or coho salmon will be annually stocked. The intention is to restore recreational fishing opportunities in these lakes while preventing the spread of this invasive species to other vulnerable waters.

The Division respectfully requests Board of Fisheries consent to use rotenone in Anderson and Kings lakes. If approved, please ask the Chairman to provide a memo of their consent.

Please contact Parker Bradley (746-6328), Kristine Dunker (267-2889), or Sam Ivey (746-6300) if you or board members have any questions or want additional information. Thank you.