

Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission Report

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www.fishandboat.com



This is the second time I have used that title for an article. The first was for a monthly Straight Talk column I wrote for our agency's Pennsylvania Angler and Boater magazine in 2010. At that time, I used it to catch readers' attention and begin to get them thinking about our need to address funding needs that were starting to plague the agency.

A little over four years since that article was published, the title has become a reality. Actually, our Board of Commissioners approved it at their quarterly meeting on September 30, and it will become a reality on December 1 when licenses go on sale for the 2015 license year.

Lowering the cost of a fishing license has been a personal goal of mine since I took this job, and the Commissioners' action will forever stand as one of the most memorable events for me in the agency's nearly 150-year existence.

Beginning December 1, prices will be reduced by \$1 for resident and non-resident annual licenses purchased throughout the year. Anglers who buy 3-year and 5-year licenses will see a reduction of \$3 and \$5, respectively, if they buy the license during the month of December.

The discounts also apply to gift vouchers for annual licenses purchased throughout the year and to gift vouchers for multi-year licenses purchased in December. (Voucher is a fancy word for gift certificate.)

I am confident that this novel promotion will highlight fishing's afford-

A Fishing License Decrease

ability to families and younger audiences and persuade lapsed anglers to return. The price cut will catch the attention of many people who haven't fished in a few years, or who have wanted to try fishing but mistakenly have thought that prices have increased like they have for other products and activities.

The fact is, the price of a fishing license hasn't increased in nearly a decade, since 2005. Fishing has always been an affordable and fun family activity that can be enjoyed for a lifetime.

If we can capture the attention of new and returning anglers, we know they'll be surprised at how inexpensive it is to fish and how easy it is to enjoy the sport.



We sell approximately 850,000 licenses annually, but survey research from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service estimates that there are 1.1 million anglers in the Commonwealth. This 250,000 gap and those who do not purchase a license every consecutive year represent a segment of potential customers who may better recognize the value of a license at a discounted rate.

With the discount, the price of a resident annual license will be just

\$21.70; non-resident annual \$51.70; 3-year resident \$61.70; 3-year non-resident \$151.70; 5-year resident \$101.70; and 5-year non-resident \$251.70. Trout/salmon permits, Lake Erie permits, and combo permits are not included in the price reduction.

As of August 31, 2014, licensed anglers are up 3.36% over the average of the most recent 5-year period. Coupled with continued aggressive and creative marketing of positive fishing experiences, reducing the cost of a fishing license can provide added incentive for even more individuals to purchase fishing licenses.

Additionally, promotion of fishing license vouchers during the holiday gift-buying season in recent years has yielded increased sales. Offering additional pricing incentives in advance of and during this time of year has the potential to spur increased purchasing of gift vouchers.

Board of Commissioners President Norm Gavlick shares my enthusiasm for this bold move. He is especially excited about the savings customers can enjoy on multi-year licenses and vouchers during the month of December.

As December approaches, President Gavlick and I encourage you to think about current, former, and would-

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be anglers on your holiday shopping lists. Don't let the lack of a license be an impediment the next time you invite someone to join you on the water. If you buy them a voucher for a 3- or 5-year license, they may redeem it at their convenience any time during the coming fishing season.

What better way to ensure a part-

ner and maybe also reignite the passion for fishing for someone who may have thought they didn't have the time or extra few dollars to buy a license?

At the risk of spoiling the surprise for some on my own gift list, I can tell you that there will be a few of the specially priced multi-year licenses under the Christmas tree at my house on De-

cember 25. Hope you consider doing the same.

At the same time that the Commissioners approved the price reduction, they directed our staff to work with the General Assembly to pursue an increase to the trout/salmon permit fee. That issue merits an article all its own, and I will focus on that in my next On Target submission.

Congratulations and Welcome to Newly Appointed Fish & Boat Commissioner Eric Hussar, Sworn in as District 5 Representative

HARRISBURG, Pa. (Oct. 14) — Union County sportsman Eric Hussar has been sworn in as the District 5 Commissioner for the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC), representing Bradford, Columbia, Lycoming, Montour, Northumberland, Snyder, Sullivan, Tioga and Union counties.

"We congratulate Eric on his confirmation and welcome him to the board," said PFBC President Norm Gavlick.

"The Commission faces a number of challenges in the years ahead related to resource management and conservation, and we look forward to the unique knowledge and experience he will bring to the discussions."

"We look forward to having someone with Mr. Hussar's business experience and interest in fishing join the board and help set the course for the future of our agency," added PFBC Executive Director John Arway.

An avid fly fisherman who fishes more than 80 days a year, Commissioner Hussar is owner and president of Mid-Penn Energy, a Lewisburg-based heating and cooling company. He also serves as the Vice Chairman of the Central PA Workforce Development Corporation and is a former board member of the

Central PA Chamber of Commerce and Junior Achievement of Central PA.

Commissioner Hussar also volunteers with "Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing," a non-profit organization dedicated to the physical and emotional rehabilitation of disabled active military service personnel and disabled veterans through fly fishing and associated activities.

Commissioner Hussar was nominated by Gov. Tom Corbett on Sept. 9 and was confirmed by the Senate on Oct. 7. Commissioners serve four-year terms and are not compensated for their services. Commissioner Hussar's four-year term expires on Oct. 7, 2018.

He graduated from Widener University, Chester, Pa., in 1985 and he earned a MBA from Frostburg State University, Frostburg, MD, in 1988.

Commissioner Hussar and his wife, Carol, have four daughters. **PFBC**



Life Jackets Save Lives Follow Safety Tips in Cold Weather

When sunny days tempt the boater in you, don't forget about your life jacket, especially if you are planning to use a canoe, kayak or similar small boat. Beginning Nov. 1 and lasting through April 30, individuals are required to wear a life jacket while underway or at anchor



on boats less than 16 feet in length or on any canoe or kayak. The requirement applies to all PA waters.

To learn more about life jackets and cold water survival, visit <http://fishandboat.com/safety.htm> and www.wearitpennsylvania.com.