



## PROTECT CONSERVE ENHANCE

### In a Manner that Best Serves



### We are moving forward!

Thank you to everyone who played a part in helping to pass the license and boat registration fee increase. This was a major accomplishment for the anglers and boaters of Pennsylvania and the Fish & Boat Commission. Please also thank your legislators for supporting this bill and, through that, supporting fishing and boating in the Commonwealth. At the same time, however, I realize that this means there will be less money in your pocket. What I hope is that each one of you views this as an investment in the future that will pay off for you and generations to come.

You also need to know that I take very seriously the responsibility you have placed with us to spend your money wisely. Whether or not you personally agreed with the fee increase and supported it with letters or emails, I look at each dollar we spend as if it were an individual angler and boater's money. The \$21 that many of you will spend, including myself, to purchase a resident fishing license, or the \$14 to buy the combination Lake Erie and trout/salmon stamp, directly equates to an item we buy or a salary we pay. The purchase of a computer is the equivalent of 50 individuals buying a license. The fuel in a patrol boat may be the equivalent of three or four licenses. To the best of our ability my staff and I will do our best to spend your money in a manner that best serves resource conservation and enhancement and improves your fishing and boating opportunities. Let me tell you about a few activities that will help us do this successfully.

Boating access is a fundamental part of our mission. Through Commonwealth ownership, the Commission has management responsibility for over 250 boat access sites, and some 900 total access areas in the Commonwealth are available to the public. Some need up-

grades or complete renovation, and we all know of areas where we need new boat access facilities. Early in 2005, with approval of the Commission, we will announce a new boat access initiative that will make a \$2 million investment in the Commonwealth's boat access infrastructure. A combination of grants will help local governments improve or build new boat access sites and support our own work to complete repairs and upgrades at Commonwealth-owned access areas. We expect to work with county and local park districts, townships, cities and many others to make boating in Pennsylvania more available and pleasurable to each of you who launches a boat or puts in a kayak or canoe for a day of fun.

On another front, we all recognize that habitat is the foundation of virtually everything we do as the Fish & Boat Commission. The quality of our streams, the health of our lakes, and the diversity and extent of their habitat set the stage for the fisheries they will provide and their attractiveness for boating. We need to do everything possible to protect good habitat and improve it where it is lacking.

Pennsylvania isn't alone in this recognition. Declines or losses of aquatic habitat nationwide are astonishing and result in loss of species. Of 822 native freshwater fish species in the U.S., 39 percent are at risk of extinction. Nationally, 227 aquatic species (fish, amphibians, mussels and crustaceans) are on the federal threatened or endangered species list. In Pennsylvania, 29 species of fish, reptiles, amphibians and mussels are on the state threatened and endangered species list. The loss of habitat is the number one cause of the declines of these species. For the angler, good habitat is what it is all about. Good habitat is directly related to good fish populations.

One response will be to increase our capacity to address habitat. We have already started this in the area of dam removal, and we will continue in other areas. Another way is to be involved in national efforts to bring in new funds or better use existing federal resources. I have been honored by being asked to help lead such an effort, called the National Fish Habitat Initiative (NFHI). For more information on NFHI, see [www.fishhabitat.org](http://www.fishhabitat.org).

A simple introduction to NFHI is to start with the recognition that habitat destruction is a major cause of the crisis of our aquatic species, and that improved habitat is a substantial solution. Improving habitat is a complex process of problem identification, funding and moving dirt and rock. Partners in this national effort will include such diverse groups as watershed restoration organizations, state and federal agencies, non-profit organizations, and Native American tribes that have valued the resource long before our ancestors arrived in the New World. I will be leading a small team representing this diverse assemblage in an attempt to develop an approach that will make fish habitat restoration a national priority.

The benefits for Pennsylvania will be real as we enhance our current efforts. The NFHI will better enable us to develop innovative partnerships, acquire new federal funds, and identify many other ways of directing resources to that most critical component of our agency—the aquatic resources of Pennsylvania.

I'm excited about the future for our agency, for fishing and boating opportunities, and for the conservation and enhancement of the Commonwealth's fisheries and their habitats. I want to thank you sincerely for your support in the past and for your continued support.



**Douglas J. Austen, Ph.D.**  
Executive Director

# 2005 FISHING LICENSES

Licenses and stamps are valid from January 1, 2005 to December 31, 2005 inclusive.

Cost includes Issuing Agent Fee of \$1.00.

Note: You qualify for a Resident or a Senior Resident fishing license if you are a bona fide resident of Pennsylvania. You must show positive proof of permanent residency and age.



The mission of the Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission is to provide fishing and boating opportunities through the protection and management of aquatic resources.

| Type of License/Stamp Permit    | Years of Age | Cost           |
|---------------------------------|--------------|----------------|
| <b>Resident</b>                 | <b>16-64</b> | <b>\$22.00</b> |
| <b>Nonresident</b>              | <b>16-up</b> | <b>\$52.00</b> |
| <b>Resident Senior (annual)</b> | <b>65-up</b> | <b>\$11.00</b> |
| <b>Resident Senior Lifetime</b> | <b>65-up</b> | <b>\$51.00</b> |
| <b>7-day tourist</b>            | <b>16-up</b> | <b>\$34.00</b> |
| <b>3-day tourist</b>            | <b>16-up</b> | <b>\$26.00</b> |
| <b>1-day resident</b>           | <b>16-up</b> | <b>\$11.00</b> |
| <b>Trout Stamp</b>              | <b>16-up</b> | <b>\$9.00</b>  |
| <b>Lake Erie Stamp</b>          | <b>16-up</b> | <b>\$9.00</b>  |
| <b>Combo Lake Erie Stamp</b>    | <b>16-up</b> | <b>\$15.00</b> |

New fishing license fees go into effect January 1, 2005. There are three new fishing licenses and permits: A Lake Erie stamp, a combo Lake Erie stamp (which includes a trout/salmon stamp and a Lake Erie stamp), and a 1-day resident license (with seasonal restrictions). Prices listed include agent fees, which were also raised to \$1 for each license and stamp.

## New Fishing License Fees

Governor Edward G. Rendell last November signed House Bill (HB) 2155 into law. The new law provides much-needed operating revenue for the Commission through modest increases in fishing license and boat registration fees.

The fee structure established in HB 2155 evolved from the input of the state's major sporting and boating organizations, including the Pennsylvania Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs, Pennsylvania Boating Association of Southeast PA, Pennsylvania Trout, Pennsylvania B.A.S.S., Pennsylvania Boating Association of Southwest PA, Coalition of Concerned Anglers, and Unified Sportsmen of Pennsylvania.



photos-Art Michaels

During mid-December, Fish & Boat Commission staff shipped the new 2005 fishing licenses to some 1,500 license-issuing agents. The licenses go on sale January 1, 2005.