

# Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission Report

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## Reminders

English author Samuel Johnson (1709 – 1784) once said “People need to be reminded more often than they need to be instructed.” I believe that most of us can identify with that quotation and it emphasizes the need to provide reminders to others especially when we need their help to get things done.

Following that logic, we conducted a series of informational sessions around the Commonwealth for legislators in their home Districts. In early 2011, Tim Schaeffer, Gary Moore and I traveled around the state joining our District Commissioners in meetings with members of the General Assembly and their staff.

We met in West Chester, Wilkes Barre, Williamsport, Brockway, Erie, Grove City, Murrysville, Belle Vernon, Coraopolis, and Wormleysburg. There were times when I wished that our state was more the size of Rhode Island due to the winter travel, but I wouldn't trade the diversity of landscapes or fisheries for any other. We are truly blessed to have the quality and quantity of fishing and boating opportunities that our 86,000 miles of streams and over 3,956 lakes and reservoirs over 2 acres in size (that's more than 161,445 acres) have to offer.

We discussed local and regional topics that ranged from American shad and striped bass fishing in the lower Delaware River to small-mouth bass tournament fishing on the North Branch of the Susquehan-

na River to fish disease problems on the middle Susquehanna which caused us to institute the catch and release regulation to restrict harvest until the fishery improves.

We talked about barefoot water skiing tournaments on northeastern lakes, the improvements that we have seen in the Lake Erie fishery and the ability of our Three Rivers to support national bass tournaments.

Marcellus Shale was discussed everywhere we went and we continued to remind legislators that their predecessors empowered the Fish Commission in 1909 with water pollution enforcement authority, which still remains a high priority for all 100 of our current Waterways Conservation Officers and their 135 Deputies.

We summarized existing legislative initiatives that were pending in the House and Senate and asked for their support for the bills that will have a positive impact on our fisheries and fishing boating recreation.

I believe the meetings were so successful that we are repeating them again this year. As we move forward with our programs,

it is imperative that we remind the legislature and others about our priorities for the future. Everyone has so much to do these days that we have to be reminded about simple things so we don't forget to take action when the time comes.

By-the-way, did you buy your fishing license yet?

Your Director,  
John {(>

*“In its knowledge's light, we must think and act not only for the moment but for our time. I am reminded of the great French Marshal Lyautey, who once asked his gardener to plant a tree. The gardener objected that the tree was slow-growing and would not reach maturity for a hundred years. The Marshal replied, In that case, there is no time to lose, plant it this afternoon.”*

John Fitzgerald Kennedy



*No, we don't have Barracudas in PA. John caught it on a charter trip in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida in Feb. Photo taken by FJ Shaw.*