October – December 2011 Quarterly Report

Strategic Plan Implementation

The following updates include the major activities or accomplishments during the quarter that further the July 2010 – June 2015 PFBC Strategic Plan. The bulleted list does not include every detail about what is being done on a particular goal, just the highlights that help to track implementation.

If there is nothing listed for a particular goal, either there was nothing major to report during the quarter, or work has yet to commence on the goal.

Overall, please also note that it is intended to be a tracking tool for the strategic plan rather than an auditing tool.

Goal 1: Actively pursue innovative, as well as traditional, funding sources, compensation for services provided to all Pennsylvanians, and funding for the completion of priority infrastructure projects.

A. Advocate for passage by July 2011 of alternative, secure, long-term funding (e.g., special fees or permits, General Fund, sales tax revenues, Renew Growing Greener) to compensate the Commission for services provided to all Pennsylvanians and the Commonwealth in general for lost natural resource values.

- Currently negotiating seven oil and gas cooperative agreements that are in various stages of completion, and actively pursuing two water access opportunities. Developed and successfully implemented a competitive Call-for-Offers (CFO) program to help identify the highest and best offers from industry under the natural gas leasing and water access programs.

B. Advocate for a Marcellus Shale severance tax that includes dedicated conservation funding, including support for functions performed by the Commission, until such a tax is enacted.

- Continued to actively explain PFBC roles and present case for being included in proposed impact fee. As of January 11, PFBC was in SB 1100 (the apparent impact fee vehicle) for $1.5 million annually.

C. Advocate for passage by December 2014 of regular annual increases to fishing licenses, permits and boat registrations, a dedicated fee for access and habitat, and sales and marketing flexibility, including, but not limited to, group or family licenses, as necessary.

- SB 1049 was unanimously passed out of the Senate Game and Fisheries Committee vote on October 25, received second consideration in the Senate, and, as of January 10, was scheduled for a vote in the Senate Appropriations committee on January 17.
• Worked closely with Senator Alloway’s office on a package of Title 30 updates, including updating a number of fees. Senator Alloway circulated a co-sponsorship memo on December 13, and the bill is expected to be introduced in January.

D. Advocate for passage by December 2014 of funding to increase youth education programs and participation in fishing and boating based upon successful results of pilot programs in test areas.

E. Advocate for and seek capital funding to make Commission-owned high-hazard dams safe, complete state fish hatchery upgrades, and other priorities identified in the Commission’s Infrastructure Plan.

• Advocated for the inclusion of funding for high hazard dams (via the H2O PA Program) in the Marcellus shale impact fee legislation.

F. Advocate for passage of existing and new federal legislation to protect and expand funds available to the Commission to support our mission.

• Continued to work with the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies to educate Members of Congress about the value of State Wildlife Grants.

**Issue 2: Current and increasing threats to our aquatic resources demand the Commission provide better resource management and protection.**

**Strategy 2: Provide better resource management and protection to reduce the impacts of current and increasing threats to our aquatic resources.**

**Goal 2: Improve protection, conservation and enhancement of aquatic resources and habitats.**

A. By July 2010, continue implementation of the *Strategic Plan for Management of Trout Fisheries in Pennsylvania.*

• Provided PFBC comments on SRBC draft Low Flow and Headwaters Protection Policies that may provide groundbreaking protection for basin streams. Draft policy expected to be released to public for comment in mid-2012.
• Represented PFBC position for NYC Reservoir releases to Delaware River at Friends of the Upper Delaware November meeting, DRBC Regulated Flow Advisory Committee meetings and Decree Party negotiations.
• Reviewed four of six scenarios for Lehigh River Section 22, Phase 2 modeling by U. S. Army Corps of Engineers and made a proposal for the final two scenarios. This study is being done to evaluate the feasibility of improving the tailwater trout fishery downstream of FE Walter Reservoir.
• Participated in public review of 2011 F. E. Walter Recreational Release Program for Lehigh River.
• Met with The Nature Conservancy to evaluate important fish species that may be affected by flow variation for Ohio River Ecosystem Flow Study.
• Completed a draft brochure titled “Protecting our Cold Water Resources.” This document is designed to provide municipalities with ideas and tools to protect the aquatic resources in their communities.
• Water temperature thermographs were retrieved from Kinzua Creek (16B) Section 05, and Plum Creek (17E) Section 01 relative to fingerling trout studies.
• Angler use counts were conducted on Friday, October 21st on Hunters Lake (10D) and Muncy Creek, Section 04, (DH Area). No anglers were observed on these fall trout-stocked waters during the late morning/early afternoon angler count.
• In May 2011, Section 04 of Lackawasen River was stocked with 6,000 adipose clipped fingerling rainbow trout and 6,000 adipose clipped fingerling brown trout in an attempt to initiate a tailwater trout fishery downstream of Lake Wallenpaupack. None of these trout were captured during the October 17, 2011 survey.
• Met with PSU and USFWS concerning wild trout population and stream habitat sampling methodologies.
• Continued work with PSU to determine the relative value of our stocked trout fisheries as a basis for possible future decisions regarding our catchable trout stocking program.
• Trout habitat projects completed in partnership with four conservation partners: Morrison Rn, Warren Co., UNT to Yellow Breeches, Cumberland Co., Big Spring Ck., Cumberland Co., Church Hill Rn., Franklin Co., Willow Ck., Berks Co.,
• Conducted habitat surveys on three trout waters as ongoing effort to monitor impact of habitat enhancement projects.

B. By December 2010, begin implementation of large river management plans for the Delaware, Susquehanna, and Three Rivers systems.

• Night electroboat sampling was conducted at six locations on the Allegheny River to assess abundance of walleye young-of-the-year (YOY) given the suspension of walleye fry stocking on the Allegheny River in Area 2 since 2008.
• Night electroboat sampling at two sites on the Delaware River at the Delaware Water Gap (RM 210) where a total of 80 SMB were captured and Sandts Eddy (RM 189) where a total of 79 SMB were captured. No occurrence of diseased fish was noticed. Provided fish flesh samples to DEP for contaminant analysis.
• Susquehanna River SMB adult electrofishing sampling at Accomac, York County, resulted in a good catch of 92 SMB in 2 hours, including 25 legal fish. A substantial disease problem was observed on 40% of the adult bass. Samples of adult SMB and channel catfish were taken at Accomac for the fish flesh contamination study by the PA DEP lab.
• Additional sites were surveyed on the Susquehanna River, Section 05, looking for diseased adult smallmouth bass following reports of diseased fish by Fisheries Management Area 6. None were found.

• Designed a creel survey to be conducted on the North Branch and West Branch Susquehanna River May 1 to the opening day of bass season, 2012. This study is being done to determine the effect of the closed season on the mainstem on West Branch and North Branch Susquehanna River angler use.

C. By December 2010, begin implementation of statewide action plans for the following species: Eastern pearlshell mussel, bog turtle, Eastern spadefoot toad, Eastern massasauga rattlesnake, and timber rattlesnake.

• Implementation of action plans is underway; first semiannual interim progress reports have been submitted for all action plans.

• Eastern Pearlshell
  o Monitoring stations have been established for 2 streams, including baseline data collection. Data analysis has begun.
  o DHM protocol is being revised to include mussels, will be applied in 2012
  o Degraded habitat in occupied streams has been identified.

• Bog turtle
  o Sub-contract with Mid-Atlantic Center for Herpetology and Conservation (MACHAC) has been completed.
  o Data compilation of bog turtle data and habitat restoration work has been initiated.
  o A training workshop is being developed.
  o Active habitat restoration occurring in Adams County, and planning for Monroe County.
  o We are working with conservation partners to acquire an important property for bog turtles in Berks County, and potentially, Monroe County.
  o Pursuing a potential bog turtle conservation fund with USFWS.
  o Writing site management plans for bog turtle properties in Berks and Lebanon Counties.

• Eastern Spadefoot
  o 3-year status assessment with East Stroudsburg has just been completed.
  o 3 monitoring stations have been established; 2 other stations are under development (Centre and Cumberland Co’s).
  o Developing scope of work for determining population size and structure of known metapopulations, home range, breeding migration distances.

• Eastern Massasauga
  o Met with Dr. Howard Reinert to discuss massasauga conservation, habitat restoration, and recovery in northwest PA. Also worked on SWG funded grant proposal regarding pre, during, and post monitoring of massasauga population in Venango County in the midst of a habitat restoration project.

• Timber Rattlesnake
o Completed historic den surveys.
o Identify TR populations in gap areas statewide; continue telemetry work focused on finding dens in remote gap areas.
o Conducting 5-year review of data collection for hunting program; reviewing regulations for potential updates.

D. By July 2011 and annually thereafter, facilitate or complete population inventories and home-range assessments for 10% of the state-listed endangered, threatened or candidate species identified in the State Wildlife Action Plan.

- Finalized grant proposals for State Wildlife Grant herpetofauna data compilation project and massasauga habitat restoration and monitoring project.
- Continued work on status assessments of several species that will likely be listed as threatened or endangered: Chesapeake logperch, Acuminatus crayfish, round hickorynut, pistolgrip mussel, and eastern mud turtle. The American brook lamprey and Ohio lamprey are under review for potential de-listing. The bowfin status assessment is also underway.
- Ongoing work with timber rattlesnake assessment project – focus has been on statewide site assessments and radio telemetry in various regions to locate denning habitats in gap areas.
- Inventory work for eastern spadefoot and eastern mud turtle projects have been completed for the SWG study. The final report for the eastern mud turtle has been completed, and the eastern spadefoot is nearly completed.

E. By December 2012, develop a PFBC sampling protocol manual to ensure consistent data collection techniques for waterways.

1. By September 2010, complete documentation of PFBC-approved sampling protocols for wadeable streams.
   - Complete

2. By December 2011, complete documentation of PFBC-approved sampling protocols for large rivers.
   - First draft of large river sampling protocols projected to be completed by January 31, 2012 and internal review initiated.

   - Met with Commissioner Elliott to discuss development of lake monitoring protocol to assess habitat treatments; staff are currently drafting protocol document.
F. By January 2013, develop and advocate for water quality protection criteria for special protection classes of Warm Water Fishes in 25 Pa. Code Chapter 93 in collaboration with the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection.

- Discussed potential Warm Water Fishes criteria with DEP that could be used to elevate the water quality protection use designation to HQ or EV.

G. By January 2014, sample at least 200 prioritized, un-inventoried streams with the potential to support wild trout identified by Commission staff as most at risk from the effects of human activities, and pursue partnerships and funding to augment Commission sampling efforts.

- Conducted 12 unassessed stream surveys.
- Completed entry of 305 unassessed waters surveyed by PFBC staff into the Agency Resource Database.
- Began data review of 431 unassessed waters surveyed by PFBC research partners.

H. By July 2014, evaluate and improve gamefish management programs for muskellunge, walleye, channel catfish and striped bass/hybrid bass.

- Completed second draft of muskellunge management plan.
- Coded wire tagging of fingerling muskellunge was conducted to assist in the evaluation of the survival of different size muskellunge stocked by the PFBC.
- A coded wire tag retention study was conducted on muskellunge being held at the Linesville hatchery.
- Completed final draft of channel catfish management plan for interagency review.
- Completed final walleye management plan and posted to PFBC web site.

I. By June 2015, minimize the impacts of aquatic invasive species and disease on aquatic resources.

1. By July 2010, begin implementation of an education and outreach program targeted at anglers and boaters as identified in the Pennsylvania Aquatic Invasive Species Management Plan and in cooperation with partners on the Governor’s Invasive Species Council of Pennsylvania.

- In cooperation with Sea Grant, an AIS E-LMS course was developed for all PFBC staff. Implementation is underway.
- Working with multiple state and non-governmental organizations, compiled the materials for submission to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) for the next agreement of the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative. With these funds, PFBC will construct an equipment wash station at the Pleasant Gap facility and a biosecure steelhead spawning facility at the Fairview Hatchery, and purchase additional materials and supplies in support of AIS control.
2. By July 2010, begin implementation of action plans, as necessary, for Didymo, Asian carp, water chestnut and golden algae as identified in the Pennsylvania Aquatic Invasive Species Management Plan and in cooperation with partners on the Governor’s Invasive Species Council of Pennsylvania.

- An AIS informational page was developed for the summary book, as well as a separate page for aquatic invasive crayfish.
- Draft Rapid Response Plans were developed for high priority AIS species: the Asian Carp (Silver Carp, Black Carp, Bighead Carp), Didymo, Golden Alga, and Water Chestnut. These are currently under internal agency review.
- AIS Action Plan implementation is ongoing:
  - **Asian Carp**
    - Continued to be actively involved in the Asian Carp Regional Coordinating Committee and advocated for the need to try to slow the spread of Asian Carp up the Ohio River.
  - **Didymo**
    - White paper pertaining to possible ban of felt-soled waders was completed.
    - Planning for surveying infected waters is underway.
  - **Golden Alga**
    - Working with DEP, SRBC, and DRBC to develop water hauling and disinfection procedures.
  - **Water Chestnut**
    - Investigated biological controls for water chestnut.

3. By December 2010, begin implementation of an action plan, as necessary, for viral hemorrhagic septicemia as identified in the Pennsylvania Aquatic Invasive Species Management Plan and in cooperation with partners on the Governor’s Invasive Species Council of Pennsylvania.

- Complete. Ongoing implementation.

4. By April 2013, amend the Commission’s regulations concerning introduction, propagation and transportation of fish in Pennsylvania’s waters to minimize the spread of aquatic invasive species and disease.

- Convened and commenced the work of an intra-agency team for this effort.

J. By June 2015, improve fish passage efforts on the Susquehanna and Lehigh Rivers and small streams.

1. By September 2014, collaborate with other natural resource agencies in the FERC relicensing of the four Lower Susquehanna River hydroelectric projects to ensure incorporation of provisions for timely and effective upstream and downstream fish
passage consistent with American shad, river herring and American eel restoration goals and resident fish needs.

2. By June 2015, investigate the feasibility of fish passage improvements on the Lehigh River in collaboration with state and local partners.
   - Convened a meeting with contracted consultants to overview study plan and conducted a meeting among major stakeholders.

3. By June 2015, facilitate or complete at least 40 small dam removals in collaboration with state and local partners.
   - Completed the following dam removals with partners: War Dam and Morrison Run Dam, Morrison Run, Warren Co.
   - Assisted partners with coordinating dam removal projects on Taylor Run, Tioga Co.; Turtle Creek, Westmoreland County; Wetmore Run (2 dams), Potter Co.; Black Creek (2 dams), Schuylkill Co.; Driftwood Br. Sinnemahoning Creek, Cameron Co.; Skinner Creek, McKean Co.; East Br. Clarion River, Elk Co.; Cussewago Creek, Crawford Co.; S Br Conewago Ck, Adams Co.(Fishway); Ridley Creek, Delaware Co.; Solomons Creek, Lackawanna Co.; East Branch Brandywine Creek, Chester Co.; Conococheague Creek, Franklin County; Darby Creek (3 dams), Delaware Co.; Cacoosing Creek, Berks Co.; Stony Creek, Montgomery Co.; Miller Run, Somerset Co.; Chickies Creek, Lancaster Co.; Morrison Run, Warren Co.; UNT to Darby Creek, Delaware Co.; Ferney Run, Clinton Co.; Devils Hole Creek, Monroe Co.; UNT to Frankstown Br. Juniata River, Blair Co.; Mosquito Creek, Clearfield Co.; Bushkill Creek (3), Northampton Co.; Little Lehigh Creek, Lehigh Co.
   - Fishways on Fourmile Ck., Erie Co. have been completed and are facilitating the movement of steelhead to upstream areas.

**Issue 3:** 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.

**Strategy 3:** Increase the Commission’s knowledge and understanding of its users to enhance recreational fishing and safe boating opportunities.

**Goal 3:** Improve the Commission’s knowledge of its users in order to better direct Commission programs and services.

A. By March 2013, conduct the first bi-annual, statewide survey of active and lapsed anglers and boaters to supplement the Commission’s use of the 5-year National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation.
B. By July 2013, utilize information captured from participants in the Commission’s educational programs to direct future fishing and safe boating programs.

   1. By July 2010, continue collecting participant data for analysis of the behaviors, motivations and demographics of the users of the Commission’s educational programs.
      
      - Collected contact data from more than 350 participants in 2011 educational programming.
      - Expanded use of on-line registration system to include special events and non-PFBC sponsored fishing programs.

C. By July 2010, continue efforts to amend the Commission’s boating safety regulations and/or education requirements and, as needed, pursue corresponding legislative changes to further reduce the number of recreational boating accidents and fatalities.

   - Coordinated outreach to anglers and hunters regarding the new coldwater lifejacket requirement that will go into effect November 1, 2012.

**Issue 4: The public continues to identify a need for access to the Commonwealth’s aquatic resources.**

**Strategy 4: Increase public access to the Commonwealth’s aquatic resources.**

**Goal 4: Retain and add new access to fishing and boating opportunities.**

A. By June 2011, launch a new boating and fishing access program to reflect the priorities of the Commission and its customers, consistent with available funding.

   - The Programmatic Environmental Assessment (PEA) for the Commission’s Voluntary Public Access/Habitat Incentive Program grant was completed and posted for public comment. The PEA was also submitted to USDA for their approval.

B. Beginning in July 2011, implement 5 watershed access plans per year as delineated in the Commission’s Access Strategy priority list of 52 HUC8 watersheds.

   - Held the first meeting of the Lake Erie Advisory Committee. The Committee members participated in a mapping exercise which will be used for the development of the Lake Erie Watershed access plan. The Lake Erie Watershed is ranked #1 in the Access Strategy.

C. By December 2014, improve public access to at least ten lakes, ten Class A streams, ten Class B, C, and D streams, and ten stocked streams with no wild trout reproduction.
• Completed the final inspection and authorized payment for the West Dobbins Landing project (Phase 2) in Erie County improving public access to Lake Erie.
• Completed the final inspection and authorized payment for the Lawrence Park Township Boating Facility Grant improving public access to Lake Erie.
• Held settlement on a Public Fishing Access and Conservation Easement on a property located on Elk Creek in Erie County. The property provides 2,600 linear feet of access to the Creek.
• In cooperation with PA Sea Grant, held a public information meeting on public fishing access and conservation easements with private landowners in Erie County. Approximately 50 landowners attended the meeting with sixteen of those landowners indicating they were interested in a follow-up meeting with staff.
• Received approval of the Borough of Shickshinny Boating Facility Grant project from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The grant will improve public access to the North Branch of the Susquehanna River. The project is located in the Upper Susquehanna-Lackawanna Watershed, ranked 7th in the Access Strategy.

**Issue 5:** The Commission’s existing data are not well-integrated and therefore not optimally used to proactively manage the aquatic resources under our jurisdiction.

**Strategy 5:** Improve the Commission’s utilization and integration of existing data to proactively manage the aquatic resources under its jurisdiction.

**Goal 5:** Optimize agency operations through integrated information systems management.

A. By December 2010, ensure integrity of agency data through the use of GIS.

• Completed with resolution to be included in new Resource First Portal.

B. By January 2012, begin implementation of the *Modernization Plan for IT Infrastructure and Software Resources*.

• The following deliverables related to implementation have been completed as of Dec 31, 2011:
  o Iteration 1 – Water and Section (Create, Update, Delete and Re-section)
    • Requirements and Prototype review
    • Database Conversion
    • Design and Development
    • Unit Test
  o Iteration 2 – Water and Section Reports
    • Requirements and prototype
    • Prototype review with PFBC
  o Iteration 3 – Site Survey (Add, Edit, Delete)
    • Requirements
    • Database Conversion for Site, Aging and Narratives
C. By January 2012, begin integration of priority agency information systems, including the current GIS environment, as identified in the *Modernization Plan for IT Infrastructure and Software Resources*.

- Pleasant Gap has now been fully virtualized in preparation for Modernization.
- Necessary software/hardware have been purchased and are being configured by the Office of Administration in preparation for the implementation of the Commission’s new firewall in May 2012.
- Partnership has been formed with OA’s Office of Geospatial Technology and work has begun on PFBC’s utilization of the GIS infrastructure needed to support modernization, with services expected to be hosted on the OA infrastructure by July 31, 2012.

**Issue 6:** Limited financial and human resources require the Commission to more effectively manage our internal resources.

**Strategy 6:** Strengthen performance and operations by managing limited financial and human resources more effectively.

**Goal 6:** Optimize agency efficiency and ensure continuity of operations through infrastructure planning and employee development.

A. By August 2010, improve accessibility to on-going training opportunities for all staff and Commissioners.

- Keystone Academy of Learning (KAL) courses offered through the Office of Administration continue to be encouraged for our staff. Courses are high quality and include offerings for new supervisors, line staff and current and future Commonwealth leaders.
- Collecting training materials on various topics from outside resources in order to offer in-house training for PFBC staff in the coming year.

B. By December 2010, begin implementation of a Leadership Development Plan to increase the development and utilization of employee’s leadership traits and skills.

- Reinvigorated the Leadership Development Program.
- HR Staff completed all Workforce and Succession Planning Courses offered by the Office of Administration. Although in past reports HR recommended these courses for all PFBC staff (particularly supervisors and managers), this is no longer a viable option because OA’s Office of Workforce and Succession Planning has been disbanded in cost-saving efforts by the current Administration. Plans will be made to accomplish this goal without OA assistance.
• Another PFBC employee was selected to attend the OA’s Emerging Leaders Program and along with another PFBC employee being selected to attend the upcoming Leadership Development Institute offered by the OA.

C. By January 2011, begin implementation of Supervisor Development Training.

• Completed development of Workplace Violence, SEAP, Fitness for Duty and Classification Training courses which will be offered internally in the coming year.
• Absence Management training was offered by HR Staff and was completed internally for supervisory and management staff.
• Internal Labor Relations training occurred for the bulk of managers and supervisors. One class remains to be taught in January and then one make-up course will be offered for each of the core courses that HR has taught throughout the past year.

D. By September 2011, conduct a full review of State Fish Hatcheries to identify strategies for promoting cost savings with the least adverse effects on services to the angling public.

• Presented the report at a special hearing conducted by the Senate Game and Fisheries Committees on November 15.

E. By December 2011, begin implementation of a comprehensive multi-year Infrastructure Plan for the engineering, maintenance and development of the Commission’s hatcheries, marinas, dams, accesses and administrative buildings to ensure continuity of critical operations.

• The Infrastructure Work Group (IWG) developed infrastructure focus areas and a list of prioritized projects to further develop.
• The draft report of the IWG received input from the bureau directors, however due to the reorganization, the draft report was revisited with the new bureau directors and the new Deputy Director for Operations.
• Infrastructure Workgroup reconvened 11/17/11 with additional members (result of re-org).
• The due date for the Infrastructure Plan has been bumped out to June 30, 2012, to accommodate a comprehensive collection of infrastructure data for all PFBC facilities.

Issue 7: Due to the limitations of current communications systems, technologies and processes, the Commission must improve its internal and external communication methods and systems.

Strategy 7: Improve internal and external communications by strengthening the use of current communication technologies and processes.
Goal 7: Improve internal and external communications systems to develop an informed and engaged workforce and increase the public’s access to and use of Commission information.

A. By July 2010, establish a direct line of internal and external communication with the Commission’s Executive Director.

• Answered hundred of e-mails from the Fishing Hole.
• Facilitated executive director attendance at various public events and corresponding media interviews, including:
  o TU report on Susquehanna River health at Hyner View State Park (Clinton County);
  o Speedwell Forge Lake public meeting with Sen. Mike Brubaker and Rep. Tom Creighton (Lancaster County). Included on-site media interviews and follow-up guest appearance on local cable public affairs program;
  o Spring Creek Canyon opening ceremony (Centre County);
• Facilitated executive director media interviews on various issues, including:
  o Clarks Creek land acquisition (Dauphin County);
  o Speedwell Forge Lake – editorial in Lancaster News

B. By July 2011, implement and regularly evaluate the use of emerging technologies to improve target audiences’ access to key commission messages.

• Issued 17 press releases through online distribution system to approximately 1,800 subscribers on variety of subjects, including high-hazard, unsafe dams; pollution settlements; land acquisition for public access points; new license year; grant availability; saltwater angler registry.

C. By July 2011, begin implementation of a business plan that makes the best use of the Commission’s core publications and exhibits.

• Printing specifications were revised with a new printing contract awarded for Pennsylvania Angler & Boater magazine that resulted in a savings of $48,000 per year. Similar adjustments in specifications and contract assignment took place for the PLAY (Pennsylvania League of Angling Youth) newsletter which result in a savings of $12,000 per year.
• Planning and scheduling was begun for a new Pennsylvania Amphibians and Reptiles book co-authored by Andrew Shiels and Chris Urban. Print production is slated for completion by the end of 2012.
• Printing of the annual Fishing Summary book (1.1 million copies) was completed in November. Creation and solicitation of advertising with summary content on a new web domain (www.fishinpa.com) leveraged an additional $8,000 in ad revenue.
• Bureau of Law Enforcement’s Title 30 and Title 58 officer publications were redesigned with changes in printing specifications that resulted in a savings of more than $12,000.

D. By January 2012, annually evaluate, and modify as needed, employee communications strategies.

• Continued to implement Climate Assessment recommendations.

Major Activities and/or Accomplishments not Directly Connected to Strategic Plan Implementation

• In September 2011, the Commission sued Consol Energy for civil damages resulting from the 2009 pollution incident on Dunkard Creek that caused a massive fish kill spanning nearly 30 miles of stream in West Virginia and Pennsylvania. The lawsuit seeks compensatory damages for lost fish, mussels and amphibians, as well as lost fishing opportunities for Pennsylvania anglers and punitive damages to deter future pollution. The primary lawsuit was filed in West Virginia where the pollution originated. On October 11, 2011, Consol filed a notice of removal, transferring the case to the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of West Virginia. Consol contends that the case should be decided based on federal law and that federal law provides no monetary remedy for the Commission’s losses. The Commission is contesting the transfer and has filed a motion to remand the case back to West Virginia state court. Both sides have briefed their arguments. As of the date of report preparation, the federal judge assigned to the matter had not yet issued a decision on whether to retain or remand the case.

• In January of 2007, the Commission filed an action in the Court of Common Pleas of Susquehanna County against Nicholas Demaree after Demaree built a fence that blocked the public’s access to the Commission’s boat launch at Quaker Lake. Demaree claimed to hold title to the lake through a deed that was not recorded until after the Commission developed the site. In September of 2011, the court issued its decision granting the Commission ownership of the disputed area thereby preserving public access to Quaker Lake. Thereafter, Demaree filed a post trial motion appealing the court’s decision on the basis that he received no compensation for the property granted. Since Demaree appealed, the Commission also filed its own post trial motion seeking further clarification of the court’s order. Oral argument on the motions took place on December 28, 2011. As of the date of report preparation, the court had not yet rendered a decision on the motions.

• In an appeal to the Environmental Hearing Board (EHB) of the renewal by the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) of an NPDES permit to RRI Energy Mid-Atlantic Holdings (now GenOn Inc.), the Commission asserted that the permit’s thermal limits for the wastewater discharge to the West Branch of the Susquehanna River are not sufficiently protective of warm water fishes. In October 2011, the parties finalized a settlement agreement that will replace DEP’s thermal limits with the protective limits calculated by Commission staff and that will require GenOn, Inc. to contribute a total of $300,000 over the next three years to the Commission for a project or projects of the Commission’s choosing. The EHB approved the settlement, and GenOn submitted its new NPDES permit with the
agreed upon limits. Notice of the application was published in the Pennsylvania Bulletin on November 19, 2011, giving the public 30 days to comment on the application. No comments were received.

- Leaser Lake Dam underwent a major re-construction in 2011, with DGS holding a Substantial Completion Inspection on December 19, 2011. Punch list work yet to be completed includes final work on the embankment drains and the surrounding vegetation. With good weather the project will be completed by early spring 2012.

- Opossum Lake Dam underwent a major re-construction in 2011, with DGS holding a Final Inspection on December 20, 2011. Punch list work yet to be completed includes a few details on the spillway and the surrounding vegetation. With good weather the project will be completed by early spring 2012.

- Dutch Fork Lake Dam: Construction continues on the DGS administered dam re-construction project. The scheduled completion date for this project is July 13, 2012.

- Hereford Manor Lakes (Upper and Lower Dams): Construction began on the DGS administered project on October 12, 2011 for the phase one project to breach the existing dams. The scheduled completion date is November 10, 2012.

- Canonsburg Lake Dam: Construction began on the DGS administered dam rehabilitation project on November 3, 2011. The scheduled completion date is July 26, 2012.

- Speedwell Forge Lake Dam: The Lake was drained beginning on October 19, 2011 due to flood damage to the spillway caused by Tropical Storm Lee. The lake is expected to remain drained until funding can be secured to rehabilitate the dam.

- Tamarack A&B Dams: These lakes were drawn down 4ft. beginning November 22, 2011 to address seepage around the outlet conduit. This will be monitored over the winter and a plan for repairs will be developed as necessary.

- Walnut Creek Marina: Design began in November 2011 for the Walnut Creek Rehabilitation Project. The design Professional is being administered by DGS.

- PALS
  - As of December 27, 2011 the total number of 2011 fishing licenses & permits sold and vouchers redeemed were 814,174 which is 3.92% less than the same time period last year. The total number of 2011 permits sold was 561,066 which is 4.43 percent lower than the same period last year.

- Boating
  - The Commission’s 2011 new boat registration transactions decreased 5.06% to 27,479, new titling transaction decreased 5.90 percent to 14,933, boat renewals remain steady with a .65 percent increase at 136,190.
  - There were 8,832 (1) Year Launch Permits and 23,191 (2) Year Launch Permits sold which is a 9.2% increase from 2010.

- Pennsylvania Saltwater Angler Registry Program (PA-SARP)
  - PFBC staff developed and implemented an on-line registry application called PA Saltwater Angler Registry Program (PA-SARP). Anglers can register for free through PA-SARP with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) beginning Jan. 1. NOAA requires annual registration from anglers who target or catch shad, striped bass and river herring from the Delaware River below Trenton Falls or in the Delaware River Estuary.
To access and register through the PA Saltwater Angler Registry Program click on the web button in the left column of the PFBC website called “PA-SARP” that link directs anglers to the free registration page.

- Met with PA DEP to coordinate revision of Aquatic herbicide permit program to include NPDES permit issuance as required by federal court. Revised program to be implemented in 2012.
- Represented PFBC at meeting of the Moraine Musky Association to discuss potential for aquatic herbicide use and effect on the Lake Arthur Musky population. PFBC presented information indicating no impact, which was not well received.
- Conducted an aquatic benthic macroinvertebrate biological survey of Oswayo Creek upstream and downstream of the Oswayo State Fish Hatchery effluent discharge in response to a discharge from the Re-circulation Pond at the hatchery facility.
- Completed a white paper titled “Guidance for Pipeline Crossings of Pennsylvania’s Aquatic Ecosystems.”
- Completed biomonitoring reports for Pleasant Gap, Benner Springs, Bellefonte, Tylersville, and Huntsdale SFH’s.
- Completed the Species Impact Review process analysis with OA.
- Completed fish salvage on Speedwell Forge Lake in response to emergency drawdown.

Oil & Gas Development Activities October - December 2011
Site Investigation and Enforcement Activities
- Chesapeake Towanda Creek, Bradford Co., flowback water release settlement. Represented the lost fishing use claim due to lost trout stocking in settlement proceedings
- Water quality grab samples and meeting with DEP to discuss enforcement of water quality violations associated with ongoing EXCO groundwater pollution of Little Sandy Run, Centre Co.
- Conducted site visits, permitting discussion and water quality sampling with PA DEP at Range Resources well pad on Gulf US 63H pad on an UNT to Black Moshannon Ck., Centre Co.
- Provided expert testimony at preliminary hearing for PGE sediment pollution, McKean Co.
- Provided PFBC comments on SRBC regulations for approval of natural gas development projects.
- Coordination meeting with DEP Oil & Gas staff, SW Region.
- Internal PFBC meeting to discuss merits and problems for stream boring versus trenching. Reviewed resulting PFBC recommendations white paper.
- Reviewed 19 natural gas related dockets for SRBC. Supported denial of Anadarko Council Run (Centre Co.) Well docket and modification of Keystone Clearwater Babb Creek (Tioga Co.) docket to maintain existing water quality.
- Presented 4 technical sessions at the 2011 PA State Association for Physical Education, Recreation and Dance (PSAHPERD). PSAHPERD is the professional organization representing health and physical education teachers and related professionals. Sessions included a 6-hour Fishing Skills Instructor Training, 6-hour Paddle Pa (paddlesports)
training, a 1-hour promotion of PFBC training and services, and 2 hour session on fly casting & PE. PFBC has already been asked to present at the 2012 conference.

- Shipped more than 80,000 brook trout eggs to the approximately 187 classrooms participating in Trout in the Classroom. Provided support and technical assistance to teachers who experienced problems with their eggs and support systems.
- Preparations and plans for sports shows in the first quarter of 2012 were made during this period. This includes finalizing exhibit space, staff schedules, publications and equipment requests. The PFBC will have exhibits at 17 major shows during the first quarter of 2012.

**Education Program Results, 10/01/2011-12/31/2011**

### Boating Safety Education

| Boating Safety Education Certificates (BSEC) Issued | 410 |
| BSEC—Distance learning | 270 |
| BSEC—Classroom courses | 140 |
| Boating and Water Safety Awareness Courses (BWSA, youth) | 4 |
| BWSA students | 81 |
| BWSA BSEC issued | 3 |
| Basic Boating Classroom Courses (BB) | 8 |
| BB students | 99 |
| BB BSEC issued | 94 |
| New boating course instructors | 0 |

### Fishing/Aquatic Resource Education

| Family Fishing Programs (FFP) | 3 |
| FFP attendance | 244 |
| New Fishing Skills Instructors trained | 0 |
| Fishing Tackle Loaner Sites | 61 |
| Teacher training workshops (TT) | 1 |
| TT attendance | 15 |
| Program requests* | 20 |
| Programs presented (confirmed) | 19 |

*does not include requests for 2012 programs.

- Provided instructor training in the PFBC’s Water Rescue & Emergency Response curriculum to City of Pittsburgh’s professional first responders which will result in 1,600 trained emergency response personnel.
- Provided instructor training to New Jersey State Police/Task Force 1 in all of the PFBC’s Water Rescue curricula. New Jersey has adopted the PFBC’s Water Rescue Program to implement in their State.
- Met with State of New Jersey and U.S. Coast Guard to improve understanding and consistency of boating safety education requirements and enforcement on the Delaware River.
- The Volunteer Rescue Service Recognition (VRSR) program, of which PFBC is a key partner, successfully typed six rescue teams in the State with many other teams in the application process. The VRSR program is a partnership between the Office of the State Fire Commissioner, the Pennsylvania Department of Health, the Pennsylvania Emergency
Management Agency, the Rescue Task Force of the Pennsylvania Emergency Health Services Council (PEHSC) and the PFBC. The VRSR program utilizes PFBC Water Rescue training and standards, and types rescue teams according to their ability. This enables the state to deploy standardized and qualified rescue teams to state and national emergencies.

- Attended US Power Squadrons conference to enhance partnership by sharing boating safety information updates and promoting boating safety education courses.
- Provided comment to the Federal Register on the U.S. Coast Guard’s notification of recommendations from the National Boating Safety Advisory Council (NBSAC) regarding potential ways to improve the recreational boating accident reporting process.
- Initiated planning for a major promotional effort titled “Take Me Fishing in Pennsylvania” month. The promotion will begin in February 2012 and culminate with a month-long observance of family fishing programming in May. During each Saturday in May (May 5, 12, 19), the Commission will host Family Fishing Festivals leading up to Memorial Day’s Fish-for-Free Day.
- Established a license agreement permitting the production of a limited-edition, collectible embroidered patch series through a contracted vendor. This agreement helps set the standard for future product agreements where the Commission minimizes its former retail risk of being a manufacturer and, instead, becomes an enterprise which receives a royalty payment (based on sales) from those licensed to manufacture a product under the Commission’s name.