THOUGHTS ON LIGHT

Cold front conditions= tough fishing!

Fish live in an environment that can become **very low** in **light**, and they **need to see** even then in order **to survive**. As a result, the **eyes of fish are much more sensitive** to low light conditions than our own. However, fish **have no pupils or eyelids** to help them **adjust to changes in light**. This is why fish **can go very dormant** (especially in clear water) **when a cold front passes** through, leaving **sunny, clear blue skies**. In his study material, Buck Perry talks about **light** being **a major factor in fish behavior**, but that we have difficulty in determining exactly what factors in light cause behavior changes. The **intensity of light** may have an effect, but that **is difficult for humans to decipher** because we squint our eyes and our pupils adjust to light unconsciously, and we usually are not very aware of changes. We usually are aware when we have a clear, bright sky or a cloudy or hazy sky, but **cannot put a finger on** the actual **degree of light intensity** present. It would be interesting to measure accurately the light intensity and see how that relates to fishing success. Could this help us determine when, where, and under what conditions we would have a better chance for fishing success? Old-fashioned **photographic light meters** could possibly be used to measure light intensity on a given day and time, but the direction the meter was pointed would have to be consistent. At the sun, 90 degrees from the sun, or with the sun at your back would be 3 choices. Or on cloudy days, would it be pointed at the sky or horizontal away from the source? **Conclusions would be difficult with these measurements**.

Buck Perry described light as being **the most important factor we can see** that is considered in the behavior of fish. He had developed an uncanny ability to interpret different weather conditions and predict how fish might react. This was especially true **when slight changes in the weather caused a change in the light** such as **a drop in the wind or high cirrus clouds moving in**. Yet **he spoke of the "quality of light", not just light intensity**. Light can be **affected by the amount of moisture (humidity) in the higher atmosphere**. He

especially noted that there were **signs in the sky and clouds** that told us **when conditions for fishing would be better. One** of the **most significant signs** he mentioned was **observing jet contrails in the sky**. If there was **little or no contrail** behind high flying jets**, fishing would likely be poor**, and if they were narrow and broken up, not much better. **The best sign of improving fishing conditions** would be **if contrails** in the sky **were long, continuouis, and spreading out.** That indicates the fish may be moving and you better get out on the water!

As one can see, the **factors involved** in light can be **quite complex** and cover more than just intensity. **Mr. Perry did a lifetime of studying about how weather and light affect fish, so following his simple guidelines as to light and fish behavior is still a wise approach.**

Chase Klinesteker CSI