Lake Erie

Lake Erie is Pennsylvania's most unique waterway, not only because of its size, but because of the abundance of gamefish. Anglers catch an average of 1.5 million fish each year in the lake, Presque Isle Bay and Lake Erie tributaries.



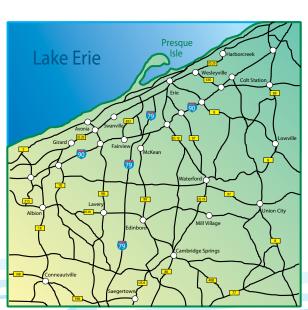
To many anglers, Erie fishing means steelhead, and for good reason, as the lake and its tributaries provide a world-class steelhead fishery. But, great fishing doesn't stop there; Lake Erie also has excellent populations of Yellow Perch, Walleyes, Northern Pike, Smallmouth Bass, Largemouth Bass, Rock Bass, Bluegills, Channel Catfish, Bowfin, crappies, sunfish, bullhead and carp. And let's not forget that a lake this size allows for a variety of boating opportunities as well. So what are you waiting for? Start exploring this GREAT Lake.

The steelhead fishery in Lake Erie and its tributaries has become a popular destination for anglers. Nearly a quarter-million steelhead fishing trips are made here every year. These trips generate more than \$9.5 million in economic activity for the community. One challenge in keeping this good thing going is addressing the increased demands on public and private lands. The Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission (PFBC) has taken the lead by developing the Erie Access Improvement Program.

Erie Access Improvement Program

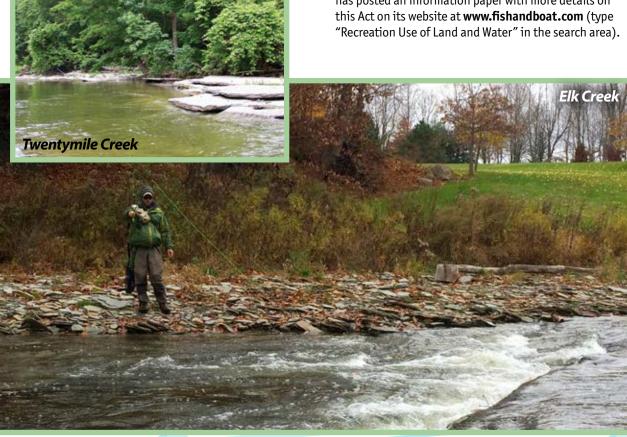
The Erie Access Improvement Program was made possible by Act 159 of 2004, which created a new Lake Erie stamp/permit (required for anglers fishing in the Lake Erie watershed) and a Combination Lake Erie Trout/ Salmon stamp. The Act provides that the proceeds from the sale of Lake Erie permits are to be deposited into a restricted account to "be used to provide public fishing access on or at Lake Erie and the watersheds of Lake Erie." With these dedicated funds, the Commission developed the Erie Access Improvement Program to ensure that anglers in the Erie watershed have perpetual and high quality access to fishing opportunities.

Government entities and other nonprofit, sporting and conservation organizations may identify acquisition and development needs in the Erie watershed and request Commission funding through the Erie Access Improvement Program to assist in addressing these needs. Eliqible projects include acquisition of lands and property rights, and/or development of lands to improve and/or maintain angler access. A major component of this program is to work with willing landowners to develop public fishing easements that allow fishing access in exchange for fair compensation.



WHAT IS AN EASEMENT?

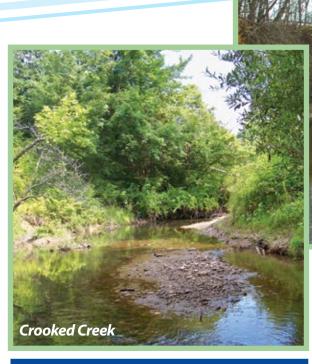
A public fishing easement is a voluntary and permanent legal contract between the current and future landowner of the property and PFBC. A public fishing easement allows the public to access the property in perpetuity for the purpose of fishing. The size and shape of the easement varies but generally encompasses 35 feet of land from the stream's edge on either side of the stream. If the course of the stream changes over time, the easement corridor will move with the stream as long as it remains within the boundaries of the property. Easements put an encumbrance on the property title that stays on the land even if it is sold or deeded to an heir. Easements under this program provide only fishing access. The landowner continues to own and control the land.



LANDOWNER RIGHTS AND PROTECTION

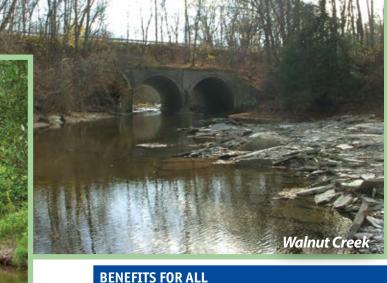
Entering into a public fishing easement preserves landowner rights and provides additional benefits. Landowners may still use the property for farming, grazing, water supply, fishing and other activities. Landowners retain the right to have anyone acting unlawfully removed from the property. The PFBC will mark the boundaries of the easement corridor with signs that remind anglers to respect the landowner's rights and not to trespass outside of the easement corridor boundary. PFBC Waterways Conservation Officers will conduct periodic patrols through these areas and will respond to landowner complaints regarding illegal fishing on

LANDOWNERS: Did you know that Pennsylvania has legislation protecting landowners who hold their lands and waters open for free public recreational use? PFBC has posted an information paper with more details on



LANDOWNER RELATIONS

The number one reason landowners post their property against public access is in response to poor behavior such as littering, building open fires, trampling farm fields or landscaping and blocking driveways and access roads on private property. Preserving public access to private lands is a simple matter, but one that requires us all to take action to police ourselves. Regardless of whether a public fishing easement is on a property, visitors on private lands must remember to act like a quest. Respect the landowners rights and all postings, park only in designated areas, access the property only at designated areas, and stay within the marked boundaries of the fishing area and the stream. In addition, please be a caretaker of the stream and remove any trash that you may find. Following these guidelines will help to ensure that private properties remain open and available to the public and provide high quality fishing experiences for generations to come.



The development of public fishing easements is beneficial for landowners and anglers. By acquiring and documenting public fishing easements, PFBC is better able to direct anglers to areas open for fishing, which may help to spread out the fishing pressure. Public fishing easements ensure good fishing for everyone through the continuation of formal fisheries management. This cooperative approach to access ensures that generations of residents and visitors are able to reap the economic and recreational benefits of a long-term, high quality fishery.





Erie waters are among the best trophy fisheries in the world and include dozens of tributaries, Presque Isle Bay and miles of public access. Locals know, the best times to fish for steelhead are fall, winter and early spring. The streams that flow into Lake Erie in Pennsylvania provide a series of unique seasonal fisheries. One of the most successful is the trout and salmon program. The Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission has been managing the steelhead fishery on Lake Erie for over 40 years. With a million juvenile steelhead stocked each year, these fish have dominated the stocking efforts almost every year since 1990. Since the inception of the program, the steelhead fishery has been successful beyond the expectations of many.

The Commission also started stocking Brown Trout in the Lake Erie tributaries in 2008. The goal of this program is to emulate the Brown Trout program on Lake Ontario but on a smaller scale. To date, Lake Erie's Brown Trout program has been a cooperative venture between PFBC and local cooperative sportsman's nurseries including 3-CU and the Wesleyville Conservation Club.

Many premier access areas are highlighted on the map on the reverse side. Learn more by visiting PFBC's website at www.fishandboat.com/steelhead.htm.



HOW TO RELEASE FISH: CATCH AND RELEASE

Some waters are managed strictly as "Catch and Release" waters. Every angler should expect and be prepared to release some portion of his catch. Minimum size limits require that fish less than the minimum must be released. Creel limits require that fish caught in excess of the limit must be released. Closed seasons require the release of fish species caught during a season when keeping them is not permitted. Just as important, catch and release has become a popular and preferred method of angling. The idea for both voluntary catch and release and catch and release required by regulations is that the fish survive to grow larger, and perhaps reproduce, and perhaps then can be caught again. The number of fish that survive depends on several factors, including the length of the fight, where the fish is hooked, water temperature and how the fish is handled and released.

To give fish released the best chance for survival, follow these recommended quidelines:

1. Use barbless hooks.

2. Play fish quickly. Try to land your fish as quickly as possible, and don't play the fish to exhaustion.

3. Use a landing net.

4. Keep the fish in the water. The chance of a fish being injured increases the longer it is held out of water.

5. Wet your hands. Wet your hands, your net and other materials that may come in contact with the fish.

6. Hold the fish upside down while removing the hook. This can often pacify the fish and reduce handling time.

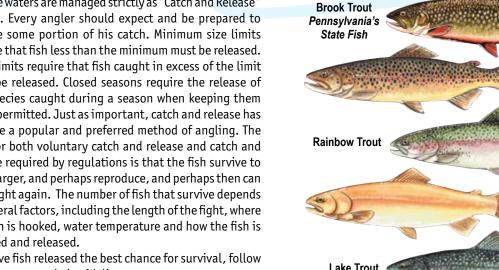
7. Remove hooks quickly. Hemostats or long-nose pliers are essential tools for quickly removing hooks. **8. Cut the line.** When it is not possible to remove the

hook without harming the fish, cut the line. 9. Don't touch the gills. Do not handle fish by placing

your fingers in the gill slits. 10. Hold the fish upright underwater after hook removal and allow it to swim away under its own power. If necessary, hold the fish out of the current until it

11. Fish that are bleeding from the mouth or gills due to hook removal do not survive after being released back into the water. Anglers may be charged with violating the Fish and Boat Code by failing to immediately release the fish unharmed. If regulations permit, the angler should keep the fish and have it count towards the daily limit.

MEET THE TROUT FAMILY



lateral stripe.

Brown Trout has Rainbow Trout has dark spots, few or

Lake Trout has dark spots, especially light spots over on tail, and a pink entire body. Tail deeply forked.

Buy your multi-year or annual License & **Erie Combo Permit ONLINE!** www.GoneFishingPa.com

Aquatic Invasive Species

Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) may be microscopic and can be plants or animals. AIS have the potential to cause significant economic and ecologic harm to our waterways by competing with native and game species for space and food. water can unknowingly spread AIS.

Do not move or release animals or plants to other
 Dispose of unwanted fishing bait in the trash.

Small Gear

Use the following AIS before using your gear or equipment at a new

Check these areas

For a minimum of 20 minutes, soak gear in hot water (120°-140° F) (may damage Gor-tex®) containing 1 cup of regular dis detergent per gallon of water OR freeze gear for at least 8 hours.

After cleaning or freezing, allow gear to dry for a minimum of 48 hours before

Boats and Heavy Equipment water from boat, motor, bilges, bladd tanks, live bait wells, any other wet compartments and portable bait

Consider using your gear in only one

Use a steam spray unit to thoroughly clean all parts of the boat or neavy equipment (including all wet compartments such as the bilge, bait compartments and storage bunkers). I steam cleaning is not available, use a high pressure hot water sprayer. If these cleaning options are not available, put your boat through a hot water car wash. oroughly spray all parts of a boat traile and towing vehicle that contact the water.
Thoroughly flush the cooling system of al

After cleaning, allow equipment to dry for at least 48 hours.

STOP AQUATIC HITCHHIKERS For more information, visit www.fishandboat.com/AIS.htm

REPORT AIS SIGHTINGS: http://fishandboat.com/ais-reporting.htm







WHO MUST WEAR A LIFE JACKET?

 All water skiers and anyone towed behind vessels, personal watercraft operators and passengers and sailboarders (windsurfers). Inflatable life jackets are not acceptable for these activities.

 Children 12 years of age and younger on Commonwealth waters when underway in any boat 20 feet or less in length and in all canoes and kayaks.

 On Pittsburgh District U.S. Army Corps of Engineers lakes (only), everyone in boats less than 16 feet in length and in all canoes and kayaks.

• From November 1 through April 30, boaters are required by law to wear life jackets on boats less than 16 feet in length or any canoe or kayak

Life jackets should be personalized, properly fitted and tested. Everyone should know how to use them. Always wear your life jacket.

PENNSYLVANIA FISH & BOAT COMMISSION P.O. Box 67000

Harrisburg, PA 17106-7000 Phone: (717) 705-7800

Northwest Region Law Enforcement Office 11528 State Highway 98 Meadville, PA 16335 8 a.m.-4 p.m. weekdays Phone: (814) 337-0444 FAX: (814) 337-0579



REPORTING WATER POLLUTION

If you see anything suspected to be a pollution or disturbance of any waterway, report it immediately by calling the region office, PFBC's toll-free pollution hotline (855-FISH-KIL) or the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection at 1-800-541-2050 (24 hours a day, 7 days a week).

RESPECT THE LANDOWNER

1. ALWAYS ask permission before entering private land. 2. DON'T park in cultivated fields or block roadways.

3. AVOID damage to fences, trees, etc.

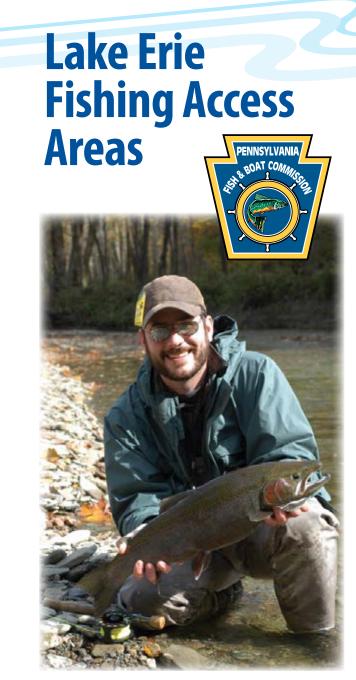
4. DON'T LITTER.

5. BE COURTEOUS to your fellow anglers and boaters.

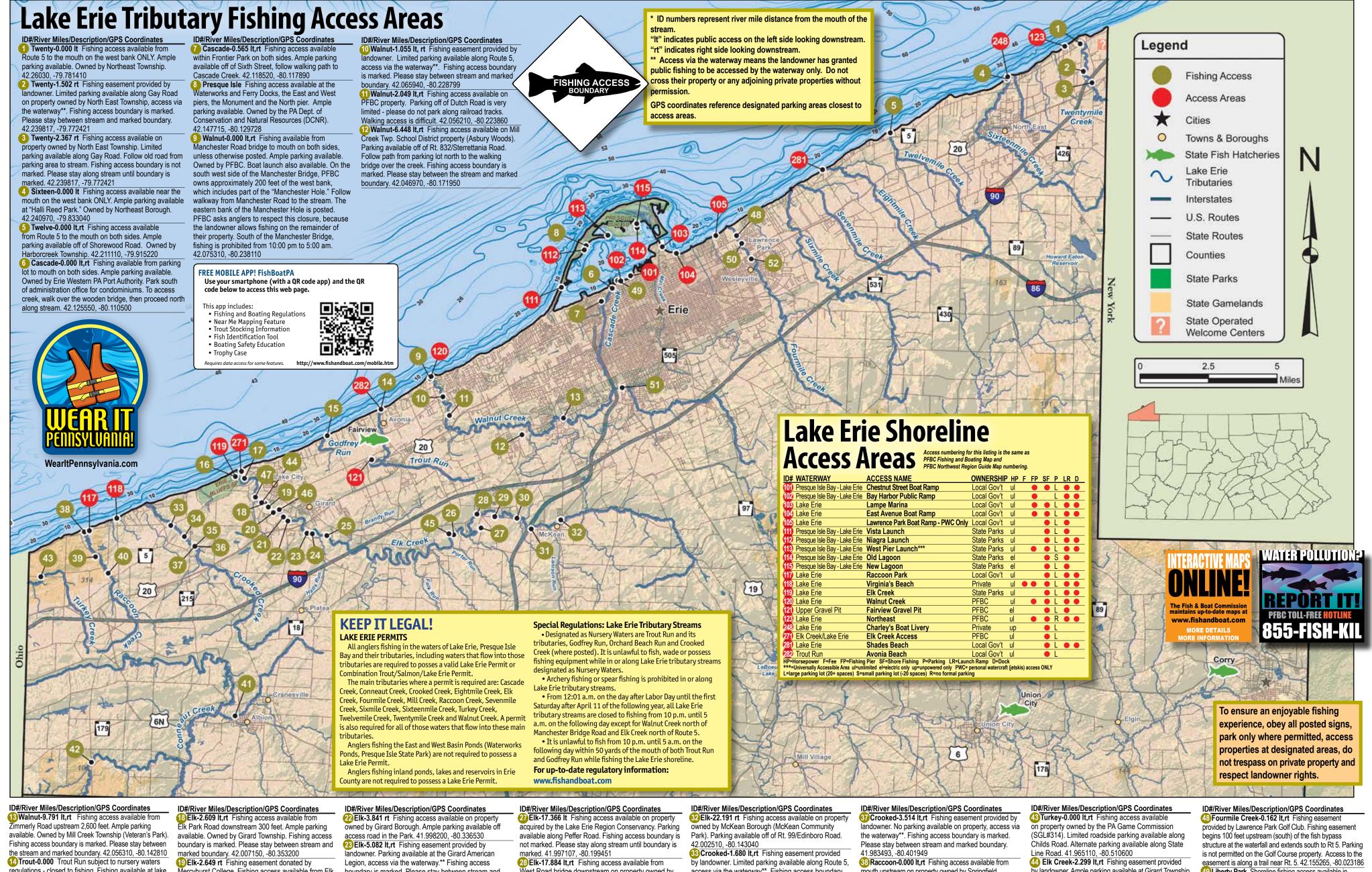
ERIE ACCESS IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

E-mail: scbollinge@pa.gov

Mailing address: Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission Division of Public Access & Property Services P.O. Box 67000 Harrisburg, PA 17106-7000



www.fishandboat.com



regulations - closed to fishing. Fishing available at lake shore near mouth. Ample parking available. Owned by Fairview Twp. Fishing access boundary is marked. Please stay between lake and marked boundary.

42.058510, -80.272520 15 Godfrey-0.000 Godfrey Run subject to nursery waters regulations - closed to fishing. Fishing available at lake shore near mouth. Limited parking along Godfrey Road, walk-in access from road to mouth. Owned by PFBC. 42.043830, -80.310210

6 Elk-0.168 It Fishing access available from mouth 3,300 feet primarily on west side. Ample parking available off of Route 5. Owned by DCNR (Erie Bluffs State Park). Boat launch also available. 42.020950, -80.374670 17 Elk-0.040 rt Fishing access available from parking lot to mouth primarily on east side. Ample parking available. Owned by PFBC, boat launch also

available. 42.020060, -80.368090

Mercyhurst College. Fishing access available from Elk Park Road upstream 1,550 feet along northeast bank. Ample parking available at Girard Township parking lot on Elk Park Road, access via the waterway**. Fishing access boundary is marked. Please stay between stream and marked boundary. 42.007150, -80.353200

20 Elk Creek-2.977 lt,rt Fishing easement provided by landowner. Fishing access available from railroad trestle upstream 1,050 feet along both banks. Ample parking available at Girard Township parking lot on Elk Park Road, access via the waterway**. Fishing access boundary is marked. Please stay between stream and marked boundary. 42.007150, -80.353200

21 Elk-3.479 lt,rt Fishing access available on easement provided by landowner. Ample parking available at Girard Borough Park, access via the waterway**. Fishing access boundary is marked. Please stay between stream and marked boundary. 41.998200, -80.336530

boundary is marked. Please stay between stream and marked boundary. 41.991790, -80.318810

24 Elk-4.925 lt,rt Fishing easement provided by landowner. Ample parking available at the Girard American Legion off of Noble Road, access via the waterway**. Fishing access boundary is marked. Please stay between stream and marked boundary. 41.991790, -80.318810 Elk-6.005 rt Fishing easement provided by

landowner. Parking available at the Girard American Legion, access via the waterway. Fishing access boundary is marked. Please stay between stream and marked boundary. 41.99179, -80.318805 26 Elk-15.728 rt Fishing access available on property

owned by Fairview Township (Struchen Flats Park). Ample parking available off of Platz Road. 41.993160, -80.218560 West Road bridge downstream on property owned by McKean Township (Sterrettania Access). Ample parking available off of West Road. 42.004380, -80.202600

29 Elk-19.046 lt,rt Fishing access available on property acquired by the Lake Erie Region Conservancy. Ample parking available off of West Road. Follow path from parking area to the stream. Fishing access boundary is not marked. Please stay along stream until boundary is marked. 42.003700, -80.189260

is marked. Please stay between stream and marked

boundary. 41.997259, -80.163778

Elk-20.079 lt,rt Fishing access available from Rick Road downstream 900 feet. Ample parking available along Rick Road. Owned by PFBC. 42.002740, -80.174050 31) Elk-21.174 lt,rt Fishing easement provided by landowner. Limited parking available along West Road, access via the waterway**. Fishing access boundary

access via the waterway**. Fishing access boundary is marked. Please stay between stream and marked boundary, 41,994116, -80,419529

Crooked-2.301 lt,rt Fishing easement provided by landowner. No parking available on the property, access via the waterway**. Fishing access boundary is marked. Please stay between stream and marked boundary. 41.994120, -80.419530

35 Crooked-3.058 It Fishing easement provided by landowner. No parking available on property, access via the waterway**. Fishing access boundary is marked. Please stay between stream and marked boundary. 41.983493, -80.401949

36 Crooked-3.058 rt Fishing easement provided by landowner. Limited parking available along Lucas Road, access via the marked trail from Lucas Road to the stream. Fishing access boundary is marked. Please stay between stream and marked boundary. 41.983493, -80.401949

mouth upstream on property owned by Springfield Township (Raccoon Creek Park). Ample parking available off of Old Lake Road. 41.989430, -80.480680

39 Raccoon-1.526 lt,rt Fishing access available on property owned by the PA Game Commission (SGL#314). Limited parking available off of Elmwood Road. Walk-in access to the creek. 41.976400, -80.472230

10 Raccoon-2.412 lt,rt Fishing access available on property owned by the PA Game Commission (SGL#314). Limited parking available off of Elmwood Road. Walk-in access to the creek. 41.967970, -80.462930

EB Conneaut-0.407 lt,rt Fishing access available on property owned by Albion Borough (Albion Borough Park). Parking available off of Lisek Circle. Fishing access boundary is marked. Please stay between stream and marked boundary. 41.894380, -80.370240

WB Conneaut-5.018 lt,rt Fishing access available on property owned by the PA Game Commission (SGL#101). Limited roadside parking available off of Grirrey Road. 41.867760, -80.471080

by landowner. Ample parking available at Girard Township parking lot on Elk Park Road, access via the waterway. Fishing access boundary is marked. Please stay between stream and marked boundary. 42.007150, -80.353200 5 Elk Creek-15.450 lt,rt Fishing easement provided by landowner. Ample parking on North side of stream at Struchen Flats Park, access via the waterway. Fishing access boundary is marked. Please stay between stream and marked boundary. 41.993160, -80.218560

46 Elk Creek-3.185 lt,rt Fishing access available on property owned by the Borough of Girard. Ample parking available at Girard Borough Park, access via the waterway. 41.998200, -80.336530

47 Elk Creek-2.021 lt,rt Fishing access available on property owned by the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy. Parking available on property off of North Creek Road. Follow trail from parking area to the stream Please do not use the old access road and parking area along the railroad tracks. 42.011606, -80.364948

49 Liberty Park Shoreline fishing access available in Presque Isle Bay at Liberty Park at the Edward "Mathews" Mead fishing platform. Property owned by the Erie-Western PA Port Authority. Ample parking available at Liberty Park off of the Bayfront connector. 42.128811, -80.106107

50 Fourmile Creek-0.677 rt Fishing access available on property owned by Lawrence Park Township (Napier Park). Limited parking available in and around the Park. Fishing access primarily on the east side of the stream

42.149822, -80.019653 61 Walnut Creek-13.051 lt.rt Fishing Access available on property owned by Millcreek Township (Zimmerly Park). Limited parking available in the park. ADA accessible parking area, access trail and fishing platform on the

property. 42.073106, -80.101675 52 Fourmile Creek-1.513 lt,rt Fishing access available on property owned by the Lake Erie Region Conservancy. Limited parking available off of Water Street. Access primarily along west side of the stream. 42.142809, -80.012165