Subject: : Paflyfish General Forum
Topic: : Little J No More
Little J No More
Author: : trubski
Date: : 2007/5/10 1:40:15
URL:

I live near the Little J - about 10 or 15 minutes, depending - and I have fished it for many years. Lately, however, I find myself fishing elsewhere. I've been thinking about that.

Partially, I am tired of wading such difficult water - I'm not getting any younger. Partially, I am tired of too much company - I miss the days when I always had 'my' pools to myself and I could spend a whole summer figuring them out - or not.

But that's just normal stuff, and not worth posting about. What really bothers me are the catch and release regulations. Having said that let me point out some qualifiers: I have fly fished for 30 years, and in 30 years I might have killed 20 trout (although that number seems high, looking at it). I remember every single one of them, too.

I love wild trout, and I love wild trout water. I only fish for wild fish. I have no interest in put and take fish. I'll do whatever I can - money, time, whatever - to preserve wild trout and the water they live in.

But I think blanket catch and release regulations are wrong. Much of the reason I fish is because when I am fishing I am part of the natural world and not a spectator/voyeur in it. But there is a circle that must be closed there for that to be true: every now and then, you have to kill one or it all means nothing. I kill trout not from a reckless disregard but from a sense of obligation - if I don't ever do that, well then I am just toying with them and I can't justify that. And there is nothing as good to eat as a wild trout, which is why (really) we all fish in the first place. I don't kill many fish - far from it - but if you tell me I can't kill any here, well, I will go elsewhere.

So I don't fish the Little J anymore. I wish it well, but I'll put my time in on other water. And I worry about the health of a river where it all becomes a game (I've fished others like this). It's not a game - it's a blood sport, with all of those implications for all of us, including the fish.