

# Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission



# 2014 Annual Report



*The mission of the Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission is to protect, conserve and enhance the Commonwealth's aquatic resources and provide fishing and boating opportunities.*

[www.fishandboat.com](http://www.fishandboat.com)



## Resource First

Founded in 1866, the Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission (PFBC) is charged with protecting, conserving and enhancing the Commonwealth’s aquatic resources, including waterways—streams, rivers, lakes, reservoirs and wetlands—fish, reptile and amphibian communities and habitats of game and non-game species. From stocking waterways and measuring the health of native animal populations to

patrolling lakes and restoring habitats, the Commission’s employees strive to protect, manage, and restore the resource, for the resource is the foundation for everything we do.

High-quality streams, clean water, and good habitat ensure that we can carry out the other part of the Commission’s mission, to provide recreational fishing and boating opportunities for both Pennsylvanians and out-of-state visitors.

The “Resource First” management philosophy ensures that staff will make scientifically informed decisions based on long-term conservation of aquatic resources. Resource First also sets the foundation for the agency’s strategic plan.

The PFBC is governed by a Board of Commissioners whose 10 members are appointed by the Governor with the advice and consent of the majority of the Pennsylvania State Senate. Commissioners serve terms of four years. Eight Commissioners are selected based on districts, and two Commissioners, representing boating interests, have an at-large, statewide appointment. The

Executive Director, who serves as chief executive officer and chief waterways conservation officer, leads agency operations. The PFBC staff include 432 full-time employees and 85 temporary and seasonal employees.

In 2014, there was one change in membership on the Board of Commissioners. Eric C. Hussar from Lewisburg assumed the District 5 seat that had previously been occupied by William R. Worobec, Williamsport.

### Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission’s Board of Commissioners



*Norman R. Gavlick,  
President,  
Kingston*



*Edward P. Mascharka III,  
Vice President,  
Erie*



*Rocco S. Ali,  
North Apollo*



*Robert A. Bachman,  
Denver*



*G. Warren Elliott,  
Chambersburg*



*Eric C. Hussar,  
Lewisburg*



*Steven M. Ketterer,  
Harrisburg*



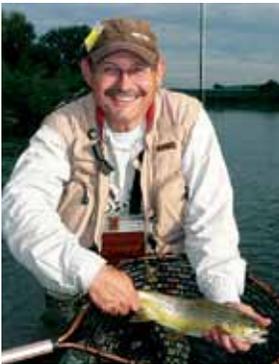
*Leonard L. Lichvar,  
Boswell*



*William J. Sabatose,  
Brockport*



*Glade E. Squires,  
Downingtown*

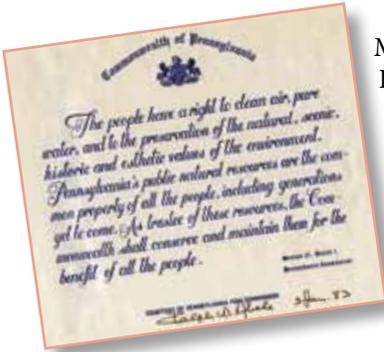


## Executive Director’s Message

As I look back on what was an action-packed 2014 for our agency, three dates stand out foremost in my mind. One was related to the celebration of our Resource First philosophy that we practice on behalf of the Commonwealth’s aquatic resources, and the other two were connected to the customers we serve and the recreational opportunities that they have come to expect from the PFBC.

### Article 1, Section 27

The Resource First highlight of the year for me was a special evening event held in conjunction with our June Board of Commissioners meeting at which I was humbled to present the Ralph W. Abele Conservation Heritage Award to former Senator Franklin Kury. This prestigious award recognized Mr. Kury’s lasting conservation impact as the author and champion of Article I, Section 27 of the Pennsylvania Constitution, also known as the Environmental Rights Amendment. Arguably, this addition to the Pennsylvania Constitution stands as one of the most important pieces of environmental legislation ever passed in Pennsylvania. The renewed relevance and incredible legacy of Article 1, Section 27, places



Mr. Kury in a group of the most notable leaders in Pennsylvania's rich conservation history.

The evening featured a lively panel discussion on the significance of Article I, Section 27, that was moderated by Pete Duncan, former Secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Resources and former Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Game Commission, and included Mr. Kury, former Chief Counsel of the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)



The PFBC Executive Director John A. Arway presented the Ralph W. Abele Conservation Heritage Award to former Senator Franklin Kury.

Terry Bossert and me. We also aired an interview, which we previously taped with Professor John Dernbach, Distinguished Professor of Law at Widener University and Co-Director of Widener's Environmental Law Center, whose work was repeatedly cited in the plurality opinion of the Pennsylvania Supreme Court in the *Robinson Township* decision.

The Abele Award is the highest recognition the PFBC provides to persons who distinguish themselves in the cause of conservation. The PFBC established the award to recognize citizens of Pennsylvania who have made outstanding contributions to the protection, conservation, and enhancement of the aquatic resources of the Commonwealth.

### Angler Thank You! Campaign

The first customer-focused highlight came on March 29, the regional opening day of trout season, during which I joined other staff in the field to thank our customers for buying their fishing license and trout stamp. I frequently say that we need to run the agency like the business it is, and we all know that successful businesses thank their customers for their patronage.

Since about 70 percent of license holders fish for trout, the two opening days seemed like the perfect time to personally thank as many anglers as possible at one time. We want our customers to know that we value their business and their commitment to the fishing and boating sports, so we deployed teams of staff to various waters throughout the region to talk with anglers and thank them for buying a fishing license.

As added tokens of our appreciation and to add value to your fishing license, multiple businesses provided free cups of coffee, other beverages and special gifts as part of the campaign that reached nearly 7,000 anglers on over 100 waters.



### A Fishing License Decrease

The other customer-focused highlight occurred when our Board of Commissioners unanimously voted in September to reduce the price of a fishing license for the first time in the history of the agency. You will read more about the rationale behind the decision later in this report.

For me, the Board's action completed a goal I have had since taking this position. I have always maintained that we need to have the courage to test whether we can reverse the paradigm of declining license sales in the wake of license fee increases. The historic decision to reduce the price of a fishing license is designed to attract people back to the sport or to try it for the first time.

We immediately got to work preparing for the December 1 launch of the discounted licenses under the promotional slogan of *Catch the Value!* We selected *Catch the Value!* since it represents both the value of the fishing license and, even more importantly, the value of the tremendous fishing opportunities here in Pennsylvania. I often say that the fishing is better now (other than the ongoing woes with the Susquehanna's Smallmouth Bass) than at any point in my lifetime. Through the hard work of professional staff and volunteers, and some major help from Mother Nature, we offer unparalleled angling opportunities, which we are actively promoting through programs such as *Pennsylvania's Best Fishing Waters*.

As I write this, we have begun to see a jump in sales over last December after the first few weeks of 2015 license sales (2015 fishing licenses went on sale on December 1, 2014). We are already looking toward the peak sales period just before trout season, and I remain confident that the customer-centered approach that we fully embraced in 2014 will carry over to a positive and memorable 2015.

Your Director,  
<<(John{(°>

## Strategic Plan Revision

In July, the Board of Commissioners approved a new strategic plan that will guide agency operations from July 2014 through June 2017. The previous strategic plan was adopted in July 2010, amended slightly in January 2012, and intended to last from July 2010 until June 2015. Due to significant fiscal constraints driven largely by impending increases in health care and retirement costs, the Board determined that the plan needed to be revised to reflect the new fiscal realities.

Mandatory personnel cost increases beyond the agency’s control are expected to be over \$9 million annually by fiscal year 2016-17 and constitute about 20 percent of annual spending. Before the strategic planning process started in earnest, the agency began developing an internal Spending Reallocation Plan (SRP) that shifted spending to accommodate the ballooning health care and retirement costs. Absent an influx of revenue to meet the rising personnel costs, the new strategic plan is constrained by more austere fiscal realities than the past plan, and the agency will be doing “less for less.” The SRP limits the levels of services the agency will be able to deliver, and activities will ultimately be scaled according to available staff and financial resources.

The new plan follows the SMART goal format that characterized the previous plan and that has become a fundamental part of how the agency operates. Adherence to the SMART approach means that each goal needs to meet the following five criteria: Specific, Measurable, Action-oriented, Realistic and Time-bound.

Unlike the previous strategic plan that focused mainly on new initiatives, the new plan is intended to capture the universe of activities that the agency will focus on from July 1, 2014 through June 30, 2017. To pursue the goals laid out in this plan, the agency acknowledges the need to maintain core support functions such as administration; human resources; fisheries and hatcheries; law enforcement; information technology (IT); legal; legislative and public relations; and engineering, maintenance, and other support services to operate agency facilities to provide the goods and services our anglers, boaters and conservationists expect.

The seven major priorities of the plan that concluded in June 2014 were the following:

- Escalating costs of traditional services and increasing demands for activities require the development of alternative funding sources and methods.
- Current and increasing threats to our aquatic resources demand the Commission provide better resource management and protection.
- The Commission needs to better understand recent generations’ disconnectedness from the Commonwealth’s aquatic resources and respond to anglers’ and boaters’ desires for excellent recreational fishing and boating opportunities.
- The public continues to identify a need for access to the Commonwealth’s aquatic resources.
- The Commission’s existing data are not well-integrated and therefore not optimally used to proactively manage the aquatic resources under our jurisdiction.
- Limited financial and human resources require the Commission to more effectively manage our internal resources.
- Due to the limitations of current communications systems, technologies and processes, the Commission must improve its internal and external communication methods and systems.

The approved plan for 2015-2017 is even more focused and condensed the priority categories into the following four issues:

- **Funding:** Revenues are insufficient to support the Commission’s current levels of programs and services and meet increasing fixed, variable, and mandatory personnel costs.
- **Conservation:** Current and increasing threats to our aquatic resources demand the Commission provide high quality services to insure essential resource management and protection and improved fishing.
- **Recreation:** Other leisure and recreational activities are competing with fishing and boating for people’s time.
- **Internal Resources:** The Commission must consistently make investments in itself to maintain its infrastructure, staff and programs, and their respective relevance.

### The PFBC Recognized as Most Cost-Effective Resource Agency in U.S.

A study issued in March by the bipartisan Legislative Budget and Finance Committee (LBFC) concluded that the PFBC is among the most efficiently run state agencies when compared to other fish and wildlife agencies across the country. It also concluded that merging the PFBC and the Pennsylvania Game Commission would not produce substantial cost savings and would not likely result in a streamlined, smaller government agency, but would create a less efficient mega-agency.

The report explained that the PFBC is extremely efficient in how it uses its financial resources. Specifically, the LBFC found that of the states surveyed, the Commission has the lowest expenditures per license. That means that for each dollar of license fees brought in, the PFBC returns a greater value to its license buyers and the citizens of the Commonwealth than all of the other state agencies included in the analysis.

In ranking the PFBC at the top nationally, the LBFC recognized the Commission as a model for how to efficiently manage angler and boater dollars and the other funding it receives in pursuit of its mission.



## This Report

For the fifth consecutive year, the agency's annual report is organized under the headings of the strategic plan. What makes this year different is that activities in 2014 were carried out under the direction of one strategic plan for the first six months of the year and another for the second six months. Since the four issue categories of the new plan capture the seven identified in the previous plan, this report is organized under the headings of the new plan.

## Funding

**Goal 1A: Implement a Spending Reallocation Plan within which the Commission does not spend more than it generates in revenue each fiscal year and maintains agency administrative and support services necessary to deliver programs and services.**

This has become a way of doing business for the Commission. The agency is operating within the confines of the revenue generated each year, with the latitude to reallocate spending to accomplish the goals laid out in the strategic plan.

**Goal 1B: Increase revenues.**

## Voluntary Youth Fishing License

One of the agency's longstanding goals is to increase youth and family participation in fishing and boating. This goal responds to the fact that the percentage of children and young adults ages 6-15 who fished in Pennsylvania in 2010 was only 24 percent, as compared to 41 percent in 1995 and 37 percent as recently as 2005.

In July 2013, the United States Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) confirmed that voluntary licenses that return net revenue to a state can be counted as part of the state's annual license certification process under the Sport Fish Restoration Act program. For each voluntary license sold, the PFBC will receive an estimated \$5.00 in federal revenue.

According to the 2011 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation, 367,000 children and young adults ages 6-15 fished in Pennsylvania in 2010. If a \$1.00 voluntary youth fishing license were purchased by or for even 25 percent of those 367,000 children, it would result in over \$550,000 in revenue for the Commission to invest in youth fishing programs.

The potential market for voluntary youth license sales goes beyond the youth anglers and their family and friends. Clubs, organizations, businesses, individuals, and others who are interested in promoting youth angling may purchase large quantities of voluntary youth license vouchers to distribute to children. While the Commission receives the face value of the voucher at the time of the purchase, it may not be counted as a license sold until redeemed by an individual. Once redeemed, buyers are issued a license and a customer identification number (CID).

Having unique CIDs allows the PFBC to analyze patterns and trends, tailor messages and programs, and correspond directly with its customers. For example, it allows the PFBC to track the long-term retention of youth anglers and also provides a vehicle for communicating directly with them and their families about targeted outreach and education programs and marketing initiatives.

In January, the PFBC began issuing voluntary youth fishing licenses, with all revenues dedicated to youth fishing programs. By the end of the year, 1,725 of the voluntary licenses had been purchased.

## Trout/Salmon Permit - Senior Lifetime License Holders

Until December 31, 2014, a person who purchased a senior resident lifetime fishing license and who desired to fish for trout or salmon was required to purchase one trout/salmon permit and was then exempt from the requirement to purchase a trout/salmon permit for subsequent years. This effectively meant that those licensees could purchase one trout/salmon permit that was valid for the licensee's lifetime.



### Licenses Will Remain Valid When Anglers Move From PA

Per the Commission's regulations, Senior Resident Lifetime Fishing Licenses used to become invalid when the holder established residency in another state. The regulations had been interpreted to mean that other fishing licenses became invalid upon a change in residency.

With the advent of multi-year fishing licenses, staff anticipated some confusion arising among anglers who purchase a multi-year license, move out-of-state, and expect to be able to continue fishing with the multi-year license.

In January, the Commission amended its regulations to provide that a resident fishing license will remain valid for the year or years for which it is issued regardless of whether or not the holder is a bona fide resident of this Commonwealth. This change will provide clarity to anglers and encourage them to return to Pennsylvania to fish.

The Commission's trout program accounts for about one-third of Fish Fund annual expenditures, and the cost of trout production continues to rise. About 70 percent of seniors purchase a trout/salmon permit, which mirrors the rate for other anglers. As Pennsylvania's seniors continue to account for a larger percentage of the total population (and of anglers), the relative number of anglers buying the lifetime license is expected to continue to rise.

Acknowledging that it could no longer afford to allow this group of license buyers to fish for trout without paying for the privilege to do so annually, the Board voted to require senior resident lifetime license holders to purchase a trout/salmon permit annually to fish for trout if they had not done so before January 1, 2015.

### \$1 Labor Day License

In an effort to attract new or lapsed anglers, the PFBC lowered the price of 1-day resident and non-resident fishing licenses to just \$1 on Labor Day 2014. With issuing agent and transaction fees, the total price for the 1-day adult license was \$2.70.

While the PFBC typically sells 98 percent of its licenses by Labor Day, anglers often need to be reminded that fishing season does not end with trout in the spring and bass in the summer. The reduced-fee license was designed to be an enticement to remind anglers that fishing is a year-round sport. There are many other outstanding fishing opportunities throughout the year, including many on Labor Day when people are outdoors enjoying the Commonwealth's natural resources. (See page 16 for a description of the special mentored youth panfish opportunity that also coincided with Labor Day.)

Anglers purchased 520 of the discounted 1-day licenses, which were valid to fish any water in the Commonwealth on Labor Day.



### Fishing License Decrease

For the first time in its history, the Commission took action in September to reduce the price of annual fishing licenses for the 2015 season, a promotional move intended to highlight the sport's affordability to families and younger audiences and to persuade lapsed anglers to return.

The price cut is intended to catch the attention of people who have not fished in a few years or who have wanted to try fishing but mistakenly thought that prices have increased like they have for other products and activities. The fact is, the price of a fishing license has not increased in a decade, since 2005.

The PFBC sells approximately 850,000 licenses annually, but the USFWS's 2011 national survey estimated that 1.1 million people ages 16 and older either fished in the Commonwealth in 2010 or planned to fish in the state in 2011. This 250,000 gap and the anglers who do not purchase a license every consecutive year represent a segment of potential customers who may better recognize the value of a license at a discounted rate.

The Commission actively promoted the specially priced licenses under the theme of *Catch the Value!*, which highlights both the value of the license and the value of the excellent fishing opportunities throughout Pennsylvania.

Beginning December 1, 2014, prices were reduced by \$1 for resident and non-resident annual licenses and gift vouchers purchased throughout the year. Anglers who bought 3-year and 5-year licenses in December saw a reduction of \$3 and \$5, respectively. The discounts also applied to annual and multi-year gift vouchers multi-year licenses purchased in December. The promotional campaign was credited with increasing total December license and voucher sales by 14.3 percent as compared to the previous December.

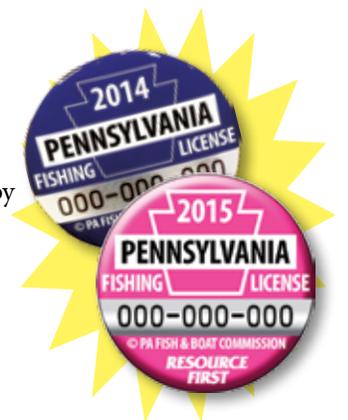


### Fishing License Buttons

2014 marked the return of the Commission's popular fishing license button as an alternative to the display requirement. Last offered in 1975 after being sold from 1923-1960, the buttons were purchased by 6,682 anglers for \$5 each.

In November, nearly 5,000 votes were cast in an online ballot last fall, and by an overwhelming majority, pink was chosen as the new button color for the 2015 fishing season.

The first year for the reintroduced buttons was 2014, so the buttons were only available online and at a limited number of locations. Another change for 2015 is that the buttons can now be purchased at any of the 900 license issuing agents across Pennsylvania, as well as through the PFBC's online store (The Outdoor Shop), [www.GoneFishingPa.com](http://www.GoneFishingPa.com), and regional offices.



Individuals must purchase an annual or multi-year resident, non-resident, or senior resident fishing license in order to purchase a license button. Children 15 and younger can also purchase a button if they first buy a voluntary youth license.

## Issuing Agent Roundtables

As part of its redoubled efforts to work with the businesses who sell fishing licenses across Pennsylvania, the PFBC engaged its fishing license issuing agents in a series of roundtable meetings. This set of nine meetings was an exchange of ideas designed to involve licensing agents in discussions on how the agency and the agents can work together to solve mutual issues, sell more licenses, and better market our product collectively. Among the results of the sessions will be an enhanced agent portal and targeted marketing materials.

The Commission relies on over 900 issuing agents in all corners of the Commonwealth to sell most of the fishing licenses. Over the past five years, an average of 12 percent of licenses have been purchased online—a figure that is slowly increasing each year.



## Funding Secured for Glade Run Lake Repair

The PFBC began 2014 with eight high-hazard, unsafe dams in need of funding to make them safe. In April, the list was reduced by one when Governor Tom Corbett announced the commitment of \$2 million in capital budget funds toward the restoration of Glade Run Lake, Butler County.



Glade Run Dam was declared unsafe in November 2002 by mutual agreement of DEP's Division of Dam Safety and the PFBC after it was determined to have seriously inadequate spillway capacity.

Because of the seepage and erosion problem, the lake was drained in May 2011.

Contributions for the estimated \$4.3 million project include the \$2 million from the capital budget, \$2 million from the PFBC, and \$300,000 from the Glade Run Lake Conservancy. Key supporters of this project in the state legislature include State Senators Randy Vulakovich, Don White, Scott Hutchinson, and State Representative Brian Ellis.

Construction is anticipated to be completed during the summer of 2016, followed by refilling the reservoir through late summer and fall of 2016.

## Act 89

Act 89 of 2013 directs the portion of the Oil Company Franchise Tax that is attributable to motorboat fuel to the Commission for the systematic improvement and management of infrastructure and operations that support Pennsylvania boaters. This is an example of the user pays/user benefits model of fish and wildlife conservation that is responsible for most of the agency's revenues.

These are taxes paid by boaters and then refunded to the PFBC. After the taxes are collected, the agency calculates and reports on estimated motorboat fuel usage and then applies for the refund of those taxes. Under the current reporting format and process, the Commission will receive the taxes paid or attributable to one fiscal year in the following fiscal year. For example, the PFBC expects to receive the funding that was generated in fiscal year 2013-14 in March or April of 2015.

Because of the timing of when Act 89 funding becomes available to the PFBC, Act 89 dollars will be committed for projects that may not be completed in the same fiscal year. Given this difference in timing and the fact that actual costs may differ from estimates, the final amount of Act 89 funding used for a given project may vary from what was initially estimated. For subsequent annual reports, the PFBC will report on expenditures for the given year.

In the first five years under Act 89, the PFBC anticipates receiving at least \$25 million to be dedicated to high-hazard dams. The PFBC will continue to work on ways to improve the accuracy of the fuel use estimates to ensure that it is being compensated for the amount of fuel that boaters are actually using.



When boaters purchase fuel, they pay state taxes that are refunded to the PFBC and used to support safe boating and the maintenance of boating infrastructure. The taxes are refunded based on the estimated number of gallons of fuel that boaters report having used or purchased when they renew their boat registrations.

Many boaters write zeroes in the fuel reporting boxes on the renewal card when they are unsure of the number of gallons used or purchased. When zeroes are reported, the taxes are not refunded to the PFBC and are not available to support boating programs.

In 2014, the Commission launched a campaign to educate boaters about the benefits of accurately reporting boat fuel consumption. Based on the successful response to the campaign, the PFBC was able to claim nearly 200,000 additional gallons of motorboat fuel consumed and a corresponding jump of \$100,000 in tax revenues.

## Conservation

**Goal 2: Protect, conserve, and enhance aquatic resources and habitats.**

### Timely Support for Natural Gas Projects

In 2014, funding from Act 13 of 2012 enhanced the PFBC’s ability to timely and effectively review permits associated with unconventional natural gas development, proactively work with and assist industry in making the best environmental and business decisions for permitting unconventional gas wells and their associated infrastructure and support the Unassessed Waters Initiative to ensure accurate classification of waters to inform permit reviews and aid the industry in site selection. Activities included developing proactive measures to assemble baseline biological information on streams and habitats, commenting on or negotiating permit conditions, and aiding industry in the monitoring of permit conditions to ensure protection of aquatic resources and other species under the PFBC’s jurisdiction. The PFBC participated in field views and pre-application meetings at which it provided technical guidance on how to avoid or minimize the proposed environmental impacts of projects to aquatic resources. Field views often included “species of special concern” critical habitat evaluation and avoidance measures.

The PFBC provided comments to DEP concerning Chapter 105 Waterway & Wetland Encroachment Permit Applications and Species Impact Reviews statewide and to the Susquehanna River Basin Commission (SRBC) for water withdrawal requests within the Susquehanna River basin.

Prior to Act 13, an average of 85 days were needed to review and comment on natural gas permit applications and an average of 30 days were needed to complete a Species Impact Review for a Marcellus gas-related project. With the passage of Act 13 and its allocation of stable, dedicated funding to the PFBC, the agency has drastically reduced

the time needed to review and process a request for comments on gas-pipeline projects and Species Impact Reviews to an average of 10 days and 13 days, respectively.

### Unassessed Waters

The PFBC’s Unassessed Waters Initiative, through grants provided by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, was able to contract with experts from eleven universities and conservation groups to determine whether there were naturally reproducing trout in previously unassessed waters. The program resulted in 1,025 unassessed waters samplings and surveys in 2014, which represents 1,926 miles of stream. The Commission surveyed 316 waters. Wild trout were documented in 49 percent of these streams.

### Susquehanna River Smallmouth Bass

Young-of-year (YOY) Smallmouth Bass survey results varied by river and reach during 2014. The high stream flows in late June and early July negatively affected YOY Smallmouth Bass densities, which is common among riverine Smallmouth Bass populations during high flow years. Surveys at the West Branch Susquehanna River, upper Susquehanna River (North Branch) and middle Susquehanna River yielded catch rates below long-term medians, while the lower Susquehanna River catch rate was slightly above the long-term median. Prevalence of disease among YOY Smallmouth Bass sampled in 2014 was highest in the middle Susquehanna River (26 percent). At the time of the initial surveys, there was no reported incidence of disease at the West Branch Susquehanna River sampling sites.

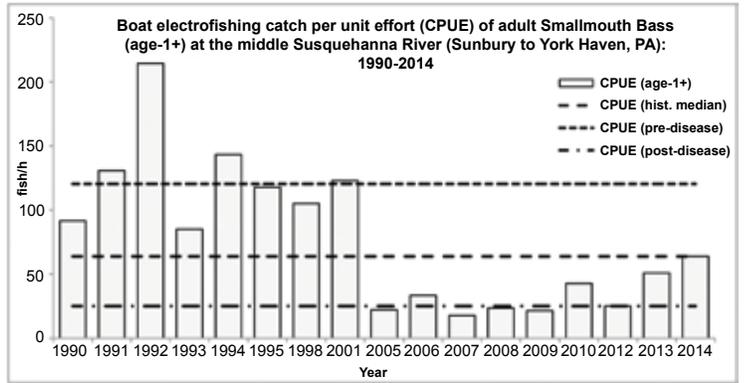
Follow-up surveys documented disease at two locations on the West Branch Susquehanna River; however, prevalence was not quantified. Adult Smallmouth Bass catch rates increased slightly from



*The PFBC enforces water pollution laws with its network of locally based Waterways Conservation Officers (WCOs). An increasing number of issues related to erosion and sedimentation from pipeline construction and maintenance are currently the primary sources of many of the violations investigated by WCOs. The PFBC may not use Act 13 revenues nor may it charge a fee to support its work to enforce environmental laws and assist gas and pipeline companies in the field in implementing their projects. The agency does not have the resources to proactively patrol sites, so it is primarily performing enforcement and rapid response activities reactively. The PFBC’s unmet costs to do its enforcement job correctly for natural gas-related projects are nearly \$1 million per year, with an additional \$1 million needed to train a new class of WCOs.*

**Numbers of Unassessed Waters Surveyed by the PFBC Partners**

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Lycoming College	41	95	92	77	46
Kings College	23	5	15		
Academy of Natural Sciences		6			
Duquesne University		28	47	45	
Juniata College		27	25	48	83
Mansfield University		61	20	78	
Penn State University		66	55	74	52
Susquehanna University		82	64	184	160
Trout Unlimited		20	39	21	182
Western Pennsylvania Conservancy		20	57	97	72
Allegheny College			20	20	20
California University			22	41	20
Clarion University			53	53	
Keystone College			21		
Lock Haven University			20	45	24
Bucknell University					40
DEP	24	32	35	5	10
<b>Totals</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>442</b>	<b>585</b>	<b>788</b>	<b>709</b>



2013 catch rates in the middle Susquehanna River. The catch rate of adult (> age 1) Smallmouth Bass for 2014 was 63.85 fish per hour, which is the long-term median catch rate (1990–present). Recent increases are largely the result of strong recruitment of the 2012 year class.

A full copy of the 2014 survey report is available at [www.fishandboat.com/images/reports/2014bio/susqoybass.pdf](http://www.fishandboat.com/images/reports/2014bio/susqoybass.pdf).



Susquehanna River

## CADDIS

In October, the Commission, DEP and the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) began the Causal Analysis/Diagnosis Decision Information System (CADDIS) process to help identify causes of health issues with YOY Smallmouth Bass in the Susquehanna River and its tributaries. A workgroup including representatives from the PFBC, DEP, USEPA, SRBC, USFWS, United States Geological Survey (USGS), Lycoming College and Susquehanna University was formed to assist with the analysis. This will be a more formal approach to what the group has been doing as part of an interagency technical committee that has worked together in recent years.

The CADDIS process continued through the end of 2014 and will culminate in September 2015 with a collaborative report of the group’s findings on causative factors associated with the reduction in recruitment and abundance of adult Smallmouth Bass in the middle Susquehanna River and lower Juniata River. This report can then be used to provide direction and support for factors for DEP to include in their Integrated Water Quality Monitoring and Assessment Report (305b) in January 2016. Project leaders from EPA are facilitating the process and providing support with statistical analysis.

## Commissioner Resolution

The Board of Commissioners adopted a resolution in September reaffirming the agency’s concern for the Susquehanna River and expressing support for continued research and action until the river’s Smallmouth Bass fishery is restored. Previously, in January 2010, responding to unprecedented declines in Smallmouth Bass numbers in the Susquehanna River, the PFBC unanimously passed a resolution expressing concern about the condition of the river and its Smallmouth Bass fishery and calling on DEP and USEPA to expand monitoring efforts to try to identify the causes of the fishery’s demise.

Since January 2010, the PFBC has expended considerable staff time and resources both on its own and in partnership with other agencies and organizations in pursuit of an answer to what is plaguing the river. The PFBC has also been a leading voice in the call for a formal impairment designation of the river.



The PFBC Board of Commissioners adopted a resolution reaffirming the agency’s concern for the Susquehanna River and its Smallmouth Bass fishery.

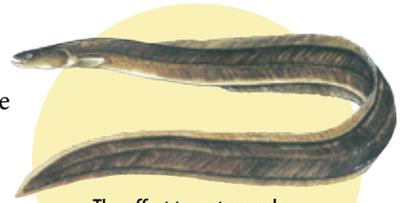
## Susquehanna River Fish Passage

In June, the Commission announced that it will receive \$800,000 as a result of a DEP water quality certification of Exelon’s Muddy Run Pumped Storage Project in Lancaster County to be used specifically to remove small dams within York and Lancaster counties. The certification was part of the company’s renewal of its operating license with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC).

Along with DEP, the PFBC and others had been negotiating with Exelon for several years leading up to the relicensing to ensure that fish and aquatic resources are protected, including appropriate mitigation for American Shad, American Eels and resident fish.

The PFBC estimates that there are several hundred dams in the two counties. The agreement calls for Exelon to pay the PFBC \$50,000 annually for small dam removals from 2014 to 2030. The PFBC intends to work with willing dam owners to direct funding to dam removal projects that will yield the greatest ecological benefits.

The DEP certification also provides for a plan to protect and improve the American Eel population by trapping eels below the Conowingo Dam in Maryland and transporting them upstream annually to various locations in the Susquehanna watershed. It is anticipated that one million juvenile eels will be moved upstream per year. The plan remains in effect from 2014 until 2030.



The effort to restore eels to the Susquehanna River in Pennsylvania will provide ecological benefits not only to the eels themselves and the species that prey upon them, but also the eastern elliptio freshwater mussel, whose primary host is the American Eel. As eel numbers have declined in the Susquehanna River, so have the elliptio mussels, as they cannot reproduce successfully in the absence of eels which serve to transport the mussel larvae throughout the watershed.

## Peach Bottom Mitigation Funds

The PFBC will be receiving \$100,000 per year as mitigation for the re-licensing of the Peach Bottom Atomic Power Station (PBAPS) as a result of the DEP water quality certification issued in July for that facility’s Extended Power Upgrade (EPU) project. The continued operation of the PBAPS and the EPU project will have impacts to the aquatic resources of the Susquehanna River, and Exelon will mitigate the impacts with this funding for as long as the PBAPS is in operation. The first payment is scheduled to be made in March of 2015 and will be managed by the Commission for habitat improvement and sediment reduction projects in Lancaster and York Counties.

## Youghiogheny and Other Tailwaters

During the fall Board of Commissioners meeting, the PFBC partnered with fishing guides and outfitters to highlight the world class fishing opportunities on the Youghiogheny River in southwestern Pennsylvania’s Laurel Highlands. Promoted as a “Yough Talk,” the PFBC and panel told attendees about the story of the river’s recovery, the coldwater benefits it receives from the outflow of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Army Corps) Youghiogheny Lake, the trout and Smallmouth Bass that inhabit the river, and how the agency manages the fishery so it remains a popular fishing area. The evening also featured a treasure trove of recreational activities for outdoor enthusiasts available in and around Ohiopyle State Park, from whitewater rafting and kayaking, to biking along the Great Allegheny Passage trail.

Pennsylvania is home to a number of other tailwater trout fisheries, and the Commission continues to look for ways to improve and expand those fisheries on waters downstream of facilities like the dams at Quemahoning Reservoir, Somerset County; Francis E. Water Reservoir, Luzerne County; Lake Wallenpaupack, Wayne and Pike Counties; Cannonsville Reservoir, New York State; Raystown Lake, Huntingdon County; and Beltsville Lake, Carbon County.



*Youghiogheny River, Ohiopyle State Park, Fayette County*

## Sinnemahoning Grants

In July, the PFBC announced \$500,000 in grants to develop and implement projects that benefit fishing, boating and aquatic resources within 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. 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, which has been used to improve access, water quality, and stream health and to restore stream connectivity.

Prior to the current grant round, the PFBC had awarded 20 grants totaling \$1.6 million. Projects completed as a result of these grants include such things as a removal of a low-head dam on the East Branch Clarion River at Bendigo State Park, Elk County, Picric Dam on the Driftwood Branch Sinnemahoning Creek, Cameron County and two dams on Skinner Creek, McKean County; provision of chemicals used in acid mine drainage treatment and concurrent rearing of trout for stocking by a cooperative nursery at the Blue Valley Treatment Plant on Brandy Camp Run, Elk County; construction of a passive mine drainage treatment system to treat mine discharges to May Hollow and Sterling Run in Cameron County; numerous stream bank stabilization and fish habitat improvement projects on streams in Potter and McKean Counties; elimination of the invasive plant Japanese knotweed along the Driftwood Branch, Cameron County; development of public access at Mead Run Ponds in the Allegheny National Forest, East Branch Clarion River, Elk County and Bennetts Branch of Sinnemahoning Creek at Medix Run, Elk County; development of a fly fishing education program for middle and high school students and teachers, disabled veterans, women and girls at Sinnemahoning State Park; expansion of the Trout In the Classroom program at schools in Elk, Cameron, McKean and Potter Counties; and scientific research on habitat use and seasonal movement patterns of wild Brown Trout and Brook Trout.

## Musky Summit

In October, the PFBC hosted a special meeting—known as the Musky Summit—at Cabela’s in Hamburg. The Summit was designed to improve communication with angling groups and focused on a wide range of topics, including the progress that has been made on the numerous aspects of the statewide musky management plan released in October 2012, presentations on hatchery culture of musky, current results from the PFBC tagging studies and projects performed by musky clubs. The meeting also included structured discussion and questions and answers from anglers regarding musky management in Pennsylvania.

The Musky Summit was well-attended and well-received by anglers, and there was very good participation and information exchange, including discussion of what Penn Jersey Chapter 50 Muskies Inc., Nittany Valley Musky Alliance Chapter 64 Muskies Inc. and Three Rivers Chapter Muskies Inc. have been doing to improve musky fishing in their regions of Pennsylvania.



## Lake Habitat

In 2014, the PFBC’s Lake Habitat Section planned or completed work on 47 lake habitat projects, including 36 construction projects. Of those construction projects, 94 percent were completed on priority waters, selected jointly by the PFBC Fisheries Management and Habitat Management staff as areas of greatest need for habitat improvement. Over 2,000 habitat structures were placed in Commonwealth lakes with Lake Section assistance. A total of 1,620 feet of eroded lake shoreline was stabilized with the PFBC devices. More than 500 volunteers turned out to help build fish habitat structures accumulating nearly 2,400 volunteer hours on Cooperative Habitat Improvement Program lake projects.



## Cowanesque Lake Habitat Project

In late September 2014, over 2,000 tons of rock rubble fish habitat was added to the waters of Cowanesque Lake, Tioga County. The effort was the largest rock rubble habitat project ever completed in a Pennsylvania reservoir. The PFBC teamed up with the Army Corps to accomplish the project. The Army Corps supplied the rock rubble and contracted a unique rock barge. The PFBC contributed heavy equipment and operators for loading and technical guidance on rock reef placement.

The outcome of this project is a significant increase in rock type cover for several aquatic species in an area that was virtually devoid of habitat. The reefs will colonize with diatoms, algae and macroinvertebrates and become feeding grounds for juvenile and adult game fish. The rock will also serve as cover for juvenile black bass, panfish and Walleye. The reefs create fishing hot spots on the lake that can be located on a habitat improvement map found at [www.fishandboat.com/lakeplans.htm](http://www.fishandboat.com/lakeplans.htm).

## Small Dam Removal

The PFBC continued to be an integral part in the efforts to remove aging, obsolete dams in Pennsylvania. Thirteen dams were removed in the Commonwealth in 2014, and the PFBC collaborated with various partner agencies and non-profit groups to provide technical assistance, funding and coordination to accomplish many of those removals. Dams were removed on the following waters in the following counties in 2014: Conewago Creek, Warren; unnamed tributary (UNT) Frankstown Branch Juniata River, Blair; Driftwood Branch Sinnemahoning Creek, Cameron; Washburn Run, Clinton; Little Cove Creek, Franklin; UNT North Branch Blacklick Creek, Indiana; Muddy Creek, Butler; Twomile Run, McKean; Hokendauqua Creek, Northampton; Furnace Creek, Berks; Little Chiques Creek, Lancaster; UNT Spring Creek, Dauphin; UNT Little Conewago Creek, York.

The PFBC continued monitoring and reporting associated on at least nine projects that dams were removed prior to 2014 and continued coordination of at least 26 projects that will be accomplished in the coming years.

Pennsylvania is a national leader in the removal of small dams, which damage aquatic resources by blocking fish passage and by slowing the natural flow of rivers and creeks, which in turn creates stagnant, nutrient-deficient and oxygen-poor water. Pennsylvania again led the nation in 2014 in the number of dam removals.

## Stream Habitat

In 2014, the PFBC completed work on 77 stream habitat projects, including 58 construction projects. A total of 652 structures were placed in Commonwealth streams, helping to improve 7.66 miles of stream. For every \$1 the PFBC contributed towards habitat projects, \$9.40 was contributed from outside sources.

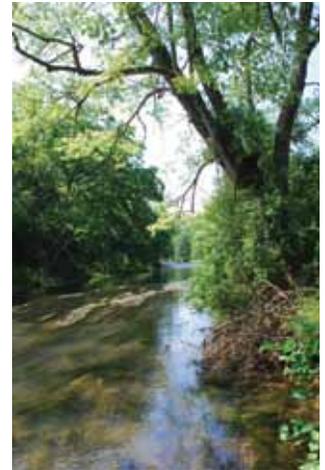
About 70 percent of the total monies were spent on priority waters, selected jointly by the PFBC Fisheries Management and Habitat Management staff as areas of greatest need for habitat improvement.

## The PFBC Spring Creek Properties

With funding assistance from a National Fish and Wildlife Foundation grant obtained by the Spring Creek Chapter of Trout Unlimited (SCCTU), Commission staff collaborated with partners to implement multiple riparian buffer plantings and/or improved stormwater management on five Commission-owned properties along Spring Creek and its Logan Branch tributary, Centre County. Additional funding was provided for riparian plantings by the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy (WPC).

Over 2,000 native trees and shrubs were planted in riparian areas at three properties to stabilize stream banks and to provide canopy shading to maintain cold water temperatures that support these popular wild Brown Trout fisheries. In addition, three existing unpaved parking lots at Fisherman's Paradise and Rock Road were re-graveled to convey surface water runoff away from the stream and to grass-lined waterways and basins that provide filtration and prevent direct discharge of sediment into Spring Creek. Vegetated buffers were also widened between these parking lots and the stream to better filter runoff and reduce stream sedimentation. Three new log-faced stone deflectors were installed at Fisherman's Paradise to improve in-stream fish habitat. Agency staff were assisted by many volunteers from SCCTU, WPC, ClearWater Conservancy and the Centre County Conservation District.

2014 Permit Numbers	
Mining.....	167
Drawdowns.....	116
Aquatic Herbicide.....	214
Triploid Grass Carp.....	215
Triploid Grass Carp Importer/Transporter.....	19
Blasting.....	129
Hydropower.....	13
Water Allocation.....	57
Waterway Encroachment.....	311
Thermal, Impingement and Entrainment.....	4
Species Impact Reviews.....	1824
Venomous Snake Permits.....	920
Organized Reptile and Amphibian Hunts.....	5
Commercial Snapping Turtle Permits.....	38
Scientific Collectors.....	459
Scientific Collectors Amendments.....	43
Threatened and Endangered Species Special Permits.....	55



Spring Creek

## Collaborative Habitat Improvement in Northcentral Pennsylvania

The PFBC continued to partner with DEP's northcentral region office, the Northcentral Pennsylvania Conservancy, Tioga County Conservation District, Union County Conservation District, Montour County Conservation District and Northumberland County Conservation District. The projects developed and completed through the partnership focus on improving the water quality on streams designated as priority waters for the Chesapeake Bay and ultimately removing them from DEP's list of impaired streams under Section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act. Follow-up assessments

of water quality and benthic macroinvertebrates are being done by DEP biologists.

In 2014, the PFBC worked at over 15 sites identified by the conservation districts. The PFBC staff then oversaw and assisted with construction. Work at these sites improved over 18,000 feet of stream and nearly 250 devices were installed. A number of these projects are being monitored by DEP biologists for follow-up assessments. The Commission presented information about the agency and the techniques used to over 100 participants.



*In recognition of this work, PFBC's Division of Habitat Management and its partners received the 2014 Governor's Award for Environmental Excellence. Pictured are (left to right) Jaci Harner and Todd Debora, Northumberland County Conservation District; Shanon Stamm, Union County Conservation District; Dave Keller, the PFBC; Jason Fellon, DEP; and Reneé Carey, Northcentral Pennsylvania Conservancy. Sean Levan, Montour County Conservation District, and Lori Maloney, Tioga County Conservation District, are not pictured.*

## Habitat Project Assessments

A primary focus of both lake and stream habitat projects in recent years has been the assessment of the biological, water quality, fishing, and related benefits of the work. There are at least 13 lake projects and 13 stream projects being assessed.

For example, a seven-year study was initiated this year on lakes in which the Commission is placing catfish spawning boxes, constructed by staff and cooperators. The goal of this study is to determine if natural spawning by catfish in these waters can negate the need to stock hatchery reared catfish to provide a fishery. Excellent use of the boxes has been documented in some cases, and the Commission is optimistic of the impacts of this effort.

Other assessment work includes documenting the effects of dam removal on fish communities, determining how stream habitat work affects the biomass of wild trout and the instream residency time of stocked trout, use of lake habitat structures by various warm and coolwater species, and the impact of large-scale shoreline enhancement work on angler use at those sites.

## Species of Conservation Concern Action Plans

### Salamander Mussel

The Salamander Mussel has disappeared from much of its historic range in Pennsylvania due to pollution and habitat alteration. This nondescript brown mussel was listed as a state endangered species in 2010. Currently, this species is restricted to a few known sites in the Allegheny River. Dunkard Creek was a former stronghold for this species until the creek's mussel population was degraded during a 2009 pollution event.



*Salamander Mussel*

The Salamander Mussel Species Action Plan completed in 2014 will provide the agency with a blueprint for the conservation, restoration, and recovery of this unique species. The action plan includes a description of the benchmarks necessary to achieve in order to delist the Salamander Mussel and includes prescriptive studies designed to characterize the current population in a manner that leads to the PFBC management actions that will help restore the species. The PFBC will be exploring the potential to re-create mussel habitat structures (similar to the concept of fish habitat structures) that may provide benefits to both mussels and their Mudpuppy hosts. The PFBC will be looking to partner with various stakeholders in order to implement the action plan with the ultimate goal of recovering this species to an extent that it can be removed from Pennsylvania's list of endangered and threatened species.

### Chesapeake Logperch

The Chesapeake Logperch is a state threatened species with a limited global distribution restricted to a small portion of the Chesapeake Bay watershed in Pennsylvania and Maryland. Its range once included parts of the District of Columbia and Virginia, where it is now extirpated. In Pennsylvania,

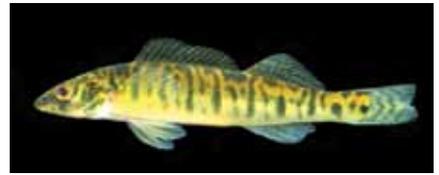
### PNDI Environmental Review Tool Upgrade

The Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Inventory (PNDI), or Heritage GIS, system has gone through several iterations throughout the years, with the most recent major upgrade in 2007. The Pennsylvania Natural Heritage Partnership (PNHP), comprised of the PFBC, the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR), the Pennsylvania Game Commission, and WPC, acknowledged the needs identified by industry and the legislature to upgrade the tool to incorporate current technologies and provide for better project planning. In 2014, the PNHP began working with contractor NatureServe to significantly upgrade the system.

Major elements of the PNDI upgrade include improved technology and usability of the system, interactive mapping, management of data layers, uploading of files by users, electronic project review submittal, and improved transparency of data by providing the ability for users to query the visible layers. Visible review polygons will allow permit applicants and the public to better review and plan their projects. PNDI receipts will be more instructive and allow users to receive more automated responses instead of sending letters to the agency and waiting for responses.

Briefings on the PNDI system, recent improvements, and the planned upgrades were provided to a number of legislators, businesses, and other stakeholders throughout 2014. The upgrades are expected to be completed in 2015.

the Chesapeake Logperch is known to be extant only in the Conowingo Pool of the lower Susquehanna River and a few of its tributaries in Lancaster and York counties, and in Octoraro Creek, its branches, and the lowermost section of one of its tributaries, in Chester and Lancaster counties. These waterways account for only 30 combined stream and river miles within Pennsylvania.



*Chesapeake Logperch*

The Chesapeake Logperch's limited global distribution, extirpation from a significant portion of its historic range, and extant threats make it a responsibility species for Pennsylvania. It is classified as a threatened species in Maryland and Pennsylvania, is considered to be endangered by the American Fisheries Society Endangered Species Committee and is listed in the 2010 update of Threatened Fishes of the World.

The PFBC developed a Species Action Plan in 2014 that will help organize resources and allow the PFBC and partners to better secure and enhance existing populations and strategize ways to repopulate its native range.

## State Wildlife Action Plan Update

In September 2005, the PFBC and the Pennsylvania Game Commission (PGC) submitted to the United States Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) the Commonwealth's first Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy (later renamed State Wildlife Action Plan). The plan was officially approved by the USFWS in April, 2006.



Pennsylvania's Wildlife Action Plan was founded upon eight required elements designated by Congress. Among these elements is a requirement that each State and U.S. Territory fully review and revise their State Wildlife Action Plans no less than every 10 years. In 2014, the Commission continued to work with the PGC to lead a collaborative effort to review and update the State Wildlife Action Plan. This revision process is being conducted with the assistance of numerous conservation organizations and in accordance with guidance from the USFWS and Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies. A fully revised State Wildlife Action Plan is expected by September 2015.

## Invasive Species

### Round Gobies

In August, the aquatic invasive species (AIS) Round Goby was positively confirmed in Lake LeBoeuf in Waterford, Erie County, by a DEP biologist. The PFBC immediately urged anglers at the popular spot to help prevent its spread and took the lead in developing a response plan.

The goal is to prevent or slow their introduction into other inland waters such as French Creek, which is partially fed by outflow from Lake LeBoeuf. French Creek contains numerous threatened and endangered fish and freshwater mussel species and is one of the most ecologically diverse waterways in the Commonwealth. The Commission wants to do everything it can to protect it by preventing the spread of Round Goby.

There are concerns about Round Goby spreading to other waterways within the Commonwealth, which could severely harm bottom-dwelling fish, including rare darter and minnow species populations, and have devastating effects on gamefish populations.

To help stop the spread of AIS, anglers who catch Round Goby at Lake LeBoeuf are asked to dispose of them in trash bins. To help track the species elsewhere, anglers catching a Round Goby in Pennsylvania waters other than the Fairview Gravel Pit, Lake Erie or Lake LeBoeuf are asked by the PFBC to immediately kill it, freeze it and call the PFBC at 814-474-1515. Individuals can also report the presence of AIS through the PFBC website at [www.fishandboat.com/ais-reporting.htm](http://www.fishandboat.com/ais-reporting.htm).

Round Goby are one of 10 non-native, invasive fish species that anglers are prohibited from possessing under fishing and boating regulations, and anglers who are found with live ones may be subject to penalties.

The "Stop Aquatic Hitchhikers" campaign encourages anglers to:

- Check for and remove plants, mud and aquatic life from fishing gear and boats before leaving any body of water.
- Drain water from boat, live well, bilge and bait bucket before transporting a boat.
- Clean boat and gear with hot water, or

## STOP AQUATIC HITCHHIKERS!



*Round Goby*



- Dry everything for at least several days.
- Do not move any plants or animals from one waterway to another.

### Crayfish

The replacement of native crayfish by introduced crayfish – such as the invasive Rusty Crayfish – represents a significant threat to aquatic communities. Exotic crayfish populations grow quickly and have negative effects on amphibians, mussels and fishes by consuming native vegetation, competing for food resources and preying on the eggs and young of native species. Stringent regulations can help prevent additional introductions of invasive crayfish.

In May, the PFBC approved a regulation change which restricts the sale, possession, introduction, transportation and importation of all live crayfish in Pennsylvania. Under the amended regulation, licensed anglers are permitted to harvest up to 50 crayfish per day. When crayfish are transported away from the water from which they were collected, the head must be removed behind the eyes. Crayfish used as bait in the water from which they were taken may remain intact.

The regulation does not apply when crayfish are used for testing and scientific purposes or for restaurant consumption, provided adequate measures have been taken to prevent their escape and documentation states the point of origin and the destination where they are to be delivered. The change took effect on January 1, 2015.



Rusty Crayfish

### 2014 Bureau of Law Enforcement

Court cases prosecuted.....	6,645
Warnings for violations .....	34,976
On board safety evaluations..	27,539
Crimes Codes.....	20
Pollutions investigated.....	192
Boating Under the Influence .....	91
Marcellus Shale (MS)	
Investigated .....	27
MS cases pending.....	15
MS cases closed.....	12
MS cases	
settlement money .....	\$17,088
Snake permits .....	917
Turtle permits .....	38
Special Activity permits.....	2,417
Lake Erie Seine Net permits.....	33

### Recreation

**Goal 3A: Engage in targeted education and outreach activities that address the five key elements of fishing and boating participation and engage partners to enhance the Commission's efforts through the multiplier effect at the local level.**

### Family Fishing Ranks Among Nation's Best

The PFBC's Family Fishing Program was developed to provide motivation for families to commit time to being outdoors where they learn new and hone existing fishing skills. In 2014, Responsive Management released the results of a nationwide survey that analyzed the effectiveness of hunting, shooting and fishing recruitment and retention programs. The results suggested that Pennsylvania is a model for other states.

Of 69 programs studied nationwide, the PFBC's Family Fishing Program ranked in the top five in 10 different categories that measured increased interest in fishing, knowledge of where to fish and fishing opportunities, knowledge of the PFBC, participation in fishing, likelihood of purchasing a fishing license and likelihood of purchasing fishing equipment.

The PFBC's program targets adults who have never fished, fished in the past or fish only once every few years or occasionally, and the youth in their household or social group. Eighty-five percent of participants 16 years of age and older did not have a fishing license at the time of the program, and 70 percent had not held a fishing license in prior years. Program participants were younger, and a greater percentage of them female, as compared to existing fishing license customers. Of the non-angler participants, 8 percent purchased a fishing license within one year of participating in the program. Family Fishing program participants were more likely to purchase fishing licenses as compared to the rest of the customers in the PFBC's database.

The PFBC will continue to track this program and compare its results with other similar programs across the country to enhance its success in recruiting, retaining and reactivating Pennsylvania's anglers.

### Mentored Youth Fishing

#### 2014 Mentored Youth Trout Day

The year 2014 marked the second year of mentored youth trout fishing after a successful pilot in 2013. The program was originally scheduled to take place on the two days prior to the traditional opening days of trout season, March 22 and April 5, but was rescheduled into one statewide day on May 10 because of unusually cold weather and unexpected ice cover.

To ensure kids and their mentors had an even better chance to catch fish, the PFBC stocked a fresh load of trout at each water. Both the youth and their mentors were again permitted to harvest two fish apiece.

### Fishing/Aquatic Resource Education - 2014

Family Fishing Programs .....	101
FFP Attendance .....	3,355
Other Fishing Programs.....	47
Other Fishing Attendance.....	1,730
New Fishing Skills Instructors	
Trained .....	95
Fishing Tackle Loaner Sites .....	75
Teacher Training Workshops .....	5
TT Attendance .....	138
Program Requests .....	702
Programs Presented .....	538
TIC Classrooms .....	260

### Trout In the Classroom

PA Trout In the Classroom (PA TIC) introduces students in grades 3 through 12 to coldwater conservation. A participating classroom receives approximately 200 to 300 Brook Trout eggs, trout food and classroom resources. The students care for the trout and participate in learning activities until May when the fingerling trout are released into an approved trout waterway.

PA TIC has grown from 247 classrooms in 2013-2014 to 260 classrooms in 2014-2015. Since the beginning of the statewide program, PA TIC has reached more than 120,000 students statewide.

To participate, adult anglers (16 years or older) had to have a valid fishing license and trout/salmon permit and be accompanied by a youth. Youth anglers had to obtain a free PFBC-issued permit or a voluntary youth fishing license.

Because the program expanded in 2014, and with an eye to the future, the PFBC used the Pennsylvania Automated License Service (PALS) to issue youth permits and voluntary licenses rather than having participants register online as they did in 2013.

Issuing permits and licenses through PALS allows the agency to collect and manage information regarding youth anglers. This process provides the agency with more customer data for better assessment of lifelong fishing license buying habits and to develop programs designed to retain anglers.

**Mentored Youth Panfish Day**

The PFBC hosted a second Mentored Youth Fishing Day on Labor Day on 17 Panfish Enhancement Lakes. To encourage participation on this day, the PFBC reduced the price of a Labor Day 1-day adult resident and Labor Day 1-day adult non-resident license to just \$1. With issuing agent and transaction fees, the total price for the 1-day adult license was \$2.70.

Anglers enjoyed the mentored youth fishing days for trout and reported that they liked the idea of having a dedicated day to fish with their families and friends. The PFBC picked Labor Day since many families already planned to be out on the water that day.

The Panfish Enhancement Lakes were chosen, because these waters have been managed to produce a large number of fish, so kids had the increased chance to catch a lot of sunfish, crappies and perch. The PFBC also removed the minimum size limits, which are either 7 or 9 inches, depending on the species, for participants in the mentored youth fishing day.



**2015 Mentored Youth Trout Day Gets Even Better**

In a message to young anglers and their adult mentors, the PFBC announced that the Mentored Youth Trout Day opportunity would be expanded to all Commonwealth waters in 2015. On March 28 in the southeast and April 11 in the rest of the state (one week before the two respective opening days), anglers will be able to take children fishing on any trout water stocked by the PFBC.



Many of the waters will receive an allotment of trout by the scheduled youth dates. As always, anglers will be able to consult [www.fishandboat.com](http://www.fishandboat.com) to see which waters have been stocked before they hit the stream or lake.

Expanding this opportunity to all stocked trout waters will make it more accessible to more people, help to guard against potential weather-related problems (e.g., iced over lakes), and reduce crowding at popular sites.

**Linesville Open House Draws Nearly 2,000 Visitors**

The annual Linesville Open House drew a steady flow of nearly 2,000 visitors throughout the day on April 5. The Commission staff set trap nets for the annual Walleye spawn, explained the spawning process and demonstrated how to filet and cook fish. Children practiced their casting skills and got to take home fish-print t-shirts.



**Bassmasters in Philadelphia**

Visitors to Philadelphia's Penn's Landing in August witnessed first-hand the excitement surrounding major league bass fishing when hometown favorite Mike Iaconelli fished the Delaware River into a first-place finish in the Bassmaster Elite tournament. Iaconelli's win demonstrated that a high-quality bass fishery can exist at the doorstep of our nation's fifth largest city

Commission staff were involved in the planning of the event, transporting and releasing the fish, providing patrol boats and on the water security, preparing launch facilities, staffing the booths and monitoring the event.



## Pocono Raceway Partnership

As part of a budding partnership with Pocono Raceway, the PFBC exhibited a booth at both the June Pocono 400 and the August GoBowling.com 400 races. The agency distributed outreach and marketing materials and fielded questions from visitors on a wide range of fishing, boating and conservation topics. The large number of racing fans who fish and boat, along with the volume of out-of-state visitors at the Pocono Raceway, provided great exposure to a large audience of current and potential anglers and boaters.



As part of a sweepstakes contest for race fans, Nick Bechtel of Conyngham, Luzerne County, in northeastern Pennsylvania, was awarded a state-of-the-art fishing kayak in September. The contest was held during the GoBowling.com 400 NASCAR Sprint Cup Series race weekend.

Kayak fishing is one of the fastest growing segments of fishing as reported by the Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation in its 2014 Special Report on Fishing, with kayak fishing now comprising 4.3% of all fishing venues, versus 3.6% of fishing venues in 2013, which is a 20% jump in one year. Factors contributing to this growth are the ease of operating, the relatively low initial investment, and low operating and maintenance costs.

Pocono Raceway has already indicated a desire to engage in future activities with the Commission.

## The PFBC Joins Get Outdoors PA

The PFBC joined on as a Get Outdoors PA community partner to offer citizens opportunities to experience guided outdoor recreation in safe group settings.



Hundreds of events are offered, including fishing and paddling. People can search [GetOutdoorsPA.com](http://GetOutdoorsPA.com) by activity, location

or date. Get Outdoors PA is a statewide initiative lead by DCNR, PA Recreation and Park Society, PA Land Trust Association, PGC, PA Department of Health and the PFBC to expand recreational programming into local communities.

**Goal 3B: Conduct outreach and informational efforts designed to reduce boating-related casualties, maintain water rescue program to provide necessary training for emergency response personnel to safely and effectively respond to water-related emergencies and pursue new public access as resources allow.**

## Paddleboards are Boats

Paddleboarding has been gaining popularity. Paddleboards were traditionally used to surf in the ocean but are now being used in lakes and rivers. They resemble oversized surfboards, and models are designed for use on various water conditions. Paddleboards are primarily operated by a person standing on the board using a paddle in a manner similar to a canoe.

In 2008, the U.S. Coast Guard classified paddleboards as vessels. This classification means that when used beyond the narrow limits of a swimming, surfing or bathing area, no person may use a paddleboard unless in compliance with the navigation rules and applicable carriage requirements for this type of vessel. This includes a Coast Guard-approved wearable life jacket for each person on board, a sound producing device, visual distress signals (if operating on Lake Erie) and proper navigation lights if operating after dark or during restricted visibility. An athletic coach's whistle and flashlight comply with these requirements. In addition, a PFBC use permit, boat registration or Pennsylvania State Parks launch permit or mooring permit is required if launching or retrieving a paddleboard at a PFBC-owned or -controlled access area or state park or forest.

To eliminate confusion and increase safety, the PFBC clarified that paddleboards are vessels and must have appropriate safety equipment on board, including a Coast Guard-approved wearable life jacket for each person and a sound producing device, effective January 1, 2015.



## Pennsylvania Water Rescue Program

In 2014, the PFBC certified 3,528 students through the Water Rescue Program which meets or exceeds various levels (Awareness, Operations, Technician) of National Fire Protection Association 1670 Standards. This is the third highest year on record for this program. The PFBC's 2½-hour Water Rescue for the First Responder program continues to be in high demand and is now available for individuals to complete online through an approved provider. The PFBC has trained an in-state volunteer instructor corps of 155 individuals, who provided more than 11,500 hours of training this past year. The PFBC's Water Rescue Program is the largest of its kind in the United States.



## Pennsylvania Helicopter Aquatic Rescue Team

In 2014, the PFBC continued providing support to the Helicopter Aquatic Rescue Team (PA-HART). PA-HART is a joint partnership between the Pennsylvania Army National Guard, the PFBC and the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA), along with civilian rescue specialists. This highly specialized aerial search and rescue team provides an air asset for the Commonwealth and the nation to respond to natural and manmade disaster incidents. This initiative mirrors the National Incident Management System and provides team members with technical training that prepares them to engage in hostile environmental conditions in both urban and wilderness settings. The PFBC is responsible for swift water rescue training in the Commonwealth and coordinates this rescue training for the PA-HART program.

The Commission's Swiftwater Emergency Response Team, which is composed of Waterways Conservation Officers, was established in 2014 to support the PA-HART Mission with force protection and swiftwater assets. This team of highly trained and nationally credentialed officers offers a vital asset to both the Commonwealth and the nation through the Emergency Management Assistance Compact.

In Pennsylvania, where the majority of large scale natural disasters involve flooding, helicopter-based rescue may be the only option.

## Operation Dry Water

In 2009, the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA), in partnership with the Coast Guard, launched Operation Dry Water to help draw public attention to the dangers of boating under the influence (BUI) of alcohol and drugs.

During the three-day Operation Dry Water weekend, law enforcement officers at local, state and federal levels were on heightened alert for those violating boating under the influence laws. During the 2014 effort, the PFBC made contact with 1,735 boaters, issued 137 citations for boating infractions, issued 123 citations for non-boating infractions, gave 402 warnings and apprehended 15 individuals for BUI.

According to Coast Guard recreational boating statistics, there has been a significant decrease in the number of recreational boater deaths where alcohol use was listed as the known primary contributing factor since 2009.

## Boating Infrastructure Grant (BIG) Program

The Commission received \$1,450,000 in federal funding through the USFWS's Boating Infrastructure Grant (BIG) Program to complete two projects in Pittsburgh in 2014. BIG provides federal funds for projects designed to accommodate transient, recreational motorboats that are 26 feet in length or longer. The PFBC partnered with Riverlife to secure BIG funds to construct transient docks on the Allegheny River at Allegheny Landing and with the Urban Redevelopment Authority of Pittsburgh to secure funding to construct transient docks along the Monongahela River at the South Shore Riverfront Park and the Southside Works.

## New Boating Facilities

In 2014, the PFBC provided funding to complete three new boat launch facilities in the Commonwealth. The Borough of Selinsgrove made improvements to the Isle of Que boat launch facility along the Susquehanna River, Snyder County. Venango County constructed a new boat launch facility on Justus Lake in Two Mile Run County Park. The Borough of Berwick rehabilitated and expanded the Test Track Park boat launch facility along the North Branch of the Susquehanna River, Columbia County.

## New Public Access

The PFBC acquired public fishing access and conservation easements on five properties along Caldwell Creek, Warren County. The easements provide access to approximately 3 miles of stream that include the Catch-and-Release Fly Fishing Only section and a portion of the trout stocked section of Caldwell Creek.



### Boating Safety Education - 2014

Boating Safety Education Certificates Issued (BSEC) .....	13,355
BSEC Distance Learning .....	11,215
BSEC Classroom Courses .....	2,140
Boating and Water Safety Awareness (BWSA) Courses .....	24
BWSA Students .....	397
Basic Boating (BB) Classroom Course .....	108
BB Students .....	1,239
Paddle PA Programs .....	7
Paddle PA Attendance .....	400



The Boating Advisory Board (BAB) advises the PFBC regarding matters relating to boating, including recommendations with respect to proposed boating rules and regulations. The BAB's advice assists the Commission with establishing a boating program that ensures the safe and enjoyable operation of boats. In 2014, the BAB reviewed and approved four regulatory amendments to be advanced for the PFBC's consideration: amendments to lighting requirements for boats; classifying paddleboards as boats and requiring operators to have wearable personal flotation devices on board; prohibiting airborne devices; and changing a slow, no-wake zone near Shikellamy State Park, Northumberland County. Pictured are (left to right) Laurel Anders, the PFBC Bureau of Boating and Outreach Director; Loren W. Lustig, BAB; Mary Gibson, BAB Chairperson; Henry Grillk, BAB; Michael LeMole, BAB; the PFBC Executive Director John A. Arway; and Ryan Dysinger, Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. Missing from the photo is Andrew Talento, BAB Vice-Chair.

## Lake Erie Watershed

Since the program was created in 2005, the PFBC has acquired Public Fishing and Conservation Easements or properties in the Erie Watershed that have permanently opened up approximately 103,290 linear feet or 19.56 miles of streams to public fishing access. In 2014, the Board of Commissioners approved three more Public Fishing Access and Conservation Easements and one property acquisition in the Lake Erie Watershed. The four properties will provide approximately 13,465 linear feet or 2.55 miles of public fishing access along the Lake Erie tributary streams. The three easements will provide 1,230 linear feet of access along Fourmile Creek, 4,960 linear feet along Conneaut Creek and 6,295 linear feet along the East Branch of Conneaut Creek. The property acquisition will provide 980 linear feet of access along Twelvemile Creek and will guarantee that the entire fishable portion of Twelvemile Creek will remain open to the public.

### 2014 Website

#### Top Ten Pages By Page View

1. Home Page = 128,039
2. Trout Stocking Schedule = 40,872
3. Buy a License = 26,479
4. Stocking Trout = 23,644
5. County Guide = 23,843
6. Trout Fast Facts = 20,711
7. Trout = 20,253
8. Stocking Overview = 19,251
9. Fishing Near You = 17,664
10. Outdoor Shop = 15,575

## Youth Fishing

In Forest County, the PFBC approved a request from the Kelletville Sportsman Club to designate a ½-mile section of Ross Run as a year-round exclusive use fishing area for children 12 years of age and younger. The section extends from the Ross Run Road Bridge downstream ½ mile to the mouth.

The club has worked cooperatively for six consecutive years with the PFBC to improve the habitat within this section. It stocks the section six times a year, hosts an opening day fishing contest and sponsors the annual Joe Kopena Memorial Fishing Derby.

**Goal 3C: Ensure that fish production levels are met annually to optimize fishing opportunities.**

## Reynoldsdale State Fish Hatchery

One of the major activities related to fish production in 2014 was the initiation of renovations of the Reynoldsdale State Fish Hatchery, Bedford County. The hatchery is undergoing major changes as it is transformed from an older earthen pond rearing system to a modern raceway system. These changes are needed due to the deterioration of the old facility, inefficient use of space and antiquated waste treatment options. The new hatchery complex will contain modern concrete raceways, oxygenation systems and an improved waste treatment system.

Work at the site started in the summer of 2014, and completion is expected in early 2016. Trout will continue to be raised at the hatchery while the construction is in progress.



*New raceways at Reynoldsdale State Fish Hatchery under construction.*

## Fish Production

Trout production was very successful in 2014 and well-received by the anglers of the Commonwealth. Although stocking trout during the abnormally cold spring with lots of ice on lakes and some streams was difficult, the PFBC was able to stock all waters prior to the opening days.

A bonus stocking of Lake Trout went to Raystown Lake in November. These were surplus Lake Trout reared at the Allegheny National Fish Hatchery and provided to the PFBC. This stocking of 10,000 fish was above the annual stocking done by the PFBC state fish hatcheries.

The largest Muskellunge fingerlings that were ever cultured by the agency were stocked in 2014. The average Muskellunge stocked in the fall averaged 10 inches in length. The average size seven years ago was 7 inches and has been increasing ever since. These larger-sized fingerlings are desired, because they have a higher survival rate in the wild. The PFBC has continued to improve feeding and rearing methods to reach these impressive sizes. The average cost for the Commission's hatcheries to produce and stock Muskellunge and tiger muskellunge over the last four years was approximately \$800,000 per year. The cost to rear and stock Muskellunge and tiger muskellunge fingerlings last year was \$4.40 and \$2.62 per fish, respectively.

In November, the PFBC approved a new Muskellunge cooperative nursery that is sponsored by Penn Jersey Muskies, Inc. This brings the total number of cooperative nurseries to 160.



## Internal Resources

**Goal 4: Optimize agency efficiency through continuation of investments in information technology, employee training and development, and infrastructure planning and implementation.**

### Information Technology Modernization

In 2014, a multi-year modernization project was completed that updated and combined multiple stand-alone applications into the PFBC’s Resource First Portal (RFP). RFP is a comprehensive system that was built utilizing industry best practices and modern technologies. It has eliminated redundant data entry, increased efficiency and automated business processes.

The PFBC also launched a collaborative workgroup as part of its effort to redesign the agency’s website to simplify and enhance ease of navigation. The initial focus is on identifying responsive design solutions that will enable streamlined viewing and navigation from multiple device platforms.

The PFBC also continued the process of updating GIS layers for its properties by reviewing, updating, and validating existing data through the use of drawing software, documentation reviews and field work.

### Training

Building on successful training programs from previous years, the PFBC maintained its commitment to employee development by creating and delivering a number of courses, including training in the following topics: Accelerated Grievance Procedures for supervisors of both FOP covered employees and AFSCME covered employees; Effective Writing; How to Conduct a Workplace Investigation; Employee Performance Reviews; Labor Relations; Fundamentals of Supervision; Workplace Violence; Fitness for Duty; State Employees Assistance Program; Office Ergonomics; and Methamphetamine and Clandestine Drug Lab Awareness Training.

### Leadership Development

The PFBC again took advantage of leadership development opportunities offered to state government employees by the Office of Administration (OA). Rob Brown, Bureau of Hatcheries, and Mike Bielen, Bureau of Administration, participated in the Commonwealth’s Emerging Leaders program, and Michele Jacoby, Bureau of Engineering, took part in the Leadership Development Institute. Both of these programs require a commitment on the part of the employee and their supervisor to invest the necessary time and attention to get the most out of the training to help develop the staff member’s skill set and prepare them for new challenges.

Recognizing the need to proactively help build the capacity of employees and its future leaders, Jason O’Brien (mentee) and Maxine Johnson (mentor) are also participating in the OA’s mentoring program while an internal mentoring program is developed for the PFBC.

### Recognition and Awards

The Commission continued to acknowledge the good work of its staff and volunteers. In addition to congratulating employees on years of service to the agency and offering anyone the opportunity to praise an employee through the Fishing Hole, the Commission formally recognized a number of individuals in conjunction with its quarterly meetings and also received recognition from outside organizations for accomplishments in 2014. The following are some of the people and programs who received commendation in the past year.

**Wave of Excellence Award:** The Wave of Excellence award is an opportunity for the PFBC employees to nominate one of their own for extraordinary workplace contributions. Winners of the award in 2014 were Sue Taylor, Clerk Typist from the Benner Spring facility, and Carol Miller from the Human Resources Office.

**Governor’s Innovation Award and National Recognition for PA-HART:** At the second annual Governor’s Innovation Expo in July, the PFBC, in cooperation with the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency and the Department of Military

2014 Fishing License & Permit Types	
Dec 1, 2013 - December 31, 2014	Units Sold
1-Day Labor Day Resident	352
1-Day Labor Day Tourist	168
1-Day Resident	4,022
1-Day Tourist	5,426
3-Day Tourist	24,710
3-year Non-Resident	322
3-year Resident	10,053
3-year Senior	255
5-year Non-Resident	81
5-year Resident	4,030
5-year Senior	51
7-Day Tourist	7,310
PA Resident National Guard/Reserve	493
Senior Lifetime	17,435
Non-Resident	38,946
Reduced Disabled Veteran	6
Resident	708,282
Senior Resident	17,753
Voluntary Youth	1,725
3-year Combination Lake Erie & Trout/Salmon Stamp Permit	1,707
3-year Lake Erie Permit	111
3-year Trout/Salmon Stamp Permit	6,431
5-year Combination Lake Erie & Trout/Salmon Stamp Permit	879
5-year Lake Erie Permit	38
5-year Trout/Salmon Stamp Permit	2,522
Combination Lake Erie & Trout/Salmon Stamp Permit	81,322
Lake Erie Permit	20,439
Trout/Salmon Stamp Permit	473,518
<b>Total Licenses &amp; Permits</b>	<b>1,428,387</b>



and Veterans Affairs (PA Army National Guard), received an award for the Pennsylvania-Helicopter Aquatic Rescue Training (PA-HART) program.

The Commission was also recognized as a key member of the PA-HART team when it was awarded the prestigious 2014 Higgins and Langley Memorial and Education Award in Swiftwater Rescue. The award was presented as part of the National Association for Search and Rescue annual conference.

**The PFBC Habitat Award to Cambria County Conservation District:** The Cambria County Conservation District (CCCD) has been a valuable partner to the Commission over the past six years, securing grants for project materials and staff reimbursement, which enables the Commission to accomplish more habitat work on the waters of Cambria County. Since 2007, the CCCD has partnered with the agency to place 782 habitat structures in three reservoirs. Since 2009, they have also worked together to construct 149 stream habitat devices on three streams.

**Lifesaving Awards:** WCO Doug Deppen was presented with a Lifesaving Award for helping victims of an automobile accident on July 24, 2013.

WCO John Cummings also was recognized with a Lifesaving Award for his efforts to treat a victim of an automobile accident on August 17, 2013.

Bernie Matscavage, Director of the Bureau of Administration, received a Lifesaving Award for his efforts to help a couple after they capsized their canoe on the Susquehanna River in fall 2013.

WCO William Crisp and Deputy Waterways Conservation Officer (DWCO) George Afionis were presented Lifesaving Awards for exemplary public service and dedication to duty displayed during actions taken on April 5, 2014, which saved the life of a boater on the Driftwood Branch of the Sinnemahoning Creek.

WCO Robert Mader, DWCO Neil H. Cook, Jr., and DWCO James F. Hillman received Lifesaving Awards for exemplary public service and dedication to duty displayed during actions taken on May 10, 2014, which saved the life of an injured citizen along the shore of the Allegheny Reservoir.

**2013 Officer of the Year:** WCO Tom Benevento from southern Chester County received the 2013 Officer of the Year Award. The PFBC Bureau of Law Enforcement reviews nominations for this award in cooperation with the Northeast Conservation Law Enforcement Chief's Association. For 2013, he and his deputy WCOs conducted 52 days of boat patrol, 1,064 safety checks of boats and issued 314 warnings and 272 citations.

**Top Gun:** WCO Mark Sweppenhiser from northern Dauphin and Northumberland counties received the PFBC's 2013 Top Gun Award, which recognizes an officer's outstanding effort in detecting and apprehending impaired boaters during the past year. In 2013, he logged 520.5 hours on recreational boating law enforcement focused on the Susquehanna River, facilitated two boating safety/BUI special enforcement details in his patrol area and actively participated in an additional three details in neighboring districts. During the recreational boating season, WCO Sweppenhiser independently apprehended and prosecuted nine individuals for boating under the influence and assisted other officers with two additional arrests.

**Boating Law Enforcement Officer of the Year Award:** The National Association of Safe Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) 2014 Butch Potts Boating Law Enforcement Officer of the Year Award was presented to WCO Darrin Kephart. Officer Kephart is assigned to the Southern York County District.



## New WCO Class

Waterways Conservation Officer duties are critical to and interwoven with the agency's conservation and recreation goals. In its new strategic plan, the Commission reaffirmed that it will continue to maintain a vigilant corps of WCOs to enforce fishing, boating, and environmental laws and regulations; assist the Commission in meeting recreation goals; and promote public safety.

The most fundamental part of delivering these services is having a corps of qualified and trained WCOs. The Commission has not deployed a new class of WCOs to the field since 2010. As of the end of 2014, 17 WCO districts were vacant across Pennsylvania.

To help get closer to full complement, the Commission decided in 2014 to recruit a new class of 20 officers. The cadets will commence a year-long training in July 2015 at the H.R. Stackhouse School of Fisheries Conservation and Watercraft Safety. WCO training begins with the 22-week Act 120 course facilitated by the Pennsylvania State Police, followed by an additional 30 weeks at Stackhouse encompassing various conservation and boating law enforcement topics. The rigorous recruitment process was still underway as of the end of 2014.

## Body Cameras for WCOs

Thanks to Act 202 of 2014, championed by Representative Dan Moul, WCOs are now legally permitted to wear body cameras in the performance of their official duties. Prior to Act 202, only municipal and state law enforcement officers were legally permitted to use body cameras. Act 202 increased officer safety and surveillance by amending Titles 30 (Fish & Boat Code) and 34 (Game Code) to include Waterways and Wildlife Conservation Officers under the definition of "law enforcement officers" within the Wiretapping and Electronic Surveillance Control Act. This amendment allows for officers to utilize body cameras in the performance of their duties after completing a training course approved by the Pennsylvania State Police.

## WCOs

One of the primary core functions of the agency is law enforcement. A Waterways Conservation Officer (WCO) is a specialized conservation police officer employed by the Commission's Bureau of Law Enforcement. After successful completion of a stringent training program, WCOs may be assigned to a law enforcement district anywhere within the Commonwealth, where they are required to perform specialized law enforcement work in fisheries conservation and watercraft safety. Typical duties include patrolling by foot, vehicle, or boat to detect, pursue, and apprehend violators. WCOs issue citations or warnings, file criminal complaints, serve warrants, present evidence at hearings and court proceedings, investigate water pollution and encroachment incidents, investigate boat accidents, and stock fish. WCOs make public appearances to conduct educational classes or provide information to the public. Additionally, WCOs coordinate the work of a corps of Deputy Waterways Conservation Officers at the district level.

## High-Hazard, Unsafe Dams

Several high hazard dam projects entered the construction phase in 2014, with completion dates set for 2015 and 2016.

In August, the PFBC announced that the final drawdown of Colyer Lake, Centre County, would begin in September and construction would begin in October. As the lake reached the final stages of drawdown, a fish salvage was conducted to remove and relocate as many fish as possible. In August, the Department of General Services (DGS) awarded the rehabilitation project to Performance Construction Services, Inc. of Harrisburg. Construction is set to be completed by late 2015, and the lake is expected to be fully refilled and open by spring 2016.



Construction also continued at Lake Nessmuk in Wellsboro, Tioga County. In 2014, the Commission completed the extension of the new concrete stilling basin, replacement of the control tower, 40 feet widening of the auxiliary spillway, new toe and embankment drains, and flattening of the downstream embankment. Habitat improvement projects will also be incorporated into the final project and will take place in February of 2015. The dam rehabilitation project is scheduled to start the refill process in the summer of 2015 and should be completed in 3 to 4 months.

In November, DGS awarded the Speedwell Forge Dam Rehabilitation Project in Lancaster County to KC Construction Company, Inc. of Ivyland. The contractor plans to begin work in early 2015.

In November, the construction project at Lehigh County's Leaser Lake to repair a seep in the facility's dam was completed. The lake is undergoing refill and is expected to be full for spring stocking and open for the start of trout season in 2015.

The Commission also commenced the design process for Tamarack Lake, Crawford County, and Meadow Grounds Lake, Fulton County. The Tamarack project is being funded by an H2O PA Flood Protection grant since the two dams there provide flood protection to the people residing downstream of the reservoir in Meadville and Cochranon. The Commission is working with local legislators and other partners to secure the balance to funding needed to complete the Meadow Grounds project.

## Other Priority Infrastructure Work

Repairs to the outlet works at the Kaercher Creek Lake Dam, Berks County, began in September and will be completed in the spring of 2015. The project includes the replacement of a non-functional drawdown gate valve with a new gate valve that will allow the PFBC to safely regulate the lake elevation.

Emergency repairs were designed and constructed at the Tionesta State Fish Hatchery to remove and replace a collapsed aeration tower with new media packed PVC degassing tubes. This work allows the hatchery to continue full operations. A follow-up project will be designed for a more permanent, long-term repair.

Also in 2014, the PFBC began working on a statewide infrastructure plan that will include Commission-owned buildings, dams, hatcheries, and access areas. The proposed plans will systematically assess the PFBC's infrastructure to evaluate the condition, set priorities, and establish funding needs for future projects.

## New Centre County Region Office

The year ended with the fulfillment of a long-time agency goal to consolidate and improve the office conditions for Commission staff in Centre County. Commission staff and operations are currently housed in a number of buildings throughout the Pleasant Gap and Bellefonte areas.

In December, the Commission completed the sale on a vacant warehouse and office building that will allow for the consolidation of 14 operations and buildings into a single facility, thereby increasing efficiency. As an existing facility, the property's purchase price and post-acquisition upgrades amount to approximately one-third of the cost to construct a new building, and comparable facilities at attractive pricing are rarely available within the Centre County region. The property will allow for expansion in the future within the warehouse and office areas and will provide indoor and outdoor storage for vehicles and boats along with capacity for doing indoor maintenance. It also has loading docks for proper delivery access and will provide the Northcentral Regional Law Enforcement Office with an accessible front office presence to do business with the public.

### DWCOs

DWCOs are volunteer officers that assist WCOCs in accomplishing PFBC's mission at the district level. They assist with general law enforcement, stocking, and outreach programs. DWCO candidates must complete the Act 235 Lethal Weapons Training before being accepted to attend PFBC's course at the H.R. Stackhouse facility. Interested individuals can learn more about the program by visiting PFBC's website or contacting the region office that covers the county in which they live.

### Fish Habitat Projects at Drawn Down Lakes

The PFBC has been working with local conservation groups at several drawn down Commonwealth-owned lakes managed by the PFBC to place fish habitat structures in those lakes.

- Glade Run Lake, Butler County: The Glade Run Lake Conservancy has leveraged multiple grants from Reservoir Fisheries Habitat Partnership and Shell Appalachia to produce large-scale fish habitat structures before the lake is refilled.
- Nessmuk Lake, Tioga County: The Tioga County Bass Anglers and the Reservoir Fisheries Habitat Partnership have been granted funding from Shell Appalachia for the fish habitat improvement scheduled for winter 2014-15.
- Colyer Lake, Centre County: The Save Colyer Lake group is contributing towards fish habitat improvement at the lake, and Graymont quarry is donating 300 tons of lime to improve water quality for fishery health.
- Speedwell Forge, Lancaster County: The Save Speedwell group has leveraged Growing Greener funding for the removal of several feet of accumulated sediment. Save Speedwell and Lancaster County Bassmasters are also contributing large-scale fish habitat improvement structures to be added in 2015.

**Fiscal Year 2013-2014 Report**  
*as of December 31, 2014 (unaudited)*

**EXPENDITURES**

**Fish Fund**

<b>Personnel</b>	<b>\$24,492,344</b>	<b>67%</b>
<b>Operating</b>	<b>\$9,462,337</b>	<b>25%</b>
<b>Fixed Assets</b>	<b>\$1,678,969</b>	<b>5%</b>
<b>Grants</b>	<b>\$1,151,555</b>	<b>3%</b>
<b>Payments to State Agencies</b>	<b>\$2,106</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Fish Fund Total</b>	<b>\$36,787,311</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Boat Fund**

<b>Personnel</b>	<b>\$9,131,367</b>	<b>64%</b>
<b>Operating</b>	<b>\$2,837,179</b>	<b>20%</b>
<b>Fixed Assets</b>	<b>\$245,186</b>	<b>2%</b>
<b>Grants</b>	<b>\$2,071,211</b>	<b>14%</b>
<b>Payments to State Agencies</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Boat Fund Total</b>	<b>\$14,284,943</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Fish Fund & Boat Fund Total**

<b>Personnel</b>	<b>\$33,623,711</b>	<b>66%</b>
<b>Operating</b>	<b>\$12,299,516</b>	<b>24%</b>
<b>Fixed Assets</b>	<b>\$1,924,155</b>	<b>4%</b>
<b>Grants</b>	<b>\$3,222,766</b>	<b>6%</b>
<b>Payments to State Agencies</b>	<b>\$2,106</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Fish &amp; Boat Fund Total</b>	<b>\$51,072,254</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Fiscal Year 2013-2014 Report**  
*as of December 31, 2014 (unaudited)*

**REVENUE**

**Fish Fund**

<b>Licenses &amp; Fees</b>	<b>\$26,723,535</b>	<b>73%</b>
<b>Fines &amp; Penalties</b>	<b>\$425,329</b>	<b>1%</b>
<b>Miscellaneous</b>	<b>\$1,933,771</b>	<b>5%</b>
<b>Augmentations</b>	<b>\$7,535,389</b>	<b>21%</b>
<b>Fish Fund Total</b>	<b>\$36,618,024</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Boat Fund**

<b>Licenses &amp; Fees</b>	<b>\$7,084,027</b>	<b>47%</b>
<b>Fines &amp; Penalties</b>	<b>\$273,171</b>	<b>2%</b>
<b>Miscellaneous</b>	<b>\$613,134</b>	<b>4%</b>
<b>Federal</b>	<b>\$5,416,839</b>	<b>36%</b>
<b>Liquid Fuels Tax Receivable</b>	<b>\$1,597,519</b>	<b>11%</b>
<b>Boat Fund Total</b>	<b>\$14,984,690</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Fish Fund & Boat Fund Total**

<b>Licenses &amp; Fees</b>	<b>\$33,807,562</b>	<b>66%</b>
<b>Fines &amp; Penalties</b>	<b>\$698,500</b>	<b>1%</b>
<b>Miscellaneous</b>	<b>\$2,546,903</b>	<b>5%</b>
<b>Federal</b>	<b>\$12,952,229</b>	<b>25%</b>
<b>Liquid Fuels Tax Receivable</b>	<b>\$1,597,519</b>	<b>3%</b>
<b>Fish &amp; Boat Fund Total</b>	<b>\$51,602,713</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Trout Stocked and Distributed to Cooperative Nurseries**

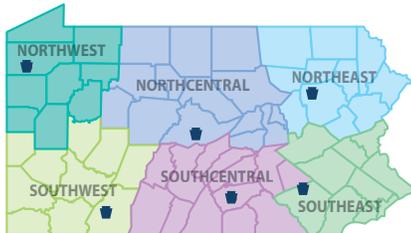
<i>Trout Species</i>	<i>Lifestage</i>	<i>Amount</i>
Brook Trout	Adult	627,489
	Fingerling	15,000
	Fingerling to Coops.	433,868
Brown Trout	Adult	870,594
	Fingerling	397,841
	Fingerling to Coops.	273,938
Rainbow Trout	Adult	1,618,231
	Fingerling	403,609
	Fingerling to Coops.	481,565
Golden Rainbow Trout	Adult	11,515
	Fingerling to Coops.	11,182
<b>Total Trout Species</b>		<b>5,144,832</b>

**Warmwater/Coolwater Fish Production and Stocking**

<i>Species</i>	<i>Lifestage</i>	<i>Amount</i>
American Shad	Fry	4,570,199
Black Crappie	Fingerling	8,240
Bluegill	Fingerling	16,480
Brown Bullhead	Fingerling	4,744
Brown Trout-Lake Erie	Fingerling	30,766
Chain Pickerel	Fingerling	418
Channel Catfish	Fingerling	181,854
Flathead Minnow	Adult	46,000
Golden Shiner	Fingerling	29,395
Lake Trout	Fingerling	3,000
Lake Trout	Yearling	75,320
Largemouth Bass	Fingerling	57,291
Muskellunge	Fingerling	119,031
Muskellunge	Yearling	2,155
Northern Pike	Fingerling	3,869
Rainbow Trout Steelhead	Yearling	1,009,322
Striped Bass	Fingerling	182,900
Striped Bass Hybrid	Fingerling	105,382
Tiger Muskellunge	Fingerling	243,751
Walleye	Fry	38,818,000
Walleye	Fingerling	2,051,830
White Crappie	Fingerling	22,518
Yellow Perch	Fingerling	20,300
<b>Grand Total of all Species</b>		<b>47,602,765</b>

## Pleasant Gap Manager's Dwelling

Act 61 of 2014, sponsored by Representative Kerry Benninghoff allowed the PFBC to more efficiently manage its assets by permitting the release of restrictions imposed under the Project 70 Land Acquisition and Borrowing Act on approximately 3.59 acres of land in Centre County. Historically, the PFBC was required to house its hatchery managers and/or foremen on site at each of its hatcheries. With the advancement of technology and revised work rules, it is no longer necessary to house hatchery managers onsite, thus leaving property unused at the Pleasant Gap Complex. As a result of Act 61, PFBC may dispose of the property for fair market value and utilize the acquired funds for purposes consistent with the Project 70 Land Acquisition and Borrowing Act to benefit anglers of and boaters of Pennsylvania.



**iFish**  
a menu of fishing resources from PFBC



<http://fishandboat.com/ifish.htm>

**iBoat**  
a menu of boating resources from PFBC



<http://fishandboat.com/iboat.htm>

Use your smartphone (with a QR code app) and the QR codes above to access PFBC web pages.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION:

### STATE HEADQUARTERS

1601 Elmerton Avenue  
P.O. Box 67000  
Harrisburg, PA 17106  
Phone: (717) 705-7800  
Hours: 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.  
Monday through Friday

### WEBSITE:

[www.fishandboat.com](http://www.fishandboat.com)

### PLEASANT GAP COMPLEX

450 Robinson Lane  
Bellefonte, PA 16823  
Phone: (814) 359-5110  
Hours: 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.  
Monday through Friday

### BOATING SAFETY EDUCATION COURSES

Phone: (888) 723-4741

### FISHING LICENSES:

Phone: (877) 707-4085

### BOAT REGISTRATION/TITLING:

Phone: (866) 262-8734

### PUBLICATIONS:

Phone: (717) 705-7835



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## REGION OFFICES: LAW ENFORCEMENT/EDUCATION

Contact **Law Enforcement** for information about regulations and fishing and boating opportunities. Contact **Education** for information about fishing and boating programs and boating safety education.

### NORTHWEST REGION

11528 SH 98, Meadville, PA 16335  
*Law Enforcement:* (814) 337-0444  
*Education:* (814) 336-2426  
Fax (814) 337-0579 Fax (814) 337-0579  
Counties: Butler, Clarion, Crawford, Erie, Forest, Lawrence, Mercer, Venango, Warren

### SOUTHWEST REGION

236 Lake Road, Somerset, PA 15501  
*Law Enforcement:* (814) 445-8974  
*Education:* (814) 443-9841  
Fax (814) 445-3497 Fax (814) 445-3497  
Counties: Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Cambria, Fayette, Greene, Indiana, Somerset, Washington, Westmoreland

### NORTHCENTRAL REGION

1150 Spring Creek Road  
Bellefonte, PA 16823  
*Law Enforcement:* (814) 359-5250  
*Education:* (814) 359-5193  
Fax (814) 359-5254 Fax (814) 359-5153  
Counties: Cameron, Centre, Clearfield, Clinton, Elk, Jefferson, Lycoming, McKean, Montour, Northumberland, Potter, Snyder, Tioga, Union

*Office hours from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday*

### SOUTHCENTRAL REGION

1704 Pine Road, Newville, PA 17241  
*Law Enforcement:* (717) 486-7087  
*Education:* (717) 486-7352  
Fax (717) 486-8227 Fax (717) 486-8227  
Counties: Adams, Bedford, Blair, Cumberland, Dauphin, Franklin, Fulton, Huntingdon, Juniata, Lebanon, Mifflin, Perry, York

### NORTHEAST REGION

5566 Main Road, Sweet Valley, PA 18656  
*Law Enforcement:* (570) 477-5717  
*Education:* (570) 477-2206  
Fax (570) 477-3221 Fax (570) 477-2621  
Counties: Bradford, Carbon, Columbia, Lackawanna, Luzerne, Monroe, Pike, Sullivan, Susquehanna, Wayne, Wyoming

### SOUTHEAST REGION

P.O. Box 9, Elm, PA 17521  
*Law Enforcement:* (717) 626-0228  
*Education:* (717) 626-9081  
Fax (717) 626-0486 Fax (717) 626-0486  
Counties: Berks, Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Lancaster, Lehigh, Montgomery, Northampton, Philadelphia, Schuylkill

## STATE FISH HATCHERIES

### BELLEFONTE\*

1115 Spring Creek Road  
Bellefonte, PA 16823  
(814) 355-3371

### BENNER SPRING

1735 Shiloh Road  
State College, PA 16801  
(814) 353-2231

### OSWAYO\*

96 State Route 244 East  
Coudersport, PA 16915  
(814) 698-2102

### REYNOLDSDALE\*

162 Fish Hatchery Road  
New Paris, PA 15554  
(814) 839-2211

### CORRY\*

13365 Route 6  
Corry, PA 16407  
(814) 664-2122

### HUNTSDALE\*

195 Lebo Road  
Carlisle, PA 17013  
(717) 486-3419

### PLEASANT GAP\*

450 Robinson Lane  
Pleasant Gap, PA 16823  
(814) 359-5121

### TIONESTA\*

172 Fish Hatchery Lane  
Tionesta, PA 16353  
(814) 755-3524

### FAIRVIEW

2000 Lohrer Road  
Fairview, PA 16415  
(814) 474-1514

### LINESVILLE\*

13300 Hartstown Road  
Linesville, PA 16424  
(814) 683-4451

### PLEASANT MOUNT\*

229 Great Bend Turnpike  
Pleasant Mount, PA  
18453  
(570) 448-2101

### TYLERSVILLE

43 Hatchery Lane  
Loganton, PA 17747  
(570) 725-3965

### UNION CITY

9450 Route 6  
Union City, PA 16438  
(814) 438-2222

*\* Includes visitor center. Visitors are welcome from 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. daily. Groups should make advance arrangements.*

[www.fishandboat.com](http://www.fishandboat.com)