

Commission Moves to Improve Access, Harmonize Regulations

The Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission took action to harmonize fishing regulations on two border waters and improve access to Lake Erie tributaries during its summer quarterly meeting in Harrisburg, in July.

Using funds generated from the sale of the special Lake Erie fishing permits, the Commission opted to move forward with two property rights acquisitions on popular Erie County steelhead trout fishing waters. The first, a 1,885-linear-foot easement, will provide access to Walnut Creek in Millcreek Township. The easement

covers two contiguous parcels located between 38th Street and State Highway 832 (Sterrettania Road). One parcel will provide access to 1,000 linear feet on both sides of the creek. Another 885 feet will be along the south side of the creek. The easements will be for public fishing, boating, riparian buffer and fisheries management and will include the stream corridor and extend at least 25 feet back from the top of the bank. An additional easement for parking along State Highway 832 and an existing trail are also part of the \$27,000 deal.

The second easement covers more than 1,400 linear feet of Elk Creek as it flows across property in Girard Township. The easement will be for public fishing, boating, riparian buffer and fisheries management and will include the stream corridor and extend at least 25 feet back from the top of the bank. The easement parcel is located between routes 5 and 20, along Elk Park Road. This easement was offered to the Commission for no fee by Mercyhurst College.

The Commission also took action to reconcile fishing regulation season, size and creel limits on the Delaware River and the Conowingo Pool of the Susquehanna River to make Pennsylvania regulations more consistent with other border jurisdictions.

The Delaware River is regulated jointly in various stretches by Pennsylvania, New York and New Jersey. To make Pennsylvania regulations consistent with other jurisdictions, effective in 2008, a no-harvest season for largemouth and smallmouth bass will run from 12:01 a.m. the first Saturday after April 11 to 12:01 a.m. the first Saturday after June 11. A 12-inch minimum size limit, five-fish-per-day creel limit will be in place the remainder of the year. The muskellunge season will be open year-round with a daily limit of one fish at least 40 inches in length.

Beginning January 1, 2008, Pennsylvania fishing regulations will harmonize with Maryland's for the Conowingo Pool of the Susquehanna River. Changes include a year-round season on trout, with no minimum size limit and a two-per-day creel limit. The taking of alewife and blueback herring will be permissible January 1 through June 15 with no size or take limits. No clams or mussels may be taken, however. The daily limit for baitfish will become 35 for all species.

Fishin' from the Kitchen

Crispy Seared Trout Steaks

by Wayne Phillips

Searing steaks from a large trout until they are crispy makes for excellent dining.

Ingredients for four servings:

- ✓ 4 large trout steaks, scales removed
- ✓ 2 limes
- ✓ Canola or peanut oil
- ✓ Coarse sea salt
- ✓ Black pepper



photo: Wayne Phillips

Procedure

Make sure to dry the fish steaks thoroughly. The drier the surface of the fish steak, the crispier the crust. Coarse sea salt aids in forming a crunchy crust. Put a heavy cast iron skillet over high heat. When hot, add oil. Carefully dry the steaks and sprinkle both sides liberally with coarse sea salt and black pepper. Place the fish steaks in the skillets. Turn heat down to medium high. Once the first side is well browned and crusty, turn the fish steaks. The second side will cook quicker than the first. Before removing from the pan, squeeze the lime juice over the fish.

Serve

Serve lime wedges with the fish. Roasted potato wedges and a green vegetable like sugar snap peas, asparagus or broccoli are good side dishes.

Serve

You'll want to sear your trout steaks so that they have a moist center and a crisp outside. Start with a very hot pan and dry fish steaks. Add the coarse sea salt just before you put the fish in the pan. Turning the fish only once helps keep the crust crisp and crunchy. Once you turn the fish, it will take half as long to cook the second side.