

Subject: : Conservation

Topic: : could we, would we and should we?

Re: could we, would we and should we?

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URL:

I would certainly agree that we should attempt improvements on our wild trout waters. As always though - the devil is in the details. Do we manage for brookies? Do we put man made improvements in or let nature run its course? I'm inclined to believe that man made improvements are good most of the time. In particular, I would like to see some form of structural isolation of brook trout headwaters - and not just the upper headwaters but perhaps further down into areas more likely dominated by stocked fish or wild browns. Some similar efforts are being made in the Smokies to protect brookies through barriers. Some of these are natural waterfalls but some are, I think, man made or natural barriers that are modified to be impassable to fish downstream. Of course Big Spring always becomes part of this discussion. Critics would argue that the fish barrier never kept out browns and rainbows anyway and that's why it was removed. Many fishermen (myself included) enjoyed fishing for the many big browns and 'bows in the "ditch." However, I still believe that with occassional electroshocking "maintainence" the browns/'bows could have been kept out for the most part and the brookies given some leg room. As it is now with the improved water quality, both brooks and 'bows seem to be showing signs of recovery but I fear without the barrier the 'bows will eventually overtake the bt. If it were entirely up to me I'd put the barrier back, deepen the water with some structural improvements and add some more cover. Below the barrier I'd do the same for the browns/rainbows. I would also like to see more lime dosing of streams with acidity problems as I think this is showing some promising results. This could really improve some of the lesser known waters (or competely unknown) that you refer to. Another policy change I would like is to see more surveys of stocked water. I know (as I'm sure you do) waters that are stocked that are almost certainly Class A and that should see an abatement of stocking. Of course we would all love to see more and better trout waters. How to get there - and what manifestations of "more and better" we would want to see - is a matter of personal philosophy. It also is expensive and demanding of time and physical effort. My hat's off to the many dedicated TU members, club members etc, who take the time to volunteer and/or raise money to support these projects.