



WCS

Healthy  
Ecosystems



Healthy  
Fish

*Mercury and PFAS in Brooks Range Rivers*

## What was tested?

Filets from Arctic grayling, northern pike, slimy sculpin, whitefish, and longnose suckers were collected in 2023 and 2024 by the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) and analyzed to see the levels of heavy metals (including mercury) and PFAS (artificially produced chemicals found in fire fighting foam). River sediment, aquatic vegetation, and invertebrates were also tested.

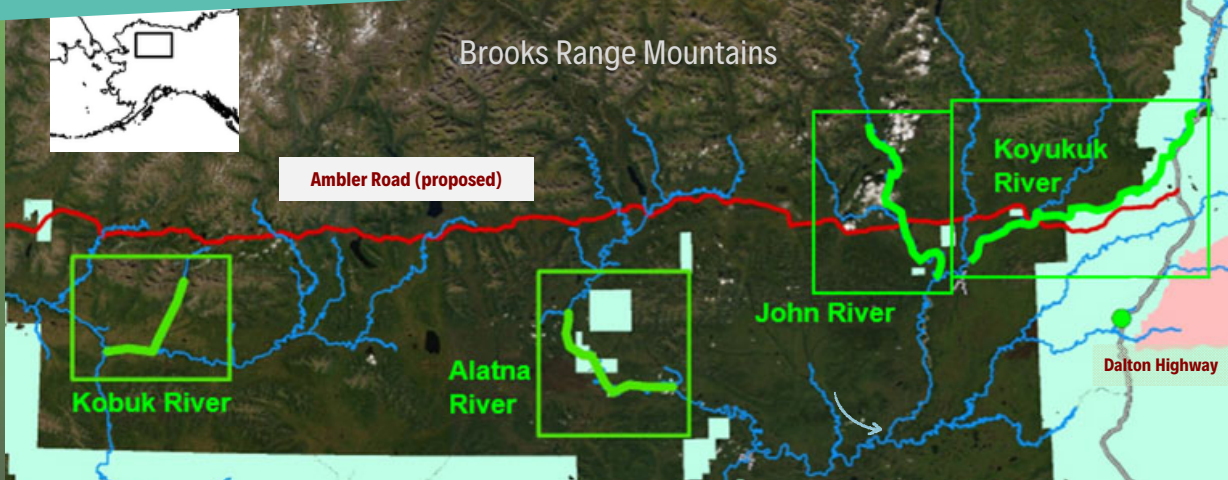
Fish drying along the Kobuk River



Alatna River northern pike

These were assessed to get an idea of the current amount of contaminants in aquatic ecosystems, in case of future development, such as mines, roads or infrastructure. A secondary goal was to inform people about the health of the fish they are eating.

## Which rivers were studied?



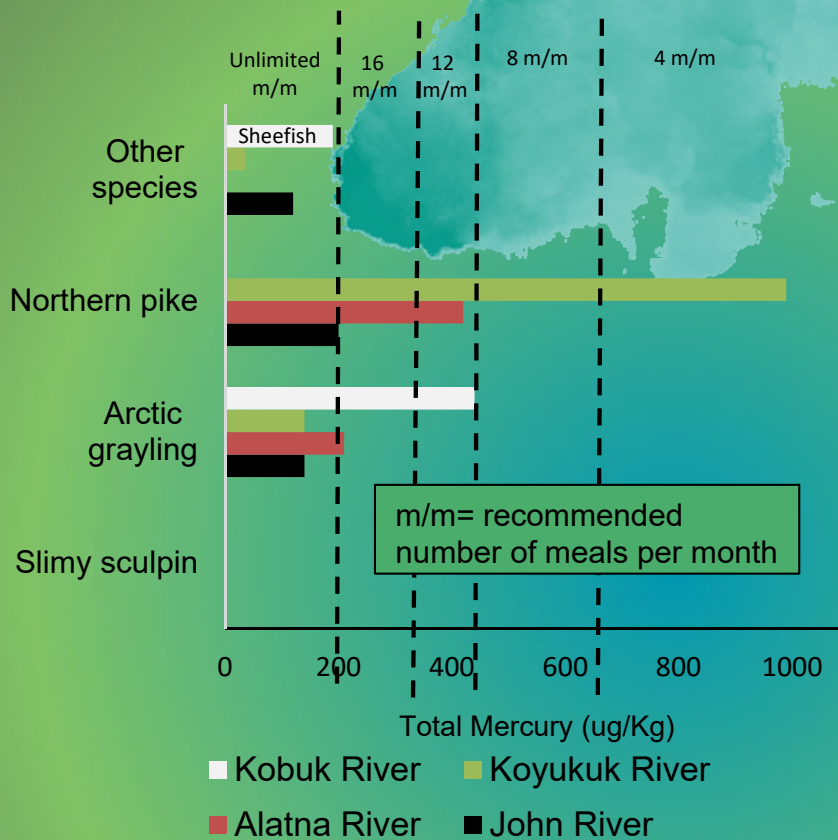


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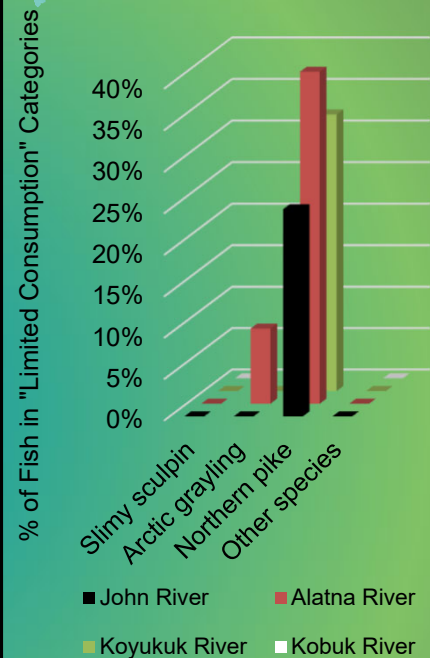
## What were the results?



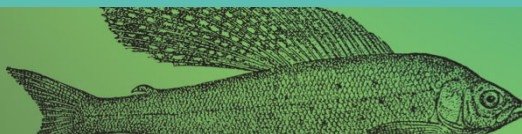
Maximum mercury level in fish, by river



Percent of fish that had mercury levels higher than the State of Alaska "unlimited" cutoff (200  $\mu\text{g/kg}$ )



**PFAS were not detected or were  $<1.5 \mu\text{g/kg}$  for all fish = Very low!**



Read more about the study and see detailed findings

**SCAN ME!**



### What does this mean for people who eat fish from these rivers?

**All species tested appear to be very healthy to eat, but pregnant women and children should limit their number of meals per month of large northern pike, to minimize intake of mercury.**