

PROPOSAL 228

5 AAC 60.122. Special provisions for the seasons, bag, possession, annual, and size limits, and methods and means for the Knik Arm Drainages Area.

Prohibit fishing while wading in Fish Creek, as follows:

(5)

(a)(5)(new) In Fish Creek, fishing while wading is prohibited downstream from a department marker located approximately 0.1 mi below the Knik-Goose Bay Road from 2.5 hours before high tide through the time of high tide, according to the NOAA Anchorage Tide Tables for Anchorage.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Fish Creek is open to sport fishing on weekends during the coho salmon run. Sport fishing is allowed starting on the second Saturday in August through the end of December. However, fishing usually terminates when the run stops in September. Coho salmon are sight feeders.

Nearly all of the sport fishers fishing for coho salmon in Fish Creek during this time use lures as terminal tackle. There is very little to no use of bait in this stream. I have been fishing this stream since 1984. Recently, the number of fishers fishing this weekend fishery has increased dramatically. A very few of these fishers wade in the stream to catch the incoming tide and the migrating coho salmon. Normally, there is only one or two fisher who wade in the stream during the incoming tide. Nearly all of the fishers are fishing from the bank. Fishing while wading within the intertidal area of Fish Creek dislodges so much glacial flour (mud) that it causes great turbidity downstream of the wading fisher. This turbidity is so great that it takes away the fishing opportunity from the fishers on the bank. Because of the extreme turbidity caused by the fisher wading in this stream within the intertidal zone, the coho salmon cannot see and therefore hit the lures. The opportunity to catch coho salmon is markedly reduced by this turbidity, nearly to zero.

I would like the Board to prohibit fishing while wading in Fish Creek for two and a half hours before high tide through the time of high tide. These two and a half hours would allow more catching opportunity for the vast majority of the fishers who fish from the bank. Wading above the intertidal zone does not cloud the water. Therefore, I suggest that the Board prohibit fishing while wading in Fish Creek downstream of a department marker set at approximately 0.1 mile below the Knik-Goose Bay Road, or below the road culvert for the period 2.5 hours before high tide through high tide, according to the NOAA Tide Tables for Anchorage.

PROPOSED BY: Gene Sandone

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