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Subject: : Paflyfish General Forum

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

Re: So they're not closing...

Author: : pcray1231

Date: : 2013/3/25 9:43:00

URL:

It's hard to break it down by anglers. You got guys that fish 1 day a year, and others that fish over 100 days per year. You got guys that keep none, guys that keep all, and a huge majority that keep some % and release a %, but those percentages vary greatly. You also have huge variations in skill and tactics. On the same water, one guy may catch 20 while the next catches 1 or 2.

Assuming equal impact per angler is simply silly.

Much better to do it by fish. I don't care to look it up, but we have estimates of what % of caught fish are released. We probably can find some serious location variations too. Like perhaps fish caught from lakes are far more likely to be harvested than those from streams? You could look for things like this, do a weighted average, and come up with a reasonable estimate.

It's just a guess, but I'd venture to say far less than 1% of caught wild fish are harvested. Far less. I think intentional harvest of wild fish, state wide, is almost negligible, but don't deny that there could be specific locations where it's substantial. Just one guy with repeated trips to a small stream is capable of doing some damage.

But the bigger issue is not intentional harvest, but accidental mortality. Stocked fish bring lots of anglers, often beginner anglers. Even if most of those anglers are skilled enough to keep mortality rates low, there's a few where mortality rates are high.

I don't mean to jumpstart the bait vs. artificial debate. But if you see, say, a 20% "average" mortality rate for baitfishing, that doesn't mean that most of those anglers are killing 20% of the fish they catch. That means MOST of them are probably killing under 5%, and a few of them are killing 80 or 90% of the fish they catch! Baitfishing does ALLOW an angler to have high mortality. It can be avoided. But in any large group, there are a few beginners who don't know any better, and a few a-holes who just don't care.

If I could come up with a way, through regulation, to target the a-holes without hurting the beginners or the enlightened, I'd be for it. But I have empathy for the beginners, we were all there once. And frankly, we don't give the PFBC enough credit. The fishing in this state is pretty dang good right now. We're all well intentioned but sometimes I think we'd be better to leave well-enough alone. We bash them for perceived or real slights to our beloved wild trout, but overall, you have to admit they're doing a heck of a job.