

Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission Report

John A. Arway, Executive Director

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Closing Ceremonies of the Canon Envirothon

I recently had the honor to speak at the closing ceremony of the Canon Envirothon, which was hosted by Pennsylvania at the Susquehanna University in Sellingsgrove. Following is my presentation to them.

It is quite an honor for Pennsylvania to host this year's Canon Envirothon's competition, since it was born here in 1979 as the Enviro-Olympics. 45 states, 9 Canadian provinces and 1 territory are represented and you should all be extremely proud of your accomplishments.

I want to personally thank you students; the team advisors; Canon Envirothon organizers, the committees and volunteers; PA Envirothon Board; and the staff from our other state agencies for your support of the Envirothon program and the Canon Envirothon event.

Students dedicate many hours of preparation and study. You've worked very hard to reach this level of competition:

First, by representing your school and winning the county/regional level events. Competing and winning your state event. Then by representing your state and traveling to Pennsylvania to compete at an international level of competition.

Team advisors also deserve our appreciation for your hard work and time investment in preparing and guiding your student team members, most of you doing so as volunteers.

Congratulations to all participants for making it to the champi-

onship and accept my best wishes to the top five teams at your final oral presentation and the award ceremony.

PFBC Legacy

I am Director of the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission and my agency's mission is simple—Resource First—To protect, conserve and enhance our aquatic resources and provide fishing and boating opportunities.

My agency has a long legacy of conservation stewardship and environmental protection.

We are one of the oldest conservation organizations in the world, formed in 1866 to restore declining American shad populations to the Susquehanna River and also control sedimentation from reaching our native brook trout streams due to trees being logged from our forests.

Our Commission also has a long history of public education, dating back to the turn of the century.

One of the first organized programs was Junior Conservationist where young anglers received a certificate and pin if they could prove they killed a certain number of water snakes.

Today the Commission and society

better understand the role of all species in our biological communities and we try to maximize native species diversity since we know, as John Muir once said, everything is connected to everything else in nature—it is our job to figure it out.

How we go about public education has also changed. The Commission is involved with many outreach, education and recreation programs that reach youth and adults including:

- Angler education programs
- Boating & water safety
- Aquatic resources, fisheries, reptiles & amphibians, and other non-game species
- Instructor training for educators & adult volunteers
- And special programs & events, like the Envirothon

Encouragement & Challenge

The fact that you are here today



Director Arway and Governor Corbett surveying the smallmouth bass population on the Allegheny River near Pittsburgh on the Governor's kayak trip in July.

Photo by Chad Foster, PFBC staff

demonstrates your interest and passion in environmental, conservation and stewardship issues.

You are preceded in time by the Lost Generation who fought in WW1, the Greatest Generation who fought in WW2, the Silent Generation of the Great depression, my generation—the Baby Boomers who tried to re-define traditional values with events like Earth Day back in 1970. Then we have Generation X who faced an uncertain future, Generation Y, the Millennials, and your generation- Generation Z or the Internet Generation.

So how will you choose to spend your time in the future?

I encourage you to continue your interests in the environment and outdoors.

- Stay involved with environmental issues in your community

- Volunteer for parks, fish & wildlife agencies or other civic/environmental groups
 - Consider a future career in environmental protection, conservation, fish and wildlife management, outdoor recreation or education
 - Consider supporting your state's fish and wildlife agencies by purchasing a license and pursuing outdoor activities like hunting and fishing - buying a license not only gives you the privilege to hunt or fish but is also an investment in the conservation of the fish and wildlife species we all care about.
 - Join and be active in other sportsmen and conservation organization
- As young, new leaders in conservation, it is your responsibility

to be proactive in helping our society to meet the challenges that lie ahead, such as pollution of our precious waterways, climate change, threats to biodiversity, alternate sources of renewable energy, loss or degradation of habitat, invasive species, sustainable land management and so many more.

The Canon Envirothon is your team's challenge this week. You have prepared yourselves for this challenge, so you have built an excellent foundation for the future.

Good luck and look forward to the challenges that lie ahead of you. Although they may be frustrating at times, I can personally testify that if you do your duty, you will benefit those in the Next Generation who will be part of the Envirothon's Class of 2015 and beyond!

PFBC

Regulation Changes, Stream Listings Highlight July Commission Meeting Actions

HARRISBURG, Pa. – At its quarterly business meeting in July, the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC) approved catch and release regulations for American shad on the Lehigh and Schuylkill rivers, approved a property transaction in Huntingdon County and added various stream sections to the list of wild trout streams.

Commissioners approved regulation changes that will impose catch and release regulations on American shad in the Lehigh and Schuylkill rivers beginning in 2013. Management of fisheries in state waters along the Atlantic Coast is coordinated through the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC). The ASMFC recently called for a catch and release regulation for American shad fisheries which cannot be demonstrated to be sustainable.

“Given that both the Lehigh and Schuylkill rivers remain under restoration and that there is currently

inefficient fish passage, the Commission cannot determine that the fisheries are sustainable,” said Leroy Young, director of the PFBC Bureau of Fisheries.

In Huntingdon County, Commissioners voted to purchase for \$56,500 a public fishing access and conservation easement over approximately 4,465 linear feet on one side of the Little Juniata River in Porter Township. It will include the stream corridor and will extend 35 feet back from the top of the bank.

Funding to acquire the easement is coming from the PFBC and grants from the state Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Voluntary Public Access/Habitat Incentive Program.

Also, Commissioners added 34 stream sections to the state's list of wild trout streams and removed one from the list, found at: http://fishandboat.com/rulemakings/notices/2012_05_03wildtrout.pdf.

Three stream sections were also added to the list of Class A wild trout streams, found at: http://fishandboat.com/rulemakings/notices/2012_05_03classa.pdf.

In Clearfield County, Commissioners approved designating section 3 of the West Branch Susquehanna River as an approved trout water open to year-round fishing, increasing angling opportunities. The 2.7 mile-section flows through Clearfield and extends from the SR 1001 bridge near Hyde downstream to the first railroad bridge downstream of Moose Creek. The change will go into effect Jan. 1, 2013.

A complete copy of the meeting schedule and the full agenda for the meeting can be found on the Commission's web site at www.fishandboat.com/minutes.htm. For more information about fishing and boating in Pennsylvania, please visit our website at <http://www.fishandboat.com/>.

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