

PROPOSAL 65

5 AAC 74.010. Seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Tanana River Area.

Require retention of sport caught salmon, if removed from the water, in the Tanana River Area, as follows:

(b) Except as otherwise specified in (c) and (d) of this section, the following are the general bag, possession, and size limits and means for finfish in the waters of the Tanana River Area:

(1) king salmon 20 inches or greater in length: the bag and possession limit is one fish, **as follows;**

(A) in all waters, a king salmon that is removed from the water must be retained and becomes part of the bag limit of the person that originally hooked the fish; a person may not remove a king salmon from the water before releasing the fish;

(2) salmon, other than king salmon: the bag and possession limit is three fish, with no size limit **as follows;**

(A) in all waters, a salmon, including a king salmon as specified in (1)(A) of this subsection, that is removed from the water must be retained and becomes part of the bag limit of the person that originally hooked the fish; a person may not remove a salmon from the water before releasing the fish;

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? During the past several years, runs of Chinook, coho, and chum salmon throughout the Yukon and Tanana drainages have not met escapement goals, resulting in subsistence and sport fishing closures. The sport fishing community that enjoys fishing for salmon species for food and recreation, and also enjoys catching other fish species such as Arctic grayling that benefit from the marine-derived nutrients provided by healthy salmon runs, wishes to contribute towards minimizing stress and mortality of salmon species that can be caused through catch-and-release angling. Scientific studies have shown that removing fish from the water, thereby depriving them of oxygen, is the main cause of catch-and-release stress and mortality. Therefore, it is proposed that regulations be adopted throughout the Tanana drainage in which anglers may not remove a salmon from the water if they are not retaining it as part of their bag limit. Similar regulations are in place in the Susitna River drainage of Southcentral Alaska for Chinook and coho salmon, with the goal to minimize catch-and-release stress on these popular and important food fishes. If this regulation is adopted, sport fishermen can do their part to facilitate the rehabilitation of salmon stocks in the Yukon and Tanana River drainages. This will help ensure that subsistence fishers regain food security associated with catching salmon, and will enhance opportunities for sport fishers to catch salmon into the future, for sustenance and for recreation.

PROPOSED BY: Midnight Sun Fly Casters

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