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Subject: : Paflyfish General Forum

Topic: : Fryin' up wild browns

Re: Fryin' up wild browns

Author: : k-bob

Date: : 2013/5/2 7:18:53

URL:

WBTEP regs may have been created due to controversy over whether harvest is reducing the number of bigger brookies on small PA freestone streams. I have read that fish biologists were skeptical that this cropping was a significant problem.

When I started fishing, I kinda bought the argument that brookie streams are rare, and I went to the special-reg brookie streams, that is WBTEP across the state, so I could find some rare brookies. IMHO, they range from ridiculous to sublime :)

Now I realize that there are many streams with brookies, and if they are small, remote, and/or overgrown, they probably dont really have the bigger fish cropped off. Still may not be many bigger brookies, due to habitat. Shrug.

(true story ... I walk in to a fly shop NE PA when I started and ask about streams with wild brook trout. guy says "this is not the 19th century." OK, I get confused about whther it's the 20th or 21st or whatever, but I knew that. At the time, I thought he just didnt know me and would not tell. Now I think that not so many guys fish for brookies, he really might not have known many streams)

imho, habitat is a better predictor of numbers of bigger brookies than harvest, from the least known to best known brookie streams.

So if you work really hard to get on a stream two miles from a road, no trails to speak of, there may be bigger brookies if the habitat supports them. Stream with average habitat in the middle of nowhere will have only average fish. Stream with decent habitat and reasonable access will often have more biggish brookies. Habitat > harvest. I am not really chasing bigger brookies, dont really care.

Sure, I still believe that cropping theoretically can reduce the number of bigger brookies in a small stream. I seldom post stream names here, I dont like to fish behind people and in some cases I was given leads that I should not publicize. I dont really like it if I tell someone about an off-the-radar stream and they ID it on the internet, either.

But practcially speaking, there are so many small streams with brookies in say NE PA, and not that many people who fish them. There may be cropping on a few better known streams particularly at nice big or deep pools with easier access. Shrug. A WBTEP listing might lead to more of this. Be careful what you wish for?

Biggest wild brook trout I ever caught was in a stream with good habitat but brutal hiking and climbing, right by a highway :)

With some hiking and map scouring, you can fish brookie streams where you'd be very surprised to run into another fishermen on the nicest weekend of the year. :)