

Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission

ANNUAL REPORT



PFBC Annual Report Executive Summary and Financial Statement Highlights of Fiscal Year 1999-00 (July 1999 through June 2000)

With more than 83,000 miles of rivers and streams and thousands of lakes, impoundments and ponds, Pennsylvania has one of the largest and most diverse systems of water resources in the nation. The Fish & Boat Commission's mission is to provide fishing and boating opportunities through the protection and management of the Commonwealth's aquatic resources. The work to fulfill that mission takes on many forms, from managing fish populations to conducting safe boating programs, and from law enforcement patrols to producing publications on how and where to enjoy angling opportunities. Even though it's impractical to recount everything the Commission achieved in fiscal year 1999-2000, some special highlights stand out:

After nearly a year of collecting extensive public comment, the Commission adopted a new creel limit for trout at its July 1999 meeting. The change lowered the daily limit to five trout (combined species), the first such change since an eight-trout limit was implemented in 1952. There was strong public support for the new creel limit, with some 60 percent advocating a reduction. That public support was the crucial factor for Commissioners in considering the proposal because the measure was based on social and policy perceptions instead of distinct fisheries management needs. On-the-stream creel surveys in Pennsylvania have shown that 90 percent of anglers already creel five or fewer trout. The action also brought trout limits more in line with those established for other popular game fish such as bass (six fish daily limit) and walleyes (six fish daily limit.)

At the same meeting, the Commissioners approved a major update to the state's list of threatened and endangered fishes. The revised list was the result of a multi-year cooperative study to produce a method of objectively classifying fish species on their distribution and abundance in the Commonwealth. This cutting-edge work combined more than 11,000 fish records from the Commission's fisheries management database with those of retired Penn State professor Dr. Edwin Cooper, the Penn State Fish Museum, University of Michigan Museum of Zoology, Cornell University, National Museum of Natural History, Environmental Protection Agency and the Academy of Natural Sciences in Philadelphia.

A drought through the summer and fall of 1999 made it difficult or impossible to use some boats on some Commonwealth waterways and boating accesses. Commission biologists reported that even though the drought had localized effects on specific fisheries, a long-term effect on fish populations or fishing was unlikely.

Larry J. Schweiger, President of the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy, was named the 1999 winner of the Ralph W. Abele Conservation Heritage Award. The Abele Award is the highest honor the Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission can confer in recognition of dedicated service to the conservation of Pennsylvania's natural resources. The Abele Award commemorates Ralph W. Abele, the late executive director of the Pennsylvania Fish Commission, whose commitment to conservation and education made him a hero to all Pennsylvania conservationists.

The number of boats registered in Pennsylvania reached a record high by the end of 1999. The 352,231 watercraft registered by the Commission topped the 1998 total of 348,352 by 3,879 registrations. Allegheny County continued to lead the state with the highest number of registered boats. However, the 29,194 watercraft registered in the county for 1999 dropped slightly from the high of 29,955 set in 1996.

A new structure for Commonwealth bass fishing regulations started with the new year. The new regulations allow bass fishing year-round, with catch-and-immediate-release fishing in the spring replacing the former closed season. Harvest was reduced in fall and winter to offset the additional springtime angling pressure.

Starting January 1, all operators of personal watercraft, specialized kinds of small inboard motorboats, were required to obtain and carry a boating safety education certificate. The certificates are awarded to those who successfully complete boating courses approved by the Commission. The measure was implemented to combat the disproportionate number of accidents and complaints involving personal watercraft.

The Commission sent out more than 89,000 trout as part of its Late-Winter Adult Trout Stocking Program in January and February 2000. Waters included in the program are open for an additional month of trout fishing. Trout angling is permitted in March on these waters while most other trout-stocked waters close to fishing at the end of February in preparation for the traditional opening day of the season.

Special fishing regulations for three southwestern Pennsylvania lakes highlighted the Commission's January 2000 quarterly meeting. Hinckston Dam and Wilmore Dam, Cambria County, along with Quemahoning Reservoir, Somerset County, were designated as Big Bass Waters. In addition, all three waters were added to the Panfish Enhancement Special-Regulation Program, designed to

increase the number and size of sunfish, crappies and yellow perch.

Leonard A. Green, former member of the Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission, died in Butler on March 28, 2000. Green served as a member of the Commission for 16 years, from 1975 until 1991. He was a key player in the development of the resource-based policies and programs known as Operation FUTURE. A conservation leader of state and national importance, Green was a strong supporter of the "Resource First" philosophy that has guided the Commission and its staff for many years.

The Commission announced it would fund grants for aquatic resource protection and enhancement projects such as habitat/access acquisition, riparian restoration and in-stream habitat enhancement projects. Funding for the Waterways Conservation Grants came from donations to the Commission's voluntary contribution programs: The Conservation Acquisition Partnership (CAP) Program and the Waterways Conservation Program "Conserve 2000."

Representatives of the Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission along with those of other government agencies, environmentalists and sporting groups joined utility officials at the GPU York Haven Hydroelectric Plant in June to dedicate the newly constructed fish passage facility, located on the southeast shoreline of Three Mile Island. The completion of the York Haven fish passage facility marked an important milestone in a joint venture to provide passage for American shad and other migratory fishes through four hydroelectric dams on the lower Susquehanna River. The spring 2000 migration broke all previous records with more than 163,000 American shad passing over Conowingo Dam.

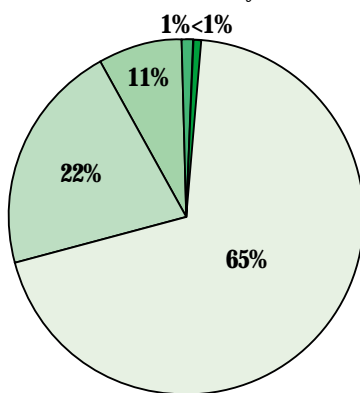
In June 2000, the Fish & Boat Commission's Harrisburg offices moved to a new headquarters building at 1601 Elmerton Avenue, Harrisburg (Susquehanna Township). The Fish & Boat Commission was 134 years old in 2000. For the first time in its history, the Commission's Harrisburg offices are now housed in quarters built to its specifications instead of renting or borrowing offices. The project was years in the making. With this move, the Commission continues its commitment to serving its customers, the anglers and boaters of Pennsylvania. ☐

Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission Financial Report for Fiscal Year 1999-00

(July 1, 1999, through June 30, 2000)

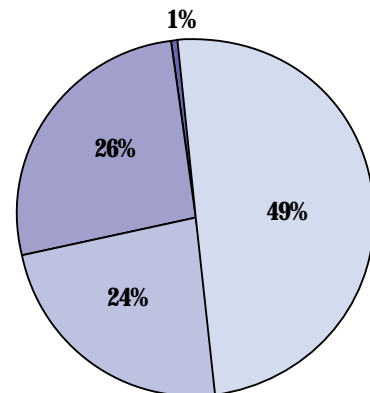
Ross E. Starner, Comptroller

Amounts are rounded to the nearest whole dollar.
Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number.



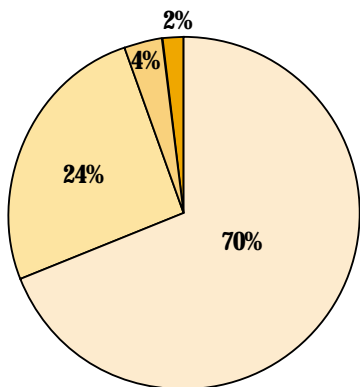
F I S H F U N D

Total Fish Fund Revenue		
\$29,429,130		100%
Licenses and Fees	\$19,229,368	65%
Fine and Penalties	\$224,069	1%
Miscellaneous Revenue	\$3,394,245	11%
Augmentations	\$6,520,331	22%
Restricted Revenue	\$61,117	<1%



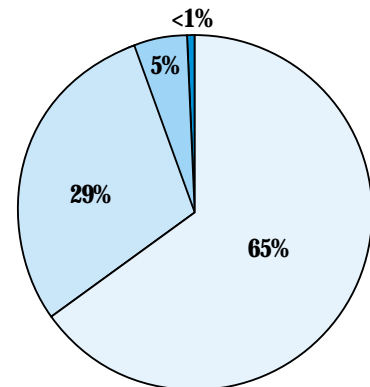
B O A T F U N D

Total Boat Fund Revenue		
\$10,487,202		100%
Licenses and Fees	\$5,100,501	49%
Fine and Penalties	\$121,806	1%
Miscellaneous Revenue	\$2,699,235	26%
Augmentations	\$2,565,660	24%



F I S H F U N D

Total Fish Fund Expenditures		
\$28,015,328		100%
Personnel Services	\$19,607,365	70%
Operational Expenses	\$6,876,436	24%
Fixed Assets/Capital Improvements	1,072,767	4%
Grants, Subsidies, Refunds	\$458,760	2%



B O A T F U N D

Total Boat Fund Expenditures		
\$9,420,934		100%
Personnel Services	\$6,130,801	65%
Operational Expenses	\$2,759,715	29%
Fixed Assets/Capital Improvements	\$490,183	5%
Grants, Subsidies, Adjustments	\$40,235	<1%