

PROPOSAL 186 - 5 AAC 57.121. Special provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai River Drainage Area. Only barbless hooks allowed in the Kenai River upstream of the Lower Killey River, as follows:

Regulation should read as follows: In the Kenai River upstream of the Lower Killey River only barbless hooks, or hooks with the barb completely pinched are allowed from August 21- May 1

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Damage to Rainbow Trout in the Kenai River Catch and Release Fishery

Rainbow trout and dolly varden in the Kenai River typically show mouth damage from poor fish handling practices in the Kenai River. This degrades the fishery because a majority of fish from the Kenai are extremely ugly, in a fishery for wild trout it is very important for many anglers seeking a near wilderness experience to catch undamaged fish. Gill lice are very common throughout the stock of rainbow trout on the Kenai River. Gill lice have been shown to lower a trout's fitness, it has also been shown that rainbow trout can only be infected by lice while under stress. The intense fishery on the Kenai causes stress to nearly every fish. Barbless hooks have been shown to greatly reduce handling time and greatly reduce mouth/lip damage to released fish while having minimal to a positive effect on landing rates.

Other solutions include a year round barbed hook ban, which while optimal likely has little support amongst salmon anglers and the status quo.

PROPOSED BY: Patrick McCormick (EF-F16-126)
