

Submitted By; Nanci Morris Lyon

Proposal 4 – I would support the following substitute language for this proposal;

Notwithstanding 5 AAC 75.995 (36), in the following areas which have been designated fly fishing only in the Southwest Alaska Rainbow Trout Management Plan, Lower Talarik Creek, Brooks River, Copper River drainage, Gibraltar River drainage, Moraine Creek drainage, Agulukpuk River, "bait" means any substance applied to fishing gear or placed in fresh water by a person for the purpose of attracting fish by scent, including fish eggs in any form, natural or preserved animal, fish, fish oil, shellfish, or insect parts, natural or processed vegetable matter and natural or synthetic chemicals, from June 8th through October 31st.

I strongly support the spirit of this proposal and have been asked to represent the proposal in the absence of the original author who could not participate in the meeting. I feel his original arguments are strong and would also like to point out that a no chumming regulation is currently in place on Federal Park Service Lands.

36 CFR 2.3(d)(3) The following are prohibited:

(3) Chumming or placing preserved or fresh fish eggs, fish roe, food, fish parts, chemicals, or other foreign substances in fresh waters for the purpose of feeding or attracting fish in order that they may be taken.

I also recognize that in order not to accidentally involve folks who are incidentally cleaning fish in an area that is being fished, we will need to carefully review any final language of this proposal, but I am fairly confident by using the date restrictions suggested, we will eliminate this issue.

I have attached the relevant portion of the Management Plan and feel it might also benefit us to include some of the waters listed in figure 10 as well, but want to make sure we can come to agreement with all parties. If agreement could be reached, I urge adoption of these waters too.

SOUTHWEST ALASKA RAINBOW TROUT MANAGEMENT PLAN

In February 1990, the BOF adopted regulations implementing a comprehensive management plan for rainbow trout in the area previously known as the Southwest Alaska Management Area. This area included the BBMA; the waters flowing into Kuskokwim Bay from Cape Newenham to the outlet of the Kuskokwim River; and the Kuskokwim River and tributaries from the Aniak River to Kuskokwim Bay (ADF&G 1990). Still in force, this plan is not a regulation but is used as a policy for guiding the BOF and the public. It provides a clear understanding of the underlying principles by which rainbow trout stocks are to be managed and provides guidance for the BOF in developing future regulations. In 1998, the BOF adopted *Criteria for Establishing Special Management Areas for Trout* (5 AAC 75.013). This regulation embodies most of the criteria that originated, and is still used, in the Southwest Alaska Rainbow Trout Management Plan.

Philosophy of the Plan

The overriding philosophy of the Southwest Alaska Rainbow Trout Management Plan is one of conservative wild stock management. Conservative wild stock management does not necessarily preclude limited harvest of rainbow trout for food or trophies. However, maximum yield principles which emphasize harvest are ruled out. Additionally, under a philosophy that emphasizes wild trout management, mitigating losses of wild stocks through enhancement or stocking is not considered a desirable management alternative.

Conservative wild stock management is guided by both biological considerations and social concerns. Growth in the region's rainbow trout sport fisheries is inevitable, but by managing the area's wild rainbow trout stocks conservatively, the potential for serious long-term resource problems is minimized. From a social perspective, conservative wild stock management is consistent with the priorities of most of the public presently using the resource. The Southwest Alaska Rainbow Trout Management Plan contains three policies which are intended to protect the biological integrity of the region's wild trout stocks and maximize their recreational benefit and economic potential. The policies guide the development of sport fishing regulations and provide ADF&G management biologists, BOF members, and the public with clear direction as to how rainbow trout fisheries in the BBMA should be managed. The three policies are as follows:

- **Policy I:** Native rainbow trout populations will be managed to maintain historic size and age compositions and at stock levels sufficient such that stocking is not needed to enhance or supplement the wild population.
- **Policy II:** A diversity of sport fishing opportunities for wild rainbow trout should be provided through establishment of special management areas by regulation. Selection of areas for special management will be based on criteria to be adopted by the Board of Fisheries.
- **Policy III:** Management strategies should be consistent with the prudent economic development of the state's recreational sport fishing industry while at the same time acknowledging the intrinsic value of this fishery resource to the people of Alaska.

Plan Implementation

Regulations based on the Southwest Alaska Rainbow Trout Management Plan were adopted by the BOF in February 1990. These regulations were designed to implement the three management policies contained in the rainbow trout management plan. Specifically, the Board:

- Expanded the Wild Trout Zone from the Iliamna drainage to include the drainages of Bristol Bay and Kuskokwim Bay and the Kuskokwim River from Aniak River downstream.
- Established eight catch-and-release areas in the Bristol Bay Management Area and three catch-and-release areas in the Lower Kuskokwim Management Area (Figure 10).
- Established six artificial fly-only/catch-and-release-only areas (Figure 11).
- Established 11 unbaited single-hook artificial lure only areas to protect rainbow trout stocks (Figure 12, drainages 1-10).

Adoption of regulations implementing the management policies contained in this plan was not expected to be a one-time effort. Rather, policy implementation was understood to be a long-term process, with the policies being used as the framework for development of a very important and unique resource. This has been the case and special management regulations have since been adopted using this process for the Kvichak River in Bristol Bay, and the Kanektok, Kwethluk, Kasigluk, and Kisaralik rivers in the Kuskokwim area during the BOF meetings held in the fall and winter of 1997. This plan has also proved to be a useful guide for rainbow trout management in other parts of the state.

BRISTOL BAY RAINBOW TROUT STUDIES

During 2009, the first year of a long-term study of Lower Talarik Creek rainbow trout was funded by the Division of Sport Fish. The project involves identifying critical habitat areas and estimation of abundance and dynamic rates (e.g. survival, cause-specific mortality, movement, etc.) of spawning rainbow trout in Lower Talarik Creek.

LOWER TALARIK CREEK

Fishery Description

Lower Talarik Creek, located at the northwest corner of Lake Iliamna, is renowned for its high quality rainbow trout sport fishery. The creek is relatively small and most anglers only fish along the first 2 miles above its entrance into Lake Iliamna. The large fish, for which Lower Talarik Creek is so famous, enter the creek from Iliamna Lake to feed on salmon eggs and carcasses in the fall. The sport fishery takes advantage of this migration and is most active from mid-August until late September or October. Most anglers fishing Lower Talarik Creek are guided nonresidents who make daily fly-in trips from the many lodges operating in the Lake Iliamna area. From 10 to 30 anglers can be accommodated at any given time in the lower portion of the creek that is commonly fished.

In 1992, a Native land claim had the potential to eliminate public access to this world-class rainbow fishery. Through an agreement with the claimant, the Nature Conservancy (TNC) obtained the land and coordinated a land management agreement with ADF&G and the Alaska Department of Natural Resources. One stipulation of the agreement was to create a Special Use Area along the lower reaches of Lower Talarik Creek that would allow public access. After extensive discussions with local leaders, the Special Use Area was created in August 1999. In the spring of 2001, the Nature Conservancy initiated a process to convey these lands to the state for management. The Department of Natural Resources Realty section has finalized the transfer.

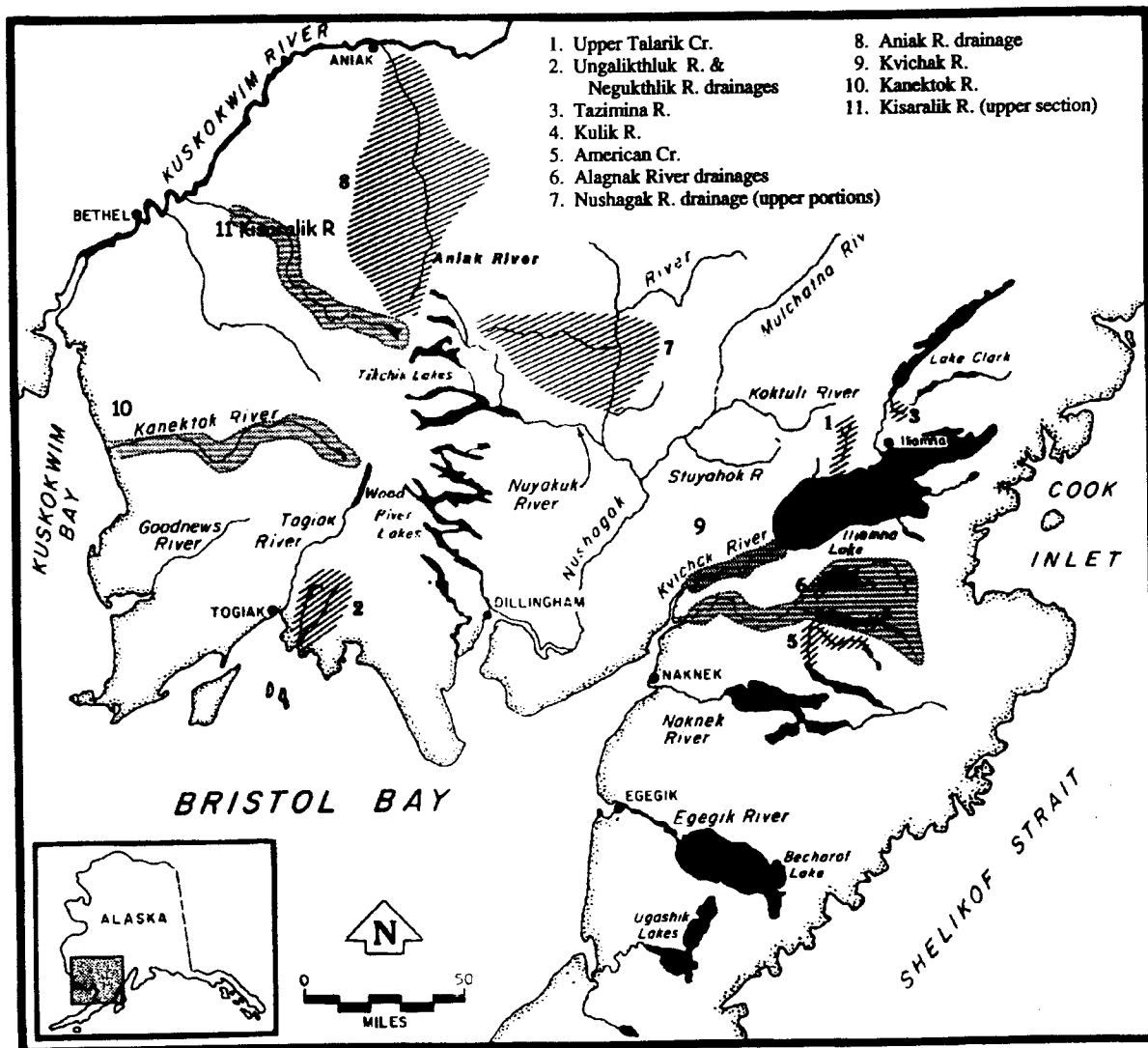


Figure 10.—Catch-and-release special management areas for rainbow trout in the Bristol Bay Sport Fish Management Area.

Harvest and Effort

Sport fishing effort and harvest on Lower Talarik Creek rainbow trout was first estimated with onsite creel surveys from 1970 through 1976 (Table 11). Annual harvest ranged from a high of 433 fish in 1971 to 73 fish in 1974. Creel surveys conducted during the fall fisheries of 1987, 1990, 1991, and 1993 through 2005 found effort was at the upper range of, but not significantly different from, the levels observed in the 1970s (Table 11). Low catch and effort in 1997 and 2001 are due to the short duration of surveys those years.

Based on the SWHS, effort on Lower Talarik Creek has been relatively constant at 350 to 900 angler-days per year. Harvests of Lower Talarik creek rainbow trout were less than 100 fish annually since 1977 and were virtually nonexistent after 1985 (Mills 1979-1980, 1981a-b, 1982-1994; Howe et al. 1995, 1996, 2001 a-d; Walker et al. 2003; Jennings et al. 2004, 2006 a-b, 2007, 2009 a-b, *In prep*; and unpublished 2008 data, Gretchen Jennings, SWHS project manager, ADF&G, Division of Sport Fish, Anchorage).

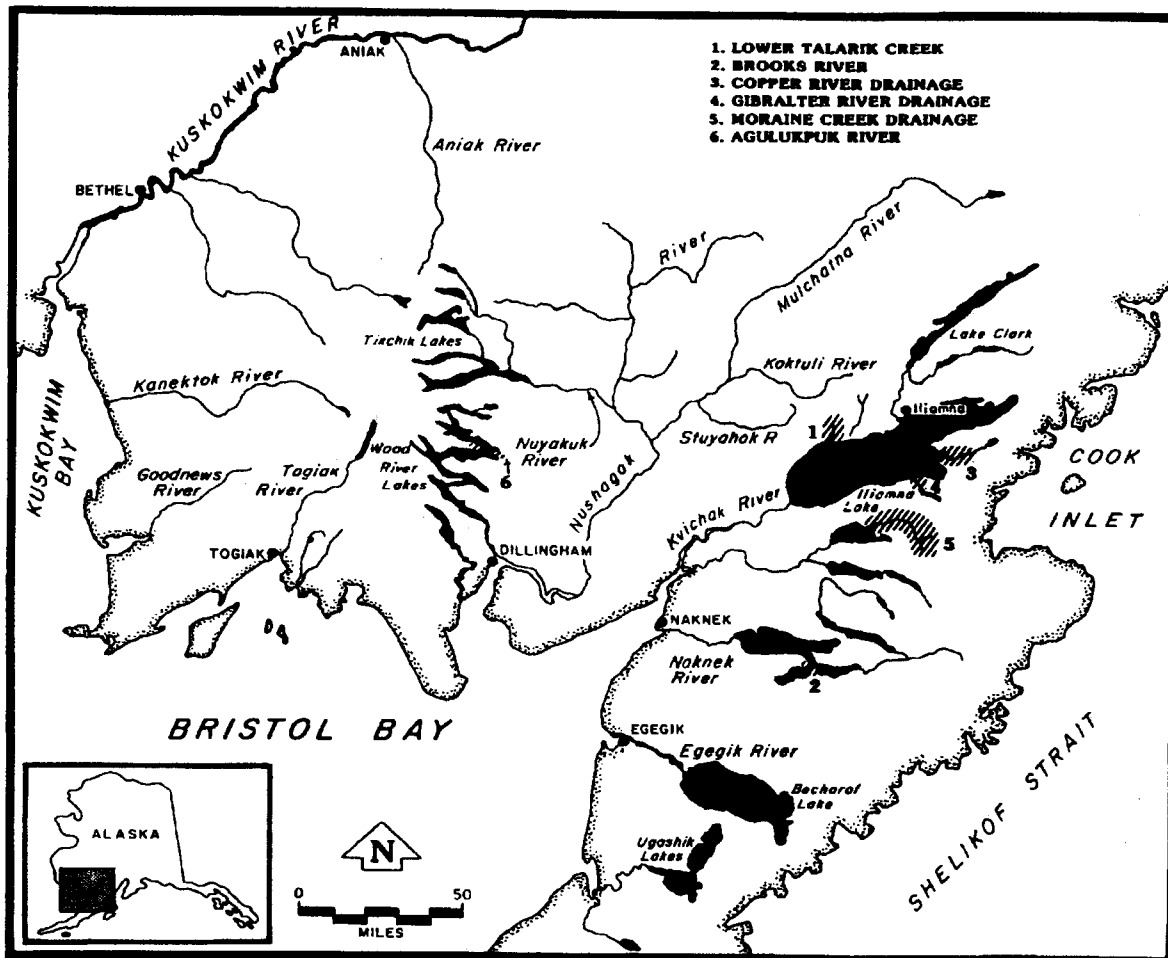


Figure 11.—Fly-only/catch-and-release special management areas for rainbow trout in the Bristol Bay Sport Fish Management Area.