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Subject: : Beginner Forum

Topic: : High water effect trout?

Re: High water effect trout?

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URL:

Agreed, it has a major effect, but it can be good or bad. Most of the advice here is sound. Properly reading conditions, and using it to decide when and where to fish is 90% of what it takes to be a truly good fisherman. A few points to add to the above.

1. There is nearly ALWAYS somewhere that is not only fishing decent, but fishing better than average. Don't get married to a stream. Pick which stream to go to based on conditions. If you've had flooding rains for 3 days, guess what? Tailwaters are holding back and often at their best when low. Everything low and clear? Pick a bigger stream, where such conditions are usually better. Just get a big thunderboomer? Well, the little streams came up, but there's a day or so delay before it hits the big water. Fish there today. Tomorrow, the big stream will blow out, but the little streams will be prime again, up a little, but not blown, which is when they're at their best.

1a: Every stream has a different run-off rate. Get to know them. Generally speaking it's correlated with size, bigger streams taking longer to come up and drop. But lots of things affect this. For instance, a fully forested watershed slows it down, a urbanized one speeds it up. A limestoneer with very large source springs can be pretty large but act like a small stream in terms of runoff rate.

2. In regards to temps, I consider 60 to be prime. 58 or 62, it doesn't matter, I'm not going to argue the exact prime. But overall, direction of change often matters more than actual temp. You want to be moving TOWARDS the prime. i.e. if it was 34 and raises to 40, that stream may turn on. If it was 50 and lowered to 45, that stream may turn off.

2a. Water temperature is very much a function of water conditions. If you got snow on the ground, that 50 degree day seems like it should bring water temps up. It doesn't. Snow melt dumps a bunch of 32 degree water in that stream. Likewise, it's August and you have water temps in the mid 60's, air temp highs around 90 everyday. But one rainy day it's 75 degrees and rainy. You'd think that water temp cools down. Nope. You have a whole bunch of 75 degree water entering the 60 something stream.

Also keep an eye on urban waterways. There's a few where the watershed has a high % of improved land (roads and parking lots with storm drains). A very typical summertime situation is for all that concrete to bake in the sun all day and then get rained on. That rainwater hits hot pavement, heats up, dumps down a storm drain, and into a stream extremely quickly. Water temperature spikes can be extreme.