

# Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission



# 2015 Annual Report



*The mission of the Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission is to protect, conserve and enhance the Commonwealth's aquatic resources and provide fishing and boating opportunities.*

[www.fishandboat.com](http://www.fishandboat.com)



## Resource First

Founded in 1866, the Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission (PFBC) is charged with protecting, conserving and enhancing the Commonwealth’s aquatic resources, including waterways—streams, rivers, lakes, reservoirs and wetlands—fish, reptile and amphibian communities and habitats of game and non-game species. From stocking and measuring the health of waterways to patrolling lakes and restoring

habitats, the Commission’s employees strive to protect, conserve, and manage the resource, for the resource is the foundation for everything we do.

High-quality streams, clean water, and good habitat ensure that we can carry out the other part of the Commission’s mission, to provide recreational fishing and boating opportunities for both Pennsylvanians and out-of-state visitors.

The “Resource First” management philosophy ensures that staff will make scientifically informed decisions based on long-term conservation of aquatic resources. Resource First also sets the foundation for the agency’s strategic plan.

The PFBC is governed by a Board of Commissioners whose ten members are appointed by the Governor with the advice and consent of the majority of the Pennsylvania State Senate. Commissioners serve terms of four years. Eight Commissioners are selected based on districts, and two Commissioners, representing boating interests, have an at-large, statewide appointment. The Executive Director, who serves as chief executive officer and chief waterways conservation officer, leads agency operations. The PFBC staff includes about 380 full-time employees and 90 seasonal employees.

### Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission’s Board of Commissioners



*Rocco S. Ali,  
North Apollo*



*G. Warren Elliott,  
Chambersburg*



*Norman R. Gavlick,  
Kingston*



*Eric C. Hussar,  
Lewisburg*



*Steven M. Ketterer,  
Harrisburg*



*Leonard L. Lichvar,  
Boswell*



*Edward P.  
Mascharka III,  
President, Erie*



*William J. Sabatose,  
Brockport*



*Glade E. Squires,  
Vice President  
Downingtown*



*Vacant*



## Executive Director’s Message Happy Anniversary

On March 30, 2016, the PFBC will commemorate and celebrate the 150th anniversary of our founding in 1866 ([www.fishandboat.com/promo/150anniv/150yrAnniversary.pdf](http://www.fishandboat.com/promo/150anniv/150yrAnniversary.pdf)). This annual report highlights the agency’s accomplishments immediately preceding our anniversary year and illustrates the many ways that we are maintaining the tradition of excellence started by our predecessors.



Throughout 2015, we have been working with historian Dr. Ken Wolensky and the Ralph W. Abele Conservation Scholarship Fund on the first comprehensive history book about the agency. Building on the theme of history that will feature so prominently for us in 2016, it is fitting to begin this report about 2015 with a little background on how we got here.

A convention was held in Harrisburg in 1866 to investigate water pollution being caused by the wholesale logging of Pennsylvania’s forests and the impacts caused by sedimentation of our mountain lakes and streams. There were also serious concerns about the reduction of American Shad runs in the Susquehanna River. This discussion resulted in Governor Andrew Curtin signing the law that named James Worrall Pennsylvania’s first Commissioner of Fisheries. In 1925, the legislature and governor established the Board of Fish Commissioners, and in 1949 officially established the Pennsylvania Fish Commission as an agency and described its powers

and duties. The Commission appointed Charles A. French as its first executive director in 1949, and in 1991 the Pennsylvania Fish Commission became the PFBC.

Over the last 150 years, the Commission has evolved from a one-man operation funded solely by the general fund to an agency with a complement of 432 full-time staff funded by anglers and boaters through license and registration fees and the federal excise taxes on fishing and boating equipment. Our mission has broadened a bit from our original one, but we are still focused on protecting, conserving and enhancing our aquatic resources and providing fishing and boating opportunities.

Over 150 species of plants and animals have been lost from Pennsylvania, and 664 others are species of greatest conservation need and are detailed in our State Wildlife Action Plan—90 birds, 19 mammals, 65 fish, 22 reptiles, 18 amphibians and 450 invertebrates. The major threats have been identified as residential and commercial development (15%); energy production and mining (13%); pollution (13%); and invasive and other problematic species, genes and diseases (12%). See page 12 for more information about this important conservation planning tool.

We have 12,763,536 people on a fixed amount of land, 45,333 square miles.

As of 2015, 83,438 miles of streams and rivers, out of a total of 86,000 miles, have been assessed by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PA DEP) staff for aquatic life use support and approximately 19% (15,882 miles) do not fully support healthy aquatic communities. Furthermore, some of these waters are still not fishable or swimmable. We have the nation's 16th largest river, the Susquehanna River, which drains nearly half of the Commonwealth's land area and has been identified as a major contributor to the impairment of the Chesapeake Bay. The Susquehanna currently supports a Smallmouth Bass fishery in distress with bacteria infecting young bass producing mortality rates ranging from 10% to 70% (2005 – 2015). Adult bass have been found with cancerous tumors, other open sores and lesions, intersex conditions (male bass with egg precursors and hormones that should only be found in female bass), and black spots that aren't understood (blotchy bass syndrome or melanosis). There is something wrong with the Susquehanna River and Pennsylvania formally admitted it at the end of 2015 and committed to begin working on a plan to fix the problems (see page 9). We also know that 15,882 miles of our streams and rivers and 37,761 acres of our lakes are not attaining their aquatic life uses because of the current and legacy impacts from agriculture and coal mining creating siltation, metals, nutrients and organic enrichment of our waters.

Aldo Leopold (1887–1948) recognized the importance of a land ethic in his writings and teachings; however, our society is still trying to balance the importance of a strong economy with the value of a healthy environment.

*“The land ethic simply enlarges the boundaries of the community to include soils, waters, plants, and animals, or collectively: the land. In short, a land ethic changes the role of Homo sapiens from conqueror of the land-community to plain member and citizen of it. It implies respect for his fellow-members, and also respect for the community as such.”—Aldo Leopold (1887–1948)*

Our future is bright but not without challenge. We have made substantial progress over the last generation by cleaning up our waters so that we can now say that we have more waters to fish today than when we were children. However, yesterday's challenges were simple compared to the environmental and natural resource challenges that we face in the future. Today's challenges include cancerous tumors, bacterial infections, black spots and intersex Smallmouth Bass in the mighty Susquehanna; rapidly expanding deep natural gas development across the Commonwealth and the uncertainties about fracking; the Brook Trout, our state fish, being compromised by changing climate; invasive species out competing native species; our lakes, rivers and the Chesapeake Bay clogged with nuisance algae blooms that lower oxygen to dangerous levels for fish and other aquatic life; and, less people, including our legislators, fishing, boating and recreating outdoors; and we can't forget about our obligation to restore American Shad to the Susquehanna.

Unfortunately, I can't promise you the same thing that Executive Director Bielo promised anglers in his “Turn of a Century” article in 1966. He was able to promise doubling the acreage of fishable lake waters from 57,000 acres in 1966 to 111,000 acres in 1975 because of a Commonwealth commitment to fund and build new lakes. Today, we have a similar funding commitment, but it is to repair and maintain those same historic dams, which have since become unsafe and high-hazard (see page 24 for more information). This commitment will ensure that our children and grandchildren will continue to have a place to fish in Pennsylvania.

Our new challenges will no longer be at the local scale but will require much different solutions at the watershed, regional, national and even global scales. We will have to work across disciplines and use the appropriate science to diagnose the problems, apply the engineering skills to develop the solutions and have the political will to create the laws and provide the funding for the solutions. It won't be easy, but I am confident that our next generation will have the knowledge, skills, abilities and the guts to get it done right. Perhaps, we will finally come to recognize that a healthy economy and a healthy environment must co-exist and the adoption of a land ethic will no longer be optional as Leopold professed.

Over the course of the next year, we invite all Pennsylvanians to join in our commemoration of the last 150 years. We will not be alone in the celebration, as two of the signature national natural resource management events of the year come to Pennsylvania in 2016.

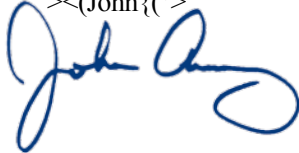
From March 13 through March 18, up to 1,000 attendees are expected to attend the 81st North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference at the Wyndham Grand Hotel in Pittsburgh. This is the premier annual event for fish and wildlife professionals, and we are already working with the conference organizers to share the natural resource success stories of Pennsylvania with attendees from across the United States and other countries.

This will be followed on September 11 through September 15 by the 106th Annual Meeting of the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AFWA) at the Marriott Philadelphia Downtown in Philadelphia. I have had the pleasure to sit on AFWA's Executive Committee, and it will be a real honor to welcome fish and wildlife directors from all 50 states, the 10 provinces and three territories from Canada, and our federal agency and non-profit organization partners to Pennsylvania.

The year 2016 will be a great time to learn about our agency's contribution to the health of Penn's Woods and Waters and celebrate the fact that our 86,000 miles of streams, nearly 4,000 lakes and reservoirs, over 404,000 acres of wetlands and 63 miles of Lake Erie shoreline are still home to more than 25,000 species of known plants and animals, and perhaps many thousands more yet to be identified. These facts demonstrate the enormity and complexity of the challenges that face the PFBC as we strive to fulfill our legislative and Constitutional duties to protect, conserve and enhance our Commonwealth's aquatic resources.

Your Director,

<<John {°>



**TABLE 1. Summary of Shad Passages (1997–2015)**

YEAR	Conowingo*	Holtwood**	Safe Harbor**	York Haven**
2015	8,341	5,286	3,896	43
2014	10,425	2,528	1,336	8
2013	12,733	2,503	1,927	202
2012	22,143	4,238	3,089	224
2011	20,571	21	8	0
2010	37,757	16,472	12,706	907
2009	29,272	10,896	7,994	402
2008	19,914	2,795	1,252	21
2007	25,464	10,338	7,215	192
2006	56,899	35,968	24,929	1,913
2005	68,853	34,189	24,425	1,772
2004	109,360	3,482	2,109	219
2003	125,135	25,254	16,646	2,536
2002	108,001	17,522	11,705	1,555
2001	193,574	109,976	89,816	16,200
2000	153,546	29,421	21,079	4,675
1999	69,712	34,702	34,150	--
1998	39,904	8,235	6,054	--
1997	90,971	28,063	20,828	--

\*Although the Conowingo East lift began operating in 1991, fish were sorted and transported upstream by truck until 1997.

\*\*Holtwood and Safe Harbor came online in 1997, and York Haven in 2000.

## Following the Strategic Plan

In 2015, we marked the first full year of operating under the strategic plan approved by the agency's Board of Commissioners in July 2014. As with the past five years, this annual report is organized under the headings of the strategic plan.

In 2015, the agency continued to implement goals of the 2014-17 strategic plan that follow the SMART format, meaning that they are Specific, Measurable, Action-oriented, Realistic and Time-bound. Those goals and the text of this report are organized within the following four major priority issue categories:

- **Funding:** Revenues are insufficient to support the Commission's current levels of programs and services and meet increasing fixed, variable, and mandatory personnel costs.
- **Conservation:** Current and increasing threats to our aquatic resources demand that the Commission provide high quality services to insure essential resource management and protection and improved fishing.
- **Recreation:** Other leisure and recreational activities are competing with fishing and boating for people's time.
- **Internal Resources:** The Commission must consistently make investments in itself to maintain its infrastructure, staff, and programs and their respective relevance.

For a complete copy of the strategic plan and for quarterly reports with more details than the summary provided in this report, please visit [www.fishandboat.com](http://www.fishandboat.com).

## Funding Spending Reallocation Plan

When he became Executive Director in 2010, John A. Arway challenged the agency to not spend more than it earned in any given year. The agency has adhered to this approach by implementing a Spending Reallocation Plan that provided for the continued delivery of core goods and services in the face of increasing costs. While the impacts were not readily apparent to anglers and boaters in 2015, the agency has been forced to lower agency complement through attrition from 432 permanent employees to about 380 and truly begun doing less with less as mounting personnel costs begin to become a reality.

This pattern is expected to continue in 2016, with mandatory personnel costs projected to be over \$9 million by fiscal year 2016-17. Absent an infusion of revenue from a revenue source such as the license and permit fee increase described below or other sources, the agency will need to develop an even fiscally leaner version of the Spending Reallocation Plan.

## Fishing License Fee Increase Initiated

Soon after 2015 drew to a close, Senator Jim Brewster formally introduced Senate Bill 1103 to increase the price of fishing licenses and permits for the first time since 2005. He was joined by Senators Blake, Alloway, Wiley, Haywood and Fontana on the bill.

The following text is drawn directly from Senator Brewster's co-sponsorship memo explaining the rationale for the increase.

*Consistent with the long-established user pays/user benefits model of funding fish and wildlife conservation, fees from fishing licenses and associated permits comprise the largest portion of annual Fish Fund revenue—nearly 70%—for the PFBC's work on behalf of anglers and aquatic resources. While I support efforts of the PFBC to diversify its funding base, the core revenue stream of license and permit sales are expected to continue to be fundamental to the agency's ability to fulfill its mission of protecting, conserving, and enhancing aquatic resources and providing fishing and boating opportunities.*

*The percentage increase for all but two of the categories is 25%. Based on historical trends, the PFBC estimates that this might result in a roughly 9% loss in license buyers. Even with the reduced sales, the new fee structure is estimated to generate an additional \$5.4 million a year in new revenue for the PFBC.*

*The reason that the senior resident lifetime license is proposed to increase from \$50 to \$100 is largely driven by the changing demographics of Pennsylvania's angling base and the fact that an ever-increasing segment of the license buying public is reaching eligibility age of 65 for this license category. Residents 65 years of age and older may currently purchase either a senior resident lifetime fishing license for \$50 or a senior resident annual fishing license for \$10. In 1979, senior resident lifetime licenses and senior resident annual licenses totaled 87,247, but the lifetime category only accounted for 15.11% of that total. In 2014, of the more than 35,000 combined senior resident lifetime and senior resident annual licenses, about 50% were for the lifetime license. As Pennsylvania's seniors continue to account for a larger percentage of the total population (and of anglers), the relative number of anglers buying the lifetime license is expected to continue to rise.*

*The senior resident annual license is proposed to be raised by only 25% and will still be an exceptional value for seniors. Without a doubling of the price of the lifetime license, long-term revenues are expected to decline as nearly 375,000 senior anglers over the next 20 years are expected to join the more than 480,000 Pennsylvanians who have purchased a resident senior lifetime license since 1979.*

*Approximately 70% of licensed anglers purchase the trout/salmon or combination permits. In 1991, over 737,000 trout/salmon permits yielded nearly \$3.7 million in annual revenue, representing 57% of the costs of raising trout (and Coho salmon at the time). In 2014, the PFBC sold about 593,000 trout/salmon and combination permits that generated over \$4.7 million, but increasing costs meant that the revenue amounted to only 46% of the cost to run the trout hatchery program. If the cost of the permits and the number of trout anglers remain unchanged, that percentage is expected to drop to 30% by 2021 as the costs of production continue to rise.*

*As less of the relative cost of the trout hatchery program has been supported by the trout/salmon permit, a greater portion has been provided by revenues from fishing licenses. This greater reliance on the use of general license dollars to support the hatchery program is further compounded by the fact that license sales have declined from 1.2 million in 1991 to about 860,000 today. A smaller pool of general license buyers is being asked to pay for a greater portion of the trout hatchery program.*

*I am proposing to raise the price of the trout/salmon and combination permits by \$6.00 for the 2017 license year, which the PFBC projects could generate up to \$2.6 million annually in new revenues. These additional trout/salmon permit revenues would be used to help cover approximately 56% of the projected \$13 million needed to operate the trout production facilities in 2017. Combined with the proposed general license increase and other sources of funding, this increase in trout permit fees will greatly help the PFBC in its efforts to continue providing the Commonwealth's anglers with 3.2 million adult trout, one million Steelhead smolts, and one million eggs and fingerlings to cooperative nurseries each year. Without the increase or alternative revenue, the PFBC will need to curtail production or further reduce other services to anglers and boaters.*



To keep up with escalating costs, I am also proposing that after the initial increase in 2017, all of the license and permit categories be increased by 3% per year for the subsequent five years. Three percent is roughly the rate of inflation and will help the PFBC keep up with costs (e.g., fish food, fuel) that are out of its control.

This approach of annual incremental increases continues the innovative trend set by Act 66 of 2012, which gave the PFBC the ability to sell multi-year license and permits and charge less than the price set by law for marketing purposes. This approach is expected to have less of an impact on license sales, and the PFBC expects that it would result in \$2.3 million in additional annual revenues by 2022 even with a potential 6% drop in sales.

Overall, this comprehensive, six-year proposal would result in nearly \$7.8 million in new annual revenues for the PFBC. This figure approaches the \$9.1 million the agency needs beginning in Fiscal Year 2016-17 to sustain its core operations while meeting burgeoning retirement and health care obligations.

Ultimately, the PFBC has identified the need to have the new fee structure in place for the 2017 license year, which begins December 1, 2016. To accommodate the printing of materials for the 2017 license year, my goal is to have the bill passed by both the House and Senate and receive the Governor’s signature by the end of September 2016.

## Proposed Fees in Senate Bill 1103

License Category	Current Fee	Proposed Fees					
		Initial Increase	With 3% Annual Increases				
		2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Resident Annual	\$21.00	\$26.25	\$27.04	\$27.85	\$28.68	\$29.54	\$30.43
Nonresident Annual	\$51.00	\$63.75	\$65.66	\$67.63	\$69.66	\$71.75	\$73.90
Senior Resident Annual	\$10.00	\$12.50	\$12.88	\$13.26	\$13.66	\$14.07	\$14.49
Senior Resident Lifetime	\$50.00	\$100.00	\$103.00	\$106.09	\$109.27	\$112.55	\$115.93
3-Day Tourist	\$25.00	\$31.25	\$32.19	\$33.15	\$34.15	\$35.17	\$36.23
7-Day Tourist	\$33.00	\$41.25	\$42.49	\$43.76	\$45.07	\$46.43	\$47.82
1-Day Resident	\$10.00	\$12.50	\$12.88	\$13.26	\$13.66	\$14.07	\$14.49
1-Day Tourist	\$25.00	\$31.25	\$32.19	\$33.15	\$34.15	\$35.17	\$36.23
Trout/Salmon Permit	\$8.00	\$14.00	\$14.42	\$14.85	\$15.30	\$15.76	\$16.23
Combination Trout/Salmon and Lake Erie Permit*	\$14.00	\$20.00	\$20.42	\$20.85	\$21.30	\$21.76	\$22.23

\*Of each combination permit, \$14 will continue to be deposited into the PFBC’s Fish Fund and may be used to help offset the cost of the agency’s operations, and the other \$6 will continue to be deposited into a restricted revenue account that may only be used within the Lake Erie Watershed.

The PFBC thanks Senator Brewster for his leadership, supports his proposal, and looks forward to working with the Senate, House, and Governor in 2016 to advance this important bill that will help the agency continue to be a leader in aquatic resource conservation while meeting the needs and expectations of Pennsylvania’s resident and visiting anglers and boaters. At the same time, the PFBC will continue to advocate for a variety of alternative funding sources to supplement license sales and other traditional revenues to achieve long-term financial sustainability.

## Analysis of Multi-year Licenses and \$1 Decrease

In 2015, the Commission contracted with Southwick Associates, one of the nation’s leading companies that analyzes trends in hunting and fishing participation, to evaluate the effect of multi-year licenses on angler churn rates and license revenues since their introduction for the 2013 license year and to also examine the effect of the 2015 price reductions on sales of multi-year and annual licenses. The results of the analysis will be based on final 2015 figures and are expected by April 2016.

At the Commission’s September meeting in Erie, Southwick Associates Vice President of Research Tom Allen delivered preliminary results that suggested that although Pennsylvania anglers are somewhat more loyal than the average United States angler, large numbers of the state’s anglers each year fail to renew their Pennsylvania fishing license. Only 69% of residents and 53% of non-residents who purchased a license in 2013 bought another fishing license in 2014. Based on the prior purchase history of each individual angler who has purchased a multi-year license, Southwick is estimating the number of added licensed anglers and revenues attributable to the 3- and 5-year multi-year licenses.

The temporary price reduction for the multi-year licenses in December 2014 and year-long reduction for 2015 annual licenses were accompanied by marketing campaigns, which may have impacted license sales.

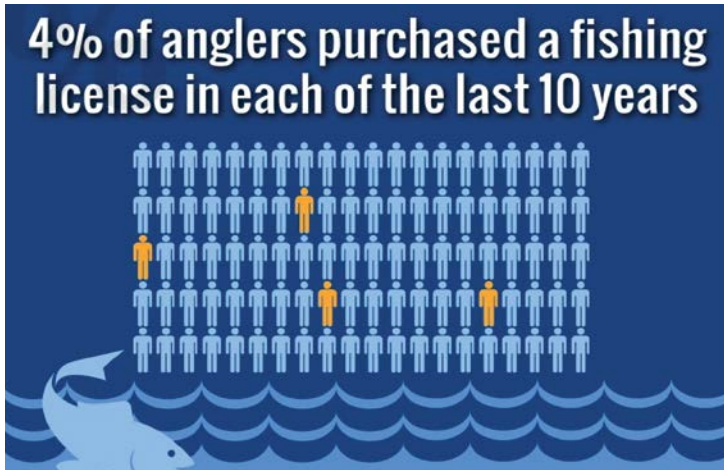
**Proposal to Expand Use of Lake Erie Funds**

In December, Senate Bill 604 by Senator Sean Wiley was unanimously passed by the Senate. This bill would expand the permitted uses of funds generated by the special permit to fish in Lake Erie and its tributaries to any projects that support public fishing, in addition to the currently authorized uses for public access and habitat within the watershed. The bill awaits action in the House during the spring legislative session.

If Senate Bill 604 becomes law, the Commission will continue to look to the Lake Erie Advisory Committee for input about priorities for how and where to invest the funds within the Lake Erie Watershed.

The effects of the price reduction are being examined by analyzing the license sales records and through a survey of anglers who purchased multi-year and annual fishing licenses. With complete 2015 license data, the final analysis will provide a more complete estimation of the effects of the price reduction, including a determination of whether the lower prices resulted in overall greater sales for 2015 or simply shifted a greater share of multi-year license sales to the month of December.

### National Churn Among Anglers



Source: Southwick Associates

### National Average Purchase Frequency



Source: Southwick Associates

**Initial 3-year License Holders Eligible for Renewal**

The nearly 22,000 anglers who bought three-year licenses when they first went on sale in 2013 are now eligible to renew their licenses. Anglers may do so online at [www.GoneFishingPa.com](http://www.GoneFishingPa.com) or at one of over 900 issuing agents across the Commonwealth.

2015 Fishing License & Permit Types	
December 1, 2014 - December 31, 2015	Units Sold
1-Day Labor Day Resident	493
1-Day Labor Day Tourist	231
1-Day Resident	4,229
1-Day Tourist	5,342
3-Day Tourist	25,589
3-year Non-Resident	270
3-year Resident	7,488
3-year Senior Resident	293
5-year Non-Resident	59
5-year Resident	2,835
5-year Senior Resident	54
7-Day Tourist	7,343
PA Resident National Guard/Reserve	407
Senior Lifetime	13,796
Non-Resident	39,672
POW Resident Annual	1
POW Resident Lifetime	1
Reduced Disabled Veteran	161
Resident	700,223
Senior Resident	19,577
Voluntary Youth	9,260
3-year Lake Erie & Trout/Salmon Stamp Permit	1,245
3-year Lake Erie Permit	100
3-year Trout/Salmon Stamp Permit	4,729
5-year Combination Lake Erie & Trout/Salmon Stamp Permit	634
5-year Lake Erie Permit	39
5-year Trout/Salmon Stamp Permit	1,668
Combination Lake Erie & Trout/Salmon Stamp Permit	77,746
Lake Erie Permit	21,427
Trout/Salmon Stamp Permit	471,125
<b>Total Licenses &amp; Permits</b>	<b>1,416,037</b>

**CATCH THE VALUE! FISH PA!**  
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**MENTORED YOUTH LICENSE**

**KAYAK PACKAGE**

**BEST OF THE BEST**

**FAMILY FISHING PROGRAMS**

## License Buttons Gain in Popularity

In its second year after a nearly 40-year hiatus, the Commission's popular fishing license button saw a jump in sales from nearly 7,000 in 2014 to almost 30,000 in 2015. One of the primary reasons contributing to the growth in sales in 2015 was that the buttons could be purchased in person at license issuing agents across Pennsylvania, at the agency's regional offices and headquarters, and at [www.GoneFishingPa.com](http://www.GoneFishingPa.com). In 2014, they could only be purchased online.

In September, the Commission turned to anglers and asked them to cast their vote online for their favorite button color. When more than 5,300 votes were counted, an overwhelming majority—more than 70%—picked the Brook Trout pattern for the 2016 license year.

Individuals must purchase an annual or multi-year resident, non-resident, senior resident or senior lifetime fishing license in order to purchase a license button. Children 15 and younger can also purchase a button if they first buy a voluntary youth license for \$1.

Brought back by popular demand in 2014, the buttons resemble ones offered by the PFC in the 1930s, 1940s, 1950s, and again in 1974 and 1975. Each custom button measures 1¾ inches with a high-quality, pin-back design and features the angler's customer identification number, the same number displayed on a paper license. As long as an angler is carrying a valid paper license, a valid button is the only display requirement.



## Voluntary Youth License Sales Grow Dramatically

Two other categories showed even more growth in 2015. Sales of Voluntary Youth Fishing Licenses grew from a little over 1,700 in 2014 to nearly 9,300 in 2015. The Commission also issued nearly 18,900 Mentored Youth permits, up from 2,500 in 2014.

This phenomenal growth is significant for a number of reasons.

Perhaps most importantly, it demonstrates the growing interest in fishing by kids and their adult mentors. The voluntary license or permit are required to participate in the increasingly popular and expanding mentored youth fishing programs ([www.fishandboat.com/youthlicense.htm](http://www.fishandboat.com/youthlicense.htm)). See page 16.

Having unique information about youth anglers allows the agency to analyze patterns and trends in fishing behavior, including whether participating youth end up buying a license when they turn 16. It also gives the agency a means of connecting with youth anglers and promoting additional opportunities for them to get on the water.

The growth in voluntary youth licenses is also significant because the Commission is eligible to receive approximately \$5.00 in federal revenue for every license sold after license sales are certified, about three years from the date of sale. When it created this license category, the agency committed to reinvesting the revenues in youth fishing programs. To date, the licenses have generated nearly \$11,000 in direct revenue that is dedicated to recruiting and retaining more kids to fish in Pennsylvania.



## Plan to Fund Remaining High-Hazard, Unsafe Dams

Based upon Governor Wolf's commitment in October to a comprehensive, five-year remediation plan for the ten currently remaining high-hazard, unsafe dams that are managed by the PFBC on behalf of the Commonwealth, the PFBC commenced implementation of the plan using Oil Company Franchise Tax (OCFT) revenues attributable to motorboat fuel pursuant to Act 89.

In March 2015, the Majority and Minority Chairs of the Senate and House Game and Fisheries Committees jointly asked Governor Wolf to release \$2 million each in capital funding for the rehabilitation of the high-hazard, unsafe dams at Meadow Grounds Lake and Somerset Lake. The capital funding requests were made to complete the funding packages needed for the construction of the two projects, and to match local contributions and Act 89 dollars expected to be received by the Commission.

This request came at the same time that the Department of General Services (DGS) asked all agencies to develop and submit comprehensive, five-year capital budget plans as a substitute to the traditional practice of making periodic and sporadic requests seeking the release of capital funding for individual projects.

Of the \$56.7 million in total estimated project funding needed to complete designs and repairs at the ten facilities, the Commission will leverage a total of \$21.7 million in capital funding in fiscal years 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 with over \$30 million in projected OCFT revenue. Having the capital funds released in the first two years of the plan allows for the maximum number projects to commence.

Upon full execution of the plan, all 24 of the previous and current high-hazard, unsafe dams managed by the PFBC will no longer be classified as unsafe.



## Growing Greener

Since it was enacted in 2005 after a voter-approved referendum, the Commission has received \$27.5 million as part of the \$625 million investment of Growing Greener 2. The Commission strategically invested most of the funding in effluent and infrastructure improvements at 13 state fish hatcheries that allowed it to meet or exceed water quality standards while continuing to produce over 47 million warmwater fish like Walleyes, Muskellunge, bass, catfish, and American Shad; 3.2 million adult trout; one million steelhead smolts; and one million eggs and fingerlings raised and stocked by cooperative nurseries. The Commission invested the balance of its Growing Greener 2 funds in the rehabilitation of six high-hazard, unsafe dams that it manages on behalf of the Commonwealth.

In the fall of 2015, the Commission began working with partners from other agencies and outside of government on the framework for a Growing Greener 3 initiative. As of the end of 2015, the Commission was completing its analysis of infrastructure and operational categories that help support fishing, boating and aquatic resources that would benefit from a new Growing Greener initiative. In each case, needs, opportunities and priorities outpace the agency's capacity, which is largely funded by fishing license sales and boat registration fees.

## Bog Turtle Recovery Grant

In June 2015, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) National Competitive State Wildlife Grant Program awarded the grant titled "Multistate Recovery Actions for the Bog Turtle and Associated Headwater Wetland Species of Greatest Conservation Need" to Pennsylvania and its partners. This nearly \$500,000 regional grant leverages approximately \$225,000 in matching funds from five northeast state fish and wildlife resource agencies and four non-government partner organizations. The project covers a variety of conservation actions for the Bog Turtle, including regional database development, eDNA testing, habitat restoration work, species surveys and population monitoring in five of the northeastern states that fall within the range of the northern population of the Bog Turtle.

This project is an excellent example of the Commission's efforts to collaboratively seek grant funding to advance agency priorities.

## Conservation Susquehanna River Smallmouth Bass

On May 4, 2015, the PFBC announced that two independent laboratory tests confirmed a malignant, or cancerous, tumor on a single Smallmouth Bass caught in the middle Susquehanna River by an angler in late 2014 and provided to the PFBC for testing.

Cancerous growths and tumors on fish are extremely rare in Pennsylvania and throughout the United States, but they do occur. This is the only documented case of this type of tumor being found on Smallmouth Bass in Pennsylvania. The finding was confirmed by the USFWS and the Aquatic Animal Health Laboratory at Michigan State University. Although the malignant tumor finding represents only one individual fish from the overall population, it provides additional evidence that the health of the fish community residing in the river is being compromised.

The PFBC first documented disease-related mortality of young-of-year Smallmouth Bass in the Susquehanna River in 2005. The continued mortality has contributed to the decline in abundance of Smallmouth Bass. Throughout 2015, PFBC staff continued to work with DEP, the United States Geological Survey (USGS), USFWS, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and other partners to focus efforts on better understanding what factors are impacting the Smallmouth Bass inhabiting the middle Susquehanna and lower Juniata rivers ([www.fishandboat.com/susq-impairment.htm](http://www.fishandboat.com/susq-impairment.htm)).

## CADDIS

Throughout 2015, the Commission continued its participation in the Causal Analysis/Diagnosis Decision Information System (CADDIS) analysis with DEP, the United State Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA), USGS, USFWS and SRBC. Based on this multi-agency, multi-year study of one of the most complex river systems in Pennsylvania, the two most likely causes for the population decline of Smallmouth Bass in the Susquehanna River were announced at the end of 2015: endocrine disrupting chemicals and herbicides; and pathogens and parasites. DEP and the Commission, along with nearly 50 participants and 6 partner agencies, released the findings that narrow the likely causes from an initial field of 14 candidate causes to those two.

The health of the Smallmouth Bass in the Susquehanna River continues to be compromised, and this analysis rules out certain causes, prioritizes other uncertain causes for further study and most importantly identifies likely causes that can be targeted for action. The next step is to focus on identifying the sources of the endocrine disrupting chemicals and herbicides, and what is causing the



increased prevalence and lethality of the pathogens and parasites in Smallmouth Bass, including monitoring in the tributaries of the Susquehanna River. The Commission is optimistic that the results from the CADDIS study along with the continued efforts to identify the causes and reduce the sources will provide for the recovery and return of the once world class recreational fishery.



## S.O.S – Save Our Susquehanna

In early June 2015, the PFBC launched an “S.O.S. - Save Our Susquehanna!” campaign to fund water and soil conservation projects along the Susquehanna River. The

Susquehanna’s young Smallmouth Bass population has been plagued over the last decade by illness and elevated mortality rates. The S.O.S. campaign’s website is [www.SaveOurSusquehannaBass.com](http://www.SaveOurSusquehannaBass.com).

To kick off the campaign, the Commission produced a series of videos describing the need for increased attention to the Susquehanna River’s water quality and health of the Smallmouth Bass population. In partnership with the USFWS, the Commission’s videos highlight habitat improvement projects that reduce the amount of nutrients and sedimentation that migrate into tributaries of the Susquehanna River—the same types of projects that will benefit from the funding generated by the S.O.S. campaign.

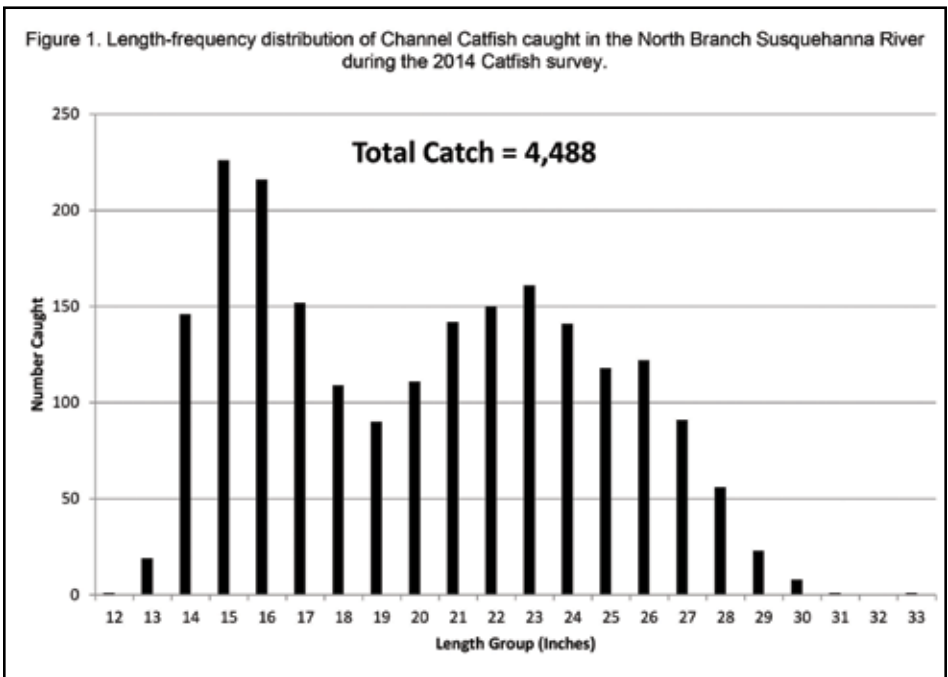
Broadening the agency’s efforts to save the ailing Susquehanna River, in mid-December, the Commission announced a unique partnership with the non-profit Ralph Abele Conservation Scholarship Fund to launch an online FirstGiving fundraising site for the Susquehanna River. This direct fundraising approach allows for individuals to make convenient tax deductible contributions to the campaign to put projects into motion to help save the Susquehanna River.

The PFBC dedicated a portion of license sales and proceeds from a \$10 S.O.S. button to fund future projects. By the end of the year, concerned citizens raised \$30,101.19 for the S.O.S. campaign, including a \$5,000 donation from Fishing Creek Sportsman Association in Columbia County, a \$1,000 donation from the Enola Sportsmen’s Association in Cumberland County and \$15,141 from sales of S.O.S. buttons.



## Catfish Surveys

In October 2015, Commission staff prepared a report on the first ever census of catfish populations in the North Branch Susquehanna River that began during the summer of 2014. Hoop nets were set at 32 locations in the river for a distance of 87 miles and captured 4,488 Channel Catfish and 19 Flathead Catfish. Length, weight and otolith samples were collected for continued evaluation of the catfish population in the North Branch. The survey contributed to an ongoing, statewide study of catfish populations that is anticipated to culminate in 2016. A full copy of the survey report is available at [www.fishandboat.com/images/reports/2015bio/4x10\\_28nBrSusq.pdf](http://www.fishandboat.com/images/reports/2015bio/4x10_28nBrSusq.pdf).



## Striped Bass Regulatory Amendment

The Commission amended Striped Bass regulations in the Delaware River and Delaware Estuary—defined as the Pennsylvania/Delaware state line upstream to the Calhoun Street Bridge—to meet requirements of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) to reduce fishing mortality rates. In response to concerns regarding fishing mortality rate thresholds and recent low recruitment of young fish, the ASMFC Striped Bass Management Board, which includes the Commonwealth as a member, directed all coastal states to reduce fishing mortality rates by 25% beginning in 2015.

In Pennsylvania, the Striped Bass fishery in the Delaware River and Estuary typically begins in early March. The Commission decreased the creel limit for Striped Bass in the Estuary during the periods, January 1 through March 31 and June 1 through December 31, to one 28-inch fish and changed the slot limit for two fish daily during the period, April 1 through May 31, to 21 to 25 inches. The Commission also decreased the creel limit for Striped Bass in the Delaware River upstream from the Calhoun Street Bridge to one 28-inch fish.



### Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

In the early 1940s, recognizing that they could accomplish far more through cooperation rather than individual effort, the Atlantic coast states came together to form the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC). An Interstate Compact, ratified by the states and approved by the United States Congress in 1942, acknowledged the necessity of the states joining forces to manage their shared migratory fishery resources and affirmed the states' commitment to cooperative stewardship in promoting and protecting Atlantic coastal fishery resources.

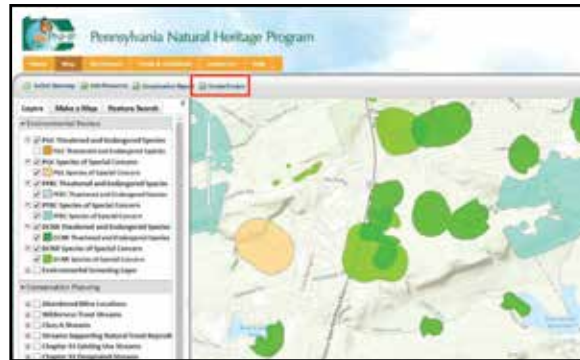
For over 70 years, the ASMFC has served as a deliberative body of the Atlantic coastal states, coordinating the conservation and management of 25 nearshore fish species. Each state is represented on the Commission by three Commissioners. Pennsylvania's members of ASMFC are Executive Director John A. Arway who delegates his role to Leroy Young, the director of PFBC's Bureau of Fisheries; State Representative Mike Vereb; and Loren Lustig, an individual appointed by the Governor to represent stakeholder interests. These Commissioners participate in deliberations in the Commission's main policy arenas: interstate fisheries management, fisheries science, habitat conservation, and law enforcement. Through these activities, the states collectively ensure the sound conservation and management of their shared coastal fishery resources and the resulting benefits to the fishing and non-fishing public.

## PNDI Environmental Review Tool Upgrade

The Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Inventory (PNDI) or Heritage GIS system has gone through several iterations throughout the years, and the Pennsylvania natural resource agencies began working with contractor NatureServe to significantly upgrade the system in 2015. The Pennsylvania Natural Heritage Partnership (PNHP), comprised of PFBC, the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR), the Pennsylvania Game Commission, and the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy (WPC), acknowledged the needs identified by industry and the legislature to upgrade the tool to incorporate current technologies and provide for better project planning.

Major elements of the PNDI upgrade include improved technology and usability of the system, interactive mapping, management of data layers, uploading of files by users, electronic project review submittal, and improved transparency of data by providing the ability for users to query the visible layers. Visible review polygons will allow permit applicants and the public to better review and plan their projects. PNDI receipts will be more instructive and allow users to receive more automated responses instead of sending letters to the agency and waiting for responses.

Briefings on the PNDI system and its recent improvements and upgrades were provided to a number of legislators, businesses and other stakeholders throughout 2015 as the upgrades were completed.



## Threatened and Endangered Species Listing Removals and Additions

In 2015, the Commission removed the Bluebreast Darter (*Etheostoma camurum*), Gilt Darter (*Percina evides*), Spotted Darter (*Etheostoma maculatum*) and Tippecanoe Darter (*Etheostoma tippecanoe*) from the state's list of threatened species. All have experienced a similar considerable range expansion in Pennsylvania since they were listed as threatened in 1999. Now, these four darter species each occupy more than 200 river miles throughout French Creek, sections of the Allegheny and Ohio rivers as well as additional tributaries to these waterways.

At its fall quarterly board meeting, the Commission approved the publication of a notice of proposed rulemaking to add the Hornyhead Chub (*Nocomis biguttatus*) to the state's Endangered Species list; to remove the Mountain Brook Lamprey (*Ichthyomyzon greeleyi*) from the Threatened Species list; and remove the Hornyhead Chub, Ohio Lamprey (*Ichthyomyzon bdellium*), Bowfin (*Amia calva*) and Timber Rattlesnake (*Crotalus horridus*) from the Candidate Species list.

The listing actions taken by the Commission should be regarded as important steps in conservation biology. The ability to collect necessary science and adapt regulations and policy accordingly is the perfect example of good governance.

## Timber Rattlesnakes

Prior to European settlement, the range of the Timber Rattlesnake is thought to have spanned most of Pennsylvania. However, in 1978, the Commission listed the Timber Rattlesnake as a candidate species due to reported population declines from overhunting and habitat loss. Protective measures and regulations by the Commission gradually increased, including permitting of organized hunts (1982), bag limits (1982, then reduced further in 1993), hunting season shortened to protect gravid (pregnant) females (1993), minimum size limit and prohibiting take of females (2007). These regulations were designed to discourage harvest of Timber Rattlesnakes, especially pregnant females and immature snakes. Also, oversight of organized hunts by Commission technical staff and law enforcement has increased, and education and protection measures taken by the Commission and other state land-holding agencies have also improved. Today, Timber Rattlesnakes occur in 50 of 67 Pennsylvania counties, within forested, mountainous regions with strongholds mainly within the southwest, central and northeast region of Pennsylvania.

A Species Action (recovery) Plan was developed for the Timber Rattlesnake in June 2011 ([www.fishandboat.com/water/amprep/species-plan-timber-rattlesnake.pdf](http://www.fishandboat.com/water/amprep/species-plan-timber-rattlesnake.pdf)). Commission staff continue to work with conservation partners to implement actions to maintain the recovery of the species. Protection of the Timber Rattlesnake will continue, warranting no changes to the take regulations or venomous snake hunt program. Additionally, the Commission established a partnership with East Stroudsburg University in 2015 to develop a robust long-term population monitoring program of the statewide population in order to track changes in the population and continue to develop our understanding of the conservation status of the Timber Rattlesnake in the Commonwealth.

After intensive field work and monitoring, staff and the Amphibians & Reptiles Technical Committee of Pennsylvania Biological Survey found the Timber Rattlesnake to be uncommon but not rare, and usually widespread in the state. Therefore, the Commission published a notice of proposed rulemaking in late 2015 to remove the Timber Rattlesnake from the Pennsylvania list of candidate species.

### 2015 Permit Numbers

- Species Impact Reviews: 1,844
- Venomous Snake Permits: 1,058
- Organized Reptile and Amphibian Hunts: 6
- Commercial Snapping Turtle Permits: 26
- Scientific Collectors' Permits (and amendments): 473
- Threatened and Endangered Species Permits: 61
- Special Permits:
  - Amphibian and Reptile Rehabilitation (temporary possession): 6
  - Amphibian and Reptile Education and Outreach (possession): 20
  - Other (nongame permits, etc.): 5



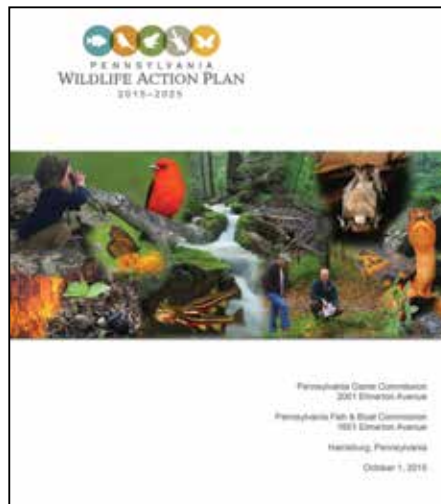
Over 100 new Timber Rattlesnake (*Crotalus horridus*) site assessments were drafted, reviewed, quality checked, finalized and submitted to the Pennsylvania Natural Heritage Program for inclusion into PNDI.

The Salamander Mussel Species Action Plan was written and finalized in 2015. This Species Action Plan is an initial five-year blueprint for actions to address near-term and long-term goals for the conservation and recovery of the Salamander Mussel. This plan also supports the 2015 Pennsylvania Wildlife Action Plan. The goals of the Species Action Plan are to guide the maintenance and protection of extant populations of Salamander Mussels in the Commonwealth, to ensure sufficient distribution, and to secure its populations and remove this species from the list of Pennsylvania endangered species.

## State Wildlife Action Plan Update

Pennsylvania's State Wildlife Action Plan is founded upon eight required elements designated by Congress. Among these elements is a requirement that each State and U.S. Territory fully review and revise their State Wildlife Action Plans no less than every 10 years. Throughout 2015, the PFBC worked with the Pennsylvania Game Commission to lead a collaborative effort to comprehensively review and update the State Wildlife Action Plan. This revision process was conducted with the assistance of numerous conservation organizations and in accordance with guidance from the USFWS and Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies.

Selecting Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) is a foundational feature of the State Wildlife Action Plan. Pennsylvania's plan identifies 664 Pennsylvania SGCNs for 2015-2025, of which 555 are fish, amphibians, reptiles or aquatic invertebrates within the PFBC's legal authority. The plan is the guiding document for addressing the needs of these at-risk species. A fully revised Pennsylvania State Wildlife Action Plan was approved by both Commissions in the fall of 2015. The complete plan is available at [www.fishandboat.com/swap.htm](http://www.fishandboat.com/swap.htm).



The Chesapeake Logperch Action Plan was written and finalized in 2015. The goals of this Species Action Plan are to maintain extant populations of Chesapeake Logperch in the Commonwealth, protect its habitat, describe the relationship of this species with its habitat and other species, and develop appropriate reintroduction and monitoring strategies. Long-term, the goal is to sufficiently secure the species for its removal from the Pennsylvania list of threatened species.

## Eastern Pearlshell Mussel Surveys

Surveys for year two of the Eastern Pearlshell Mussel State Wildlife Grant project were completed. Additional surveys as well as a detailed habitat and landscape assessment of extant and historical occurrences were conducted during the 2015 field season. Surveys revealed a new occurrence of this species at two locations in Schuylkill County.

## Dunkard Creek Pollution Settlement

In September, the PFBC announced that it had reached a \$2.5 million settlement with Murray Energy for civil damages resulting from a devastating 2009 pollution incident in which discharges from a coal mine entered Dunkard Creek, contributing to a massive fish kill spanning nearly 30 miles of stream in West Virginia and Pennsylvania. The devastation was astonishing. PFBC biologists collected 40 species of fish and 14 species of mussels that were killed by the incident. Among the dead mussels was the Pennsylvania endangered snuffbox mussel.



Ohio-based Murray agreed to pay the settlement in lieu of civil damages for the lost aquatic life and lost fishing opportunities for Pennsylvania anglers as a result of the pollution incident. The funds were placed in a restricted revenue account within the Fish Fund to be utilized for the primary purpose of developing and implementing projects that benefit recreational fishing and boating and the aquatic resources of the Dunkard Creek watershed. Once restoration is complete, the Commission may use the remaining funds for restoration projects in other southwestern Pennsylvania watersheds.

## Regulation Simplification

It has long been a concern that the complexity and number of the Commission's fishing regulations may be a deterrent to people fishing. A workgroup comprised of staff across bureau and office lines was formed in 2013. Workgroup meetings were held and drafts were circulated throughout 2013 and 2014. In 2015, the regulation simplification and consolidation package was approved by the Commission, including housekeeping changes relating to various specific waterways and special regulation programs. Additionally, the Commission approved a number of substantive changes including:

- Clean-up of special notes and references in seasons, sizes and creel limits for Commonwealth Inland Waters and the Susquehanna River and its tributaries.
- Established "stocked trout waters" as the term to more accurately describe waters that are stocked with trout and defined it to be "waters that are stocked with adult trout by the Commission." The Commission also amended other sections to reflect the change from "approved trout waters" to "stocked trout waters."
- Removed the restriction limiting baitfish to 8 inches in length, because there is no biological reason for the restriction.
- Deleted the list of prohibited lures and substances for use in catch and release, catch and release fly-fishing only areas and the Trophy Trout Program in favor of naming the permitted items only to eliminate confusion
- Ensured consistency of language relating to Panfish Enhancement Special Regulations.
- Eliminated the Wild Brook Trout Enhancement Program because, based on peer reviewed and published scientific research on the waters within this program, staff have determined that this regulation is ineffective.
- Amended miscellaneous special regulations on a number of waters including: Elk Creek (Big Elk Creek), Chester County; Opossum Lake, Cumberland County; West Branch Clarion River, Elk County; Lake Scranton, Lackawanna County; Leaser Lake, Lehigh County; West Branch Delaware River, Wayne County; Indian Lake, Westmoreland County; and Lake Winola, Wyoming County.

www.fishinpa.com

## Pine Creek

Pine Creek, an 85-mile long tributary to the West Branch Susquehanna River, provides a variety of recreational angling opportunities along its length. Class A wild trout angling opportunities exist in the headwaters followed by stocked trout fishing in the middle reaches and warm/coolwater angling opportunities in the lower reaches. Based on staff work, public comment collected in 2014 and a desire to explore a variety of regulatory options for this waterway to enhance recreational fishing use, the Commission designated the section of Pine Creek from the confluence of Slate Run downstream to the confluence of Bonnell Run as a Catch and Release All Tackle Area in 2015. See Keystone Select Stocked Trout Waters program on page 17 for other specially designated premium trout destination fisheries.

## Muskellunge Management

PFBC staff continued to implement a multi-year study designed to evaluate the effectiveness of enhanced stocking rates and regulation changes on Muskellunge populations statewide. The objectives of this five-year study (2013–2017) are to evaluate the survival and growth of stocked tiger muskellunge and the effects a 2007 regulation change pertaining to Muskellunge and tiger muskellunge (no closed season; 1 fish/day; 40-inch minimum size) may have had on the population.

Throughout 2015, staff biologists sampled Little Buffalo Lake (also known as Holman Lake) at Little Buffalo State Park in Perry County, Lake Nockamixon at Nockamixon State Park in Bucks County and Frances Slocum Lake at Frances Slocum State Park in Luzerne County. Pennsylvania style trap nets were used at these reservoirs in 2015 and captured Muskellunge ranging in size from 26 to 42 inches long and 7 to 21 pounds. Catch per unit effort at all locations exceeded the statewide catch rate objective of the management plan.

Also part of the management plan, staff biologists surveyed wild juvenile Muskellunge in the North Branch Susquehanna River from Terrytown, Bradford County, to Northumberland, Northumberland County, in 2015. Results of the survey confirm historical documented evidence that wild Muskellunge naturally reproduce throughout the length of the North Branch Susquehanna River. Whether this natural reproduction can sustain a fishery without supplemental stocking will be determined through additional study in coming years.

The 2015 surveys are part of a larger statewide study that is guided by the Plan for Management of Muskellunge in Pennsylvania ([www.fishandboat.com/musky-plan.htm](http://www.fishandboat.com/musky-plan.htm)). The goal of the Muskellunge management program is to identify and rehabilitate where practical, natural reproducing populations of Muskellunge in Pennsylvania and, through the efficient and effective use of hatchery culture techniques, stocking practices, regulations and angler involvement, provide high quality angling opportunities for these popular sportfish.



Little Buffalo Lake has a wide variety of fish species in addition to Muskellunge that offer diverse year-round angling opportunities. The lake has two boat launches, a mooring area, an ADA accessible fishing pier as well as ample vehicle parking. It's no wonder that Little Buffalo State Park was named one of the Top 100 Family Friendly Places to Boat and Fish in the United States, based on its proximity to a major city, good fishing opportunities and family-friendly amenities. See page 17.

## Unassessed Waters

Based on results from the Unassessed Waters Initiative, the Commission added 102 new waters to the list of wild trout streams, revised the section limits of four waters, removed one water from the list and added 40 stream sections to its Class A Wild Trout streams list. The Unassessed Waters Initiative provides the opportunity to work with partner organizations to survey waters that cannot be assessed by PFBC staff. This is achieved through the examination of waters that have not been inventoried to date using qualified universities, research entities and conservation organization partners to lead the surveys, in addition to PFBC staff. The outside groups sample previously unassessed waters using PFBC sampling protocols and are directed to work in watersheds determined to be high priority. The previously unassessed waters found to have wild trout are then proposed to PFBC for official listing and subsequent DEP regulatory protection. More information about the program is available at [www.fishandboat.com/unassessedwaters.htm](http://www.fishandboat.com/unassessedwaters.htm).



## Big Spring Creek Survey Finds More Brook Trout

Fisheries staff conducted a follow-up survey of Cumberland County's Big Spring Creek, Sections 01 and 02, in August 2015 to evaluate the response of the fishery to large scale habitat enhancement projects constructed during 2010 and 2013. Reach-wide, preliminary results indicate continued increased abundance of Brook Trout, while Rainbow Trout abundance remained steady or continued to decline following an initial proliferation of that species in 2011. Two years following the completion of the 2013 project, Brook Trout now account for greater than 50 percent of the total number of trout estimated to reside in the portion of Big Spring Creek managed with Catch and Release Fly-Fishing Only angling regulations. The Big Spring Creek management plan is available at [www.fishandboat.com/BigSpring.htm](http://www.fishandboat.com/BigSpring.htm).

## Trout Plan Update

In November 2015, the PFBC posted the agency's draft 2016-2017 Trout Management Plan for public review and comment. The goal of the plan is to ensure that adequate protection is afforded to wild trout resources and that fisheries provided through the management of wild trout and the stocking of adult and fingerling trout will continue to provide excellent angling opportunities in Pennsylvania. The plan includes input provided by a work group that consisted of Commission staff, anglers affiliated with a variety of sportsmen's organizations and independent anglers not affiliated with a sportsmen's organization. As part of the plan, 22 priority issues were identified encompassing four primary resource categories, which include management of wild trout streams, stocked trout streams, stocked trout lakes and trout management in Lake Erie. Comments were accepted through the end of the year. The plan is available at [www.fishandboat.com/troutplan.htm](http://www.fishandboat.com/troutplan.htm).

## Small Dam Removal

Heistand Sawmill Dam removal on Chiques Creek, Lancaster County, was completed in May 2015. The project was a collaborative effort between PFBC, American Rivers, Columbia Water Company and Lancaster County. RETTEW provided consulting services and construction oversight, and Flyway Excavating was contracted to complete the construction. The project opens approximately 13 miles of upstream habitat for migratory and resident fishes. PFBC provided nearly \$90,000 in grant funding through a NFWF-Chesapeake Bay Stewardship Fund Small Watershed Grant and Exelon/Muddy Run habitat improvement funds. The total project cost was approximately \$200,000.

In June 2014, the PFBC announced that it will receive \$800,000 as a result of a DEP water quality certification of Exelon's Muddy Run Pumped Storage Project in Lancaster County to be used specifically to remove small dams within York and Lancaster counties. The certification was part of the company's renewal of its operating license with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). Along with DEP, the PFBC and others had been negotiating with Exelon for several years leading up to the relicensing to ensure that fish and aquatic resources are protected, including appropriate mitigation for American Shad, American Eels and resident fish.

The PFBC estimates that there are several hundred dams in the two counties. The agreement calls for Exelon to pay the PFBC \$50,000 annually for small dam removals from 2014 to 2030. The PFBC intends to work with willing dam owners to direct funding to dam removal projects that will yield the greatest ecological benefits.

## Lake Habitat Improvement

In 2015, Commission staff worked with Lancaster County Bassmasters and the Save Speedwell group on the Speedwell Forge Lake Habitat Project in Lancaster County, which involved placing 245 rock and wood habitat structures during the month of September ([www.fishandboat.com/habitat.htm](http://www.fishandboat.com/habitat.htm)). More than \$20,000 was raised by the partner organizations for materials and machine rental for the project on the 106-acre impoundment.

In addition, staff worked with Glade Run Lake Conservancy in Butler County, which received a \$20,000 grant from Reservoir Fisheries Habitat Partnership to construct 250 rock and wood habitat structures for the 52-acre impoundment in September.

Nessmuk Lake in Tioga County and Colyer Lake in Centre County both received habitat improvements while drawn down for dam repair and rehabilitation in 2015. Staff continue to plan for a number of other habitat projects to be completed in 2016-2017, including Kyle Lake, Jefferson County; Somerset Lake, Somerset County; and Meadow Grounds Lake, Fulton County.



## Recreation Ice Fishing

With steady, cold temperatures during January and February 2015, the PFBC issued ice safety reminders, ice fishing planning tips, links to various information including an ice-thickness chart, a safety checklist and a video of a PFBC-hosted ice fishing seminar, which contained information on equipment and tactics. In addition to these “how-to” and safety resources, PFBC Executive Director John A. Arway appeared in a special video invitation that underscored the fun of ice fishing and the year-round value of a Pennsylvania fishing license. This special video message can be viewed at [www.fishandboat.com/images/video/ice-fishing-video/ice-fishing.htm](http://www.fishandboat.com/images/video/ice-fishing-video/ice-fishing.htm).



## Mentored Youth Fishing Expansion



In a Happy New Year message to young anglers and their adult mentors, the PFBC announced in January that it was widely expanding the popular Mentored Youth Trout Days program in 2015 to include all trout waters stocked by the PFBC and managed under Commonwealth inland regulations ([www.fishandboat.com/mentoredyouth.htm](http://www.fishandboat.com/mentoredyouth.htm)). Expanding this opportunity to all trout waters made it more accessible to more people, helped to guard against potential weather-related problems (e.g., iced over lakes) and reduced crowding at popular sites. This unprecedented action reinforced the Commission’s seriousness in finding new ways to recruit and retain youth anglers and their families.

Waters receiving an allotment of trout by the scheduled youth dates were highlighted on the Commission’s online stocking list. Anglers were encouraged to consult the Commission’s website before heading to a stream or lake to increase their chances for success.

The first Mentored Youth Trout Day of 2015 was held on March 28, the Saturday before the regional opening day of trout season in 18 southcentral and southeast counties. The second one was held on April 11, the Saturday before the statewide opening day of trout season. Mentors and children were permitted to each keep two trout, at least 7 inches in length.

In an attempt to keep young anglers and their mentors fishing later in the season, select waters were also scheduled to be stocked with trout as part of another Mentored Youth Trout Day on Labor Day in conjunction with 17 Panfish Enhancement lakes where minimum size limits were removed for participants. High water temperatures forced a postponement of trout stocking on the select waters, so the Commission promised anglers that the stockings would be rescheduled, so they could take advantage of a special fall fishing opportunity.

In October, the PFBC followed through on its promise and stocked trout in three waters for a special mentored youth opportunity on Sunday, October 18. The waters included Poe Lake at Poe Valley State Park (Centre County), Cowans Gap Lake at Cowans Gap State Park (Fulton County) and Upper Woods Pond (Wayne County). Each of the waters was stocked the day prior. During the Sunday event, adults and children were permitted to fish for trout, but only youth with a voluntary youth fishing license or free mentored youth permit could keep two trout, at least 7 inches in length. The harvest rule was a change from the way the Mentored Youth Trout Days program had been administered previously; however, adult mentors are still encouraged to fish with children on these special days. The PFBC modified the program in late 2015 in response to numerous comments from participants suggesting that only children, and not adults, should be allowed to keep what they catch.

In 2015, nearly 18,900 youth obtained a free permit and close to 9,300 purchased a voluntary youth fishing license in order to participate in these special opportunities or to demonstrate their support for youth fishing programs.

Fishing/Aquatic Resource Education 2015	
Family Fishing Programs (FFP)	62
FFP Attendance	5,184
Other Fishing Programs	30
Other Fishing Attendance	1,281
New Fishing Skills Instructors Trained	78
Fishing Tackle Loaner Sites	72
Teacher Training (TT) Workshops	2
TT Attendance	56
Educational Program Requests	576
Educational Programs Presented	370
TIC Classrooms	260



### Mentored Youth Promotions

In conjunction with Mentored Youth fishing opportunities for panfish on Labor Day, the PFBC initiated a week-long Mentored Youth Photo Contest. The contest was designed to encourage participants to share their experience on the Commission’s Labor Day Mentored Youth Fishing & Photo Contest Facebook event page. Additional promotions of the fall Mentored Youth fishing opportunities were implemented through a communication and outreach plan that included distribution of nearly 1,000 promotional fliers at events and electronic distribution to more than 300 teachers, creation of a web landing page for Mentored Youth and Labor Day fishing promotions, rules and web navigation for the Mentored Youth Photo Contest, and distribution of more than 500 sponsored vouchers for Voluntary Youth Fishing Licenses in the month preceding the Labor Day fishing opportunities.



## Pennsylvania State Parks Among Top Ten Family Friendly Places to Fish and Boat in United States

In June 2015, three Pennsylvania state parks were recognized among the Top 10 Family Friendly Places to Boat and Fish in the United States, according to Take Me Fishing's Top 100 list. In total, all seven of Pennsylvania's state park entries in the sweepstakes registered in the Top 100, which includes park and recreation areas in 25 states. The three parks earning Top 10 honors include Keystone State Park, Westmoreland County; Presque Isle State Park, Erie County; and Lackawanna State Park, Lackawanna County.

The Recreational Boating & Fishing Foundation's (RBFF's) Take Me Fishing campaign initiated a nationwide vote in March to provide families and outdoor enthusiasts with a recommended list of the best family-friendly places to experience the joys of boating and fishing as the weather warmed up around the country. Criteria for the top places to fish and boat included having a public body of water within an hour of a major city with good fishing opportunities and family-friendly amenities.

The 2015 Sweepstakes offered 276 preselected family-friendly parks from across the United States. After the votes were cast, all seven of Pennsylvania's entries made the Top 100 list. The other Pennsylvania parks included:

- Little Buffalo State Park, Perry County
- Moraine State Park, Butler County
- Nockamixon State Park, Bucks County
- John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge at Tinicum, Philadelphia and Delaware counties

The release of Take Me Fishing's Top 100 list kicked off the celebration of National Fishing and Boating Week (NFBW), which took place June 6-14, 2015.



# TAKE ME FISHING™

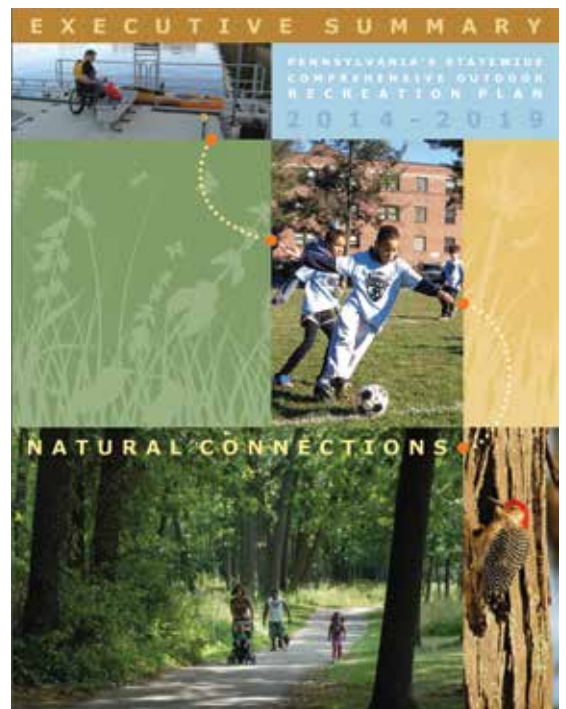


Keystone State Park, Westmoreland County

## Pennsylvania's Outdoor Recreation Plan

Pennsylvania's new five-year Outdoor Recreation Plan to connect citizens to healthy outdoor recreation was officially kicked off in 2015. The plan was spearheaded by DCNR with input from a wide diversity of outdoor recreation stakeholders and partner agencies. Pennsylvania's recreation professionals use the plan to help capitalize on natural assets and deliver facilities and programs that make it easy for people to play outdoors. As demographics, trends and interests change, a new plan every five years identifies outdoor recreation strategies that help address societal needs.

Of the 20 recommendations and 83 action steps contained in the updated plan, 13 action items include the PFBC as an implementing partner. Action items include enhancing accessibility to fishing and boating opportunities, boosting local economies through outdoor recreation tourism, providing resources and support to local parks and recreation providers, increasing participation in fishing and boating, stewardship of fishing and boating access and facilities, and more that overlap with items contained in the PFBC's strategic plan. Updates on these activities can be found at [www.PAOutdoorRecPlan.com](http://www.PAOutdoorRecPlan.com), the Commission's website at [www.fishandboat.com](http://www.fishandboat.com) or in this annual report.



## Keystone Select Stocked Trout Waters

Trout anglers wanting an experience targeting bigger fish will have the opportunity to catch 14- to 20-inch trout in eight Keystone Select Stocked Trout Waters, as unveiled at the last quarterly meeting of 2015 ([www.fishandboat.com/keystoneselect.htm](http://www.fishandboat.com/keystoneselect.htm)).



Brown Trout

Under the program, 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)



This new program adds an element of excitement to trout fishing and at the same time reminds anglers that the trout season can extend well into the summer. The waters are regulated under Delayed Harvest Artificial Lures Only (DHALO) regulations, which are open to fishing year-round. Anglers may harvest trout only between June 15 and Labor Day, and the trout have to be a minimum of 9 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.

PFBC staff presented the concept of the new program at the last quarterly meeting of 2015, and then 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 reviewed the selections, and the Keystone Select Stocked Trout Waters name was chosen. The 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. See the Regulation Simplification section on page 13.

## Baseball, NASCAR and Fishing!

The PFBC undertook marketing and advertising activities to promote the “Catch the Value” campaign for 2015 in an attempt to drive sales in conjunction with the two trout season openers and the opener of bass season. The *Catch The Value! Kayak and More Giveaway* was conducted between May 18 and June 22 as a way to garner interest in fishing and boating during the late-spring months. Marketing presence, in conjunction with outreach and law enforcement, was shown at York Revolution and Lancaster Barnstormers baseball games and the Step Outdoors Lehigh Valley event.

The PFBC was present at the Axalta “We Paint Winners” 400 race weekend, June 5-7, at Pocono Raceway, operating a booth in the FanZone area of the track, handing out various promotion materials and accepting entries to the *Catch The Value! Kayak and More Giveaway*. The PFBC also sponsored a kids fishing pond located in the Kid Zone at the track on Saturday, June 6. This was coordinated with The Bass Pro Shops “Teach a Child to Fish Clinic” featuring an appearance by NASCAR driver Tony Stewart.



PFBC employees with NASCAR driver Tony Stewart.

## Kayak Fishing Programs

The PFBC conducted two programs to provide an opportunity for anglers or kayak enthusiasts to learn about the basics of kayak fishing. Kayak Fishing Programs were held at Bald Eagle State Park, Centre County, on July 18, and August 1 at Moraine State Park, Butler County (<https://youtu.be/LiJXoMtyQdE>). During each program, participants learned about basic kayak skills and safety, how to rig or outfit a kayak for fishing and gained knowledge about bass and panfish fishing techniques. Commission staff and local kayak fishing experts lead the instruction and participants had an opportunity to make use of what they learned during an open fishing session. As an advanced skills class, participants were required to be 16 years of age or older and have a valid Pennsylvania fishing license. Post-program surveys revealed that program participants rated the program as highly informative and effective in preparing them for this quickly growing segment of angling and boating.



Kayak Fishing Program at Bald Eagle State Park, Centre County.

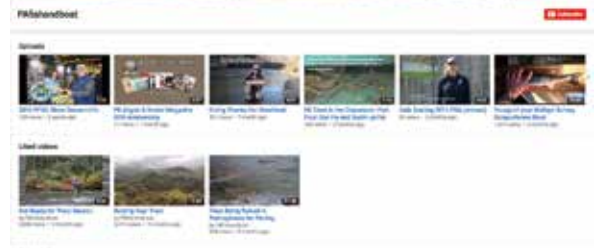
## Linesville Open House Draws Nearly 2,000 Visitors

The popular annual Linesville Open House drew a steady flow of nearly 2,000 visitors throughout the day on April 5, 2015. Commission staff set trap nets for the annual Walleye spawn, explained the spawning process and demonstrated how to fillet and cook fish. Children practiced their casting skills and got to create fish-print t-shirts. Displays and exhibits were also set up inside the hatchery.



## Video Production and Social Media

Commission staff found many opportunities to highlight Commission operations, marketing efforts and important messages through the use of videos and social media throughout 2015. At the close of the year, the PFBC Facebook page was at a total of 22,651 likes/fans. This represents an accrual of more than 12,000 fans through 2015. By the end of the year, 102 videos had been posted to the Commission's Facebook page and YouTube channel with a total of 463,253 video views on Facebook alone. Video topics included show exhibits, schedules and interviews with exhibitors; fish production, management and identification; fishing season openers and special fishing opportunities such as Mentored Youth, Fish-for-Free Days and Family Fishing Festivals; life jackets and boating safety; Trout In the Classroom; and special events such as Linesville Open House, a tribute to legislator and conservationist Franklin Kury, and Governor and First Lady Wolf purchasing their 2015 fishing licenses. The Commission's best performing Facebook video posting was its "July 4th Boating Under the Influence" video that garnered 407,909 impressions and 265,216 unique views. The Commission's videos are available for viewing at [www.youtube.com/user/PAfishandboat](http://www.youtube.com/user/PAfishandboat).



The Commission increased its use of Twitter throughout 2015 to share timely and newsworthy information with its followers. Staff posted nearly 800 messages resulting in approximately 600,000 total impressions. Coinciding with the traditional opening of trout season, the Commission gained its greatest number of profile visits, mentions and new followers in April, and ended the year well on its way to reaching the milestone of 5,000 followers. See page 26 for website statistics.

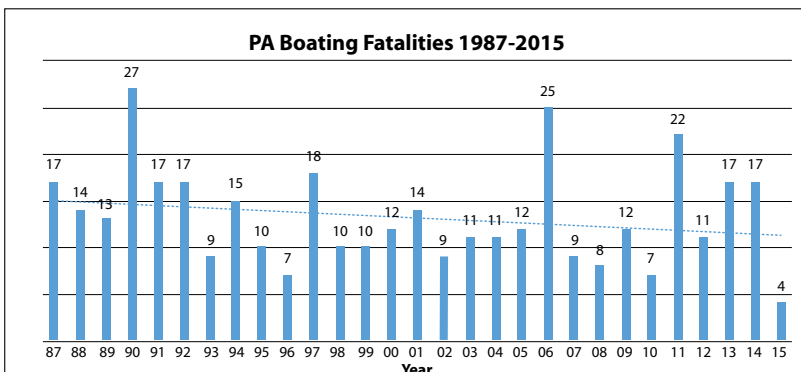


The Boating Advisory Board (BAB) advises the Commission regarding matters relating to boating, including recommendations with respect to proposed boating rules and regulations. The BAB's advice assists the Commission with establishing a boating program that ensures the safe and enjoyable operation of boats. In 2015, the BAB reviewed and recommended regulatory amendments relating to:

- Removing references to personal flotation devices (PFDs) type codes from various sections of the Commission's regulations
- Eliminating the personal watercraft (PWC) towing regulation since passenger carrying capacity is addressed in other sections
- Establishing a slow, no-wake zone on the lower section of Little Beaver Creek, Beaver County; and establishing Bradys Run Lake as electric motors only to conform with county regulations
- Simplifying the slow, no-wake designation on Neshaminy Creek, Bucks County
- Eliminating the designated ski zone on Conodoguinet Creek, Cumberland County
- Establishing a slow, no-wake designation on the entire length of Darby Creek, Delaware County
- Eliminating the water skiing prohibition on the Allentown Pool of Lehigh River, Lehigh County
- Simplifying various regulations regarding the use of electric motors only on Commission and State Park owned lakes that are already covered elsewhere
- Eliminating the prohibition on the use of inflatable boats on Commission lakes
- Clarifying overloading and improper loading of boats
- Increasing the length of boats permitted to be used at Lily Lake, Luzerne County

## Boating Accidents Hit Record Low

It was the lowest year on record for Pennsylvania with four boating-related fatalities and 58 accidents reported to the Commission. Since 1987, the PFBC has tracked boating accidents and related fatalities and reported them to the United States Coast Guard for the purpose of improving boating safety. Boaters are required to report boating accidents to the Commission if the accident results in an injury that requires treatment beyond first aid, damage exceeding \$2,000 or complete loss of a vessel, or if the accident results in a death or disappearance. Prior to 2015, the lowest number of boating accidents recorded was 59 in 2009, and 7 deaths in 1996 and 2010.



## Pennsylvania Water Rescue Curriculum Recognized by FEMA

In 2015, each of the components of the Commission’s Water Rescue curriculum was reviewed by independent third-party subject matter experts and approved as meeting the required Federal and State Course Review and Approval process standards by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The purpose of the Federal and State Course Review and Approval process is to ensure a comprehensive and consistent process for the review and approval of non-National Training and Exercise Division developed training courses ([www.fishandboat.com/waterrescue.htm](http://www.fishandboat.com/waterrescue.htm)). The Commission’s following courses will now be included in the Approved Federal/State Sponsored Course Catalog: Water Rescue and Emergency Response, Ice Rescue and Emergency Response, Water Rescue for the First Responder (Awareness Level), Emergency Boat Operations Rescue and Advanced Line Systems Rescue.



## Water Rescue Program Reaches Record Numbers

The Commission certified 3,907 students through the Water Rescue Program in 2015, which meets or exceeds various levels (Awareness, Operations, Technician) of NFPA 1670 Standards. This is the second highest year on record for this program. In another second-best, 2,408 students were certified in the Commission’s 2½-hour Water Rescue for the First Responder NFPA 1670 Awareness level program. The Commission’s 2½-hour Water Rescue for the First Responder program continues to be in high demand and is in its third year of being available for individuals to complete online through an approved course provider. The Commission maintains an in-state volunteer instructor corps of 172 individuals, who provided more than 13,000 hours of training in 2015.

2015 Boating Safety Education	
Boating Safety Education Certificates (BSEC) Issued.....	14,892
BSEC Distance Learning.....	12,940
BSEC Classroom Courses.....	134
Boating and Water Safety Awareness (BWSA) Courses.....	32
BWSA Students.....	716
Basic Boating (BB) Classroom Course.....	102
BB Students.....	977
Paddle PA Programs.....	12
Paddle PA Attendance.....	1,000

## Helicopter Rescue Program Expands

Commission staff participated in the National Helicopter Search and Rescue workshop in April 2015 to continue to enhance and integrate the Commission’s Swiftwater Emergency Response Team (SWERT) with the PA-Helicopter Aquatic Rescue Team (PA-HART). The Commission’s SWERT is composed of Waterways Conservation Officers to support the PA-HART mission with force protection and swiftwater assets. Due to the integration with PA-HART and the complexity of incidents the team is trained to respond to, SWERT was acknowledged as a Type 1 team by the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA) in its Knowledge Center in late 2014. SWERT is the only Type 1 incident response team in the Commonwealth due to its air capabilities.

PA-HART is a joint partnership between the Pennsylvania Army National Guard, the PFBC and the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA), along with civilian rescue specialists. This highly specialized aerial search and rescue team provides an air asset for the Commonwealth and the nation to respond to natural and manmade disasters or incidents. In 2015, PA-HART continued to train monthly and took part in Operation Iron Response, which was a joint training mission with several other entities including SWERT to prepare for the World Meeting of the Families in Philadelphia held the last weekend in September.



*PA-HART Rescue Technicians training in night hoist operations at Ft. Indiantown Gap, December 17, 2015.*

## Erie Access Improvements

In 2015, the Commission approved the acquisition of two easements using Lake Erie restricted account funds generated from the sale of Lake Erie fishing permits ([www.fishandboat.com/water/lakes/erie/00erie.htm](http://www.fishandboat.com/water/lakes/erie/00erie.htm)). On Elk Creek, the Commission approved acquisition of an easement on 1,720 linear feet on both sides of Elk Creek as it flows across a parcel of property in Fairview Township, Erie County. On Conneaut Creek, the Commission approved acquisition of an easement on 1,600 linear feet along Conneaut Creek as it flows across property owned by the Borough of Conneautville, Crawford County, in addition to easements for parking and a footpath to provide access to the creek. Easements on both creeks will provide additional trout and steelhead fishing opportunities in the Lake Erie watershed.

As of the end of 2015, the Commission had conserved over 20 miles of public access through easements and property purchases in the Lake Erie Watershed.



## Statewide Fishing and Boating Access

The Commission approved the acquisition of two fishing access and conservation easements along Route 287 in Piatt Township, Lycoming County, which will provide about ½ mile of fishing access along both sides of Larry’s Creek. The first easement is approximately 12.26 acres and will include an access trail, a public fishing easement along the stream corridor, which will extend 35 feet back from the top of the bank, and a conservation area, which includes wetlands. By acquiring a second easement of about 0.67 acres on adjacent property, the PFBC can provide anglers uninterrupted access to both sides of the creek which is a stocked trout water. The easements were offered to the PFBC at no cost.

Based on an agreement approved by the Commission in 2015, a new boat access area will be constructed on the west shore of the West Branch Susquehanna River in Union County as mitigation for a new highway spanning the river. Under the agreement, the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) will construct a boat launch and parking lot on the 2-acre access area, which is on the uppermost section of Lake Augusta, a 3,060-acre impoundment that extends from Sunbury several miles up both the West Branch and North Branch Susquehanna River. PennDOT will transfer jurisdiction and control of the access area to the Commission after construction is complete.

## Boating Infrastructure Grant (BIG) Program

The Commission received \$100,000 in federal funding through the USFWS’s Boating Infrastructure Grant (BIG) Program to complete a project in Erie in 2015. BIG provides federal funds for projects designed to accommodate transient, recreational motorboats that are 26 feet in length or longer. The PFBC partnered with the Erie-Western Pennsylvania Port Authority to secure BIG funds to construct transient docks in the Presque Isle portion of Lake Erie.

## Lake Erie Watershed

Since the program was created in 2005, the PFBC has acquired Public Fishing and Conservation Easements or properties in the Erie Watershed that have permanently opened up approximately 106,659 linear feet or 20.20 miles of streams to public fishing access. In 2015, the Board of Commissioners approved two more Public Fishing Access and Conservation Easements in the Lake Erie Watershed. The two properties will provide approximately 3,320 linear feet or 0.63 miles of public fishing access along the Lake Erie tributary streams. The two easements will provide 1,600 linear feet of access along Conneaut Creek and 1,720 linear feet along Elk Creek.

## Reynoldsdale State Fish Hatchery Renovations

Renovations at Reynoldsdale State Fish Hatchery in Bedford County began in the summer of 2014 and continued throughout 2015. Despite delays caused by the cold and wet winter, renovations progressed to 75% by the end of the year. The hatchery is undergoing major changes as it is transformed from an older earthen pond rearing system to a modern raceway system. These changes are needed due to the deterioration of the old facility, inefficient use of space and antiquated waste treatment options. The new hatchery complex will contain modern concrete raceways, oxygenation systems and an improved waste treatment system. Completion is expected in early 2016. The Commission continues to raise trout on-site while the construction is in progress.



## Fish Production

Trout production was successful in 2015 and well-received by the anglers of the Commonwealth. Although stocking trout was challenging during the lingering cold temperatures in the spring, the Commission produced 3.2 million adult trout and stocked all waters prior to the opening days and special mentored youth fishing opportunities. To provide anglers an inside look at trout production, the Commission produced a 10½-minute video and an extended 52-minute video that shows how our hatcheries raise trout, from egg to creel. The videos are available at the Commission’s YouTube channel at [www.youtube.com/user/PAfishandboat](http://www.youtube.com/user/PAfishandboat).

To supplement natural reproduction and provide enhanced fishing opportunities, the Commission imported 236,349 Striped Bass fingerlings from the King and Queen Hatchery in Stevensville, Virginia, and 60,000 Spotted Muskellunge fry from the Hackettstown Hatchery in Hackettstown, New Jersey. The Striped Bass were stocked into Commonwealth waters and the Muskellunge fry will be cultured to fall fingerlings then stocked into Presque Isle Bay. An additional 300,000 striped bass hybrid fry were imported from Arkansas and were stocked into hatchery ponds for future fingerling stockings.

### Adult Trout Stocked

<i>Trout Species</i>	<i>Lifestage</i>	<i>Amount</i>
Brook Trout	Adult	610,672
Brown Trout	Adult	839,668
Rainbow Trout	Adult	1,747,880
Golden Rainbow Trout	Adult	11,741
<b>Total Adult Trout Species</b>		<b>3,209,961</b>

## Internal Resources

### FishBoatPA Mobile App

Just in time for the regular statewide opening of trout season, the PFBC unveiled a new smartphone app to help anglers and boaters better navigate the Keystone State’s streams and lakes. The “FishBoatPA” app helps Pennsylvania’s fishing and boating community to see which streams have been stocked with trout, how to get to those locations easily, and what other access areas are near their current fishing spot. The new FishBoatPA app was made available for free on both Google’s Play Store and Apple’s App Store in early April ([www.fishandboat.com/mobile.htm](http://www.fishandboat.com/mobile.htm)).

The goal of the app is to meet the needs of anglers who are increasingly using smartphones and improve the fishing and boating experience for our anglers and boaters. Now, they can spend less time looking for information and more time fishing and boating.

Due to the popularity of the stocking page on the Commission’s website, the FishBoatPA app’s opening screen displayed an “Upcoming Trout Stocking” link, which updated in real-time. Users can sort stocking schedules by county and see past and upcoming stockings and the type of trout placed in a water. GIS coordinates allow users to use mapping apps installed on their phones to get directions to their favorite stocking site. The “Near Me” feature uses a phone’s GIS coordinates to locate and display trout waters within 5, 15, 25 and 50 miles of the user. Another prominent feature on the app home page is the link “Get a license today.” This enables users to find an issuing agent near them and to see pricing options for licenses.

The app also links to a “Fish ID” guide with color pictures; a “Learn” section with links to helpful information like tying knots and learning how to properly handle fish; and PFBC rules and regulations. Another option is a “My Trophies” section where anglers can post pictures to share with others using the app. Users can add a title, fish weight and length, the date they landed the fish, and their comments, like the type of lure they used. They can then share their trophies by email, text message or through social media sites like Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest and Twitter.

During the height of the summer season, the FishBoatPA app was updated to display bass fishing information and boating safety resources such as live links to boating safety education courses and the *Pennsylvania Boating Handbook*.

Downloads of the app grew exponentially within the first month of its release and users consistently rated it 4 stars or better. The app’s users totaled nearly 30,000 by the end of the year.

## Leadership Development

The Commission again took advantage of leadership development opportunities offered to state government employees by the Office of Administration (OA). Kathryn “Katie” Brashear, Administrative Officer, Bureau of Engineering, participated in the Commonwealth’s Emerging Leaders program, and Mark Hartle, Chief of Division of Environmental Services, Bureau of Fisheries, took part in the Leadership Development Institute. Both of these programs require a commitment on the part of the employee and their supervisor to invest the necessary time and attention to get the most out of the training to help develop the staff member’s skill set and prepare them for new challenges.

Recognizing the need to proactively help build the capacity of employees and its future leaders, Rick Marther (mentee), Manager of Oswayo State Fish Hatchery, and Brian Niewinski (mentor), Chief of Division of Fish Production Services, are also participating in the OA’s mentoring program while an internal mentoring program is developed for the PFBC.

## Recognition and Awards

In addition to congratulating employees on years of service to the agency and offering anyone the opportunity to praise an employee through the Fishing Hole, the Commission formally recognized a number of individuals in conjunction with its quarterly meetings and also received recognition from outside organizations for accomplishments in 2015. The following are some of the people and programs who received commendation in the past year.

**Wave of Excellence Award:** The Wave of Excellence award is an opportunity for PFBC employees to nominate one of their own for extraordinary workplace contributions. This award is for employees who have gone above and beyond the call of duty in performing their work or who have provided extraordinary customer service for the good of the agency. Winners of the award in 2015 were Deb Stump, Human Resource Analyst, Human Resources Office, and Kathryn “Katie” Brashear, Administrative Officer, Bureau of Engineering.

**2014 Officer of the Year:** WCO Anthony J. Quarracino from southern Huntingdon County received the 2014 Officer of the Year Award. The PFBC Bureau of Law Enforcement reviews nominations for this award in cooperation with the Northeast Conservation Law Enforcement Chief’s Association. He conducted 27 on-the-water patrol shifts during the 2014 recreational boating season and planned and facilitated five boating safety/boating under the influence (BUI) enforcement details resulting in four BUI apprehensions and assisted other officers with two other arrests. WCO Quarracino



*Pictured are (left to right) Commissioner Gavlick, Katie Brashear, Deb Stump and PFBC Executive Director John A. Arway.*



*Pictured are (left to right) Commissioner Gavlick, WCO Quarracino, Lieutenant Colonel Larry P. Furlong and PFBC Executive Director John A. Arway.*

implemented six special enforcement details focused on the after-hours protection of spawning Walleyes within nursery waters, the spawning run of Striped Bass and in-season trout stocking endeavors. He also conducted five independent boat accident investigations, including one that was a fatal incident resulting in a criminal charge of homicide by watercraft.

**2014 Top Gun:** WCO Mark Sweppenhiser from northern Dauphin and Northumberland counties received the PFBC's 2014 Top Gun Award, which recognizes an officer's outstanding effort in detecting and apprehending impaired boaters during the past year. In 2014, he apprehended and prosecuted 11 individuals for BUI. In addition to his BUI efforts, WCO Sweppenhiser prosecuted one individual for driving under the influence. This is the second year in a row that WCO Sweppenhiser has received this award for his BUI enforcement efforts.



*Pictured are (left to right) Commissioner Gavlick, WCO Sweppenhiser, Lieutenant Colonel Larry P. Furlong and PFBC Executive Director John A. Arway.*

**Lifesaving Award:** WCO Terry J. Crecraft was presented a Lifesaving Award for his heroic efforts during a boating rescue on Woodcock Reservoir, Crawford County, on April 18, 2015.



*Pictured are (left to right) Commissioner Gavlick, WCO Crecraft, Lieutenant Colonel Larry P. Furlong and PFBC Executive Director John A. Arway.*

**Recognition Award:** Garrett Enders and Nick Osman of the Susquehanna Valley High School Fishing Team and their coach, Mr. Tom Prowant, were presented a Recognition Award for their first place win at the 2014 National Bassmaster High School Championship. The Commission is very supportive of youth involvement in fishing—whether it be recreational or competitive fishing—and commended these gentlemen on the time commitment they made to hone their skills and achieve this national championship.



*Pictured are (left to right) Executive Director John A. Arway, Garrett Enders, Tom Prowant, Commissioner Gavlick, and Nick Osman*

**Pocono Proud Community Service Award:** The Commission was recognized on behalf of former Governor Tom Corbett, Senator Lisa Baker, Senator John Blake, Senator Mario Scavello, Representative Rosemary Brown and Representative Mike Peifer for its law enforcement efforts in assisting in the manhunt for Eric Frein who ambushed two state troopers, killing one of them, in September 2014, in Blooming Grove, Pennsylvania.



*Pictured are (left to right) Colonel Corey L. Britcher, PFBC Executive Director John A. Arway and Commissioner Gavlick.*

**Boating Law Enforcement Officer of the Year Award:** The National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) 2015 Butch Potts Boating Officer of the Year Award was presented to WCO Michael Johnson. Officer Johnson is assigned to the central Allegheny County district and previously served in the Southeast Region. Officer Johnson was a top performer in the Southwest Region leading the region in on-the-water boat patrol days and excelling in boat law enforcement and BUI detection skills.



*Pictured are (left to right) PFBC Board President Edward P. Mascharka; Sergeant John G. Hopkins; WCO Johnson; Colonel Corey L. Britcher and PFBC Executive Director John A. Arway.*

**Boating Educator of the Year Award:** The National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) 2015 Boating Educator of the Year Award was presented to James "Jim" Delesandro, a Seasonal Educator for the Commission in the Southwest Region. Since 2004, Jim has taught 122 Boating Education Courses to more than 2,300 adults and youth.



*Pictured are (left to right) Southwest Regional Education Specialist Miranda Smith; Jim Delesandro and Southwest Regional Environmental Interpretive Technician Kristi Niekamp.*

**Resource First Award:** The S.O.N.S. (Save Our Native Species) of Lake Erie Fishing Club was recognized with the Commission's Resource First Award. Established in 1981, the S.O.N.S. champions efforts to protect, conserve and enhance the fisheries of Lake Erie and the recreational fishing that make Erie the fishing capital of Pennsylvania.



*Pictured are (left to right) PFBC Board President Edward P. Mascharka; S.O.N.S. Vice President Ed Kissell; S.O.N.S. President Jerry Skrypzak; and PFBC Executive Director John A. Arway.*

## 21st WCO Class



The 18 WCO Trainees in the 21st WCO Class remain a high priority effort of the PFBC Bureau of Law Enforcement. The cadets commenced a year-long training in July 2015 at the H. R. Stackhouse School of Fisheries Conservation and Watercraft Safety. The class completed Act 120 Municipal Police Officers' Education and Training Program in early December and resumed specific WCO Trainee studies consisting of several phases designed to prepare the cadets for the various aspects of their job duties. It includes instruction in fisheries laws, environmental laws, boat operation and marine law enforcement, officer safety skills, communication skills, and conservation officer skills. The objective is to provide the cadet with the professional skills needed to become a competent WCO. The class is scheduled to graduate and begin working in their assigned districts on June 24, 2016.

## High Hazard Dam Rehabilitation

In the fall of 2015, the PFBC finished the Lake Nessmuk Spillway Upgrade project that originally started in March 2014. Located in Tioga County, Lake Nessmuk provides flood control for the town of Wellsboro and its downstream neighbors. In addition, the 60-acre lake is managed by the PFBC for its fishing and boating opportunities, and the Borough of Wellsboro manages a park facility on the property in partnership with the PFBC.

Though the Lake Nessmuk dam was constructed to protect Wellsboro from flooding, its spillway was insufficient to pass the required spillway design flood without overtopping the embankment. As a result, the dam was designated as high-hazard, unsafe according to current dam safety standards, meaning its failure could result in a significant loss of life, excessive economic losses and significant public inconvenience including a flooded road, washed-out bridge or driveway, and disruption of utilities.

In April 2009, the PFBC was awarded funds through the H2O PA Flood Control grant program administered by the Commonwealth Finance Authority to upgrade the dam to meet current regulations. After extensive on-site preparations and design approvals, the PFBC began construction in March of 2014 on the comprehensive rehabilitation project including 40-foot spillway widening, new primary outlet structure, robust dam embankment drainage system, control tower top replacement, flattening of the downstream embankment slope and armoring the spillway's right abutment with articulating concrete mats.

The large-scale project was completed on time and within budget with the design and construction completed entirely in-house. The resulting structure was approved by PA DEP and subsequently removed from the unsafe list as it now meets current dam safety regulations. Refilling of the lake began at the end of 2015.

In conjunction with the dam rehabilitation project, PFBC collaborated with the Tioga County Bass Anglers and the Reservoir Fisheries Habitat Partnership to place more than 400 wood and rock structures on the dry lake bed early in 2015. The Partnership administered over \$25,000 in grant funding from Shell Appalachia to purchase habitat materials. Shell Appalachia has designated an additional \$10,000 for habitat structures that will be placed by boat when the lake is refilled.

### 2015 Bureau of Law Enforcement

- Court Cases Prosecuted – 5,943
- Warnings for Violations – 32,264
- On Board Safety Evaluations – 28,984
- Crimes Codes – 31
- Pollutions Investigated – 155
- Boating Under the Influence – 49
- Marcellus Shale (MS) Investigated – 14
- MS Cases Pending – 6
- MS Cases Closed – 8
- MS Cases Settlement Money - \$8,875
- Snake Permits – 1,058
- Turtle Permits – 26
- Special Activity Permits – 2,431
- Lake Erie Seine Net Permits – 34



Lake Nessmuk, Tioga County

## Lease Agreement Strengthens Somerset Lake Partnership

The Commission manages 468 acres of property on behalf of the Commonwealth in Somerset Township, Somerset County, which contains a 253-acre lake known as Somerset Lake. The lake offers a variety of fishing and boating opportunities through two boat launches, Big Bass regulations, other species managed with statewide regulations, and Walleyes, Channel Catfish, Muskellunge and tiger muskellunge stockings. The property is also home to the Commission's Southwest Regional Office that includes law enforcement, fisheries management, education and outreach, and property maintenance staff.

In 2015, the Commission approved entering into a long-term lease agreement with Somerset County for a portion of the property that will allow the County to enhance the property's public recreational use and operation. Under the terms of the lease, the County is responsible for the routine maintenance, operation, repair and supervision of the property, excluding the area of the dam and the Commission's Southwest Regional Office. The County may develop, enhance and/or place improvements on the leased area for public recreation or to enhance the operation of the leased area. The 25-year lease agreement requires that the site remain open for public fishing and boating free of charge, ensures fishing and boating will take precedence over other recreational activities, and allows the County to provide expanded opportunities for public recreation at the site.



At a public lease signing in June, the PFBC transferred management of its Somerset Lake property to Somerset County, formally creating the Somerset Lake Nature Park. PFBC Executive Director John A. Arway joined PFBC Commissioner Leonard L. Lichvar and county commissioners John Vatauvuk, Joe Betta and Pamela Tokar-Ickes at the event to sign the lease and discuss future plans for the property.

Through this strategic partnership, the county will be able to enhance the property's recreational use and operation, making it even more appealing to the local community. The property is a popular spot for not only anglers and boaters but outdoor enthusiasts, who come to walk, bicycle and bird watch. This new partnership is a milestone in making the area, including Somerset, a tourist destination spot that contributes positively to the local economy.

The county's Parks and Recreation Board will manage and oversee the Nature Park. Some of the potential future projects may include improving and completing the trail around the lake; upgrading fishing access at the Siemons Lakeview Manor Nursing and Rehabilitation Center by installing a covered fishing pier that complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act; and adding picnic tables, pavilions, grills and restrooms in several locations. Plans also call for improving and reconfiguring existing boat launch areas, and providing a space at the main access area to rent boats, canoes and kayaks.

The dam at Somerset Lake is one of 10 high-hazard, unsafe dams managed by the PFBC on behalf of the Commonwealth. Somerset Lake was lowered 6 feet in January 2012 to reduce pressure on the earthen dam after inspectors documented excessive seepage, and it will remain at that level until an inspection requires further draining for safety or until funding is fully established to reconstruct the facility. The Somerset Lake Action Committee took the initiative to raise over \$100,000 toward the estimated \$8.6 million total cost to design and repair the dam. The PFBC is currently working with state officials to leverage agency resources with capital budget dollars to complete the project as part of the comprehensive, remediation plan for high-hazard, unsafe dams managed by the Commission.

## Other Dam Safety Activities in 2015

- Completed construction of the dam rehabilitation project at Speedwell Forge Lake in Lancaster County. See page 15 for lake habitat improvements conducted in conjunction with this project.
- Completed the rehabilitation of Colyer Lake Dam in Centre County in partnership with the Save Colyer Lake group, H.R.I. Inc. and Graymont Quarry, including more than 300 rock and wood habitat structures placed in the lake.
- Commenced construction of the rehabilitation of Glade Run Lake Dam in Butler County in partnership with the Glade Run Lake Conservancy. See page 15 for lake habitat improvements conducted in conjunction with this project.
- Completed repairs to the outlet works of Kaercher Creek Lake Dam in Berks County to meet proper permit standards.
- Completed full refill of the lake to the historic normal pool elevation at Leaser Lake Dam in Lehigh County.
- Obtained consultant designer for the Meadow Grounds Lake Dam rehabilitation project in Fulton County.\*
- Continued design and permitting for rehabilitation of the following high-hazard dams:
  - Lower Woods Pond in Wayne County
  - Belmont Lake in Wayne County
  - Minsi Lake in Northampton County
  - Beechwood Lake in Tioga County
  - Kyle Lake in Jefferson County\*
  - Tamarack Lake in Crawford County
  - Donegal Lake in Westmoreland County
  - Somerset Lake in Somerset County\*
- Continued design and permitting for removal of the following dams:
  - Hankins Pond in Wayne County
  - Mountain Springs Lake in Luzerne County
- Commenced design process after draining Miller Pond and White Oak Pond in Wayne County due to deficiencies in the dams. Seasons, sizes and creel limits were lifted to encourage anglers to harvest fish prior to a fish salvage effort.



*Colyer Lake Dam, Centre County*



*Groundbreaking Ceremony at Glade Run Lake, Butler County*

\*Denotes planned lake habitat improvements.

## Catch-and-Release Regulations for Lakes

In September, the Commission approved the designation of five lakes as catch and release lakes in order to restore the fisheries. Each of the lakes were lowered or drained in recent years to repair or rebuild dams. They include Colyer Lake, Potter Township, Centre County; Speedwell Forge Lake, Elizabeth Township, Lancaster County; Lake Jean, Ricketts Glen State Park, Luzerne and Sullivan counties; Lower Owl Creek, Tamaqua, Schuylkill County; and Lake Nessmuk, Wellsboro, Tioga County. The PFBC will monitor fish populations at the lakes while they develop and recommend appropriate regulations once the fisheries are rebuilt in order to continually provide high quality recreational angling opportunities.

## New Centre Regional Office

The year began with the Commission taking ownership of a vacant warehouse and office building that allows for the consolidation of 14 operations and buildings into a single facility. The Bureau of Engineering worked throughout 2015 on cleaning, basic upgrades to heating and electrical systems, and renovations to the Centre Regional Office (CRO) to allow for the Northcentral Region Law Enforcement Office staff to move in on November 2, 2015. The remainder of Pleasant Gap and Bellefonte staff and operations will move into the newly acquired building at a later date. The CRO fulfills a long-time agency goal to consolidate and improve the office conditions for Commission staff in Centre County, provide enhanced accessibility for public, and provide indoor and outdoor storage space for agency equipment and vehicles.



Centre Regional Office

## 2015 Website Statistics

Top Ten Pages by Page View	
1.	Home Page=121,743
2.	Trout Stocking-GIS=64,901
3.	Trout Stocking-GIS Redirect=34,933
4.	Buy a License =26,507
5.	Fast Facts Trout=24,908
6.	Outdoor Shop-Redirect=22,514
7.	County Guide Index=22,132
8.	Fishing Near You=19,839
9.	Inland Regulations=19,637
10.	Stocking Overview=18,698

Total Web Page Visits
3,804,117



Web Page Visits by State
Pennsylvania=2,545,708
New York=180,630
District of Columbia=153,997
New Jersey=120,242
Ohio=93,623
Maryland=52,470
Texas=43,837
Michigan=43,364
Virginia=42,571
Other=40,556
<b>Total United States Visits=3,707,590</b>

**Fiscal Year 2014-2015 Report**  
*as of December 31, 2015 (unaudited)*

**EXPENDITURES**

**Fish Fund**

Personnel	\$25,123,312
Operating	\$9,057,963
Fixed Assets	\$1,022,090
Grants	\$1,356,763
<b>Fish Fund Total</b>	<b>\$36,560,128</b>

**Boat Fund**

Personnel	\$9,522,369
Operating	\$2,641,429
Fixed Assets	\$807,100
Grants	\$6,341
<b>Boat Fund Total</b>	<b>\$12,977,239</b>

**Fish Fund & Boat Fund Total**

Personnel	\$34,645,681
Operating	\$11,699,392
Fixed Assets	\$1,829,190
Grants	\$1,363,104
<b>Fish &amp; Boat Fund Total</b>	<b>\$49,537,367</b>

**Fiscal Year 2014-2015 Report**  
*as of December 31, 2015 (unaudited)*

**REVENUE**

**Fish Fund**

Licenses & Fees	\$25,869,679
Fines & Penalties	\$402,438
Miscellaneous	\$2,031,719
Augmentations	\$8,093,001
<b>Fish Fund Total</b>	<b>\$36,396,837</b>

**Boat Fund**

Licenses & Fees	\$7,535,259
Fines & Penalties	\$258,629
Miscellaneous	\$2,214,882
Federal	\$3,483,444
<b>Boat Fund Total</b>	<b>\$13,492,214</b>

**Fish Fund & Boat Fund Total**

Licenses & Fees	\$33,404,938
Fines & Penalties	\$661,067
Miscellaneous	\$4,246,601
Federal	\$11,576,445
<b>Fish &amp; Boat Fund Total</b>	<b>\$49,889,051</b>

**Trout Stocked and Distributed to Cooperative Nurseries**

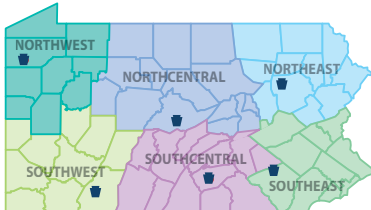
Trout Species	Lifestage	Amount
Brook Trout	Adult	610,672
	Fingerling	86,664
	Fingerling to Coops.	408,285
Brown Trout	Adult	839,668
	Fingerling	545,186
	Fingerling to Coops.	264,178
Rainbow Trout	Adult	1,747,880
	Fingerling	425,831
	Fingerling to Coops.	516,356
Golden Rainbow Trout	Adult	11,741
	Fingerling to Coops.	12,045
<b>Total Trout Species</b>		<b>5,468,506</b>

**2015 Cooperative Nursery 50 Year Award Certificates**

- Marienville Rod & Gun Club
- Reynoldsville Sportsmen Club

**Warmwater/Coolwater Fish Production and Stocking**

Species	Lifestage	Amount
American Shad	Fry	2,445,073
Bluegill	Fingerling	12,050
Brown Bullhead	Fingerling	3,611
Channel Catfish	Fingerling	149,376
Channel Catfish	Yearling	1,600
Flathead Catfish	Adult	25
Lake Trout	Fingerling	9,000
Lake Trout	Yearling	54,000
Largemouth Bass	Fingerling	65,504
Muskellunge	Fingerling	150,525
Muskellunge	Yearling	2,692
Northern Pike	Fingerling	3,869
Rainbow Trout Steelhead	Yearling	986,232
Striped Bass	Adult	200
Striped Bass	Fingerling	276,600
Striped Bass Hybrid	Fingerling	192,967
Tiger Muskellunge	Fingerling	72,091
Walleye	Fry	45,154,000
Walleye	Fingerling	832,925
White Crappie	Fingerling	142,207
Yellow Perch	Fingerling	2,500
<b>Grand Total of all Species</b>		<b>50,557,047</b>



Online Summary Book:  
[www.fishinpa.com](http://www.fishinpa.com)

To purchase fishing licenses online:  
[www.GoneFishingPa.com](http://www.GoneFishingPa.com)

iFish  
a menu of fishing resources from PFBC



<http://fishandboat.com/ifish.htm>

iBoat  
a menu of boating resources from PFBC



<http://fishandboat.com/iboat.htm>

Use your smartphone (with a QR code app)  
and the QR codes above to access  
PFBC web pages.

FOLLOW US ON:



Facebook: PaFishandBoat

YouTube: PaFishandBoat

Twitter: @fishandboat

Mobile App: [www.fishandboat.com/mobile.htm](http://www.fishandboat.com/mobile.htm)

## FOR MORE INFORMATION:

### STATE HEADQUARTERS

1601 Elmerston Avenue  
P.O. Box 67000  
Harrisburg, PA 17106  
Phone: (717) 705-7800  
Hours: 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.  
Monday through Friday

### WEBSITE:

[www.fishandboat.com](http://www.fishandboat.com)

### PLEASANT GAP COMPLEX

450 Robinson Lane  
Bellefonte, PA 16823  
Phone: (814) 359-5110  
Hours: 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.  
Monday through Friday

### BOATING SAFETY EDUCATION COURSES

Phone: (888) 723-4741

### FISHING LICENSES:

Phone: (877) 707-4085

### BOAT REGISTRATION/TITLING:

Phone: (866) 262-8734

### PUBLICATIONS:

Phone: (717) 705-7835

## REGION OFFICES: LAW ENFORCEMENT/EDUCATION

Contact **Law Enforcement** for information about regulations and fishing and boating opportunities.  
Contact **Education** for information about fishing and boating programs and boating safety education.

### NORTHWEST REGION

11528 SH 98, Meadville, PA 16335  
*Law Enforcement:* (814) 337-0444  
*Outreach & Education:* (814) 336-2426  
Fax (814) 337-0579 Fax (814) 337-0579  
Counties: Butler, Clarion, Crawford, Erie,  
Forest, Lawrence, Mercer, Venango, Warren

### SOUTHWEST REGION

236 Lake Road, Somerset, PA 15501  
*Law Enforcement:* (814) 445-8974  
*Outreach & Education:* (814) 443-9841  
Fax (814) 445-3497 Fax (814) 445-3497  
Counties: Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver,  
Cambria, Fayette, Greene, Indiana, Somerset,  
Washington, Westmoreland

### NORTHCENTRAL REGION

595 East Rolling Ridge Drive  
Bellefonte, PA 16823  
*Law Enforcement:* (814) 359-5250  
*Outreach & Education:* (814) 359-5193  
Fax (814) 359-5254 Fax (814) 359-5153  
Counties: Cameron, Centre, Clearfield,  
Clinton, Elk, Jefferson, Lycoming, McKean,  
Montour, Northumberland, Potter, Snyder,  
Tioga, Union

*Office hours from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday*

### SOUTHCENTRAL REGION

1704 Pine Road, Newville, PA 17241  
*Law Enforcement:* (717) 486-7087  
*Outreach & Education:* (717) 486-7352  
Fax (717) 486-8227 Fax (717) 486-8227  
Counties: Adams, Bedford, Blair, Cumberland,  
Dauphin, Franklin, Fulton, Huntingdon,  
Juniata, Lebanon, Mifflin, Perry, York

### NORTHEAST REGION

5566 Main Road, Sweet Valley, PA 18656  
*Law Enforcement:* (570) 477-5717  
*Outreach & Education:* (570) 477-2206  
Fax (570) 477-3221 Fax (570) 477-2621  
Counties: Bradford, Carbon, Columbia,  
Lackawanna, Luzerne, Monroe, Pike, Sullivan,  
Susquehanna, Wayne, Wyoming

### SOUTHEAST REGION

P.O. Box 9, Elm, PA 17521  
*Law Enforcement:* (717) 626-0228  
*Outreach & Education:* (215) 968-3631  
Fax (717) 626-0486 Fax (215) 968-1610  
Counties: Berks, Bucks, Chester, Delaware,  
Lancaster, Lehigh, Montgomery, Northampton,  
Philadelphia, Schuylkill

## STATE FISH HATCHERIES

### BELLEFONTE\*

1115 Spring Creek Road  
Bellefonte, PA 16823  
(814) 355-3371

### CORRY\*

13365 Route 6  
Corry, PA 16407  
(814) 664-2122

### FAIRVIEW

2000 Lohrer Road  
Fairview, PA 16415  
(814) 474-1514

### BENNER SPRING

1735 Shiloh Road  
State College, PA 16801  
(814) 355-4837

### HUNTSDALE\*

195 Lebo Road  
Carlisle, PA 17013  
(717) 486-3419

### LINESVILLE\*

13300 Hartstown Road  
Linesville, PA 16424  
(814) 683-4451

### OSWAYO\*

96 State Route 244 East  
Coudersport, PA 16915  
(814) 698-2102

### PLEASANT GAP\*

450 Robinson Lane  
Pleasant Gap, PA 16823  
(814) 359-5121

### PLEASANT MOUNT\*

229 Great Bend Turnpike  
Pleasant Mount, PA 18453  
(570) 448-2101

### REYNOLDSDALE\*

162 Fish Hatchery Road  
New Paris, PA 15554  
(814) 839-2211

### TIONESTA\*

172 Fish Hatchery Lane  
Tionesta, PA 16353  
(814) 755-3524

### TYLERSVILLE

43 Hatchery Lane  
Loganton, PA 17747  
(570) 725-3965

### UNION CITY

9450 Route 6  
Union City, PA 16438  
(814) 438-2222

\* Includes visitor center. Visitors are welcome  
from 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. daily.  
Groups should make advance arrangements.

[www.fishandboat.com](http://www.fishandboat.com)