

Subject: : Warm Water & Salt Water Fly-Fishing

Topic: : YOY Smallmouths: Susquehanna River - 2012

Re: YOY Smallmouths: Susquehanna River - 2012

Author: : Fishidiot

Date: : 2012/10/20 8:24:18

URL:

Tim,

You may be right.....and I would have said you're spot-on five or six years ago.

However, in recent years, I've become more skeptical of the correlation between *columnaris* sores and bass decline. In recent years, sores have been equal or more prevalent in the upper branches where bass populations remain robust. Despite an occasional substandard YOY class (which is predictable) SMBs in the North and West Branch are generally doing well whereas the main stem, especially the lower reaches, continues to fail to produce good reproduction.

From a glass-half-full point of view, one could conclude that things have stabilized with respect to population. My biggest fear five or six years ago was that the crash would extend upstream and we would see similar bass declines all the way up through the branches. This, however, does not appear to have happened (despite the prevalence of sores). I'm increasingly convinced that there is something in the lower river that we have not discovered.

Despite evidence of continued poor YOY in the main stem, the good news is that things aren't getting worse and there may even be some small scale improvement in lower river spawning. An optimist would say we're in an improving trend (although a very slow one).

My guess would be that the survey of adult bass will reveal similar trends as this YOY and the last several years of adult bass surveys.