

# LAKE 'MONSTER' SOUGHT

## Fabled Iliamna Mystery Fish Eludes Capture

JUNEAU — Loch Ness may have its monster, and Lake Okanogan its sea serpent, but Iliamna Lake, the largest inland body of water in Alaska, ins't going to be outdone.

Iliamna Lake, according to Clarence J. Rhode, regional director of the Fish and Wildlife Service, hides in its depths a species of mystery fish reputed to be "at least" six feet long.

Pilots flying over the lake have on several occasions reported sighting the mystery fish.

Rhode said he once gave such a pilot a permit to use dynamite to take a mystery fish.

"I wrote him out a permit on a piece of cardboard," Rhode recalled. "It said: 'So and so is hereby granted permission to use explosives to take one mystery fish.'"

"But he never saw a mystery fish again and never used his permit," Rhode said almost sadly.

Lately not much has been heard of the mystery fish.

Edward L. Keithahn, curator of the Alaska Historical Library and Museum, wonders whether the mystery fish of Iliamna Lake is not the "Gonakadet" of Tlingit legend (same critter as the Haidas' "Wasgo")

Gonakadet is a large underwater creature with head and tail like a wolf and body like that of

a killer whale. Indian legend mentions Gonakadet over and over. Some of the oldest petroglyphs along the coast attest to the existence of the big fish, or whatever it is.

Rhode is confident he has not heard the last of the mystery fish: Somebody along the shores of Iliamna Lake will be reporting one soon.

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