



Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission

For Immediate Release

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Contact: Eric Levis, Director of Communications
717.705.7806 or elevis@state.pa.us

Fish & Boat Commission Awards Grants for Sinnemahoning Watershed Restoration

Harrisburg, PA — The Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC) today announced more than \$1.36 million in grants to develop and implement projects that benefit fishing, boating, and aquatic resources within the Sinnemahoning Creek Watershed in Cameron, Elk, Potter and McKean counties.

The funding is available through a 2007 settlement agreement with Norfolk Southern as restitution for environmental damages from a June 30, 2006, train derailment in rural Norwich Township, McKean County. The accident spilled sodium hydroxide into Big Fill Run, Sinnemahoning-Portage Creek and the Driftwood Branch of the Sinnemahoning Creek.

Under the settlement, Norfolk Southern agreed to pay the Commonwealth \$7.35 million as restitution for environmental damages. The PFBC received \$3.675 million of the settlement and must use the funds to develop and implement projects that benefit fishing, boating and aquatic resources in Cameron, Elk, McKean or Potter counties. In addition, as part of the settlement, the PFBC has dedicated a minimum \$125,000 to the McKean County Boondocs Program, a unique conservation and education project that uses the construction of trout stream improvement devices as a means of providing treatment to delinquent and dependent children.

The projects funded today total \$1,362,988 and include:

American Rivers, Inc., \$55,000 - Provide fish passage and restore stream habitat through the removal of a low-head dam in Bendigo State Park.

Bucktail Watershed Assn., \$ 4,750 – Improve riparian habitat through the elimination of Japanese knotweed and establishment of native plant communities along Driftwood Branch, Cameron County.

Cameron County Conservation District, \$25,000 – Stabilize stream banks and enhance stream habitat in the Sinnemahoning-Portage Creek watershed

Cameron County Conservation District, \$240,000 – Construct passive system to treat mine discharge in May Hollow and Sterling Run watersheds.

Elk Conservation District & Elk Co. Freshwater Assn., \$65,000 – Construct public access facilities and stream bank stabilization measures in Big Mill Creek, Elk County.

McKean County Conservation District, \$315,400 – Provide project management support, complete 24 stabilization/habitat improvement projects on various waters, and improve public access to the Allegheny River and Potato Creek.

Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, \$17,590 – Provide technical assistance to control invasive plants along the First Fork corridor in Cameron and Potter counties.

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Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, \$100,000 - Improve riparian habitat through the control of invasive plants and establishment of native plant communities along First Fork of Sinnemahoning Creek in Sinnemahoning Creek State Park.

Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, \$32,600 – Construct educational waysides, develop fishing and boating map for Sinnemahoning State Park, and develop fly-fishing education program for area middle and high school students and teachers, disabled veterans, and outdoor women/girls.

Trout Unlimited, \$15,400 - Expand Trout in the Classroom program for schools in Elk, Cameron, McKean, and Potter counties.

Pennsylvania Game Commission, \$21,100 – Provide public access and improve fish habitat in Meade Run Ponds, Allegheny National Forest.

The Pennsylvania State University/USFWS, \$40,640 – Conduct long-term monitoring of brook trout populations and their habitat in north central Pennsylvania and develop biological and habitat monitoring protocols to gauge the effectiveness of habitat restoration and fisheries management efforts.

The Pennsylvania State University/USFWS, \$104,713 – Conduct long-term monitoring of seasonal movement patterns and habitat use of brook and brown trout in north central Pennsylvania to provide information to direct future fisheries and habitat management initiatives (project conducted over three-year time span).

Potter County Conservation District, \$6,400 – Provide support for watershed specialist.

Potter County Conservation District, \$11,000 – Stabilize stream banks and enhance stream habitat at the Track Bed Road site, First Fork of the Sinnemahoning Creek.

Potter County Conservation District, \$14,000 – Stabilize stream banks and enhance stream habitat at the Raunch Road site, Kettle Creek.

Potter County Conservation District, \$17,300 – Stabilize stream banks and enhance stream habitat at the Dunbar-Reed property, West Branch of Genesee River.

Potter County Conservation District, \$17,500 – Stabilize stream banks and enhance stream habitat at the Heagy property, Genesee River.

Potter County Conservation District, \$18,400 – Stabilize stream banks and enhance stream habitat at the McAfoose property, First Fork of Sinnemahoning Creek.

Potter County Conservation District, \$20,000 – Stabilize stream banks and enhance stream habitat at the Bricker and Weaver properties, First Fork of Sinnemahoning Creek.

Potter County Conservation District, \$20,000 – Stabilize stream banks and enhance stream habitat at the Nancy, Reese and Rudolph properties, First Fork of Sinnemahoning Creek.

Potter County Conservation District, \$28,000 – Stabilize stream banks and enhance stream habitat at the Davis and Shinglehouse properties on Oswayo Creek, the Clark, Lehman, Frederick, and Buchsen properties on the Allegheny River, and Chapman property on the Genesee River.

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Toby Creek Watershed Assn., \$58,500 – Provide chemicals for the continued operation of the Blue Valley Treatment System Facility, Brandy Camp Creek, Elk County.

Western Pennsylvania Conservancy, \$114,695 – Complete an assessment and restoration plan for the Sinnemahoning-Portage Creek and Driftwood Branch to document stream impairment and habitat needs and landowner information that will assist in advancing future habitat improvement projects and obtaining easements for fishing access.

Total \$1,362,988

The mission of the Fish and Boat Commission is to protect, conserve, and enhance the Commonwealth's aquatic resources and provide fishing and boating opportunities. For more information about fishing and boating in Pennsylvania, please visit our website at www.fishandboat.com.

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