

PROPOSAL 72 – 5 AAC 57.120. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, annual, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai River Drainage Area. Amend general provisions for lakes and ponds of the Kenai River drainage to restore winter ice fisheries for landlocked coho salmon less than 16 inches in length, as follows:

5 AAC 57.120(a)(4) is amended to read:

- (4) salmon, other than king salmon,
 - (A) 16 inches or greater in length, as follows:

...

- (ii) coho salmon may be taken in the Lower Section only from July 1 – November 30 and in the Middle **Section** [AND UPPER SECTIONS] only from July 1 – October 31; a person after taking and retaining a bag limit of coho salmon 16 inches or greater in length from the Kenai River may continue to sport fish only from the Soldotna Bridge upstream to the ADF&G regulatory markers at the outlet of Skilak Lake;

...

- (B) less than 16 inches in length [MAY BE TAKEN FROM JANUARY 1 – DECEMBER 31]; bag and possession limit of 10 fish, **may be taken as follows:**

- (i) sockeye, pink, and chum salmon may be taken from January 1 – December 31;**

- (ii) coho salmon may be taken in the Lower Section only from July 1 – November 30 and in the Middle Section only from July 1 – October 31, except that coho salmon may be taken in lakes and ponds, excluding Skilak Lake, from January 1 – December 31;**

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Select lakes in the lower and middle section of the Kenai River Drainage Area can become temporarily landlocked from year to year between high water events. Under these circumstances the typical life history of coho salmon is interrupted to the extent that the fish do not migrate to sea and remain to become resident freshwater fish. Historically, coho salmon fishing season was open year round and the public harvested these fish during the winter while fishing through the ice. Changes to coho salmon fishing seasons for the Kenai River precluded the harvest of coho salmon less than 16 inches during the winter in these select lakes. Changing the regulation will allow harvest of landlocked coho salmon during the winter.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F16-141)
