
Subject: : Beginner Forum

Topic: : Interpreting stream flow numbers

Re: Interpreting stream flow numbers

Author: : afishinado

Date: : 2014/3/13 6:45:47

URL:

Quote:

Six-Gun wrote:

I have spent more and more time reading the USGS streamflow/cubic feet per second figures for my local waters and have slowly come to realize that I'm not really well-educated in this regard. I see a number for a given stream one day and can tell if it's had major runoff or heavy rain causing a sudden spike, but that's about it. I have no idea what else I can glean from the figures seasonally or how to tell if now is a good time to fish other than "it shouldn't be blown out because there was no major precip or snow runoff."

A lot of people I hear around here and elsewhere can tell that a particular stream is getting good because it's a "X" cfs. I simply have no clue what the logic behind their reasoning is, merely trusting that they know what they're talking about from past experience. I presume it's a relative thing that varies significantly from stream to stream, of course.

How can I make the graphs and the number they present more useful to me? I figure that there has to be more to it than that.

You have it in the above paragraph. When I fish a particular stream or river, I can relate the gauge height to the level at which I've fished before. All this is pretty much in my head (not the best place for it all the time 🤔).

You may want to consider recording the flow and rating it on a scale of fishability in your computer or in a written journal.

One other thing; every gauge has an average for that date (those little triangles thingies on the graph). Even if you've never fished the stream or river, you can use the average for that date to determine if the stream is high, low or average for that date. Remember though, in most cases the average, say the late summer, will be a lot lower than the average in the early spring.

HTH