

**PROPOSAL 147 - 5 AAC 57.160. Kenai River and Kasilof River Early-run King Salmon Management Plan. and 5 AAC 57.120. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, annual, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai River Drainage Area.** Start the Kenai River early-run king salmon fishery as an unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure, no retention fishery, as follows:

The solution is that the Board require ADF&G managers to (1) embrace the all to under-utilized management tool of hook and release fishing, (2) implement a reasonable management philosophy that "minimizes mortality yet maximizes opportunity" and (3) put in place a clear "step up" plan that begins with single hook, no bait, hook and release fishing and monitors the run daily either liberalizing or restricting it based on how the run shapes up. Presently, the ER king fishery is completely closed for its duration, whereas NO chinook sport fishing is allowed during May and June. this is a terrible loss of opportunity to both resident and non-resident anglers, but one that is worth enduring IF (capital IF!) the hardship actually produces substantial savings. Sadly, this is not the case: by utilizing ADF&G's own data and multiplying total angler effort in May/June with angler success rate and then Hook and Release mortality averages (5-8%) the data shows that 25-50 total fish were saved by a complete closure over a two month period. Now, if the run is so dire that escapement numbers were clearly going to fall under the current goal, then the sport fishery must be closed. Sustainability of the resource must remain as priority above anglers needs or desires. However, if and when the ER is projected to be ONE single fish over the minimum, a step-up process from 'hook and release' to harvest to full bait should be implemented. Presently, with The Departments reluctance to utilize the proven effective tool of Hook and Release fishing, it seems that ADF&G's management philosophy is to create maximum hardship that produces minimal gains. While I am sure this is not intentional, the fact remains that NOT allowing Hook and Release fishing is providing for extremely minimal savings.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** I would like the board to address the repeated complete closures of the Early Run Kenai River king salmon sport fishery so that anglers can once again enjoy this remarkable resource, this quiet time, and thereby take some pressure off of the Late Run KR king salmon fishery.

**PROPOSED BY:** Greg Brush (EF-F16-066)

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