



Multi-Year Fishing Licenses Available December 1

America loves choices. It is difficult today to find a product that doesn't offer buyers multiple options – choices designed to fit various customer needs. Sometimes a choice is based on convenience, other times it's based on price. For example, I buy a multi-year vehicle registration for my boat trailer because it's convenient. I also buy a combination trout stamp/Lake Erie permit because I save money.

My choices for buying fishing lures are endless, for bait too high to keep track of. But one choice we haven't been able to give to anglers is the convenient option to buy a multi-year fishing license. Until now.

Beginning December 1, the Fish and Boat Commission will provide anglers for the first time the opportunity to purchase multi-year fishing licenses, locked in at today's prices.

It's a choice that's long overdue and one that I believe will help our sport retain anglers. In fact, I think we may be surprised and find that this new product leads to an increase in the number of anglers.

We're able to provide this product to you thanks to legislation introduced earlier this year by Senators Richard Kasunic and Richard Alloway and a bipartisan group of their Senate colleagues. Gov. Tom Corbett signed the bill into law this summer.

Until now, we've always been restricted by state law to charging you one fixed price for a fishing license and to selling you a fishing license valid for only one year.

The new law now gives the

Commission the flexibility to creatively market our fishing licenses to meet changing customer needs. The first products we have decided to offer are three-year and five-year options for fishing licenses and permits.

We know that everyone is busy these days, that it's hard to fit everything into our schedules. When surveyed, anglers often cite lack of time as an obstacle to getting out on the water. It is with these thoughts in mind that we decided on the multi-year license. It is intended to be more convenient for you by eliminating at least one task in your busy lives.

When you buy a three-year license on Dec. 1, it will be valid through 2015. The five-year option will be good through 2017. The first year's base price with transaction fees will remain the same at \$22.70, but you will save on the transaction fees for additional years, avoiding \$3.40 for the three-year license and \$6.80 for the five-year option. If you add in a multi-year trout/salmon, Lake Erie, or combo permit, you'll double your savings, avoiding \$6.80 or \$13.60 in transaction fees.

With a multi-year license in hand, you won't have to worry about buying a license at the last minute when your kids, brother or sister, mom or dad, say "Let's go fishing this weekend." You'll know that the license is there and you can move onto the next decision.

When I became your execu-

tive director, I publicly stated that my ultimate goal is to reduce the cost of a fishing license. A lofty goal? Absolutely. But I'm confident that we can reach it. We're not ready to lower the price just yet, but the multi-year license is the first step in the right direction.

Join me this December 1 and purchase a multi-year license. And let me know what you think about the product and about other products we might be able to offer to make your family's fishing experience more enjoyable. *PFBC*



John won 1st Place in the Walleye Division during the Pro Am Tournament in Pittsburgh. Here he is accepting his award with pro angler Jason Przkurat

Commission to Launch New Mentored Youth Pilot Program

At its quarterly business meeting in September, the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC) previewed a mentored youth pilot program it will launch next spring on the Saturday preceding the southeast regional opening day of trout season. It's a program agency leaders believe will generate excitement with kids and their parents, ultimately drawing more participants to the sport and increasing license sales.

"We know from research that children who fish typically learn from their parents or other family members," said PFBC Executive Director John Arway. "Research also shows that the positive experience from a mentoring program creates a big influence on kids and their adult mentors, making it more likely that they will continue in the sport."

Under the program, kids under the age of 16 would register for the program and join a mentor angler, who must have a current fishing license and trout permit. They would then be able to fish on the Saturday before the southeast opener on select waters within the 18-county area. The waters will be stocked to ensure a plentiful supply of fish to catch for the youth day and the regular season to follow. Each person will be allowed to keep a combined species total of two fish.

"Mentoring opportunities differ from educational programs in that they go beyond one instructional period," said Laurel Anders, PFBC Director of Boating and Outreach. "Mentors talk to the kids as they plan the trip, show them how to fish during the day, and follow up with them again when they day is over. Special youth opportunities engage both youth and their parents or other mentors."

The waters for the pilot program are still being reviewed. The list of waters and additional information – including details on how to register – are expected to be finalized by early January.

The regional trout season for southeastern counties was introduced in 2007 and opens at 8 a.m. on Saturday, March 30. The 18 counties include: Adams, Berks, Bucks, Chester, Cumberland, Dauphin, Delaware, Franklin, Juniata, Lancaster, Lebanon, Lehigh, Montgomery, Northampton, Perry, Philadelphia, Schuylkill, and York.

Also, Commissioners:

- Added 13 waters in Lycoming, Montour and Potter counties to the list of wild trout streams. The list can be found on the PFBC website.

- Finalized changes to regulations for boats carrying passengers for hire. Under the changes, vessels must undergo a dry dock examination by an accredited marine surveyor once every five years. Also, boats which have been involved in an accident or have been structurally modified will be required to undergo stability testing in order to determine passenger capacity. The changes go into effect Jan. 1, 2013.

- Approved a notice of proposed rulemaking to eliminate the Early Season Trout Stocked Waters Program, which was intended to offer additional trout fishing opportunities in March. Under the proposal, the 45 waters currently in the program will be designated as Approved Trout Waters Open to Year-Round Fishing.

The change will allow the PFBC to stock trout more efficiently and closer to opening day on

streams that have been found to have trout residency problems. The change will also simplify trout fishing regulations by eliminating one special regulation program.

- Approved new boating regulations aimed at the growing sport of wake surfing. The regulations define wake surfing; require a 200-foot slow, no-wake zone; restrict wake surfing to inboard propelled boats only; and allow participants to wear a specifically designed wetsuit in lieu of the U.S. Coast Guard approved life jackets.

- Established a Statewide Public Access Grant Program to help expand the number of public fishing and boating facilities in the state. The new program replaces the Boating Facility Grant Program. Counties, municipalities, watershed associations, land trusts and other partners will be eligible to participate in the program, which generally requires a 50 percent match and a signed agreement that projects will remain open to public use.

- Tabled a recommendation to add the Eastern mud turtle, round hickorynut mussel, pistolgrip mussel and rayed bean mussel to the Endangered Species list; to add the Chesapeake logperch to the Threatened Species list; and to remove the American brook lamprey from the Candidate Species list.

- Approved a notice of proposed rulemaking listing the requirements for individuals to become qualified surveyors of endangered and threatened species. The proposed requirements can be found on the PFBC website.

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 www.fishandboat.com.

