



PROTECT CONSERVE ENHANCE

Commission Adopts Trout Management Plan at Quarterly Meeting



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At our quarterly meeting held October 6 in Harrisburg, the board of commissioners adopted a five-year strategic plan for trout management. The plan is designed to set the immediate direction of trout management within the agency, identify the priority needs and provide a means for measuring progress in regard to trout management.

In the time period since the publication of the “Third Edition of the Management of Trout Fisheries in Pennsylvania Waters” (November 1997), a number of evaluations have been conducted to enable staff to refine trout management in the waters of the Commonwealth. These evaluations have included the following: a statewide angler use and harvest assessment of trout stocked lakes in 2000 and 2001; a Trout Summit involving Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission (PFBC) staff and invited members of the angling public in 2002; a statewide angler use and harvest survey and economic assessment of wild trout streams in 2004; a statewide angler use and harvest survey and economic assessment of stocked trout streams in 2005; assessments of opening weekend angler use and cost-benefit of stocking on trout stocked streams in 2006, 2007, 2008 and 2009; statewide assessments of stocked trout residency in streams prior to the opening day of trout season in 2006, 2007, 2008 and 2009; a statewide Trout Angler Telephone Survey to assess angler attitudes and opinions in 2008; annual stream and lake examination inventories; evaluations of existing trout management program options; and a comprehensive economic analysis of the costs to produce hatchery trout for put-grow-take fisheries, cooperative nurseries and put-and-take catchable adult trout fisheries.

The current plan is a major revision of the 1997 edition and was developed based on input provided by a work group that consisted of commission staff, anglers affiliated with a variety of sportsmen’s organizations and independent trout anglers which are not affiliated with an organized group. It incorporates the information collected from the evaluations mentioned above to outline the current status of the existing management program. It then details areas for improvement in the current program and identifies new opportunities as determined by staff and the public. Strategies are then proposed to address these areas of needed improvement.

Some of the key issues addressed in the plan include: the sampling of unassessed wild trout streams; protection of Class A wild trout waters; trout stocking in Class B streams; managing waters through fingerling stocking; stocked trout movement; in-stream flow and habitat protection and improvement; public access to trout waters; and the Lake Erie steelhead and brown trout stocking program.

Significant progress in addressing these issues over the life of this plan will ensure that adequate protection is being afforded to the resource and that the fisheries provided through the management of wild trout and the stocking of hatchery trout will provide excellent angling opportunities in Pennsylvania.

The management of Pennsylvania’s trout fisheries continues to evolve as the PFBC moves forward to meet the challenges of the new millennium. As such, the plan is dynamic, and as the need for revision arises, the plan will be modified accordingly. This document should be considered as a five-year plan. Program evaluation will include annual progress reports. An overall plan review and update will be conducted in 2014. A full copy of the plan is available on our website at www.fishandboat.com.