

Subject: : Paflyfish General Forum

Topic: : "wild" rainbows

Re: "wild" rainbows

Author: : pcray1231

Date: : 2009/6/24 10:59:33

URL:

Troutbert,

Water temperature was a problem with the clearcuts, but not the main problem. Siltation was the main problem, as well as a very quick change in soil type (leading to old springs drying up and new, different ones forming). Even today, many of the small streams have relatively little suitable spawning habitat. All the spawning occurs in relatively small areas, and then the fry spread back out afterwards. (this all goes back to populations, not fish, being "fragile").

With the deforestation, there would have been a rapid change in the streams, and spawning areas would have been silted in. I'm not saying no populations held on, but it would have been tough. Logging then was very different than today. Today we do small clearcuts or selective logging. Then they did wholesale clearing of many square miles.

By the time the area regrows into grasses and brush, the siltation would have been slowly washing out, forming new structure, and allowing for possible repopulation.

Like you said, it wasn't all at the same time, some regions took longer to get to than others, and maybe while the Pine Creek drainage was being devastated, several other drainages farther south along the Susquehanna were well on their way to recovery. Those drainages are connected and fish do have the ability to swim, and have always shown the ability to repopulate good habitat against all odds. While I don't dismiss the possibility of an isolated, remnant "pure" population, I do think it's likely we have significant natural genes in our fish, whether mixed or not.