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Subject: : Paflyfish General Forum

Topic: : So they're not closing...

Re: So they're not closing...

Author: : Fishidiot

Date: : 2013/3/24 9:04:53

URL:

Quote:

Mountainbrookie wrote:

Does the stocking of trout suppress the population of warm water species? I don't know I'm asking. When it comes to smallmouth bass why aren't they there in numbers now? They are a native species here in Western PA.

I'm not familiar off the top of my mind with any studies suggesting that stocking trout displaces SMBs.....although it certainly may be possible in some (very limited) scenarios.

I think many fishermen, especially trout fishermen, are not aware of two aspects of SMBs that are germane to this question: their slow growth and migratory nature.

SMBs are very slow growers. With a minimum size of 12".....these fish need to grow for about *five years* to reach this size (more in small stream environments). That is longer than the lifespan of most wild brookies in PA just to reach min size! Small streams just don't have enough "catchable" - to use the PFBC term - size bass. Anglers who are accustomed to stocked trout want fish to harvest and stream bass will be too small on average. You can fish small streams all day, catch dozens of SMBs, and you may not get one that is 12" long. This is just the reality of the situation.

The other issue is movement. Small stream SMB populations are largely transient and many fishermen don't know this. They catch bass in summer and assume they're there all year. Most bass in most small streams are not there during the colder months so they are not a viable fishery in the springtime when fishermen want to pursue stocked trout. Usually, by mid summer when the stocked trout have all been caught or died from thermal increase.....all of the sudden the bass are there. It's a coincidence of timing. Bass fishing in bigger rivers can be great in early spring but in the smaller streams where trout are stocked, it's a waste of time in spring because the bass have not migrated up these streams yet.

Due to this timing of movement, I don't think that stocking trout in smaller, typical sized trout streams has much effect on bass - they really aren't there at the same time.