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Subject: : Paflyfish General Forum

Topic: : Fall stocking this year

Re: Fall stocking this year

Author: : Mike

Date: : 2013/10/2 13:31:03

URL:

General info plus the SE Pa approach to the fall stocking program changes:

The Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC) has been gradually terminating the fall trout stocking program on numerous waters around the state due, in general, to low angler usage in fall as reported by many of our Conservation Officers and as even reported by some anglers. I will note that we did not suddenly receive such reports from our staff; we had been receiving them for years. Additionally, with budgets getting tighter now than perhaps they had been at times in the past and with our Commissioners recently charging the staff with finding ways to utilize our adult trout more efficiently, the fall stocking program and the late winter stocking program were two programs that came to mind immediately. The programs were attractive for the anglers who utilized them, but the bulk of the anglers did not participate, especially in the fall program. Both resulted in extra truck trips for low numbers of fish per load and in many cases low numbers of anglers per stream. Additionally, the fall program required the hatchery system to hold adult trout through the tough summer months that could have been stocked during the spring. Holding those trout through the summer resulted in substantial mortality associated with diseases and stress associated with fish coming into spawning condition. This meant that more fish had to be held through the summer than we planned on delivering to the streams and lakes in the fall just so we could achieve the desired fall allocations. Additionally, certain species were difficult to transport in the fall because of their gravid state, particularly brooks and browns, resulting in additional mortality on the trucks or post-stocking. More recently, we even had problems with rainbows becoming gravid in early fall. We tried to keep some waters in the fall program, however, and those were ones that either received good angler use, according to reports from the field, could serve the needs of a wide geographical area, or could be more efficiently stocked in combination with another section of the same stream where general statewide regulations (allowing bait fishing and harvest) applied. Catch and Release and Delayed Harvest Areas that remain in the fall stocking program in the SE part of the state are one of the two sections of Tulpehocken Ck, Berks Co.; Ridley Ck, Delaware Co.; E. Br. Brandywine Ck, Chester Co.; and Muddy Ck, York Co. In all cases, all or nearly all fish that would have been stocked this fall were instead included in last spring's stockings of special regulation areas that are not going to receive a fall stocking.