

PROPOSAL 248

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.

Restrict Big Lake Arctic char to catch-and-release in the Fish Creek drainage as follows:

5 AAC 60.122(a)(5)(G) is amended to read:

...

(G) [THE BAG AND POSSESSION LIMIT FOR ARCTIC CHAR/DOLLY VARDEN IS ONE FISH, WHICH MUST BE 20 INCHES OR GREATER IN LENGTH;] **Arctic char may not be retained or possessed;**

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Review of Statewide Harvest Survey (SWHS) data shows a decline in the abundance of Arctic Char, particularly of large fish over 20 inches in length. Nonretention would maximize recruitment into mature age classes and maximize spawning events to help rebuild the stock. The department has been issuing emergency orders to restrict sport fishing for Arctic char in Big Lake to catch-and-release only for the past two calendar years.

Mirror and Flat lakes have direct connections with Big Lake, allowing migration and sharing of fish between lakes. Resident species such as Arctic Char and burbot in Big Lake are no longer protected by conservative regulation when they migrate to neighboring Mirror and Flat lakes.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game

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