

**PROPOSAL 151 - 5 AAC 21.359. Kenai River Late-Run King Salmon Management Plan., 5 AAC 57.121. Special provisions for the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Lower Section of the Kenai River Drainage Area., and 5 AAC 57.160. Kenai River and Kasilof River Early-run King Salmon Management Plan.** Repeal barbless hook provisions in Lower Kenai River, as follows:

I suggest the Board revisit this topic under "housekeeping" and repeal the restriction. The use of barbless hooks only penalizes a novice angler such as our youth who wishes to CATCH one Kenai River king during a Catch and Release Emergency Order. Restrictions that make it increasingly difficult to even catch a fish continue to be implemented. In the future, after correcting this dangerous precedent, I respectfully suggest that Board focus on restrictions that limit the HARVEST of said chinook, rather than hand-cuffing our future anglers with regulations that are not supported by hard data and studies. If ADF&G wishes to do a new study, and the data that the new study provides clearly shows that KR king salmon mortality is substantially reduced through the use of barbless hooks, then myself and other conservation minded anglers would support a regulation change.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** I would like the Board to address the highly alarming adoption of a new sport fishery regulation during the last BOF cycle that was based on emotion rather than data. Three years ago, a particular Board member stated that he desired a barbless hook restriction on Kenai River kings to be "his legacy that he left behind". Those are powerful words. The problem with the adoption of this policy is not "the legacy" per se but the precedent that this type of action sets, namely passing restrictive regulation without data or a specific study to support the change. In this particular instance, there is no data that shows that the survival rate of Hook and Release Kenai River king salmon is increased by utilizing barbless hooks. Rather, the ADF&G September 1991 Hook and Release Mortality study by Terry Bendock shows numerous variables impacting a KR kings survival rate, the foremost being the location of the hook, not the presence of a barb.

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