



Photo: Carl Kimmel

# THE POWER OF PARTNERSHIPS

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The Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC) is a relatively small state agency, which, using a boxing metaphor, punches above its weight. Our nearly 420 full-time and approximately 200 seasonal staff statewide deliver incredible results on behalf of the Commonwealth's anglers, boaters, and aquatic resources. In all corners of Pennsylvania and during every season of the year, PFBC employees work daily to implement our mission to protect, conserve, and enhance aquatic resources and provide fishing and boating opportunities.

Some of this work will be highlighted April 30 through May 2, 2023, when we join our colleagues at the Pennsylvania Game Commission to host the 78th Annual Northeast Fish and Wildlife Conference in Hershey. This event rotates among the northeast states from Virginia to Maine and comes to Pennsylvania about once every 10 years. It offers an opportunity to interact with and learn from fish and wildlife professionals throughout the region. For registration information, visit [www.neafwa.org](http://www.neafwa.org).

working. Most boating accidents happen in the summer when more people are on the water, but a disproportionate number of fatalities happen when the water is cold and the chances of survival dramatically drop. In response, since 2012, boaters are required to wear a life jacket on boats less than 16 feet in length and on any canoe, kayak, or paddleboard from November 1 through April 30.

While the number of accidents during the cold weather months have remained steady over the past 10 years, fatalities have been cut in half. The regulation is saving lives and is a poignant reminder that life jackets work.

Do not be fooled by a warm day this winter or when boating during the opening day of trout season on April 1, 2023. Despite the air temperature, the water is still dangerously cold. Wearing a life jacket can save your life, and it is the law this time of year.

As thoughts start to turn toward more time on the water with the changing seasons, appreciate the power of partnerships for aquatic resource conservation and renew your commitment to being our partner in boating safety by wearing your life jacket.

The opening plenary of the conference will feature a session entitled *The Power of Partnerships*. That title applies to nearly everything we do and helps explain how the PFBC is able to accomplish so much. We don't do it alone.

On behalf of our Board of Commissioners and Boating Advisory Board, thank you to all of the partners—many of whom are regularly featured in the pages of *Pennsylvania Angler and Boater*—who collectively make our successes possible.

We ask that everyone be our partner in the pursuit of safety. You can do that by wearing your life jacket.

At a recent meeting of our Boating Committee chaired by Commissioner John Mahn, our staff reported compelling statistics showing that the 10-year-old cold weather life jacket regulation is



**WEAR IT**  
National Safe Boating Council  
**Pennsylvania**