

**PROPOSAL 63**

**5 AAC 01.244. Minto Flats Northern Pike Management Plan.**

Establish an annual bag limit of 20 northern pike and modify daily bag limit of fish greater than 30 inches in the Chatanika Harvest Area subsistence fishery, as follows:

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2 (B) There is no daily or annual bag limit, except that in the area described in (G) of this paragraph, the daily harvest limit per permit is 10 fish only **one** [TWO] of which may be 30 inches or greater in length, and the possession limit per permit is 20 fish only **two** [FOUR] of which may be 30 inches or greater in length, **and the annual bag limit is 20 fish only two of which may be 30 inches or greater in length;**

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** The Chatanika River Winter subsistence Northern Pike fishery (CHA) harvests a significant number of Northern Pike from the Minto Flats complex. Fish harvest is biased heavily towards large females (fish > 30 inches), which provide a disproportionate contribution of eggs to the population (Gutierrez and Tyers 2020). In addition, the number of fish harvested in the CHA has led to restrictions in the sport fisheries during 2007, 2008, 2016, and 2021 (Gleason and Estensen 2018). Anecdotal reports from local cabin-owners suggests that fishing pressure has increased during the winter subsistence fisheries due to greater accessibility via snowmachine, and the likelihood of catching large pike has decreased in recent years. Increased selective harvest in the CHA has reduced the quality of sport fishing in the Minto Flats complex, yet sport fisheries pay the price for this selective harvest in the form of fishery restrictions and reduced likelihood of trophy fish. Additionally, excessive selective harvest can reduce the long-term resilience of a fishery, and the current harvest levels may not remain sustainable under future conditions (e.g., different water levels).

Gleason, C., and J. Estensen. 2018. An overview of Minto Flats northern pike subsistence and sport fisheries: a report to the Board of Fisheries. Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Special Publication No. 18-20, Anchorage.

Gutierrez, L., and M. Tyers. 2020. Investigations of length and sex in northern pike subsistence harvest from the Chatanika Harvest Area. Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Fishery Data Series No. 20-31, Anchorage.

**PROPOSED BY:** Will Samuel

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