

## Day of Firsts for Tylersville

April 5, 2007, isn't a date that denotes a new year on any modern calendar, but for the Tylersville State Fish Hatchery it was a day that signified the beginning of a new era. Officials of the Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) gathered in Clinton County recently to convey the station officially from federal to state ownership. The day was doubly significant because new, state-of-the-art water treatment equipment went online there officially.

The Tylersville hatchery was originally constructed in 1963 by the USFWS and was closed in 1977. In 1984, the Commission entered into a lease agreement with the USFWS to maintain and operate the facility. Producing some 261,000 pounds of adult trout each year, the facility provides about 13 percent of the adult trout stocked statewide by the Commission. Recognizing the importance of the facility to Pennsylvania and the Commission's desire to make significant infrastructure upgrades to it,

the two agencies in 2006 jointly supported federal legislation to transfer ownership of the Tylersville hatchery to the Commonwealth. That act of Congress reached fruition with the formal conveyance in a brief ceremony at the hatchery.

"We've been pleased to be able to keep this hatchery in production through our longstanding partnership with the Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission. In conveying ownership of the hatchery to the Commonwealth for its permanent operation, we know it's in good hands," said Rick Bennett, deputy director for the Service's Northeast Region.

In taking ownership of the hatchery, Commission Executive Director Doug Austen noted that the two agencies had long maintained a good working relationship at the facility, a partnership that is expected to continue. "Having the hatchery in state hands provides assurances about moving forward. This facility is a key component in supporting Pennsylvania's recreational trout fishing opportunities and the economic activity that trout fishing provides, especially to rural Pennsylvania," Austen said.

The hatchery is located on 125 total acres with 5,000 feet of concrete raceways. The water supply for the facility is a spring pool and sub-surface flow that originates from Big Fishing Creek. Buildings include a hatch house/administrative office complex, maintenance garage/employee quarters building, and a pole building for vehicle storage.

The facility's newest building includes state-of-the-art water treatment equipment—\$1.7 million in pipes, pumps, controls and filters. The project was made possible through funds from Growing Greener II, a voter-approved plan that is investing \$625 million in environmental programs across Pennsylvania. Included in this legislation is an allotment of \$27.5 million for facilities such as Tylersville that the Commission manages.

### Fishin' from the Kitchen

## Grilled Smallmouth Bass

by Wayne Phillips

Foil packets of smallmouth bass cooked on a grill result in a cool kitchen and satisfied diners.

#### Ingredients for four servings:

- ✓ Boneless, skinless smallmouth bass fillets for 4
- ✓ 2 fennel bulbs, thinly sliced
- ✓ 2 red onions, thinly sliced
- ✓ 2 oranges, zest and sections
- ✓ Juice from two oranges
- ✓ Butter
- ✓ Extra virgin olive oil
- ✓ Salt and white pepper to taste
- ✓ Aluminum foil

### Procedure

Place one piece of aluminum foil on top of another. Drizzle a bit of olive oil on the foil. Scatter fennel and red onion slices on the foil. Top with pieces of smallmouth bass. Season with salt and white pepper. Scatter orange zest over fish and vegetables. Dot with butter. Cut the peel off the orange and remove each section so there is no pith (the white part). Reserve the sections. Squeeze the remaining orange pieces over the fish. Wrap the foil tightly and crimp the edges as tightly as possible. Place on a medium grill. Once the packet puffs



photo-Wayne Phillips

up, it will take only a few minutes to finish cooking.

Note that double wrapping your fish in foil keeps it moist and prevents burning. Keep the dull side of the foil on the outside. Pinch the foil seams as tightly as possible. This keeps steam inside, aiding the cooking process and keeping the fish moist. Cook fish over medium heat on a grill or in a 350-degree oven. As the packets cook, they will fill with steam and puff up. You can add a couple of tablespoons of white wine to the foil packets if you wish.

### Serve

Place a bed of fennel, red onions and orange sections on each plate. Top with fish. Garnish with orange zest and fennel fronds.