



Comments by Anglers in the ASF Live Release Survey

Many responding anglers shared with us what they consider to be the importance of live release angling. Some of their reasons follow:

With salmon numbers still critically low, it is important that every salmon returning to its natal stream has the chance to spawn.

Really nothing more need be said except that dead salmon cannot spawn

It is perhaps the most important thing a salmon angler can do.

Live release is a necessary part of responsible Atlantic salmon angling. It allows the already depleted genetic pool the ability to grow by allowing the maximum possible number of fish to add to that genetic pool.

Its a provincial/federal treasure and should be treated as such.

It is important to release them as they are under increasingly more pressure by natives, seals and environmental conditions. The importance of the C&R angler is deeper than just releasing them; we are the protectors of the realm as well. There is also the hands-on scientific value of the anglers observations and reporting to DFO as well.

The numbers of returning salmon/grilse are too low to sustain the species in the long term...live release is vital to their survival

teaches future generations the appropriate actions. Most important way to create change

Each year, since 1988, I make my yearly sojourn to Newfoundland to experience the wonderful sport of fly fishing for the elusive Atlantic salmon. Each year the number of salmon hooked appears to be shrinking no matter what is being done to monitor the plight of the salmon. We always fished with the thought that one landed fish would go into the skillet and the rest would be released. In the past 5 to 7 years, the amount of hooked salmon does not appear to have gotten any better and our thoughts have changed to a mindset of releasing an even larger percentage of hooked fish to do our part in preserving a species that is seriously in trouble. In 2009, we experienced a banner year where in 23 rod/days we hooked 132 salmon and kept three of them. We have even developed a new release technique whereby the nose of the fish is gently nudged close to the tip of the rod and with a gentle tap on the nose; the salmon can be easily released and no one needs to touch the fish thereby ensuring no damage to the scales.

In 2010, there is no need to keep Atlantic salmon for food. All grilse and large fish should be released, PERIOD. Our salmon have enough odds stacked against them; it is a miracle that they return to their home rivers to spawn. After their long journey it is a shame that they be killed.

You're either part of the solution, or part of the problem. Wild Atlantic salmon are too valuable to be caught once and served for dinner.

We are one of the largest user groups of this resource. It is beyond important; it should be mandatory.

Except where fish is clearly fatally wounded, ie. bleeding from gills etc.

Given the low return rates on most of our east coast rivers, I feel that live release is the ONLY option that should be open to anglers.

Large spawning fish aside, given the current rate of ocean mortality, keeping the odd grilse here and there is likely not overly detrimental to the overall population. However, if we are going to ask commercial fisherman, natives and others to give up their livelihoods so we can have more fish in the river, it seems the least we can do to hold ourselves to the same standard. That being said, there are many rivers whose current run levels make C&R crucial.

It's a no brainer; You get to enjoy the salmon, chances are someone else will release the same fish, and the salmon gets to spawn!

La prise de saumons par la pêche commerciale et la pêche de subsistance au moyen de filets par les autochtones est plus dommageable pour la ressource que les prises des pêcheurs sportifs

LES PÊCHES COMMERCIALES SONT LE VRAI PROBLÈME

Je pense qu'effectivement cette mesure est importante, mais elle doit être conjuguée avec d'autres mesures

Believing in this program, I made C&R mandatory for the past 9 years at the St-Paul's Salmon Fishing Club, Inc. on the St-Paul's River and have seen the fishing statistics increase steadily over the years with 100% customer support of the program.

Needs to be part of an overall strategy, but is a vitally important tool. Keeping rivers open with live release helps save salmon from poachers.

Wild Atlantic salmon are a public resource and their population is declining. I believe the only way these declines can be reversed is to promote the argument that any angler kills represent

the private appropriation for personal benefit of a publicly owned resource. As such, the deliberate killing of wild Atlantic salmon should be prohibited, just as the theft of other public resources is prohibited.

No live release, no spawning salmon, NO SALMON!!!

si elle bien fait

The experience of hooking the fish is the best, one does not have to kill the fish

Not as important as prevention of poaching, netting and expansion of aquaculture.

I logged my 1000th Cape Breton Atlantic over 10 years ago and can count on one hand the number of salmon I have ever seen not survive a live release.

Many responding anglers shared their comments of the volunteer release of grilse. Some of their thoughts follow:

It makes me feel that I have played a part in the recovery of salmon numbers every time I release a grilse or salmon, and that some day my children or grandchildren may have the opportunity to play a fish that may be a descendant of a fish I released.

Having some understanding of what each salmon has gone through to get back to the point in the river to spawn, it just isn't in me to kill one.

I release all salmon, and all of the grilse except one or two.

I have increasingly released most of the fish caught over the last few years and have decided to release all from this year on.

I would like to keep one a year, but often I can't resolve to kill the king of fish. I wouldn't kill a lion either, even if I could.

I generally will keep one grilse per annum and release all other grilse.

It's the right thing to do. Salmon face enough challenges without being killed for their willingness to take a fly.

With the steady decline of the stocks it is against my morals to retain.

All except fatally injured.

La remise

Si vous enlevez tout espoir

The older I get, the less I enjoy killing things.

I strongly encourage everyone I fish with to release all salmon.

I don't want to be the cause of the decline in Atlantic salmon. I'm 16 and have fly fished for 2 years now. I have many years ahead of me and want to continue chasing salmon.

Je suis pour la graciation mais faut pas exagérer. Je suis pour la graciation des grands saumon obligatoire, mais il faut permettre la garde de au moins 1 gril minimum. Merci et bravo pour le sondage !

I have been releasing salmon and grilse for 40 years. I encourage others to do the same.

The thrill of catching this wonderful fish is sufficient for me and I want this sport to be available to my children and grandchildren.

Helps me feel that 'I leave no mark' on nature.

I would love to keep the occasional fish but feel that I CANNOT JUSTIFY IT GIVEN THE STATE OF THE RESOURCE.

I enjoy the rush of landing an Atlantic salmon, but get a bigger rush releasing it.

Would only kill a medium sized fish from a good stock component if available. I have not killed a fish for a decade!

We also asked anglers about their opinions on live release licenses. Here are some of their comments:

I used one in Quebec two years ago without hesitation. Good release instructions with the license would be nice.

I'd love to see it in NL but am not optimistic it will happen.

My wish would be for mandatory release for all salmon.

I always purchase these licenses where available. I find it ridiculous that they are not available in NS where we have the lowest number of healthy runs in Atlantic Canada!!

It is a big step in the right direction.

I would be just as interested and spend just as much time (probably more) if the law was 100% live-release only on all rivers.

If it were a lower cost than the regular license it might be more popular.

Encore plus s'ils sont moins chers que les permis réguliers comme au Québec.

Faudrais que les Québécois peuvent profiter de plus de rivières

Mais, je ne suis pas pour la remise

No, no, NO! The option to retain should be on every license. Some fish are badly injured during the struggle to escape the angler and it is a complete waste of the resource to release a fish that will die in a few minutes.

Pour ceux qui le veulent mais pas pour tout le monde.

I support it as long as it remains an option and is not mandatory.

We asked anglers whether they thought barbless hooks should be made an angling requirement. Here is what they said:

I have been fishing with barbless hooks for 5 years and the pleasure is there.

Barbless hooks and H & R should go hand in hand.

As a guide, I have seen the difference in barbless hooks, also have seen the change in sports idea of barbless as a positive, more sport fishing experience.

They set into the mouth easier, and they are easier to remove after fighting. Also, without the barb, the hole in the fish's mouth remains smaller.

They should be required but how to police this act would be difficult.

It only makes sense.

I don't believe in the whole barbless hook deal. I have never had a problem where the fish had been injured by a barbed hook.

You don't have to worry about hurting or unintentionally killing a salmon when the hook can be easily knocked out of the fish's mouth when it brushes against a rock, or when it jumps out of the water.

Those of us who always fish barbless, both in fresh and salt water, have found precious little difference in the hook up and holding of fish while the release is significantly easier...and it's much easier to remove a barbless hook from an angler too!!

They are great. My fingers don't get as cold at the end of the season because it takes lead time to release the fish!

I'm now fly fishing entirely with barbless hooks, and my own experience tells me that this does not impose a hardship on anglers.

Il n'y a pas de question ici.

Je suis d'accord que les hameçons sans arpillons sont plus facile

It is a well accepted practice in Newfoundland and Labrador.

After losing a fish I have never felt that it was the result of a barbless hook. It was because my actions and reactions failed to meet the challenge. A challenge that is fair to the fish and the fly fisher.

Saves many thousands of parr every year.

This is a tough question, anglers deserve to have the best chance possible to land a fish and the fish deserve the best possible chance of survival.

Anglers thoughts on the reducing the number of tags anglers receive with their traditional (non live-release Licenses) follow:

I agree with this in general. There are few people, if any, relying on salmon for subsistence, so bag limits should be minimized.

It's a delicate issue as local people might go back to more poaching. Keep promoting catch and release so that all sport fishermen do it and offer a lower price license for those that do it.

It is ridiculous that provinces such as Quebec have not reduced tags in over 20 years.

Might be a double edged sword in reducing the anglers presence on the river, but I believe it would be a positive step.

I would accept zero tags if that is required to achieve healthy salmon runs.

I don't think anyone should be allowed to keep more than two salmon a year, with incentives of some sort to encourage turning in tags.

Anything that saves a salmon that defies all odds to make it back to the river, should not be killed.

I would support a small reduction but I would not support a full ban of retention. (ex. maybe

reduce number from 4 to 2 grilse)

There are more tags issued than there are grilse in NS. That's ridiculous.

Our tags are reduced enough now!!! The problem is with the tags being reused.

I am in favor of catch and release only. Almost all salmon fishermen I know will continue to fish even if there were no tags.

I don't see the need for anyone to keep 8 fish a year. At the very least maybe go for 3 licenses instead of 2. Make the 8-tag license cost another 10-15 bucks - keep a 3 or 4 tag license at the same price as it is now, and reduce the cost of the C&R license. I would also support a small tax similar to the Pittman/Robertson act in the US which would go back into Fish/Wildlife. Need better enforcement, locals still kill too many fish.

Absolutely. This should be our highest priority. Let's not drain the waters of another species.

I think having more enforcement officers to stop poaching would help a lot more. I know of one river that is poached using box nets all the time. I reported it to the government ministry and received no reply.

Mais OUI

On pourrait partager le nombre de scellés, ex: 3 pour les grands saumons et 4 pour les grilse.

C'est une approche

It depends on the river. If a river is having a good return every year then no, but if the river is showing a small return where in the past they have had large returns then yes. Let the river get back to what it used to be or close it.

I have never filled all my tags and know very few that do, so a reduction wouldn't be a problem for us.

Seven tags in Quebec is nonsense!

Voilà, la vraie réponse. Je ne fais pas de la pêche de subsistance et je trouve que le nombre de scellés, 7 est de loin invraisemblable tenant compte de la ressource.

YES, YES and oh did I say YES !!! Maximum 2 !!!!!

No-brainer - Less retention more spawners!

Tag numbers should be tied to the best research and science

Here are your thoughts on whether or not non-resident anglers should be restricted to live-release angling only?

My feeling is that any salmon kept should be kept by locals.

Everybody should be restricted to that.

In my experience, the majority of non residents release their salmon - in many places they have experienced depleted salmon stocks and already learned a lesson.

No one should be kept from doing anything unless everyone is restricted. It has to begin at home. Non-resident fishermen put a lot more back into the economy than anyone.

Why not? They do not kill many anyway. It is locals who wish to kill them.

Non-Residents and Residents should all be required to participate in the protection of healthy runs. I would suggest that non-residents continue to pay increased fees for licenses.

Restricting just one portion of the fishing group will not help. It will only alienate the non residents from coming if they feel they are being the only ones restricted. Rules should be the same for all who fish.

This would negatively impact the sport fishing industry. Non Residents should have a season maximum number of grilse tags.

They should be treated the same as resident anglers once they have paid a higher price for their licenses.

All salmon angling should be catch and release

Ils viennent au Québec en grand nombre parce qu'ils ont la possibilité de garder des saumons!!!

L'obligation d'engager un guide serait plus bénéfique pour l'économie locale.

Any of the non-residents that I guide have no problem with live release.

Better to concentrate on having more camps sign-on to Live Release and look for mandatory release at a later time.

Conservation requirements should not be determined by residency.

Most guests we see at Flowers River Lodge would not return if we killed a Salmon / Grilse.

They practice this virtually everywhere else in the world, including Russia and Argentina