



Creating Destination Fisheries with “Keystone Select Stocked Trout Waters”

Open any fishing magazine and you’re bound to see an article with colorful pictures featuring a “destination” fishery, waters that offer ample opportunities for big catches and even bigger bragging rights when you’re back home. Many anglers may think these select fisheries exist only in western states, where officials have done a great job promoting their locations and enticing tourists to visit.

I’ve been to some of those waters and will attest to their offerings. But I’ve also fished all over our Commonwealth and know from firsthand experience that Pennsylvania has the resources to create its own destination fisheries.

At the Commission’s recent quarterly business meeting in Erie, we took the first step toward creating this unique angling experience by unveiling the locations that comprise the new Keystone Select Stocked Trout Waters.

Under the program, trout anglers who want an experience targeting bigger fish will have the opportunity to catch 14”-20” trout in eight waters statewide, beginning with the start of the 2016 season. Approximately 3,200 large trout will be distributed among the eight waters, one in each commissioner district. The trout will be stocked at a rate of up to 250 trout per mile, which is comparable to the numbers of fish of this size in Pennsylvania’s best wild trout waters.

The eight waters include:

- Chester County, Middle Branch White Clay Creek, Section 3 (1.67 miles)
- Dauphin County, Wiconisco Creek, Section 3 (0.74 miles)
- Lackawanna/Wyoming Counties,

South Branch Tunkhannock Creek, Section 4 (0.99 miles)

- Lawrence County, Neshannock Creek, Section 3 (2.67 miles)
- Lycoming County, Loyalsock Creek, Section 5 (1.49 miles)
- Potter County, First Fork Sinnemahoning Creek, Section 4 (1.67 miles)
- Somerset County, Laurel Hill Creek, Section 3 (2.33 miles)
- Westmoreland County, Loyalhanna Creek, Section 3 (1.67 miles)

The program will be run under Delayed Harvest Artificial Lures Only (DHALO) regulations, where waters are open to fishing year-round. But anglers may harvest trout only between June 15 and Labor Day and the trout have to be a minimum of nine inches. From the day after Labor Day until June 15, these waters are managed on a catch-and-release-only basis and the creel limit is zero. Tackle is limited to artificial lures and flies.

Similar programs have proven

very popular on other waters, such as Pine Creek in Lycoming County. This is where the idea came from, and we know that these programs have successfully demonstrated that destination fisheries can be created, drawing anglers from across the state and even the country and providing an economic boost to local communities. We’re confident our program will have the same effect and we’ll draw anglers to each of these eight destinations.”

The waters in Dauphin and Chester counties will be stocked with the larger trout in advance of the regional opening day of trout season on April 2. The other waters will be stocked prior to the April 16 statewide opener for trout. Each of the eight waters will also receive an in-season stocking in late April. Both stockings will include a number of these larger fish. Stay tuned and check the PFBC website or FishBoatPA app for the actual stocking dates.

We had a little fun with naming the new program. We ran an online promotion asking anglers to submit suggestions for the name. More than 1,550 submissions were received with 144 different names recommended by the public. A committee then reviewed the selections and the Keystone Select Stocked Trout Waters name was chosen.

This name ties the program uniquely to Pennsylvania and includes the new Stocked Trout Waters name, which replaces the previously named Approved Trout Waters beginning in 2016. We’re happy with the response, and if the response to helping us pick a name is any indication, we think we have a winner with this new program.



Governor's Council Looks To Fill Game, Fish & Boat Commission Board Openings

The Governor's Advisory Council for Hunting, Fishing and Conservation is seeking qualified candidates to fill a vacancy on the board of the Fish and Boat Commission in District 6, which includes Adams, Cumberland, Dauphin, Franklin, Lancaster, Lebanon, Perry and York counties. The district was represented by Robert A. Bachman of Denver, Lancaster County, whose term has expired.

It also seeking a qualified candidate to represent District 7 on the Game Commission's board of directors. District 7 includes the counties of Carbon, Luzerne, Lackawanna, Monroe, Pike, Susquehanna, Wayne and Wyoming. The district was represented by Commissioner Jay Delaney, whose term has expired.

"The Governor is reaching out to the anglers and boaters of southcentral Pennsylvania to find a diverse group of

qualified applicants, one of which will fill the seat vacated by Commissioner Bachman," said Robb Miller, director of the advisory council. "The Governor is also reaching out to the hunting and trapping community in District 7 to find a diverse group of applicants, one of which will fill the seat vacated by Commissioner Delaney. We're encouraging anyone interested in volunteering to serve on either board to send us a letter of intent."

According to the Fish and Boat Code, in order to qualify as a commissioner, the applicant must be a resident of the district and be well informed on the subjects of conservation, restoration, fishing, and boating. The term of service is four years and members may serve three consecutive terms upon being nominated by the Governor and confirmed by a majority of members of the Senate.

According to the Game Code, applicants must be well informed on the subject of wildlife conservation and restoration and be residents of the district. Commissioners serve a four year term and may be reappointed for a maximum of two additional terms.

While commissioners are not compensated, they do receive a travel reimbursement.

Applications will be accepted until October 30.

Individuals interested in applying should send a resume and detailed cover letter explaining their desire to serve to Robb Miller, Governor's Advisory Council for Hunting, Fishing and Conservation, 400 Market St., 7th Floor, Harrisburg, PA 17101-2301. Individuals can also email the information to Robb Miller at: robmille@pa.gov

Recent Commission Action

- Approved an amendment to boating regulations which eliminates the restriction for personal watercraft (PWC) to tow no more than one skier. The total number of persons being towed, in addition to the operator, observer and any other passengers, may not exceed the maximum passenger capacity of the boat. The amendment goes into effect on Jan. 1, 2016.
- Approved the publication of a notice of proposed rulemaking which would eliminate the requirement that inflatable boats must have at least two separate buoyancy chambers in order to be used on PFBC lakes. With the advent of high-quality, durable inflatable boats with less than two separate buoyancy chambers, such as inflatable standup paddleboards, the PFBC believes the current regulation is overly restrictive.
- Approved the publication of a notice of proposed rulemaking to add the Hornyhead Chub to the state's Endangered Species list; to remove the Mountain Brook Lamprey from the Threatened Species list; and remove the Hornyhead Chub, Ohio Lamprey, Bowfin and Timber Rattlesnake

from the Candidate Species list.

- Added 102 waters to the list of wild trout streams, revised the section limits of four waters, and removed one water. The list can be found on the PFBC website.
- Added 40 stream sections to the list of Class A wild trout streams. The list can be found on the PFBC website.
- Approved a pass-through grant of up to \$130,000 to the Eastern Pennsylvania Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation or other appropriate partner organization for the removal of the Solomon Creek Dam in Luzerne County. The PFBC received the funds from the state Department of Transportation as mitigation for a highway improvement project on State Route 3046, Section 301, known as the South Valley Parkway Project.
- Adopted the 2015 Pennsylvania Wildlife Action

Plan. As required by Congress, State Wildlife Action Plans must be revised no less than every 10 years. The plan and associated funding from State and Tribal Wildlife Grants have been crucial for protecting and recovering imperiled species and their habitats.

PFBC



Pat Domico, Joe Humphreys and John Arway on the West Branch Susquehanna River in Curwensville, Clearfield County celebrating the recovery of the West Branch at a trout stocking event. Photo taken September 24, 2015 by Paul Swanson