

PFBC Activity Report – Highlights of Third Quarter 2007

Executive Office

Grants: In September, staff, working with the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy, conducted site-visits to two Landowner Incentive Program (LIP) sites in the French Creek Watershed where landowners have expressed strong interest in conservation easements for their properties. Additional easements in this area are also likely as there is growing interest in this approach for land protection. Staff have also been intensively working on processing SWG grant documents for submission to the Fish & Wildlife Service. These projects will help the Commonwealth implement the State Wildlife Action Plan and further the Commission's conservation efforts for species of greatest conservation need (SGCN). A press release announced the most recent projects recommended by staff and approved by Executive Director Austen.

State Wildlife Grants: The Commission announced in September that it would be using more than \$1,129,000 from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service's State Wildlife Grants Program in undertaking nine projects to study and manage rare or declining species and their habitats. The projects include: 1) use of geographic information systems (GIS) for conservation of high-priority species, 2) habitat enhancement at four state lakes, 3) an assessment of the range and habitat use of eastern spadefoot toad, 4) mussel survey on the upper Susquehanna River and major tributaries – primarily for the yellow lampmussel, 5) developing a mussel database to store data from mussel surveys, 6) stream habitat improvement projects in 14 counties of northcentral Pennsylvania, 7) assessment of fishes of the upper Ohio and lower Allegheny rivers, 8) timber rattlesnake genetics, and 9) development an eastern massasauga management plan.

State Wildlife Action Plan – Northeast Regional Projects: Fish & Boat Commission staff and Game Commission staff continue to be actively involved in two regional projects in support of the State Wildlife Action Plan implementation process. The *NE Habitat Classification Project* will develop consistent regional terrestrial and aquatic habitat classification and will be an important step in the management and protection of species of greatest conservation need (SGCN) which transcend state boundaries. Staff attended a one-day workshop in September held at the National Conservation Training Center in Shepherdstown, WV. This workshop was an opportunity for states to provide input and to hear about the most recent developments in this project.

The second project, *NE Monitoring and Performance Measures Framework*, will identify what features to monitor, indicators and measures for SGCN, habitats, threats, and actions most compatible with each state's Wildlife Action Plan implementation goals. It will next develop a framework for regional monitoring, including final indicators and measures, standards for data collection and management, and collaborative monitoring efforts that NE states can use individually and collectively. Staff helped coordinate a two-day workshop held in June in Albany, NY. The workshop was attended by representatives from state and federal agencies who met to identify the indicators and measures developed at the first workshop. A second workshop, held in late September near Rensselaerville, NY, further refined these indicators. A final report for this project is due in early 2008. Both projects are funded by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation through the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, and are being viewed as models for other regions.

Farm Bill (2007): Staff is engaged in the 2007 Farm Bill by providing technical assistance to the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AFWA), Agricultural Committee and other agricultural programs which affect PFBC trust species. Staff have provided a variety of technical information to legislative offices regarding the importance of Farm Bill programs for the PFBC. Among the programs critical to PFBC management activities is the Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP). This program has been crucial to the PFBC nationally recognized dam removal program.

Conservation Assembly: In August, a pre-proposal was submitted by the Pennsylvania Environmental Council and the Pennsylvania Federation of Sportsmans Clubs to the Wildlife Conservation Society to fund this project. The pre-proposal was accepted and a full proposal will be submitted in October. This project will further support the Pennsylvania Wildlife Action Plan by providing outreach and re-engaging public input into the Plan.

Marketing and Promotions: During the third quarter, Marketing worked with seasonal staff to record and analyze data from the 2007 show season. Data thus far is inconclusive due to lack of full data sets and uncertainty in the accuracy of data. Plans are in the process to roll out a comprehensive show program in 2008 with guidance from regional show managers.

Marketing has also been working extensively on the steelhead fishing program to promote awareness and action for steelhead fishing in the Erie region. The campaign includes a multi-layered approach to marketing the fishery incorporating print advertisements, Internet marketing, email blasts, direct mail postcards, media relations, and tourism relations.

Additionally, Marketing continues to work on ‘bigger picture’ recommendations for inter-agency outdoor marketing plans and recommendations for national organizations and other groups. At the Commission, the marketing specialist works as a consultant for various bureaus on a project-by-project basis. Currently, Marketing is working on plans with the *Angler & Boater* magazine to boost awareness and subscription sales.

Reorganization: On July 26, 2007, the Commissioners approved the agency’s request to reorganize. The request formally establishes the Three River Ecological Research Center; creates the Bureau of Planning, Policy and Communications which will house the newly created Division of Communications. The Division of Communications consists of communication elements from the Bureau of Boating and Education; Marketing and the Press Office. The reorganization also creates the Deputate for Administration, Boating and Engineering by aligning the Bureau of Administration, the renamed Bureau of Engineering and Property Services with the reconfigured and renamed Bureau of Boating and Access. Also the Human Resource Office was renamed as a division and reassigned to the Bureau of Administration in a more traditional location. HR Office forwarded the request to the Governor’s Office of Administration for review and executive approval where it is awaiting technical and budgetary review.

Press and Public Relations: A total of 17 press releases were issued in the third quarter, covering a wide range of agency-related subjects such as dam removals, grants and fall trout fishing. The self-subscribe e-alerts system continued to expand, both in terms of recipients and messages issued. More than 57,000 e-alerts were issued in the third quarter. An RSS Feed was added as a complement to the E-alerts for more tech-savvy users. Executive Office staff coordinated a public dedication ceremony/press event at the newly-built Glassworks Access Area.

NEAFWA Conference 2009: Staff conducted preliminary screenings of three dozen potential sites within Pennsylvania that expressed an interest in hosting the 2009 Northeast Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies conference and narrowed the field to three finalists: Gettysburg, Lancaster and Camp Hill. On-site inspections were conducted at the three locations in conjunction with Delaney Meeting and Event Management, the association’s event planning contractor. Announcement of the site selection is expected shortly, pending the signing of a final contract with the host venue.

Commonwealth (DEP, DCNR & PFBC) v. Espy, et al. (Little Juniata River Litigation): On June 13, 2007, Huntingdon County Court of Common Pleas Judge Stewart Kurtz denied Donny Beaver’s and the other defendants’ motion for post-trial relief that was filed after the original decision was handed down in January. In addition to upholding his findings that the Little Juniata River is navigable and therefore public, Judge Kurtz permanently enjoined the defendants “from interfering with the public’s rights in the Little Juniata, including the posting and/or hanging of signs, advertising the Little Juniata River as private

waters and threatening, harassing and otherwise attempting to exclude the public from fishing, boating, wading and/or recreating on and in the Little Juniata River and the submerged lands owned by the Commonwealth.” Defendants appealed the decision to the Commonwealth Court, and their brief is due on October 10, 2007. The Commonwealth’s brief will be due 30 days after service.

Norfolk Southern Train Derailment: The Office of Chief Counsel continued to work with Commission staff, the McKean County District Attorney and the Department of Environmental Protection regarding their respective investigations into a train derailment that occurred on June 30, 2006, resulting in the discharge of more than 40,000 gallons of sodium hydroxide into Sinnemahoning Portage Creek, McKean County.

Dredging Appeals (Hanson Aggregate PMA et al. v. DEP vs. PFBC): On July 2, 2007, the Office of Chief Counsel filed a motion for partial summary judgment in appeals before the Environmental Hearing Board (EHB) by the dredging industry. In their appeals, the dredgers challenged a Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) permit condition that requires fish surveys to be performed before an area is dredged and that provides protections to endangered and threatened fish species in the Allegheny and Ohio rivers. The Commission’s motion for partial summary judgment asserts that the DEP and the EHB lack jurisdiction to hear the dredgers’ challenge to the validity of the endangered and threatened species list as set forth in the Commission’s regulations. On September 17, 2007, the EHB denied the Commission’s motion. The next step will be for the EHB to schedule a hearing of these appeals.

NPDES Permit Appeals: The Office of Chief Counsel continued to represent the Commission in the appeals of its NPDES permits for the Pleasant Gap and Benner Springs State Fish Hatcheries that are currently pending before the Environmental Hearing Board. On August 25, 2007, the Department of Environmental Protection published proposed amendments to these permits in the *Pennsylvania Bulletin*. The proposed amendments allow the Commission to raise an affirmative defense in the event that the Commission exceeds its annual mass loading limits for total suspended solids as set forth in the permits. The public comment period is 30 days.

Lehmier v. PFBC: In this appeal by Mr. Lehmier of the one-year revocation of his boating privileges, the Office of Chief Counsel was successful in getting the Commonwealth Court to dismiss the appeal. Mr. Lehmier has sought review by the Pennsylvania Supreme Court. This Office filed a brief in opposition on August 24, 2007. To date, the Supreme Court has not ruled on Lehmier’s petition. Lehmier also filed an action in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania on August 9, 2007, against the Commission, Executive Director Austen and Waterways Conservation Officers Corey Britcher and Terrance Kane. The complaint asserts, among other things, that the Commission and its employees violated Mr. Lehmier’s first amendment rights. The Office of Chief Counsel forwarded the complaint to the Attorney General’s office for representation.

Quaker Lake: Pursuant to a court order dated February 23, 2007, public access to Quaker Lake, Susquehanna County, was restored at the Commission’s access area pending the final outcome of litigation. The Office of Chief Counsel continued to work with staff and outside counsel to evaluate all legal options to ensure permanent public access to and use of the lake.

Dutch Fork Lake: In two separate lawsuits (one in Washington County, Pennsylvania, and the other in Brooke County, West Virginia), the Office of Chief Counsel continued to work with the Deputy Attorney General assigned to these cases. The plaintiffs in both cases claim that the Commission is responsible for damages to their property resulting from flooding during Hurricane Ivan in September 2004. Commission staff were, or are scheduled to be, deposed in the West Virginia case for the limited purpose of determining whether the Commission had sufficient contacts with the State of West Virginia to confer jurisdiction on West Virginia’s courts.

Eastern Spadefoot Toad: There are only two general locations in Pennsylvania that have been confirmed to have spadefoot toads, a state endangered species. One is located in Northumberland County, and the other is located in Berks County. Both sites are the subject of discussions between the Commission, the Department of Environmental Protection and the respective developers.

Palmerton Zinc Pile Superfund Site: The Office of Chief Counsel continued to work with BOF staff and the other state and federal natural resource trustees to address their respective natural resource damage and restoration concerns and responsibilities arising from the release of hazardous substances at this site. The natural resource trustees met several times with the responsible party regarding these issues and possible settlement.

POS: The Office of Chief Counsel continued to provide legal assistance to aid in the implementation of the point of sale license system. This office provided ongoing review of the vendor's performance under the terms of our contract and negotiated a contract amendment along with the Pennsylvania Game Commission (PGC) that extends the timeframe for PGC implementation and strengthens the liquidated penalties under the contract.

Holtwood Dam: The Office of Chief Counsel has been assisting Bureau of Fisheries staff during negotiations with PPL Generation LLC (PPL) regarding PPL's plans for amending its Federal Energy Regulatory Commission permit to expand its hydroelectric facility. PPL is negotiating with the Commission and other resource agencies to address the agencies' environmental concerns, including fish passage, minimum stream flow and access to fishing and recreational boating.

McCoy Dam: The Office of Chief Counsel assisted Commission staff in negotiating and executing a property rights exchange with the Trustee for the John McCoy Estate to facilitate the dam removal on Spring Creek as well as provide for permanent public access from State Route 144. The office also assisted staff with the preparation, review and execution of agreements to ensure that the necessary funding was in place for the project.

Grant Programs: The Office of Chief Counsel continued to provide support and guidance to the following grant programs – Erie Access Improvement, Sportfishing and Aquatic Resource Education, Cooperative Nursery, Boating Facilities, Fish Passage and Habitat Restoration and State Wildlife Grant Programs.

Bureau of Administration

Fishing License Point-of-Sale (POS): Bureau of Administration staff continue working with Pennsylvania Game Commission (PGC) staff to develop the Pennsylvania Automated License Service (PALS), also known as POS. Automated License Systems (ALS) headquartered in Nashville, TN, is the Commission's selected vendor for developing, implementing, and managing POS.

PALS was targeted for implementation for the sale of fishing licenses and permits by December 1, 2006, and now has 683 out of 850 agents selling fishing licenses and stamps. An additional 125 (Wal-Mart Stores) will be online before November 1, 2007. So far, through September 14, 2007, our expanded pilot locations have successfully sold over 372,614 licenses and permits, and have successfully accounted for and transferred over \$5.5 million in license revenues from our issuing agents to the Commission. Bureau staff recently completed two versions of a new 'PALS only' issuing agent handbook that will be distributed to all PALS fishing license issuing agents. One version of the document was designed to include the legislative impacts of House Bill 1109 and House Bill 948. HB 1109 contains four major components that amend sections in Title 30 (Fish and Boat Code) to better reflect changes brought about by PALS. These include the (1) rewrite of Section 2711 to address electronic transactions, (2) prohibition of the use of one-day licenses from March 15 to April 30 to address the early trout opener in the southeast counties, (3) pass-through of the transaction fees (it is anticipated that supplemental language will added

that caps this at \$1.00 per item) associated with the issuance of electronic licenses, and (4) incorporation of all previously purchased permits (e.g. Trout/Salmon or Erie stamps) when a customer purchases a replacement license. Currently the customer must purchase new stamps at face value when purchasing a replacement license. HB 948 provides the ability for the PFBC to issue a fishing license voucher. These vouchers can be purchased on behalf of another and presented as a gift. Gift licenses have historically been a popular item during the holiday season.

Paper-based Fishing Licenses and Permits for the 2008 License Year: Bureau staff designed and began the process to purchase paper-based licenses, permits, and forms as a contingency in the event that the PALS system is not operational. The licenses and permits were designed to eliminate all reference to a license year and a dollar value. The more “generic” version of the paper license and permits will provide maximum flexibility for future use.

Computerized Vessel Registration (CVR): Administration and legal staff successfully negotiated a non-exclusive contract with CVR that will allow boat dealers and other agents to conduct certain boat registration and titling functions at agent locations. By June 27, 2007, CVR had conducted a market survey and indicated that they will complete a market analysis and begin a cost benefit analysis over the next subsequent months. As of September 14, 2007, the Commission has not received any feedback from CVR on their progress.

U.S. Coast Guard - Vessel Identification System (VIS): Administration, Law Enforcement, and Boating & Education staff are reviewing a proposal by the U.S. Coast Guard to participate in a nationwide vessel identification system that will be used by the states to monitor and record stolen boats and to track ownership for more timely registration and titling transfer for boats that are sold between states. The system will also provide information on federally documented vessels to state officials.

Charter Boat/Fishing Guide Permits: The Commission’s new Charter Boat/Fishing Guide Permit program was established during 2005 and went into effect on January 1, 2006. Bureau of Administration staff issued 193 resident and 36 non-resident guide permits during 2006. Renewal notices for 2007 permits were mailed to permit holders during November 2006. Currently there are 197 active resident permit holders and 39 non-resident permit holders.

The Outdoor Shop: Bureau IT staff continue to refine the Outdoor Shop application and develop system enhancements to make the site more customer friendly and secure. As of September 14, 2007, the Commission sold 50,827 licenses, 31,991 permits, and renewed 22,869 boat registrations through the Outdoor Shop. Last year during the same period there were 35,669 licenses and 23,435 permits sold, and a total of 20,405 boat registrations processed.

Information Technology Section Reorganization: A series of supervisory changes were made to allow the section manager to delegate daily operational decision making and supervisory duties to three subordinate IT supervisors. The three supervisors are responsible for daily operations and the coordination of work to be performed by the unit’s entire technology staff. The section manager was spending a disproportionate amount of time on daily operational decisions, which detracted from long-term planning and improvement efforts. A new organizational structure will assist the section manager in fulfilling the “Big Picture” management and planning duties. A change in the organizational layout of the IT section will enable the IT manager to concentrate on operational efficiency and process improvement initiatives, special projects development, and long term planning efforts. Thus, there was a need to align current IT staff from the Pleasant Gap and Harrisburg offices within three core functional duty areas. IT staff were managed geographically, not functionally. The IT reorganization plan allows key staff to better manage the daily operational needs of Commission staff within the three core service areas of Systems Maintenance and Support, Applications Development and Support, and Information Sharing and Management.

New Disaster Recovery Computer Systems: The bureau purchased and installed new computer hardware for Disaster Recovery purposes which will ensure continued operation of the Boat Registration System in the event of a disaster with the production server in Harrisburg. The system has been configured, the operating system has been installed, the database file structure is in place, security features are implemented, applications and data are migrated, and the system is now online and functioning very nicely. Disaster failover testing with the RATS application is complete and successful. Work continues keeping the two databases synchronized with Oracle DataGuard software. This equipment has been installed and configured by the IT staff and is now online at the Pleasant Gap facility.

E-mail Blast: The IT staff worked with the Commission marketing staff to coordinate sending e-mail blasts to over 50,000 potential customers. IT staff has purchased software and hardware to provide for high volume e-mail to potential customers and provide for analyzing the results of such a marketing effort. This software and equipment is now being readied for implementation. Additional e-mail blasts are anticipated for the 2007 year.

Habitat and Fish Passage Databases: Bureau IT staff developed a multi-layered database system for the collection, evaluation and analysis of habitat and fish passage information. This database will allow for networked habitat staff to track improvement projects from inception and evaluation through the approval process. Design and development phases will be tracked and pertinent information will be made available to staff in a geo-referenced format. A cooperator database will be populated as information is entered into the database providing a contact resource for Commission staff. A similar cooperator/funding source database has been developed to similarly track fish passage projects. This will provide the Commission with a valuable reference of geo-referenced fish passage projects and associated information in the future.

Warm Water/Cool Water Stocking Database: IT staff continue to work on a database application to be used by the hatchery divisions for the stocking of warm water and cool water fish species. This application is an interactive distributed computer system that allows for the seamless exchange of information between remote hatcheries and production headquarters in Pleasant Gap. The application provides an efficient workflow tool that provides the means to move stocking requests from fish management to production chiefs for culture station assignments. Stations receive their assignments electronically and then develop and manipulate the required information to generate necessary documents to fulfill fish stocking reporting requirements. The system provides for instantaneous updates to all production staff in the event of changes and produces reports as necessary through the stocking season.

Scientific Collector Permitting System: Administration staff continues to work with Bureau of Fisheries staff to develop a system to capture information supplied through permitted scientific collectors. Currently, the Commission issues collector permits to individuals who have provided valid justification to pursue scientific collections of aquatic and herpetological specimens. Current reporting requirements for these individuals will be revamped. An application process is being developed to provide input and retrieval methodologies in a consistent geo-referenced database of these collections. Full implementation is scheduled for the 2008 collection year.

Real Estate Information System: IT staff continues to work with Bureau of Engineering and Development staff on implementation and improvements to the Real Estate Information System. This database provides a comprehensive package of tools needed to enter, track, store, and analyze information relative to properties owned by the Commission. Recent improvements have included expanded functionality in the administration, scheduling, maintenance, and oversight of Commission owned access areas. Area maintenance managers are now accessing and utilizing the system from their remote locations.

Species Impact Review system: A revision of the species impact review database is ongoing to update and refine an antiquated system that “tracks” permit applications. Environmental Services staff are

required to review permit applications for projects that have environmental impact. This review can be rather complex involving various staff and may involve threatened and endangered species under PFBC oversight. Typically there is correspondence between reviewer and applicant that may require further assessment before a project can proceed. The SIR tracking database provides an efficient and comprehensive recording of recommendations and correspondence and provides the methodology for universal retrieval across projects for species, applicants, reviewers, county, etc.

Eel Sales Database: Pleasant Gap Data Center staff have worked with the Bureau of Fisheries to develop a system that allows the input and tracking of eel sales for eel vendors licensed in the Commonwealth.

Susquehanna/Juniata Creel Survey: Pleasant Gap Data Center Staff have assisted Fish Management staff in the data warehousing of information collected during the ongoing Susquehanna/Juniata creel survey.

Agency Resource Database: Revisions were made to the agency resource database that allows for the tracking of report narratives. Assessment reports are developed by Area Fish Management staff and are funneled through a review and approval process within the Bureau of Fisheries. Writers and reviewers can now track the status of narrative reports and provide efficient prioritization and distribution of these reports.

Special Activity Permits Database: The initial phase of development was completed for what may become a larger agency wide system for the processing and retrieving of special activity permits. At present, the system provides for the collection and retrieval of fishing tournament results to be utilized by Bureau of Fisheries staff. Investigation of the potential for a more comprehensive system is ongoing.

Pathology Database System: Pleasant Gap Data Center staff is working with Fish Production Pathology staff to develop a system designed to meet agency requirements relative to fish disease and treatment. This database will provide a comprehensive record of fish disease, pathogen infestations, treatment regimes, and results within our agency fish culture system. The developed application will also provide support for mandated review of fish transfer between Fish Culture Stations both internal and external to the Commonwealth.

GIS Development Efforts: The PFBC's primary GIS project is a web-based, interactive mapping application, designed to provide information on fishing and boating opportunities to the general public. A web server and related software have been procured and are being installed during the week of September 17th. The site will be deployed later this fall. In addition, the stocking lists on the PFBC web site have been revamped and will be derived and maintained from this web server. The lists will be database driven and will provide more options for users to generate county and customized stocking lists.

GIS staff continues to develop and refine numerous GIS data layers. The layers address most program areas including trout and warm water/cool water fishing, boating and access, property management, law enforcement activities, and threatened and endangered species/habitat management. Staff also produced numerous maps and completed various analyses in support of these various agency programs, as well as many external data requests.

Other large projects underway include: development of a property GIS layer which is linked with the PFBC real estate database; development of a PNDI environmental review GIS tool; GIS analysis of the aerial angler survey on the Susquehanna and Juniata Rivers; and production of the maps for the PFBC Region Guides.

Technical support with the use of GIS software is provided on a daily basis to various PFBC staff and GIS/GPS training was also provided to the recently graduated WCO cadets. The cadet training included structured classroom and field activities and a portion of their final exam dealt with GIS and GPS.

Web Site: The marketing, press office and web design team have embarked on an effort to “brand” the web site and make it easier for users to remember, Commission publications and other marketing tools by using the URL “fishandboat.com” instead of www.fish.state.pa.us.

Web form use continues to grow as a valuable tool in Commission promotional and data gathering efforts. Forms were developed to aid in the recent promotional efforts for steelhead, safe boating, and paddle PA/water trails. Forms have also been developed to gather input for creel surveys for the Lehigh River, Juniata River, and the Susquehanna River, and to solicit comments for adding the eastern brook trout to the SWG program. Several web forms have become permanent fixtures on our site as a means to enhance customer service and interaction. People can submit comments and questions, comment on proposed regulations and order free publications. Volunteer instructors now enter family fishing courses via a form with an end result of an online schedule available for beginning anglers. We expect the use of these types of forms to continue to expand.

Process Improvements: Bureau of Administration staff initiated a number of process improvement projects that will result in greater efficiency by staff and faster and better outputs with a number of bureau administrative responsibilities. Staff have reviewed the current processes and have developed and implemented process improvements for the various systems used to 1) issue Senior Lifetime Fishing Upgrade Licenses, 2) administer the mailing of Special Permits (Regulated Lakes and Net permits) renewals, 3) manage and track the bonding of fishing license and boat registration and titling issuing agents, 4) process and deposit over 300,000 customer checks, and 5) communicate procedural and policy changes to Licensing and Registration Section staff, fishing license and boat registration issuing agents, and fishing license and boat registration and titling customers.

Fiscal Year 2008-09 Budget Submission: Administration staff facilitated and issued guidance for the preparation and submission of the Commission’s 2008-09 budget request. Agency staff completed the preliminary version of the Commission’s fiscal year 2008-09 budget. Authorization to move forward with the 2008-09 budget request will be reviewed during the October 2007 Commission meeting.

Financial Summary & Budget: As of June 30, 2007, fiscal year 06-07 Fish Fund revenues were roughly one percent, or \$407,206, above fiscal 05-06. Boat Fund revenues are also about one percent, or \$182,166, ahead of last year. Overall, Fish Fund expenditures are eight percent more relative to fiscal 05-06 and Boat Fund expenditures rose nearly 22 percent over last year. Boat Fund expenditures increased due to the purchase of docks for the Walnut Creek Marina facility and an increase in the number of boating facility access grants obligated. Fish Fund and Boat Fund revenues and expenditures are consistent with the approved levels in the 06-07 budget.

Legislative Budget and Finance Committee Audit: Currently, the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee (LB&FC) is conducting a performance audit of the Commission for the fiscal periods 2000 through 2006. The previous audit was conducted in 1998. Bureau of Administration staff have been working closely with the LB&FC in gathering requested data and responding to various inquiries, including recommendations from the 1998 audit. LB&FC’s audit report should be available by late fall.

Federal Assistance: Bureau of Administration staff monitored and managed 46 existing Federal grants. Staff also worked with other key Commission staff on new grant opportunities and to facilitate the preparation and submission of new grant applications and required reports for existing grants. Additionally, paperwork to receive approximately \$6.2 million of federal reimbursement was prepared. The USFWS issued a Finding of No Significant Impact for the Environmental Assessment submitted under the NEPA process for a Boating Infrastructure Grant project in Beaver County. Fish and Wildlife

Service staff, along with federal assistance staff, completed site visits to multiple boat launch areas in the Pittsburgh area constructed with federal funds. A positive report was received for each site visited. Staff continue to work with third party partners to develop an application to fund the construction of docks and accompanying facilities for boats 26 feet and over in Pittsburgh. This application will be submitted in October for a competitive grant selection process. This summer, staff worked to create the computer files necessary to allow the grants accounting system to be converted to improved files that use more up-to-date spreadsheet software. Staff are currently converting files to the new system.

Fishing License Sales & Revenues: Fishing license sales are about three percent higher than the 2006 level and total permit sales are slightly over 1.7 percent ahead of the 2006 levels. Some of the increase is being credited to the timelier reporting of the PALS system issued licenses and permits. Nevertheless, sales figures are ahead of last year with a total licenses sales volume of 811,330 and permit sales of 571,480 units. That compares to 787,122 and 561,832 respectively for the same period in 2006.

Fishing License & Permit Types	Units Sold - 2007	Units Sold - 2006
Resident	711,642	699,921
Senior Resident	16,124	14,804
Senior Lifetime	10,654	9,115
1-Day Resident	2,076	1,491
PA Resident National Guard/Reserve	695	648
Non-Resident	37,979	35,732
1-Day Tourist	4,250	3,334
3-Day Tourist	19,859	17,522
7-Day Tourist	5,382	4,542
Lake Erie Permit	15,847	14,365
Combination Lake Erie & Trout/Salmon Permit	73,471	67,219
Trout/Salmon Stamp Permit	482,162	480,248
Total Licenses & Permits:	1,380,141	1,348,941

Boat Registration and Titling: Total boat registration and titling transaction activity during calendar year 2007 is up by less than one percent to 209,413 transactions. This compares with 207,391 transactions completed through the same period last year. Registration renewal transactions were up by 2.6 percent, while new registrations and titles are down by 2.4 percent.

Boat Registration & Titling Transactions	Transactions - 2007	Transactions - 2006
Registration Renewal	138,645	135,118
Registration Transfer	11,348	12,414
Registration New	24,462	24,817
Registration Change	1,455	1,571
Registration Duplicate	4,103	3,635
Title New	15,771	16,402
Title Transfer	10,400	10,164
Title Correction	1,063	964
Title Duplicate	758	643
Total Transactions	208,005	205,728
Total Active Boat Registrations	337,569	335,651

Bureau of Boating and Education

Boating Accidents: There have been eight fatal recreational boating accidents with nine fatalities to date; the most recent on August 17. Last year during the same period there were 17 fatal accidents with 22 fatalities.

Boating Safety Education Certificates: We have issued nearly 13,554 Boating Safety Education Certificates to date. Nearly 12,400 of those have been issued for successful completion of Commission courses. This is a slight increase over 2006.

Water Rescue Training: We continue to have a very high level of interest in the Commission's water rescue training program. However, in 2007 we conducted only one instructor training conference in Water Rescue and Emergency Response. This did not meet demand. Due to staff constraints we have been unable to conduct additional instructor training conferences for new instructors. An update conference for current instructors is scheduled at H. R. Stackhouse Training School at the end of September.

Education Grants: Agreements are in place for all 18 organizations awarded Sportfishing and Aquatic Resource Education Grants for the 07-08 cycle. Grant funds will be used to develop or expand programs that teach fishing and boating skills or educate participants about waterways and the organisms that live in them. Human Dimensions Consulting (HDC), Gainesville, FL, has been contracted to conduct a formal evaluation of the grant program, based on projects funded in the 07-08 grant cycle. This work will be complete mid-2008. HDC has conducted evaluations of similar programs, including the national PE grant program – after which we have modeled our program. We are receiving final reports from programs funded through the 06-07 grant program. Programs funded in this grant cycle must have final reports submitted no later than September 2007. We plan to announce that no later than October 31 applications will be accepted for the 08-09 grant cycle. Applications must be postmarked December 31 or earlier.

Aquatic Resources Program Specialists (ARPS): Interviews to fill the two vacant ARPS positions (SC & SE) will be scheduled for November before the Thanksgiving holiday. These two positions have been vacant since July. We have depended on wage employees in the regions who are nearing the end of their seasonal employment terms.

Trout in the Classroom: PA Trout (PATU), in cooperation with the PFBC, will hold a training workshop for educators involved in Trout in the Classroom on October 20 at Bald Eagle State Park. Those receiving grants from PATU are required to attend this workshop. PATU received an 07-08 Sportfishing and Aquatic Resource Education Grant for this project. Grant funds are matched with local dollars (from TU chapters and schools) to purchase equipment needed for the program.

Publications: The July/Aug 07 and Sep/Oct 07 issues of *PA Angler & Boater* magazine were printed and distributed.

Approximately 287 Media Services work orders have been processed so far in 2007. Most of these services requested graphic design, writing, editing, printing and duplication.

The Educational Media Section is also producing the 2008 *Fishing Summary*, 2008 *Boating Handbook*, Boating Recap, 2008 fishing license and boat registration issuing agent handbooks, and other publications and products. These products include the 2008 PLAY patch (a purebred muskellunge) and the 2008 non-game species patch (northern fence lizard). In cooperation with the GIS Section, the Section is also updating and producing the seven regional guides and the statewide PFBC Fishing & Boating Map, and we are reprinting and replenishing the stock of staple educational publications for use during the show season and in 2008.

The 2008 PFBC Calendar and 2008 Pocket Guide are almost completed. Both products are on schedule to be distributed in November.

The Section is also currently working on producing the Pine Creek Water Trail Guides (2), Susquehanna River North Branch Water Trail Guides (4), and Three Rivers Water Trail Guide. Other water trail guides will be queued for production and reprinting as we work with partners.

Exhibits: The Educational Media Section is producing a new bass backwall display and replenishing the current stock of exhibits for use in the upcoming show season.

Photography: Staff acquired many digital high-resolution photographs of general fishing, family fishing, and boating.

Boating Facility Grant Program: The Commission has 49 active projects under the Boating Facility Grant Program. Forty-eight applicants have fully signed and executed contracts. The remaining one applicant has a contract that is going through the signature process. Thirty-one of the applicants with fully executed contracts have submitted their final engineering and bid specifications for their projects. Staff has reviewed and approved their designs and has issued them a notice to proceed with construction. Currently, 26 projects are in the construction phase of their Boating Facility Grant. Fourteen projects have been completed and inspected by staff, and the applicants have submitted their final invoices for payment. In addition, five applicants have informed staff that they are nearing completion of their Boating Facility Grant projects. Staff is working with the applicants to submit their invoices for the projects and to schedule final inspection meetings of these facilities.

Erie Access Improvement Program: Staff has been working on finalizing the following property acquisitions.

The agreement for the acquisition of the Brugger property has been finalized and payment for this property acquisition has been made to Fairview Township. Fairview Township agreed to give the Commission an easement for a parking area on the property and a public fishing easement on 560 linear feet of the Lake Erie shoreline.

The Commission approved funding for Girard Township to acquire the Miller property along Elk Creek. The property will provide access to 350 linear feet of Elk Creek on one side. Girard Township acquired the property. The township is in the process of submitting the closing documents to the Commission for final payment. Girard Township will grant the Commission a public fishing easement on this property.

The Commission approved funding for Millcreek Township to acquire the Cassidy Campground property, which is located along Walnut Creek. The property will provide access to about 2,600 linear feet on both sides of the stream. Millcreek Township acquired the property. The township is in the process of submitting the closing documents for final payment. Millcreek Township will grant the Commission a public fishing easement on this property.

The Commission has acquired the Rick Road property, which is located in McKean Township along Elk Creek. The 4.2-acre property will provide access to 900 linear feet of stream on one side and 450 linear feet of stream on the other side of Elk Creek. The property offers easy access to Elk Creek, and it already has a small parking area.

Staff has been working with North East Township for the acquisition of the Semelka property which is located along Twentymile Creek. The property will provide access to 1,900 linear feet of Twentymile Creek on the east side. North East Township recently had the property surveyed and had a second appraisal done on the property to meet the requirements of the DCNR grant. Once the DCNR grant requirements are met, the township will be able to close on the property. The township will grant the Commission a public fishing easement on this property.

The Commission entered into an option agreement to acquire the Froehlich-Sitter properties on Walnut Creek. The properties provide access to 1,380 linear feet of stream on both sides. The Commission exercised the option agreement and is planning to make final payment for the property by the end of October.

The Commission entered into an option agreement to acquire a public fishing easement on the Old Lake Road property, which is located along Walnut Creek in Fairview Township. The property will provide access to 560 linear feet of stream on both sides of Walnut Creek. Staff completed an environmental assessment and property survey, and is currently exercising the option agreement.

Staff received a signed option agreement for the Holliday property located along Crooked Creek in Springfield Township. The property will provide access to 2,350 linear feet of stream on both sides of Crooked Creek. In addition to the public fishing easement, the Commission negotiated for a parking area easement and a footpath easement. Staff had an environmental assessment and a survey performed on the property. Staff plans to exercise the option agreement and plans to close on the property later this fall.

Mercyhurst College offered to donate a public fishing easement on its property along Elk Creek. The property will provide access to 1,400 linear feet of stream on one side of the creek. Staff is working on having an environmental assessment performed on the property. The Commission will exercise the option agreement and finalize the easement once the environmental assessment is complete.

The Commission approved funding for the Millcreek Township School District for a public fishing easement on the property known as the Asbury Woods Nature Center. The school district owns two parcels of property along Walnut Creek that will provide access to 1,000 linear feet of stream on one side and 1,885 linear feet of access on the other side of the stream. The funding will be used to acquire a public fishing easement along Walnut Creek, a parking area easement, and a footpath easement to connect the parking area to the stream. Staff is working on having an environmental assessment performed on the property. The Commission will exercise the option agreement and finalize the easement once the environmental assessment is complete.

Staff is currently pursuing 13 additional properties as part of the Lake Erie Access Improvement Program. Staff has presented offers for eight of the properties and has sent out option agreements for five of the properties. Ten of the properties are located along Elk Creek and may provide access to over 20,000 linear feet of stream. Two properties are located along Crooked Creek and may allow access to almost 3,300 linear feet of stream. One property will provide access to almost 4,400 feet of stream along Twentymile Creek.

Aids to Navigation (ATON): Staff renewed 149 floating structure permits and issued 13 new permits. Staff completed ATON vendor contracts for the installation of Commission-owned ATON. Staff also made several site visits for ATON concerns by WCOs and private ATON permittees.

Marking of Run of the River Dams: Law Enforcement staff inspected some 45 dams in the NC Region and 62 in the SC Region to ensure compliance with signage requirements. Those inspections resulted in 24 compliance issues. All were resolved except for one, which is pending for an order to show cause, and a few have referred to DEP for ownership issues. Staff made several site visits to advise dam owners on compliance concerns.

Walnut Creek Marina: The transient program was started in the latter part of July and all slips were utilized. So far, the program seems to be a success and will be continued for next year. On August 22, staff met at the marina with BEAD, LE and the engineering firm selected to review the marina's expansion.

North East Marina: Completed and submitted the dock project options & estimates to the Executive Director for presentation to the commissioners.

Bridge Projects: Staff met with Fisheries & PennDOT to review and revise current notification processes. PFBC is not being properly notified on many of the bridge projects and/or we are duplicating our efforts when coordinating with PennDOT engineers and contractors. We have revised a communication process that will go out region-wide at PennDOT so that we have consistency throughout the state. Staff has responded to 23 bridge projects since July 07.

Bureau of Engineering & Development

Construction & Maintenance:

The Construction and Maintenance Sections have been busy this quarter with the development of the new Glassworks Access Area that was completed July 2007. This site was developed for recreational needs to provide fishing/boating to the public. The launch ramp will accommodate free public access for boating and fishing on the West Side of the Monongahela River North of the town of Greensboro, Green County. They also completed replacement of the launch ramps at Starbrick and Speers Access Areas. The parking lot at Starbrick was enhanced by expanding the stone parking lot. Construction started to replace the launch ramp at Middletown Access Area late in the third quarter. Dredging was completed to remove a gravel bar that formed at the mouth of North East Mariana.

The Electricians and Carpenter Crews replaced the administration building roof at Fairview and the installation of the silo valves at the Linesville SFH. They started repairs to the Pleasant Gap Visitors Center, which includes new concrete steps, staining the building, window repairs and other upgrades as necessary. The concrete raceways at Tionesta were also repaired.

Crews assisted the Habitat Division with construction of log vanes (weirs) at Walnut Creek's channel. The log weirs were placed above the steelhead fishing holes for the purpose of directing water to promote self cleaning of the holes. Crews assisted the Habitat Division with the construction of stream improvement devices in Spring Creek. This included the installation of log habitat devices in the stream and other stream bank protection measures.

Pipeline replacement started for the installation of an 18" and 12" waterline replacement at Reynoldsdale and a 15" and 12" waterline replacement at Corry. There is a continuation of Job Jar assignments that are completed daily by assigned sections of this division.

Engineering:

Pleasant Gap S.F.H. – Effluent treatment and infrastructure improvement project is complete. Included was an installation of a high flow capacity microscreen filter system for total hatchery flow. Other improvements included a partial recirculation and disinfection system and an aerated sludge storage tank, incidental utility and site repairs, and power backup.

Huntsdale S.F.H. – This effluent treatment and infrastructure improvement project is in the final design. Drawings submitted September 19, 2007. The project includes installation of a high flow capacity microscreen filter system for total hatchery flow. Much-needed improvements will include filtration and disinfection of the hatch house, aeration/degassing of spring water, cool/warm water rearing unit improvements, new domestic sewage treatment facility, incidental utility and site repairs and emergency power backup.

Bellefonte S.F.H. – This effluent treatment and infrastructure improvement project will receive the final design submission from the Professional, due October 8, 2007. The total project will include the installation of a high flow capacity microscreen filter system for total hatchery flow. Much-needed improvements will include water source pretreatment, exploration for water augmentation and/or partial recirculation and disinfection system, filtration and disinfection of the hatch house, raceway repairs, incidental utility and site repairs, and emergency power.

Benner Spring S.F.H. – This effluent treatment and infrastructure improvement project is in the final design submission. This project will include the installation of a high flow capacity microscreen filter system for total hatchery flow. Much-needed improvements will include water source pretreatment, partial recirculation and disinfection system, off-line aerated sludge storage tank, filtration and disinfection of the hatch house, cool/warm water rearing unit repairs, utility and site repairs, and power backup.

Pleasant Gap Visitor's Center – This project will allow faculty staff to have additional office space and upgrades have started to address any safety concerns. Final plans have been received and the project is submitted for bid.

Tionesta S.F.H. – Completed the drawings for submission to Labor & Industry in order to move the Tylersville generator to Tionesta. The generator is to supply power to the well pumps in case of power failure.

Property Services:

Spring Creek Access - Processed and executed license agreement with the Bellefonte Sewer Authority for placement of a sewer line across PFBC property.

In Lieu of Tax Payments - Prepared, reviewed and submitted our in lieu of tax request to DGS for checks to be cut and sent.

Erie Access Improvement Program

- Holliday Crooked Creek Tract – submitted and received signed option agreement on 2.2-acre fee simple acquisition and a 1,330-foot easement acquisition on Crooked Creek.
- Old Lake Road Property – executed option on 560-foot easement on Walnut Creek and requested check for closing.
- Froehlich Property – 19-acre property to be closed by October 1, 2007.

Union City Reservoir - Processed and implemented a new lease agreement from the Water Authority. The site is now open to the public.

Howard Eaton Reservoir - Negotiating new lease agreement.

Newton Hamilton Access and Canadohta Lake Access - Negotiating and processing a license agreement for a sewer line crossing.

Real Estate Database – Continue to populate database with important and relevant real estate documents.

Trout Run Collection Facility - Performed topographic/property survey on Trout Run at the Flowers Estate for proposed permanent easement and stream corridor stabilization.

Big Spring Creek - Performed topographic survey of 1,000 feet of stream corridor for the proposed removal of 2 stream obstructions (dam footers) and proposed stream habitat structures.

Cranberry Glade Lake Access - Performed topographic survey for proposed site upgrade.

Northeast Marina Access - Begin annual lake depth study survey.

Bureau of Fisheries

Fisheries Positions: The Bureau Director was given approval to begin the process of hiring river biologists (FB2) for the Three Rivers system, the Susquehanna River, and the Delaware River. The Susquehanna and Delaware River biologists will work under the supervision of Area Fisheries Managers in the Division of Fisheries Management. The Three Rivers biologist will work under the supervision of the Director of the Three Rivers Environmental Research Center. A job announcement was posted to fill the position of Chief of the Division of Fisheries Management, which was vacated when Leroy Young was selected as Director of the Bureau of Fisheries.

Three Rivers Ecological Research Center:

- Additional office space approved at July Commissioners meeting.
- Continued to interact with key partners about proposal to enhance 250 miles of rivers and streams in 14-county area covered by grant – potential for gathering of partners on this project to be 2008 Three Rivers Ecosystem symposium.
- Was assigned administrative and management responsibilities for PFBC-administered studies on the Three Rivers Ecosystem including administration of various restricted fund accounts resulting from pollution case settlements for use on Three Rivers projects (e.g., Buckeye Pipeline Spill, Texas Eastern Pipeline)
- Attended Global Warming Workshop on impacts of climate change on hunting and fishing (Johnstown).
- Continued participating in planning meetings for 2007 Ohio River Watershed Celebration.
- Continued to advise restoration project along Grand View Scenic Byway Park (Pittsburgh).
- Served on Advisory Committee for Allegheny Land Trust GreenPrints, which involves assessment of aquatic resources in Allegheny Co.

Division of Environmental Services: Staff participated in the following meetings: National Forum on Contaminants in Fish; Spring Creek Canyon Master Plan, Centre County; Pesticide Advisory Board to the Department of Agriculture; and Conference Planning Committees for the Zebra Mussel Summit (November 2007) and the Coldwater Conference (February 2008). Staff completed bioassessment monitoring reports for the Pleasant Gap, Bellefonte, and Benner Spring State Fish Hatcheries; the agency report to the Governor's Green Government Council; and internal Strategic Initiative Reports for 2008.

Watershed Analysis Section:

- Assisted BLE with pollution investigations on Clarion River (Elk County) in response to DOMTAR paper mill discharge and on Skippack Creek (Montgomery County) in response to a fish kill as a result from a release of untreated wastewater from the MOPAC rendering facility.
- Participated at the PFBC informational booths set up for Ag Progress Days (PSU) and the Dirt & Gravel Road annual workshop (Monroe County).

- Completed a four-year cooperative study with DEP concerning the benthic macroinvertebrate and fish community response to a CREP practice being initiated along an unnamed tributary stream to Latimore Run, Adams County.
- Major project reviews included: I99 (Centre County), MAIDA (Northumberland County), Johnsonburg Bypass (Elk County), PTC Northeast Extension Widening Project (Montgomery County), Hazelton Bypass (Luzerne County), and the I-95/I276 Connector Project (Bucks County).

Aquatic Resources Section:

- Worked with BLE to investigate violations at two mining operations at a Bucks County limestone operation and corrective action at a Clearfield Co. coal mine. Investigation resulted in a DEP Order that was issued to correct sedimentation.
- Worked with IT to establish GIS coverage for all 1,200 joint PFBC/DEP aquatic herbicide permits reviewed in 2007.
- Surveyed the middle portion of the Lehigh River and Aquashicola Creek with the responsible party's consultant and are estimating aquatic damages associated with Palmerton Superfund Site, Carbon County.
- Worked with Habitat Management, Fisheries Management and Law Enforcement to award five grants totaling \$43,000 for improvements in the Tulpehocken and Quittapahilla Creek watersheds.
- Promoted the development of fishing amenities on a parcel owned by Tredyffrin Twp., Chester County, as part of the Valley Creek restoration project.

Natural Diversity Section

- Permitting: conducted > 1,200 rare, T&E Species Impact Reviews; issued approximately 300 Scientific Collector's Permits and 21 Commercial Snapping Turtle Permits; consulted on several high profile development projects: MAIDA, Centre County Landfill
- Fieldwork: 214 timber rattlesnake field assessments completed, green salamander surveys in Fayette County, confirmed historic population of endangered eastern pearlshell mussel in Berks County, Red-bellied turtle/red-eared slider surveys in SE PA; set up bog turtle trapping surveys for Section 6 grant
- Grants: submitted grants to Wildlife Conservation Society (spadefoot toad habitat management), Wild Resource Conservation Grant Program (Malacologist/Special Projects, Aquatic Invertebrate Biologist/special projects), grant administration for multiple SWG grants (interim and annual report review, drafts of interim and final federal summary reports)
- Resource Conservation/Management: reviewed/drafted procedure for listing T&E species and objective listing criteria for fish and herptiles; worked on Conservation Polygons for rare species project; drafted eastern pearlshell mussel and spadefoot toad management plans; worked on criteria for recognized/qualified endangered species surveyor lists; active with meetings of the state Wind Power Policy and Science Committee and the Invasive Species Council's Aquatic Nuisance Species Workgroup

Division of Fish Production Services:

- Filled the Cooperative Nursery Unit Leader vacancy.
- Carol Martz retired on September 21, 2007, after 28 years as Cooperative Nursery Unit Clerk Typist.
- Staff participated in finalizing Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission shad stock assessment.
- Tylersville and Pleasant Gap microscreen filter studies continue. Thus far solids in the hatchery effluent have been reduced by approximately 45-50% compared to pre-construction conditions.
- Met with Graymont and Hawbaker personnel to discuss passby flows and flow monitoring at Pleasant Gap SFH.

- Staff processed, analyzed and reported on disease incidence in smallmouth bass young-of-year sampled from the Juniata and Susquehanna Rivers.
- Met with PA Department of Agriculture (PDA) staff to discuss harmonizing PFBC and PDA regulations for quarantine and movement of fish from VHS-positive watersheds.
- Met with resource agencies independently and with resource agencies and PPL Holtwood collectively to continue negotiation of settlement agreement language for PPL’s Federal Energy Regulatory Commission license amendment for Holtwood Dam and fishway.
- Met with Exelon Corporation to discuss relicensing of Muddy Run Pumped Storage facility and Conowingo Dam Hydroelectric project.
- Conducted interviews to fill vacant Fisheries Biologist 1 position in the Pathology Unit.
- Met with staff and DCNR to discuss moving the fish passage project at the Sunbury Fabridam forward.
- Staff conducted fluidized bed, pH-raising study to address low pH water at Van Dyke Shad Rearing Station.
- Coop Unit Staff conducted over 47 emergency site visits and 40 routine nursery inspections.
- Thirty-four Cooperative Nursery grant agreement packages worth almost \$60,000 were sent to sponsors for their signatures.
- Completed Susquehanna River Hydro Dam resident fish passage white paper.
- Staff participated in and presented a talk at Fisheries Committee meeting featuring smallmouth bass issues.
- Submitted funding proposal to Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) for VHS surveillance testing.

Northern Hatcheries:

- Fish Distribution:

SPECIES	LIFESTAGE	POUNDS STOCKED	NUMBER STOCKED
Chain Pickerel	Fingerling	106	3,750
Channel Catfish	Fingerling	127	59,350
Golden Shiner	Adult	67	2,700
Largemouth Bass	Fingerling	3	1,000
Muskellunge	Fingerling	1,320	61,468
Northern Pike	Fingerling	114	6,530
Smallmouth Bass	Fingerling	4	1,080
Striped Bass	Phase I	113	23,870
Tiger Muskellunge	Fingerling	124	9,200
Tiger Muskellunge	Fingerling	3,021	65,708
White X Striped Bass	Fingerling	372	153,370
White X Striped Bass	Phase II	45	2,446

- Hired two seasonal fish culturists at Oswayo and Corry and a secretary at Linesville. We also had a seasonal fish culturist transfer to Linesville from Benner Spring.
- The new well is finished at Corry Foster property. Construction is currently working on new water line from upper to lower series.
- With construction crew’s help, Tionesta was able to finish the concrete floors at Tubbs Run rearing units. Well #1 was rehabilitated also.
- At Oswayo, well #8 was test pumped and is showing promise for additional water to supply the facility. This would reduce supply problems during drought conditions. Relocation of water lines by PennDOT is complete.
- At Linesville, well #2 was rehabilitated and the replacement of valves at the steelhead silos was completed. Rebuilding the wastewater pumps is continuing.

Southern Hatcheries:

- Fish Distribution:

SPECIES	NUMBER STOCKED	SIZE OR LIFESTAGE
Brook Trout	2,600	55 lbs/100 trout
Rainbow Trout	9,700	51 lbs/100 trout
Brown Trout	97,700	Fingerling
Rainbow Trout	139,300	
Striped Bass	23,870	
Walleye	117,660	

- Personnel Actions: Joe Spahn, Fish Culturist, Bellefonte State Fish Hatchery, retired. Scott Brallier was chosen to fill the vacant Fish Culturist position at Reynoldsdale State Fish Hatchery.
- Wastewater treatment construction projects:
 - The McGuire Group continues working on designs for Benner Spring and Bellefonte improvements.
 - Quad-3 consulting group continues working on final designs for the Huntsdale project.
 - HDR/FishPro was selected to design the Reynoldsdale State Fish Hatchery renovation project.
- Bird netting is being installed at Pleasant Gap to lower bird predation.
- Trout spawning is taking place, and eggs are going into incubation units. Earlier eggs have hatched and fry are now on feed.
- Pleasant Gap Hatchery is using the recirculation system to decrease solids in effluent.
- Many of the staff participated in Excel training and Water Safety training.

Division of Fisheries Management

Smallmouth Bass: Fisheries staff met to discuss smallmouth bass young-of-year (YOY) disease and mortality in the Susquehanna River drainage and to discuss future sampling needs in the Susquehanna River, Delaware River, and Ohio River. Sampling for YOY smallmouth bass was completed and data analysis is in progress. Preliminary results indicate that catch rates were relatively low on the mainstem Susquehanna River. High catch rates were recorded on the Allegheny River, North Branch Susquehanna River, Delaware River, and Schuylkill River. Catch rates were average on the Juniata River, West Branch Susquehanna River, and Lehigh River. The presence of disease organisms (including *Columnaris* and Largemouth Bass Virus) was noted from samples of YOY smallmouth bass collected from the Susquehanna River, Juniata River, North Branch Susquehanna River, and the West Branch Susquehanna River.

A pilot smallmouth bass exploitation study is ongoing on the mainstem Susquehanna River. Of 399 bass tagged in May, approximately nine have been reported caught by anglers

At a September 14 Fisheries Committee meeting that focused on the health of the Susquehanna River, staff made presentations on Susquehanna River water quality, fisheries management, and diseases incidence and diagnosis. Information on historic and current sampling results and future plans in each of these areas was presented.

Creel Surveys: Creel survey work continued for the Susquehanna River and Juniata River. A total of 2,794 angler interviews were conducted as of August 12, 2007. Based on a summary of angler catch from the angler interview information, a total of 4,696 SMB, 1,035 channel catfish, and 389 walleye were caught and anglers harvested a total of 49 SMB, 225 channel catfish and 36 walleye. These results will later be expanded through statistical analyses.

Dr. Martin Shields of Colorado State University completed an economic analysis for the 2006 Lehigh River creel survey. The final report for this project is in process.

Other Sampling: Sampling was conducted on a total of 17 warmwater streams as part of an initiative to improve our understanding of the status of the warmwater fisheries on large streams and small rivers. Results from these efforts recorded a range of conditions from sparse to good warmwater fish populations that included legal size smallmouth bass. Sampling continued on waters managed under Wild Brook Trout Enhancement regulations. The results documented a slight increase in the density of wild brook trout populations on five treatment streams managed under these regulations and three control streams managed under statewide regulations. Stream examinations conducted on the Cross Fork Catch-and-Release Area (Sections 03 & 04), documented the presence of a Class A mixed wild brook and brown trout population within the unstocked Section 03, and a continued low abundance of wild trout within the stocked Section 04. Sampling efforts on Big Spring Creek, Sections 01 and 02, documented a general increase in the wild brook trout population within the Ditch segment of Section 01, and some improvement in the wild rainbow trout population downstream of the Ditch in Section 01 and downstream of the former Fish Barrier in Section 02. The survival of fingerling stocked brook trout continued to be very low within Section 02.

New Trout Plan: Staff prepared a document entitled “History of Trout Management in Pennsylvania” as an initial step to development of a new trout plan. Additional background information documents were either prepared, assembled, and distributed to the Commissioners in preparation for a facilitated workshop on the trout plan to be held at the Commission meeting on September 30.

Training: Staff attended water safety training provided by PFBC ARPS staff.

Lehigh River: Videotapes were analyzed for American shad passage on the Lehigh River. A total of 1,303 shad passed through the Easton Dam fishway and 169 shad passed through the Chain Dam fishway in 2007. This was a decline from the number recorded in 2006 (2,023) but an increase from the totals recorded in 2003 (422), 2004 (754), and 2005 (675).

PA Wilds: Staff met with DCNR staff to discuss the possibilities for conducting angler survey work in the Pine Creek drainage during the 2008 season. DCNR is interested in funding this study with consultation from Fisheries staff and PSU.

Lake Erie: Lake trout gill net sampling efforts in 2007 recorded an average catch of 3.16 lake trout/standard lift. This was twice the rate of the long-term average of 1.6 lake trout/standard lift. In addition, the incidence of sea lamprey attacks on lake trout was down in 2007. Results from the yellow perch gill net catch assessment recorded a high catch rate of yellow perch with multiple year classes present in the catch. Yellow perch catch was greater in the Central Basin than in the Eastern Basin.

Division of Habitat Management:

- Conducted interviews and made hiring recommendations for Stream Section Chief (Pleasant Gap) and Sweet Valley Habitat Biologist
- Developing proposal to DEP that would delegate PFBC to review and approve all GP-1 permits for fish habitat enhancement in Pennsylvania
- Submitted e-PARs to hire Habitat Biologist (Bucks County) for the Regional Habitat Section, and two Stream Habitat Managers (Centre County) for the Stream Section

- Attended meetings with various federal and state resource agencies to discuss future collaboration on habitat related issues including PFBC/DCNR habitat collaboration at selected state parks and forests
- Carney and Kristine moved offices to Pleasant Gap
- Attended sexual harassment training
- Meetings: WPC, USDA Forest Service, MAIDA, PFBC Executive staff, PFBC Sunbury fishway, Greene Twp. and Borough of Chambersburg, PFBC Natural Diversity Section, PFBC Watershed Analysis Section, Clearfield Borough, Reliant Energy, Galeton Borough, DCNR, DEP, PGC, Norfolk Southern Settlement, ASMFC, and Oswayo Hatchery

Fish Passage Section:

- Completed the removal of Heilman Dam, Mahoning Creek, Lehigh County; Bailey Dam, UNT to Turtle Creek, Union County; Whittlinger Dam, Yellow Breeches Creek, Cumberland County; Glade Run Dam, Glade Run, Northumberland County; Berwinsdale Dam, N. Witmer Run, Clearfield County; McCoy's Dam, Spring Creek, Centre County
- Continued coordinating in excess of 100 dam removal/fish passage projects; prepared grant applications to NFWF Delaware Estuary Program (\$50,000) and USFWS Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture (\$50,000) to support removal of two dams
- Advancing MOU with PA DOT for funding to remove Bigbee Dam, Bigbee Run, Somerset County (\$250,000) and Westinghouse Dam, Turtle Creek, Westmoreland County (\$200,000)
- Continued to develop project tracking and administrative support database with IT and agency GIS coordinator
- Attended and/or coordinated pre-application and/or pre-construction meetings for multiple potential dam removal projects with federal, state, and local permitting agencies and other interested parties
- Conducted multiple fisheries surveys to monitor project success
- Attended multiple project related meetings

Stream Section:

- Karl Lutz hired as Section Chief
- Provided technical assistance for 30 sites to improve fish habitat through the Technical Assistance Program
- Completed 21 habitat enhancement construction projects
- Reviewed one stream restoration mitigation plan and 15 GP-1 applications
- Significant field activities completed, including two aquatic surveys, six field site reviews, five habitat layouts
- Meetings: Centre, Clinton, Lawrence, Erie, Crawford county conservation districts, DEP, USFWS, and multiple pre-construction meetings

Lake Section:

- Completed multiple project designs and layouts
- Significant field activities include 25 construction/placement of habitat structures
- Attended multiple project related meetings
- Continued coordinating PFBC/DCNR collaborative lake habitat project

Regional Habitat Section:

- Submitted multiple grant proposals to support habitat projects
- Awarded \$210,000 from NFWF (\$120,000), USFWS – EBTJV (\$45,000), NOAA (\$25,000), Western Pennsylvania Watershed Program (\$20,000) for habitat restoration/enhancement projects
- Advancing habitat projects on the following watersheds: Spring Creek, Centre County; Kettle Creek, Clinton County; Four-mile Creek, Erie County; Loyalhanna Creek, Westmoreland County; Bens Creek, Somerset County; Yellow Breeches Creek, Cumberland County, Big Spring

Creek, Cumberland County; Conococheague Creek, Franklin County; Darby Creek, Delaware County; Pennypack Creek, Delaware/Philadelphia counties

- Completed habitat and fisheries surveys to document impact of habitat treatments
- Kris Kuhn selected as Habitat Biologist for HMA 3 (Sweet Valley); Kris transferred from Bucks County position
- Five of six regional habitat biologists hired with one current vacancy in Bucks County
- Staff attended numerous meetings with project partners

Bureau of Law Enforcement

WCO Class: The Eighteenth Waterways Conservation Officer cadet class completed the year-long training program and the officers were commissioned as Waterways Conservation Officers during a graduation ceremony in August. The officer’s district assignments are listed below. The Bureau continues to have five vacant law enforcement positions.

NAME			ASSIGNMENT
DAVID	A	HURST	Cumberland Co.
DARRIN	W	KEPHART	Southern York Co.
ROBERT	A	PLUMB	N. Pike/S. Wayne Co.
JEFFREY	R	SABO	Northampton Co.
JEFFREY	L	SCHMIDT	S. Lancaster Co.
BRENDAN	J	RYAN	N. Bucks Co.
JOHN	G	HOPKINS	SC Crawford/E. Mercer Co.
GREGORY	R	KRAYNAK	S. Luzerne Co.
DOUGLAS	H	KUNKLE	Delaware Co.
JEREMIAH	D	ALLEN	S. Pike/NE Monroe Co.

Accident Investigations: Waterways Conservation Officers have been actively involved in investigating several tragic fatal boating accidents.

Boating Under the Influence Efforts: Officers have apprehended over 60 individuals this year for operating a boat under the influence. All of these cases are pending in court. It is interesting to note that the majority of the BAC results were in excess of .01%.

WCO In-service Training Scheduled: Specialized training in the handling, measuring and determining sex of timber rattlesnakes will be provided for a group of Waterways Conservation Officers in October.

Fall Steelhead Enforcement Detail: A fall steelhead enforcement detail is planned for October through December 2007. Officers from all over the state will be provided with the opportunity to work in Erie County for a week-long period to supplement the law enforcement needs during this very busy period of time.

New DWCO Class: A basic course of instruction for new Deputy Waterways Conservation Officers was completed with sixteen (16) people graduating. At present we have 191 active deputy officers state-wide. Those completing the course and their county of residence are listed below.

NAME			COUNTY
George	P	Afionis	Cameron Co.
Mark	R	Beer	Bucks Co.
Matthew	D	Bruno	Westmoreland Co.
Jeffrey	A	DeFosse	Tioga Co.
Ronald	A	Figurella	Beaver Co.
Dana	L	Hackett	Clarion Co.
Michael	S	Hofecker	Forest Co.

Edward	E	Hoffman Jr.	Berks Co.
Wesley	W	Osborne	Lawrence Co.
Andrew	R	Panessa	Wayne Co.
David	M	Roberts	Carbon co.
Timothy	E	Rolison	Delaware Co.
Mark	E	Rosler	Susquehanna Co.
David	G	Talaba	Bucks Co.
Spencer	C	Zimmerman	Lancaster co.
Keith	A	Zygowski	Allegheny Co.

Advanced DWCO Training: The Bureau conducted an optional advanced training program for deputy officers in September. Training topics included court procedures including mock trials presided over by “Judge” Jason Oyler, firearms marksmanship exercises, interviewing techniques and basic boat accident investigation skills. Training was provided by Commission staff and an instructor from the PA State Police. Deputy officers who attended included:

NAME		Region
Theodore	Bachman	Southeast
Tina	Cumber	Northeast
Wendi	Donachy	Northwest
Alan	Harff	Southwest
Eugene	LaFavor	Northcentral
Aaron	Lupacchini	Northeast
Ronald	Myers	Northcentral
Michael	Neylon	Northwest
Brad	Smith	Southeast
Jeffrey	Snyder	Northwest
John	Sorenson	Southcentral
Jamie	Valencic	Northwest
David	Wetsell	Northwest

Great Lakes Fisheries Commission Meeting: The fall meeting of the Great Lakes Fisheries Commission Law Enforcement Committee was held in Dunkirk, NY, in September. Robert Nestor, Tom Edwards, Tom Tarkowski and Jim Smolko of the Northwest Region attended as did Jeff Bridi from Harrisburg. Discussion topics included commercialization violations from the member states and provinces, use of the MAGLOCLIN system to share intelligence, officer exchange program, Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) use for fishery monitoring and VHS disease updates.

National Conservation Leadership Institute: Jeff Bridi of the Bureau’s Harrisburg staff has been accepted into the National Conservation Leadership Institute (NCLI) which will begin in early November. The course provides an opportunity to develop leadership skills in the context of meeting the challenges facing conservation agencies and groups. The course will conclude next spring.

National Conservation Law Enforcement Chiefs Meeting: Thomas Kamerzel, Bureau Director, attended the National Conservation Law Enforcement Chiefs Association meeting in Louisville, KY, in September.

New Vehicles: The Bureau continues with the replacement of older, high mileage patrol vehicles. This year we began issuing 2007 Chevrolet Silverado extended-cab, short bed trucks. The trucks have the towing capacity needed to move patrol boats. In addition the newer trucks are more fuel efficient as they are equipped with an active fuel management program which shuts off cylinders when the truck is running with a light load. They are also capable of running on 85% ethanol fuel which is cleaner burning.