

Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission

2024 ANNUAL REPORT



photos-courtesy of Liz Johnson and PFBC archives

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

FishandBoat.com



SPECIAL SECTION AND STATEWIDE INITIATIVES

Conservation is a Team Sport

by **Timothy D. Schaeffer**

Executive Director

A colleague of mine from another state is fond of saying, “Conservation is a team sport.” He is right.

When we prepare our Annual Report each year, the teamwork that goes into implementing our mission to protect, conserve, and enhance aquatic resources, and provide fishing and boating opportunities always shines through. That is why it was easy to choose “partnerships” as a theme for showcasing the past year.

Every single one of the initiatives you will read about in the following pages has a partnership somewhere in its plan for success. From ones with sister state and federal agencies and nongovernmental organizations like the tree planting pictured below to interstate efforts to keep boaters safe on the water, this collaborative approach is yielding results that are too numerous to mention.

That spirit of collaboration runs deep within the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC). Our

staff consistently rely on their colleagues from different bureaus and divisions within the agency to cooperatively advance projects and initiatives that benefit Pennsylvania’s anglers, boaters, and aquatic resources.

Personally, I don’t know any other way to operate. My default is always to engage others and look for common ground to further mutual interests. That is often easier said than done, but if your intentions are true and you have the good of the resource and those who rely on it in mind, it is worth the work and the wait.

Two of the most important partnerships we have are with the Pennsylvania House of Representatives and Pennsylvania Senate, which is why it is a pleasure to present this annual snapshot of some of the things we did in the past year across the Commonwealth. Section 503(b) of Title 30 (the Fish and Boat Code) requires us to submit this report, but we would honestly do it even if we did not have to complete it. The stewardship entrusted to our agency ultimately derives from state law, and that stewardship is facilitated and made stronger when done in partnership with the General Assembly.

Glad we are all on the same team!



In 2024, trees and shrubs were planted at PFBC’s Mahantango Access along the Susquehanna River, Snyder County, by conservation partners. See page 19.

SPECIAL SECTION: PARTNERSHIPS FOR SUCCESS

The endless fishing and boating opportunities across Pennsylvania are best enjoyed with others. While the PFBC's mission is to protect, conserve, and enhance the Commonwealth's aquatic resources and provide fishing and boating opportunities, our agency doesn't succeed alone. Partnerships with public and private entities, non-profit organizations, and individuals on the local, state, and federal levels expand the PFBC's service to anglers, boaters, conservationists, and the aquatic resources we all enjoy.

Cooperative Nurseries

The PFBC partners with more than 160 cooperative nurseries (co-ops) statewide operated by sportsmen's groups, schools, and other volunteer organizations. These groups receive fingerling-size trout from the PFBC, which are raised to adult size at each co-op's local facilities. Collectively, co-ops contribute approximately 1 million trout that are stocked into public waterways in addition to the 3.2 million trout raised at PFBC hatcheries. In 2024, the PFBC awarded approximately \$198,000 for 32 projects through its Cooperative Nursery Grant Program to support various co-op needs, including infrastructure upgrades.



Eldred Conservation Club, McKean County, was awarded a grant in the amount of \$31,848 to replace its aging raceway used to raise trout.

Education Experiences

The PFBC ensures that everyone has the opportunity to learn basic skills needed to find adventure on the water. Education staff in partnership with certified fishing and boating instructors, Waterways Conservation Officers (WCOs), and local volunteers reached thousands of new and experienced anglers and boaters in their communities across the Commonwealth. In 2024, the PFBC provided \$203,527 in R3 (Recruit, Retain, Reactivate) Grant funding to support 19 education projects in 17 counties and one statewide project.



Glossbrenner United Methodist Church, Lancaster County, was awarded \$20,685 through the R3 Grant Program to purchase canoes, PFDs, and other gear for its experiential education program.

Local Partnerships

It's good to have friends. The PFBC's impact in local communities is amplified through partnerships with sportsmen's clubs, local watershed associations, civic organizations, and "Friends" groups who volunteer, participate in adopt-an-access programs, stock fish, or raise funds to provide additional maintenance and amenities above and beyond the PFBC's ability. Here are a few examples:

Access to the Water

Safe and convenient access to Pennsylvania's 86,000 miles of rivers, lakes, and streams is a top priority within PFBC's strategic plan and is not possible without local partners. From small boat launches for unpowered kayaks and canoes, to large-scale marina improvements, many projects are funded annually through the Boating Facility Grant Program. In 2024, the PFBC awarded \$1,693,600 for 13 projects involving the planning, acquisition, development, expansion, and rehabilitation of public boating facilities. Thanks to a \$1,000,000 grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation under the Delaware River Basin Conservation Act, special consideration was given to proposed projects within the Delaware River Watershed, resulting in five impactful projects within the watershed.



In October, the PFBC joined the Lackawaxen River Trails group to dedicate Sycamore Point Park, Wayne County, which includes a new boat launch funded in part through the Boating Facility Grant Program.



Statewide Partnerships

Aquatic resource management requires an incredible amount of cooperation and collaboration with other Commonwealth agencies and statewide conservation organizations. The PFBC is proud to partner regularly with other professionals in various fields including fisheries science,

wildlife biology, law enforcement, engineering, transportation, health, and education. While many statewide partnerships result from common interests in fishing and boating, other relationships reflect PFBC's wide-reaching mission and the benefits of the agency's work for all Pennsylvanians.

Clean Water

Pollution in our waterways comes in many forms from petroleum products and pesticides to fertilizers and even improperly disposed of pharmaceuticals. The PFBC works closely with other agencies including the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PA DEP), Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture (PDA), Pennsylvania Department of Health (PA DOH), and Pennsylvania Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs (PA DDAP) to prevent pollution and hold violators accountable. While reducing water pollution is a direct benefit to aquatic life, anglers, and boaters, clean water resulting from PFBC programs benefits all Pennsylvanians and others living downstream in neighboring states.

Governor's Invasive Species Council

The PFBC is proud to have a seat at the table of this multi-agency group, which also includes the PDA, PA DCNR, PA DEP, PA DOH, PennDOT, and PGC. Together, the agencies and non-governmental partners, such as Conservation Districts statewide, work to identify invasive plant, insect, and animal species including fish and other aquatic life that currently threaten or potentially threaten Pennsylvania's natural and agricultural resources and the industries they support. Each May, the Council celebrates Pennsylvania Native Species Day as a reminder that the natural treasures all around us are worth protecting.

Youth Programs

Engaging youth in fishing and boating programs provides tremendous physical and mental benefits that come with outdoor recreation. The PFBC is proud to partner with other organizations, including the Governor's Youth Council for Hunting, Fishing, and Conservation, PA DCNR, Pennsylvania Game Commission (PGC), and Trout Unlimited (TU) to provide youth-specific educational programming. In addition to the PFBC's popular Mentored Youth Trout Day in the spring, several waters across the Commonwealth are designated for youth fishing only, and WCOs, Education staff, and Commissioners attend many youth fishing derbies each year sponsored by sportsmen's clubs statewide. As always, youth anglers under the age of 16 do not require a fishing license. All proceeds from Voluntary Youth Fishing Licenses (\$2.97) are reinvested directly to benefit youth programming.



Photo: Commonwealth Media Services

PFBC Executive Director Schaeffer at a Prescription Drug Take-Back event at the PFBC's Harrisburg headquarters, Dauphin County, in October.



The 2024 Native Species Day was held at Big Elk Creek State Park, Chester County.



In October, members of the Governor's Youth Council for Hunting, Fishing, and Conservation helped unveil the new PA Sportsman license plate, which benefits youth fishing and hunting education.



National Partnerships

As the Keystone State, Pennsylvania is a national leader in aquatic resource management. Many of the PFBC's programs serve as models for surrounding states, and many of the agency's conservation efforts are conducted in partnership with other states and federal agencies for the common good. Approximately 25% of the PFBC's funding comes from federal

excise taxes on fishing equipment and motorboat fuel, while additional federal grant programs help to fund the acquisition of public access to water and enhanced fish habitat projects. The positive results of these federal partnerships are apparent in big cities and small communities across Pennsylvania, in the Chesapeake Bay, and beyond.

Partner with a Payer

The PFBC is proud to join the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) to participate in this program, which places a spotlight on manufacturers of outdoor goods such as fishing tackle. Manufacturers, including many in Pennsylvania, pay federal excise taxes on their products which, in turn, help to fund the PFBC and other state fish and wildlife agencies. In addition to hosting several field and facilities tours for manufacturers to highlight the PFBC's work funded by federal taxes, Pennsylvania fishing tackle manufacturers are regularly featured in the *Pennsylvania Angler & Boater* magazine.

Fish Habitat

Since 2007, the PFBC has partnered with the National Fish Habitat Partnership (NFHP) to implement 34 projects in Pennsylvania waters. Each of the projects meet the mission of the NFHP to protect, restore, and enhance the nation's fish and aquatic communities through partnerships that foster fish habitat conservation and improve the quality of life for people. Representing the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, PFBC Executive Director Tim Schaeffer serves as the Chair of the NFHP Board.

Operation Dry Water

The PFBC's Bureau of Law Enforcement (BLE) is proud to participate in the annual National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) Operation Dry Water campaign. Alongside fellow conservation law enforcement agencies from across the country, the United States Coast Guard, and United States Army Corps of Engineers, PFBC WCOs conduct enhanced Boating Under the Influence (BUI) enforcement around the Fourth of July holiday weekend. In Pennsylvania, it is unlawful to operate any boat while intoxicated with a blood alcohol content of .08% or above, and BUI offenders face similar fines and penalties as those who drive a motor vehicle on the roadway while impaired. In 2024, WCOs arrested 12 individuals for BUI during Operation Dry Water.



Pennsylvania fishing tackle manufacturers are regularly featured in the *Pennsylvania Angler & Boater* magazine.



Concrete reef balls are installed at Blue Marsh Lake, Berks County, as part of a large-scale fish habitat project funded by a grant through Bass Pro Shops and NFHP.



Sergeant Bryan Bendock patrols Lake Wallenpaupack, Wayne and Pike counties.



STATEWIDE INITIATIVES

Out for Trout

On Saturday, April 6, hundreds of thousands of anglers enjoyed the opening day of trout season. A Mentored Youth Trout Day was held on Saturday, March 30. In 2024, approximately 60% of anglers age 16 and over who purchased a fishing license also purchased a trout permit. Combined with youth angler participation, the opening day of trout season and the weeks that follow continue to be a cherished Pennsylvania tradition.

Important 2025 Trout Fishing Dates:

- Saturday, March 29, 2025 (Statewide) - Mentored Youth Trout Day
- Saturday, April 5, 2025 (Statewide) - Opening Day of Trout Season



Mentored Youth Trout Day 2024

Fishing Summary/Boating Handbook

For fishing license year 2025, beginning December 1, 2024, the PFBC published the *2025 Pennsylvania Fishing Summary* and *2025 Pennsylvania Boating Handbook*. The booklet is available free of charge at nearly 700 license issuing agents, can be viewed at **HuntFish.PA.gov**, or downloaded at **fishandboat.com**. It includes fishing regulations and information for powered and unpowered boat operators including basic navigation rules, safety information, BUI, and how to help prevent the spread of Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS).



Limited Edition Fishing License Button

In 2024, 6,822 anglers purchased a collectible fishing license button. The collectible button for 2025 features a classic keystone design similar to many vintage fishing license buttons, with a vibrant conservation green and navy blue color scheme. Once again, a limited-edition production of 10,000 buttons will be produced, and customers will receive a randomly numbered button between 00001-10000.



Fish-for-Free Days

The annual Fish-for-Free Days were offered again in 2024 on May 26 and July 4. The Fish and Boat Code permits the PFBC to offer two free fishing days a year. Dates are selected to coincide with the Memorial Day and Independence Day weekends. Fish-for-Free Days allow anyone—residents and non-residents—to legally fish in Pennsylvania without a fishing license. From 12:01 a.m. to 11:59 p.m. on both days, no fishing license is needed to fish in Pennsylvania's waterways. All other fishing regulations apply.

Fish-for-Free Days in 2025 will be:

- Sunday, May 25, 2025
- Friday, July 4, 2025

Notice of Stocking

Beginning in 2024, anglers who move live fish from one water to another are required to submit a Notice of Stocking (NOS). In addition to existing regulations that govern which types of fish are allowed to be stocked in Pennsylvania and which are prohibited, the NOS allows the PFBC to know about legal stocking activity as a way to improve fisheries management and protect against the spread of Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) and pathogens. Filling out the NOS is a fast, free, and user-friendly process that can be completed online using the **HuntFish.PA.gov** website or a .pdf form and submitting it by email or traditional mail. In 2024, the PFBC received more than 1,700 NOS submissions for 3,949 stocking events on 1,527 different waters.

Calendar Year Boat Registration

As a customer service improvement, the PFBC began issuing boat registrations that coincide with the calendar year (valid January 1-December 31) in October 2023. Renewals and registrations issued after October 1, 2023, were the first to transition to the calendar year cycle and receive registrations with a December 31, 2025, expiration date. Boat registrations issued after October 1, 2024, were the second and final group to transition to the calendar year cycle and will receive registrations with a December 31, 2026, expiration date.

Therapeutic Recreation

Act 1 of 2024, signed by Governor Shapiro in March, allows the PFBC to exempt participants from possessing a fishing license when participating in programs that use fishing as therapy. There are about 60 such events across the Commonwealth each year including those that benefit the mental and physical recovery of veterans who sustained injuries in battle, women who are recovering from breast cancer, and individuals suffering from various other forms of developmental, traumatic, and physical ailments.



photo-courtesy of Pennsylvania Senate Democrats

(Left to right) Senator Jim Brewster, Governor Josh Shapiro, Executive Director Tim Schaeffer, and Senator Greg Rothman celebrate the signing of Act 1 of 2024.

Voluntary Permits

Five years since the start of this program, anglers continue to support their favorite types of fishing through the purchase of voluntary permits. Voluntary permits do not provide any additional privileges, but revenue from each permit is invested directly into their respective programs including Bass, Musky, Wild Trout and Enhanced Waters, and Habitat/Waterways Conservation. In 2024, voluntary permits generated \$100,620. Since 2019, more than \$720,500 has been invested into special projects statewide.

Identifying and Protecting Wild Trout Streams

During 2024, biologists and Unassessed Waters Initiative partners surveyed streams to identify, classify, and protect naturally reproducing populations of trout. Surveyed waters that support natural reproduction of wild trout qualify to be added to the PFBC's listing of wild trout streams and/or listing of Class A wild trout streams. In 2024, the Commission added 143 new waters to the list of wild trout streams and extended the length of 12 waters that were already listed, thus increasing the protection on 305 miles of streams. Fifty-seven new stream sections were added to the Class A wild trout streams list, increasing the protection on 141 miles of streams.



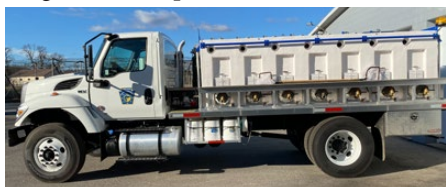
Wild Brook Trout

Faster Boat Registrations

A major success of the agency in 2024 was the elimination of long waiting periods for boaters when registering boats or renewing their boat registrations. Improved communication with customers through the PFBC call center, website, and e-mail led to increases in online renewals and reduced phone call volume. By reducing phone calls by approximately 18%, staff were able to increase their boat registration renewal efficiency by approximately 9% daily. Additionally, the call center waiting time for customers has been reduced by approximately 14%.

Stocking Truck Upgrades

Three new hatchery trucks hit Pennsylvania roads in 2024, providing a much needed upgrade for stocking operations and improving staff safety and efficiency. Upgraded trucks feature the PFBC's familiar white paint scheme and agency logos, a user-friendly cab and chassis outfitted with an aluminum bed, and a double walled insulated aluminum tank coated in fiberglass. The tanks are specifically designed to transport live fish and ensure consistent water temperature and aeration over long distances. Seven more trucks are expected to be added to the PFBC fleet during 2025.



One of the new stocking trucks added to the hatchery fleet in 2024.

Hatchery Capital Projects

Progress continues on the unprecedented effort to modernize the PFBC's 12 state fish hatcheries. In 2022, the PFBC was granted \$76 million in capital funding and matched it with PFBC funds for renovation projects to improve hatchery infrastructure, protect against AIS, and enhance fish culture operations. Some specific major projects include increasing hatch house production at Bellefonte State Fish Hatchery, Centre County; and Huntsdale State Fish Hatchery, Cumberland County. Other projects include raceway upgrades at Oswayo State Fish Hatchery, Potter County, and a new Muskellunge rearing unit at Linesville State Fish Hatchery, Crawford County. During 2024, two projects advanced to the design phase, with six other projects in early stages of planning.

Special Striper Stocking

In summer 2024, the PFBC purchased 15,000 surplus Striped Bass from a commercial fish hatchery in North Carolina for approximately 30% of normal market value. While the PFBC typically annually stocks more than 200,000 fingerling stripers (2 inches long) in Pennsylvania waters, this "special" batch of fish were approximately 10 inches long. Stocking occurred in eight lakes including Lake Nockamixon, Bucks County; Cowanesque Lake, Tioga County; Lake Marburg, York County; Beltzville Lake, Carbon County; Blue Marsh Lake, Berks County; Lake Redman, York County; Lake Wallenpaupack, Wayne and Pike counties; and Raystown Lake, Huntingdon County.

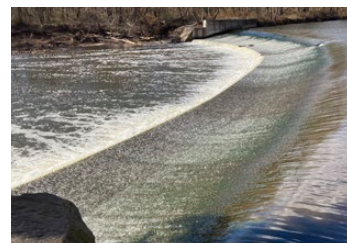
Great Lakes Consortium

In October, Pennsylvania hosted the 2024 meeting of this Consortium in Harrisburg. It was led by the PFBC, PA DEP, and PA DOH. The Consortium is a collaboration of fish advisory program managers from government agencies on fisheries, health, and water quality within the Great Lakes states, provinces, and territories. A common theme among all participants was the challenge of effective communication regarding fish consumption advisories, while also promoting the health benefits of eating fish.

Improving Aquatic Organism Passage

The PFBC's Bureau of Fisheries continued to work with PennDOT, PGC, PA DEP, PA DCNR, and others to improve aquatic organism passage under bridges through improved design and installation practices of box culverts. Since 2009, improvements to these structures have been successful in providing better aquatic connectivity by creating a more natural transition from the culvert to the stream that mimics the natural stream channel. In 2024, the PFBC added multiple colleges and universities to the program, where students help identify road-stream crossings that impede aquatic organism passage and provide valuable in-field, educational opportunities for students studying natural resource management.

Another notable aquatic organism passage project that entered the design phase in 2024 is the removal of the Spring Garden Dam within Tyler State Park, Bucks County. Removal of this dam will eliminate a boating hazard and improve fish passage.



Spring Garden Dam, Bucks County

Law Enforcement Awards

Each year, the PFBC's BLE honors its WCOs with a variety of awards that recognize outstanding service and excellence. In 2024, awards were presented in the following categories:

- **2023 Officer of the Year:**
WCO Matthew Visosky
(Central Erie County)
- **2023 NASBLA Boating Law Officer of the Year (PA):**
Sergeant Michael Blair
(Southeast Region)
- **Top Gun Award:**
WCO Kyle Robinson
(Mifflin and Northern Huntingdon counties)
- **Gerald L. Greiner Environmental Protection Award:**
Sergeant Justin Boatwright
(Northcentral Region)
- **Deputy of the Year Award:** DWCO E. Lawrence Crest
(Northcentral Region)



*Sergeant Michael Blair,
NASBLA Boating Law Officer
of the Year for Pennsylvania*

Right Tool for the Job

During 2024, the PFBC completed a three-year boat replacement plan for law enforcement. Twenty-six new boats are now in service on waterways across the Commonwealth, replacing older vessels that had outlived their usefulness for the purposes of effective law enforcement. Funding for two new patrol boats was secured through the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Port Security Grant Program.



The G3 Bay 20 GX is the type of boat being used on waterways including the Susquehanna River and Pymatuning Reservoir.

26TH WCO Class

In August 2024, the 26th WCO Trainee Class began their training at the H.R. Stackhouse School of Fishery Conservation and Watercraft Safety in Bellefonte, Centre County. After receiving instruction on various fishing and boating related topics, in early September, trainees reported to Mansfield Commonwealth University of Pennsylvania, Tioga

County, to receive certified instruction on policing topics such as the rules of criminal procedure, search and seizure, collecting evidence, and presenting courtroom testimony. After graduation at Mansfield, the class will return to Bellefonte to receive enhanced training on conservation law enforcement. The class will complete their training in the summer of 2025.



26th WCO Class

photo-Bruce Dart

Trout In the Classroom (TIC)

This program continued to expand in 2024, providing educational experiences for students and teachers who raise Rainbow Trout from eggs to fingerlings in aquariums as part of their curriculum. For the 2024-2025 school year, 417 classrooms completed 12,342 hours of TIC-related education, reaching 57,114 students—a 15% increase over the previous year. Schools in 62 counties participated in the program, representing 47% of Pennsylvania school districts. The TIC program is made possible through the partnership between the PFBC, Pennsylvania Council of Trout Unlimited, local TU chapters, Pennsylvania Department of Education, participating schools, and volunteers. Of the 35 states that offer TIC programming in schools, Pennsylvania has the third largest program.

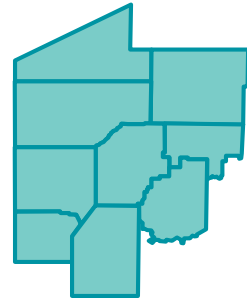


AIS Composting Stations

In 2024, AIS composting stations were installed at select agency boat launches in the western and central regions known for containing AIS such as Hydrilla or Zebra Mussels. While inspecting their boats and trailers prior to leaving the launch area, boaters can now place AIS, aquatic plant fragments, and unused live bait into these stations to compost. Composting stations were installed at Walnut Creek Marina, Erie County; Conneaut Lake, Crawford County; Tamarack Lake, Crawford County; Glade Run Lake, Butler County; Kahle Lake, Clarion and Venango counties; Kyle Lake, Jefferson County; Walker Lake, Snyder County; Opossum Lake, Cumberland County; and Colyer Lake, Centre County. This project was funded through a federal AIS Management Plan grant obtained in partnership with Pennsylvania Sea Grant.

FIRST DISTRICT

Commissioner Daniel J. Pastore



Commissioner Daniel J. Pastore, Fairview, Erie County, represents the First District of the PFBC. He was appointed in June 2019 and was reappointed in October 2023.

The First District includes **Butler, Clarion, Crawford, Erie, Forest, Lawrence, Mercer, Venango, and Warren counties.**

FIRST DISTRICT

Lake Erie Sport Fishing Update

The Walleye fishery in the Pennsylvania waters of Lake Erie was outstanding for the eighth consecutive year, and 2024 yielded the second highest catch rate and the highest harvest rate ever observed in our boat angler survey with records dating back to 1996. Overall, 43% of Walleye trips harvested the creel limit of six Walleye (15 inches or larger) per angler. The age composition of the harvest was 34% age 3, 13% age 4, 25% age 5, and 28% age 6 and older Walleye. The average length of all harvested Walleye samples was approximately 20 inches, with the largest measuring 29 inches. The steelhead tributary fishery continues to perform above expectations. The PFBC partnered with the PA Steelhead Association for a new tributary angler survey beginning in fall of 2022. A survey during the Fall 2023 and Spring 2024 seasons compiled 292 interviews from 107 anglers and documented a 0.97 fish per hour catch rate, which is considered excellent for steelhead.



PFBC Executive Director Schaeffer with a steelhead from Lake Erie, Erie County.

Linesville State Fish Hatchery Open House

On April 13, 2024, the PFBC welcomed several thousand guests to an open house held annually at this hatchery, featuring educational and entertaining activities and exhibits. Visitors enjoyed a Walleye spawning demonstration, live reptile and amphibian displays, fish cooking demonstrations, and fly tying instruction.

Pymatuning Habitat Improvement

In cooperation with PA DCNR staff at Pymatuning State Park, Pymatuning Lake Association (PLA), Crawford County Conservation District (CCCD), and PFBC completed shoreline habitat improvements at Pymatuning Reservoir and stabilized 960 feet of erosion. The PLA was awarded a \$75,000 grant from the Reservoir Fisheries Habitat Partnership, and PFBC Lake Habitat staff guided contractors to place stone structures to enhance fish habitat, improve water quality, and increase shoreline angler access. Additionally, PA DCNR and CCCD worked with Conneaut Lake Middle School to plant a riparian buffer of native trees and shrubs.



New stone deflectors and tree plantings at the Jamestown Campground at Pymatuning State Park, Crawford County.

Sugar Lake Access Improvements

The PFBC invested \$47,400 into this project in Crawford County, which included a new bulkhead and dock, shoreline stabilization, new stone parking surface, and drainage improvements.



Fresh stone and dock at the Sugar Lake Access, Crawford County.

Caged Freshwater Mussel Studies

The PFBC, USFWS, and PA DEP conducted caged freshwater mussel studies in French Creek and the Conneaut Lake outlet. The purpose of the study was to determine the impact of permitted discharges into Commonwealth waters, such as from sewer treatment and industrial facilities. For the study, juvenile plain pocketbook mussels raised at the PFBC's Union City Aquatic Conservation Center were placed in mussel silos both upstream and downstream of known discharge areas from July to October and monitored for growth. This and other studies will ultimately help determine if current discharge limits are adequate for protecting mussels and other aquatic life.

Muskellunge Survey at Pymatuning Reservoir

An early spring trap net survey is annually conducted at this Crawford County lake to assess the PFBC's bi-annual stocking of purebred Muskellunge yearlings. In 2024, 177 muskies were collected, ranging from 25 to 47 inches. All untagged Muskellunge captured were implanted with Passive Integrated Transponder (PIT) tags to track mortality and growth rates. Since 2017, 776 muskies have been tagged. Results from the tagging survey will inform stocking rates and management strategies in the next update to the Muskellunge Management Plan. Pymatuning Reservoir is the main brood source for hatchery Muskellunge production in Pennsylvania.

Protecting the Digger Crayfish

First discovered in northwest Pennsylvania in 2014, the rare digger crayfish was officially listed as an endangered species in March 2024. Extensive studies over the past decade determined that this species was once widespread in the region but was likely impacted by logging and draining of wetlands for agricultural purposes. The species is now known to be present only in two disconnected areas in the Lake Erie and the upper Ohio River drainages. Listing as an endangered species will provide expanded protections for the remaining population of digger crayfish.

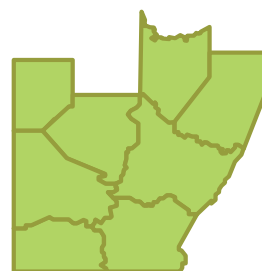


photo: Tampa Khan

In Pennsylvania, the endangered digger crayfish lives only in the Northwest Region.

SECOND DISTRICT

Commissioner John Mahn Jr.



Commissioner John Mahn Jr., Charleroi, Washington County, represents the Second District of the PFBC. He was appointed in December 2021.

The Second District includes **Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Fayette, Greene, Indiana, Washington, and Westmoreland counties.**

SECOND DISTRICT

Abandoned and Derelict Vessels Hearing

In April, the PFBC testified at a hearing of the Pennsylvania House Game and Fisheries Committee in Allegheny County to discuss abandoned and derelict vessels. Each year, boats are abandoned on waters and elsewhere across Pennsylvania, but the problem is particularly rampant in the Three Rivers area of Pittsburgh. The goal of the meeting was to examine current regulations and practices for removing abandoned boats, hear from stakeholders, and discuss practical solutions for improving the process.



Abandoned and derelict boats are not just eyesores, they can be dangerous to people and aquatic wildlife.

Pittsburgh First Catch Program

The PFBC and Venture Outdoors continued a successful partnership in 2024 building on the Pittsburgh First Catch Program, a model supported by the Recreational Boating & Fishing Foundation. From July-October, more than 1,000 people were served through 61 programs, which included Lunchtime Fishing, McKeesport Pop-Up Fishing, and Canonsburg Lake Pop-Up Fishing & Kayaking. Youth programs were offered in Allegheny, Butler, and Washington counties, such as Tykes and Trout, a new program in 2024 that included the opportunity for participants to take part in a trout stocking.



Venture Outdoors' free Lunchtime Fishing program on Pittsburgh's North Shore.

Improved Dock at Dunlap Creek Lake

In 2024, Fayette County completed this project to replace an aging wooden boat dock with a new polyethylene EZ Dock that is wider, more stable, and includes an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant kayak launch. The county was a 2022 recipient of a PFBC Boating Facility Grant in the amount of \$26,000 and provided matching funds for this project, which will enhance boater access at the popular lake for decades.

Southern Redbelly Dace Surveys

Commission biologists conducted surveys on unassessed streams in Beaver and Allegheny counties to determine the distribution of Southern Redbelly Dace. These small fish are a state threatened species that, in Pennsylvania, only occur in the Lake Erie and Ohio River drainages. Fourteen of the 22 unassessed streams contained Southern Redbelly Dace. Knowing the locations of this species allows the PFBC to better protect and conserve their populations from threats such as sedimentation, nutrient loading, and deforestation.



Southern Redbelly Dace

Freshwater Mussel Assessment of Redbank Creek

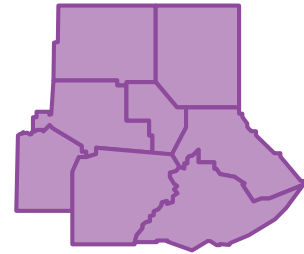
A freshwater mussel assessment was performed in Redbank Creek in Clarion and Armstrong counties. Over the past 50 years, water quality has improved, and mussels have recovered significantly from the impacts of mining, logging, and oil and gas activities during the late 1800s and early 1900s. During this survey, several types of mussels were detected including Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN). Survey results highlight the ability of aquatic communities to recover when water quality is improved. Fewer species were observed at sites upstream of the New Bethlehem Dam when compared to downstream sites.



Freshwater mussels collected in Redbank Creek.

THIRD DISTRICT

Commissioner William C. Brock



Commissioner William C. Brock, St. Marys, Elk County, represents the Third District of the PFBC. He was appointed in July 2017 and was reappointed in January 2022.

The Third District includes **Cameron, Centre, Clearfield, Clinton, Elk, Jefferson, McKean, and Potter counties.**

*Spring Creek before and
after the removal of
beaver damming trees*



THIRD DISTRICT

Foster Joseph Sayers Lake Crappie Regulation Evaluation

In May, trap nets were used to evaluate panfish populations at this Centre County lake, which is managed under special regulations intended to increase the number of large Black Crappies. Prior to the regulation being implemented in 2017, it had few large crappies, but the survey revealed the number of fish over 9 inches has nearly tripled since the regulation change, providing a unique and plentiful fishing opportunity.



A crappie from Foster Joseph Sayers Lake, Centre County.

First Fork Sinnemahoning Creek Stream Habitat Project

The PFBC partnered with the Potter County Conservation District to improve 1,000 feet of this creek in Potter County. Habitat enhancements were funded by the Sinnemahoning Creek Watershed Restoration Grant Program and voluntary permit funds on two properties within the Keystone Select Stocked Trout Waters section. One project is on private property open to public fishing and includes modified mudsills and log cross vanes, while the second project is on public land managed by the PA DCNR within the Susquehannock State Forest and consists of random boulder placement to add cover and resting areas for fish.



Streambank habitat improvements in First Fork Sinnemahoning Creek, Potter County.

Spring Creek Dam Removals

During summer 2024, two low-head dams were removed on Spring Creek, Centre County. These were PFBC-owned dams that previously provided water to the Benner Spring and Bellefonte state fish hatcheries but had become obsolete. Removal of the dams has increased connectivity in Spring Creek to benefit wild trout and other aquatic species.

Spring Creek before and after the removal of Benner Spring Dam.



Kyle Lake Improvements

The PFBC invested \$11,000 into this project in Jefferson County, which included the construction of a new boat mooring area to replace aging infrastructure. The new mooring area provides convenient summer storage for kayaks and canoes.



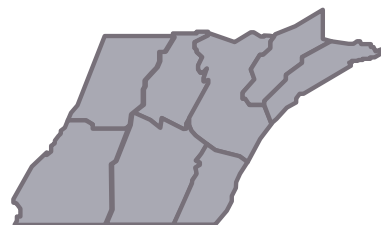
New mooring area at Kyle Lake, Jefferson County.

National Hunting and Fishing Day

The PFBC partnered with Penn State Extension and PA DCNR to offer the annual National Hunting and Fishing Day at Bald Eagle State Park, Centre County. Although it was a rainy day, 58 participants enjoyed fun activities including fishing, fish habitat building, archery, and more.

FOURTH DISTRICT

Commissioner Donald K. Anderson



Commissioner Donald K. Anderson, Meyersdale, Somerset County, represents the Fourth District of the PFBC. He was appointed in October 2018 and was reappointed in April 2023.

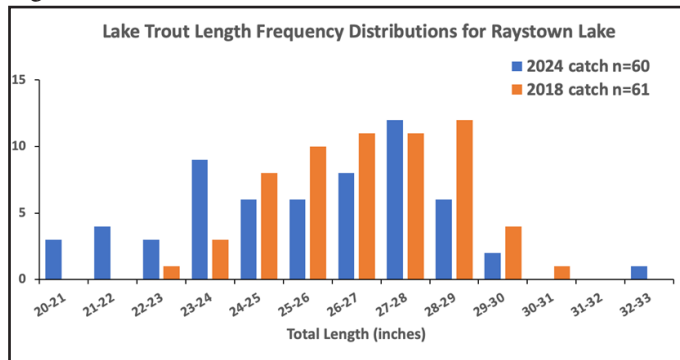
The Fourth District includes **Bedford, Blair, Cambria, Fulton, Huntingdon, Juniata, Mifflin, and Somerset counties.**

FOURTH DISTRICT

Lake Trout Survey at Raystown Lake

In April, biologists conducted a gill net survey to re-inventory the Lake Trout fishery that was previously assessed in 2018. The survey focused on the preferred habitat in the deeper and cooler parts of the lower reservoir. Sixty adult Lake Trout were captured, ranging from 20 to 33 inches long, and weighing at much as 16 pounds. Results were similar to the 2018 assessment, which suggests successful stockings of juveniles (Figure 1). Annual Commission stockings of yearlings during the spring, combined with supplemental stockings from the USFWS's Allegheny National Fish Hatchery during fall, are critical to maintaining the fishery.

Figure 1



A chart compares the amount of Lake Trout caught in Raystown Lake in 2024 vs. 2018.

Restocking Somerset Lake

Following the reopening and refill of Somerset Lake in 2022, the PFBC continues to implement a multi-year restocking plan to reestablish a vibrant, self-sustaining sportfish population. In 2024, stockings included 12,650 Black Crappie fingerlings, 12,650 Bluegill fingerlings, 7,600 Largemouth Bass fingerlings, 5,100 Walleye fingerlings, and 2,500 yearling Channel Catfish.



Somerset Lake, Somerset County

Introduction to Fishing and Boating Education

PFBC Education staff hosted four Introduction to Kayaking programs at Prince Gallitzin State Park and Duman Lake, both in Cambria County. Participants learned about legal boating requirements, proper life jacket wear, water hazards, and basic paddling skills. An Introduction to Ice Fishing program was held at Laurel Hill State Park, Somerset County.



A first-time kayaker learns basic paddling skills at Duman Lake, Cambria County.

High School Field Day at Quemahoning

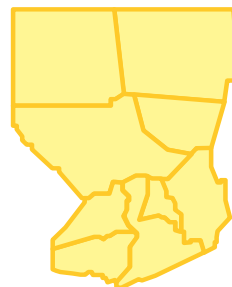
In May, high school students from Berlin Brothersvalley, Meyersdale Area, Rockwood, Salisbury-Elk Lick, Shanksville-Stonycreek, and Turkeyfoot Valley Area school districts gathered at Quemahoning Reservoir for two days of educational activities. Many of the students assisted in constructing lake habitat structures and raising Channel Catfish as part of their school curriculums.



Students get an electrofishing demonstration at Quemahoning Reservoir, Somerset County.

FIFTH DISTRICT

Commissioner Eric C. Hussar



Commissioner Eric C. Hussar, Lewisburg, Union County, represents the Fifth District of the PFBC. He was appointed in October 2014 and was reappointed in June 2019 and October 2023.

The Fifth District includes **Bradford, Columbia, Lycoming, Montour, Northumberland, Snyder, Sullivan, Tioga, and Union counties.**

FIFTH DISTRICT

Delisting of Turtle Creek

In April, the PFBC joined the PDA, PA DCNR, PA DEP, and members of the Northcentral Pennsylvania and Chesapeake conservancies for a celebration to “delist” portions of Turtle Creek, Union County, from the federal Clean Water Act impaired waters list. Since 2013, multiple successful habitat projects on private farm properties along Turtle Creek have reduced excessive siltation, stabilized streambanks, reduced livestock grazing in the stream, and restored an abundant population of aquatic life. To date, restoration work along 4.16 miles of Turtle Creek has resulted in approximately 2 miles of stream being delisted.



A streambank restoration project on Turtle Creek, Union County.

Mahantango Access Buffer Project

In October, the PFBC, PA DCNR, and Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay (ACB) partnered to plant 350 trees and shrubs at the PFBC's Mahantango Access along the Susquehanna River, Snyder County. The riparian buffer will help control flooding, prevent pollution from entering the river, improve water quality, and provide wildlife habitat. The project was funded through a PA DCNR Community Conservation Partnerships Program grant to the ACB.



PFBC, PA DCNR, and ACB staff and volunteers at the Mahantango Access, Snyder County.

Women's Excursion Pilot Program

In October, the PFBC and PA DCNR piloted a Women's Excursion weekend with female Fishing Skills Instructors in Tioga County. Participants biked, hiked, camped, fished, learned survival skills, and completed the weekend with a recreation service project. With the success of this program, it will now be offered in 2025 for advanced participants who have taken part in two or three previous programs and will include fishing in the PA Grand Canyon.



Participants in the Women's Excursion pilot program.

Hammond Lake Fishery Assessment

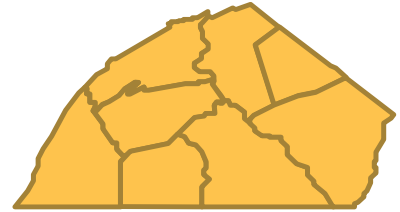
Hammond Lake, Tioga County, was surveyed during April 2024 to assess the panfish and hybrid Striped Bass populations. Black Crappies and White Crappies dominated the panfish catch with 3,440 crappies captured that ranged from 5-16 inches in length. Of the captured crappies, 87% were 10 inches or longer while Bluegill size ranged from 3 to 8 inches with 15% of the 349 captured exceeding 8 inches. Sixteen hybrid Striped Bass ranging from 14-30 inches were captured with the heaviest weighing 14.8 pounds.



A hybrid Striped Bass captured from Hammond Lake, Tioga County.

SIXTH DISTRICT

Commissioner Robert B.J. Small



Commissioner Robert B.J. Small, Mechanicsburg, Cumberland County, represents the Sixth District of the PFBC. He was appointed in July 2017 and was reappointed in January 2022.

The Sixth District includes **Adams, Cumberland, Dauphin, Franklin, Lancaster, Lebanon, Perry, and York counties.**

SIXTH DISTRICT

Zoo Day at the Capitol

In June, the PFBC participated in Zoo Day at the State Capitol in Harrisburg, where the agency displayed a variety of native reptiles and amphibians, including a gartersnake, ratsnake, copperhead, Timber Rattlesnake, box turtle, painted turtle, Wood Turtle, and Bog Turtle. Visitors had the chance to view the animals and hold certain species. Other participants in Zoo Day included the Philadelphia Zoo, Erie Zoo, Lehigh Valley Zoo, and National Aviary in Pittsburgh.



PFBC participated in Zoo Day at the State Capitol in Harrisburg.

Riparian Buffer Planting

Volunteers with the Conodoguinet Creek Watershed Association gathered in April to plant a riparian buffer along the Conodoguinet Creek at the PFBC's Good Hope Access, Cumberland County. Native trees and shrubs planted along waterways provide shade and wildlife habitat, stabilize streambanks, and filter pollution from runoff to enhance water quality.



Volunteers plant native trees and shrubs that are tolerant of wet conditions along Conodoguinet Creek.

Millcreek Co-Op Renovations

In September, the Millcreek Rod and Gun Club, Lebanon County, hosted an open house at their newly renovated co-op facility. Improvements were partially funded by a \$25,000 PFBC Cooperative Nursery grant and included the construction of new poured concrete raceways, a sidewalk, and a roof over the raceways to provide protection to the trout and volunteers during inclement weather.



The new, state-of-the-art trout raceway at Millcreek Rod and Gun Club, Lebanon County.

Lake Marburg Muskellunge Survey

In April, biologists used trap nets to capture 25 Muskellunge from this lake located within Codorus State Park, York County. The fish ranged from 32-45 inches in length, with 40% exceeding 40 inches in length. The catch rate of Muskellunge at Lake Marburg was nearly seven times the established catch benchmark in the PFBC's Muskellunge Management Plan, which is the likely result of increased survival of stocked yearling-sized fish. The PFBC will continue to stock Muskellunge at Lake Marburg in alternate years to maintain this high-quality fishery.



Muskellunge captured during the 2024 survey at Lake Marburg, York County.

Opossum Lake Boat Dock Upgrades

Visitors to this popular lake in Cumberland County will enjoy the new boarding dock at the boat launch. The \$3,000 project increases the capacity for boaters loading gear into their kayaks and canoes, and those waiting to use the nearby boat launch.



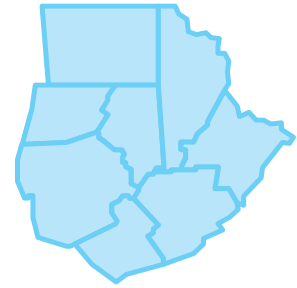
The new boarding dock at Opossum Lake, Cumberland County.

Prescription Drug Take-Back

Pollution in our waterways comes in many forms, including the improper disposal of pharmaceuticals. In October, the PFBC hosted a drug take-back event alongside the PA DOH, PSP, Pennsylvania National Guard, and PA DDAP. The PFBC has a prescription drug drop box in the lobby of the Harrisburg headquarters, Dauphin County.

SEVENTH DISTRICT

Commissioner William J. Gibney



Commissioner William J. Gibney, Honesdale, Wayne County, represents the Seventh District of the PFBC. He was appointed in June 2019 and was reappointed in October 2023.

The Seventh District includes **Carbon, Lackawanna, Luzerne, Monroe, Pike, Susquehanna, Wayne, and Wyoming** counties.

SEVENTH DISTRICT

Lower Woods Pond Dedication

In May, the ribbon was cut on this newly refilled reservoir following an extensive \$2.6 million rehabilitation project, which included the construction of a new dam, spillway, and other infrastructure to meet modern safety standards. The 91-acre lake was mostly drained in December of 2012 when a leak was discovered in the former dam, posing a threat to homes and property downstream. A multi-year fish restocking plan is now underway to restore a robust sportfish population to the lake.



Stocking Golden Shiners in Lower Woods Pond, Wayne County.

Delaware Tailwaters Monitoring

The PFBC and New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NY DEC) jointly manage and monitor the fishery within New York City's Cannonsville Reservoir, located on the West Branch Delaware River. The reservoir provides a significant



A 26½-inch Brown Trout captured during the 2024 West Branch Delaware River survey.

tailwater for wild trout fishing, and in 2024, both agencies continued to report abundant self-sustaining populations of Brown Trout and Rainbow Trout, including many trophy-sized fish. The PFBC and NY DEC biologists annually meet to discuss findings and coordinate management of this high-use, destination fishery.

Fourth of July Safe Boating

In July, the PFBC held a news conference at Lake Wallenpaupack, Wayne and Pike counties, to promote Operation Dry Water. This nationally coordinated event includes enhanced BUI patrols around the busy Independence Day holiday weekend. Other partners including PennDOT and the Pennsylvania Driving Under the Influence Association joined the event to encourage safe and sober driving. Operation Dry Water was held from July 4-6.

PA Outdoor Writers Conference

The PFBC participated in the Pennsylvania Outdoor Writers Association (POWA) conference and summer picnic at Frances Slocum State Park, Luzerne County. As part of the program, POWA members were able to tour a new PFBC patrol boat being used in the northeast region.



POWA members inspect the PFBC's new Boston Whaler 210 Guardian patrol boat.

Damascus Access Rehabilitation

The PFBC invested \$6,500 towards boat launch improvements at this facility in Wayne County. As part of the project, an aging concrete boat launch was removed and replaced with durable precast concrete planks suitable for both powered and unpowered boating.



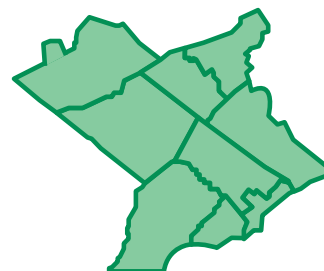
The new boat launch at the Damascus Access, Wayne County.

Mauch Chunk Lake Improvements

Partially funded through the Boating Facility Grant Program, Carbon County rehabilitated the boat launch area at "Site B" of Mauch Chunk Lake. The project also included replacing the old restroom to make it ADA accessible, repaving the parking area and access road, and adding ADA accessible parking spaces.

EIGHTH DISTRICT

Commissioner Richard S. Kauffman



Commissioner Richard S. Kauffman, Leesport, Berks County, represents the Eighth District for the PFBC. He was appointed in July 2017 and was reappointed in June 2019 and October 2023.

The Eighth District includes **Berks, Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Lehigh, Montgomery, Northampton, Philadelphia, and Schuylkill counties.**



EIGHTH DISTRICT

Eco-Camp at Kaercher Creek Lake

For the first time in 2024, the non-profit Berks Nature took residence at the PFBC's Kaercher Creek Park near Hamburg, Berks County. Young campers enjoyed the spacious 31-acre park where weekly activities throughout the summer included fishing, archery, and other fun conservation-related activities.



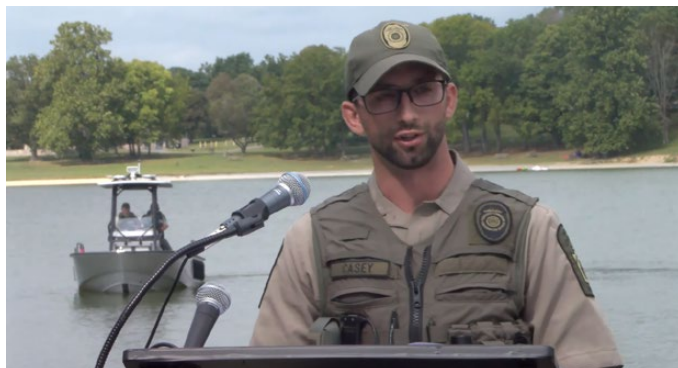
Campers at Berks Nature Eco-Camp at Kaercher Creek.

Pennypack Creek Trout Stocking

In March, the PFBC stocked thousands of trout into Pennypack Creek in Montgomery County and the City of Philadelphia. This is one of the most popular urban fishing locations in the southeast region and receives multiple preseason and in-season stockings.

Labor Day Safe Boating

In August, the PFBC, United States Army Corps of Engineers, and others held a news conference at Blue Marsh Lake, Berks County, to promote safe boating throughout the Labor Day holiday weekend. Pennsylvania's unofficial summer boating season begins on Memorial Day weekend and ends on Labor Day, making end-of-season reminders about regulations, including life jacket wear and sobriety, important.



WCO Shane Casey offers safe boating reminders at Blue Marsh Lake, Berks County.

State Record White Perch

In April, angler Christopher Barrett caught a 2-pound, 1-ounce White Perch while fishing with his dad, Craig, below the Commodore Barry Bridge near Chester, Delaware County. The fish beat the previous record, set in 2008, by 5 ounces.



Christopher Barrett with his State Record White Perch.

Tuscarora Lake Fishery Assessment

In May, biologists conducted a trap net survey to evaluate fish population on this lake in Schuylkill County, which was drained significantly in February for dam repair. The survey revealed no major differences since before the project and still provided an abundant fishery for anglers, especially for panfish. Of those captured, 73% of Bluegill were 7 inches or longer, and 83% of Black Crappies were at least 9 inches in length. Other species encountered were Brown Bullhead, Chain Pickerel, Golden Shiner, Muskellunge, Pumpkinseed, Walleye, White Crappie, White Sucker, and Yellow Perch.



Panfish captured during the 2024 Tuscarora Lake trap net survey.

BOATING- AT-LARGE

Boating-At-Large Commissioners

Two members of the Commission serve at-large and are experienced in boating and water safety education.



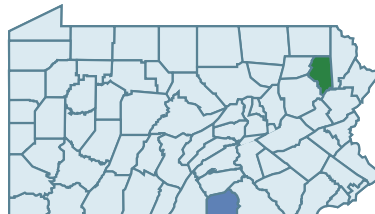
Charles J. Charlesworth

Commissioner Charles J. Charlesworth, Clarks Summit, Lackawanna County, was appointed as an at-large boating commissioner in June 2019 and was reappointed in October 2023.



Richard Lewis

Commissioner Richard Lewis, Gettysburg, Adams County, was appointed as an at-large boating commissioner in July 2017 and was reappointed in January 2022.



Boating Advisory Board

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.

BAB Members:

Rocco Ali, *Chairperson*
North Apollo

Steven Ketterer, *Vice Chairperson*
Harrisburg

Scott Ballantyne
Fleetwood

Loren Lustig
Biglerville

Elizabeth Winand
Wrightsville

National Safe Boating Week

From May 18-24, 2024, the PFBC joined the National Safe Boating Council and other partners to celebrate National Safe Boating Week. A variety of events emphasizing safe boating practices included a statewide news conference and kickoff in Harrisburg, media appearances, social media posts, and e-newsletter communications. The PFBC produced videos for 32 state legislators to promote a safe boating safety checklist for constituents in their districts.



New Rules for Rentals

At their October meeting, the Board of Commissioners voted to enact enhanced regulations for boat rental businesses, also known as liveries. Throughout 2023-2024, the PFBC conducted a wide-ranging survey to gather input from known livery operators, identify new liveries, and learn about current business practices and challenges within Pennsylvania's boat rental industry. Following stakeholder input, several new requirements for livery operators were approved to clarify their responsibilities, ensure the safety and satisfaction of renters, and connect more customers with liveries. The new regulations are effective on January 1, 2025.



For boaters, one of the best ways to try something new is through a boat rental service, also known as a livery.

Low-Cost Boating Safety Course

In December, the PFBC launched a new, low-cost online boating safety education course. The course, offered in partnership with the nonprofit BoatUS Foundation for Boating Safety and Clean Water, is available for only \$17, is approved by both the PFBC and NASBLA, and recognized by the United States Coast Guard. In 2024, the PFBC issued approximately 18,148 boating safety education certificates to students who completed an approved boating safety course in 2024.



Cold Weather Life Jacket Wear

The PFBC continued to spread the word about this important safety message for boaters year-round. From November 1 to April 30, everyone on boats less than 16 feet in length or any canoe, kayak, or paddleboard is required to wear a life jacket. In 2024, the public awareness campaign surrounding this message featured news conferences, social media posts, e-mail blasts, and video PSAs produced for 20 state legislators to share with their constituents.



Water Rescue Training

The PFBC provided more than 6,800 hours of training in 2024 and certified 2,926 students through the Water Rescue Program. Numerous boating, water, and ice rescue courses were conducted in partnership with state partners including PGC, PA DCNR, and PA DEP. Since 1983, the PFBC has trained more than 87,000 students in water rescue operations and is the largest non-profit, public water, and ice rescue training program in the country. Five water rescue instructor training courses were conducted across the Commonwealth resulting in the certification of 53 new instructors from Pennsylvania and neighboring states.

Statewide Statistics

Non-game Permits
Species Impact/PNDI Reviews – 2,071
Scientific Collector Permits/Amendments – 443
Threatened and Endangered (T&E) Species Permits – 68
Biological Opinions/T&E Take Permits – 8
Non-game Special Permits – 47
Organized Reptile and Amphibian Hunt Permits – 5
Venomous Snake Permits – 2,176
Commercial Snapping Turtle Permits – 21

Bureau of Law Enforcement
Citations – 3,227
Crimes Codes – 44
Warnings for Violations – 11,790
Total Boats Boarded – 17,886
Special Activities – 2,510
Pollutions Investigated – 135
Pollution and Disturbances Investigated – 404
Boating Under the Influence – 33
Lake Erie Commercial Permits – 13
School Programs – 264

Boating Accidents
In 2024, there were 10 recreational boating accidents that resulted in 10 fatalities. Only 4 of the 10 victims were wearing life jackets at the time of the accidents. Alcohol or drugs were believed to have been a factor in 2 of the fatal accidents.

Program Type	Count	Participants
Trout In the Classroom	417	57,114
Aquatic Resource Education Programs	34	3,301
Paddling and Boating Programs	13	308
Instructor Training Courses	25	321
Shows and Events	36	22,389 (*Direct Contacts)
Sport Fishing	118	4,390
Total	643	87,823

*Direct Contacts are interactions with the public at the agency show and expo booth. This typically involves providing publications and answering questions.



2024 Fishing License Types	
December 1, 2023 - December 31, 2024	Licenses Issued
1-Day Resident	4,157
Resident	599,607
3-Year Resident	13,683
5-Year Resident	3,393
10-Year Resident	685
Senior Resident	32,424
3-Year Senior Resident	1,686
5-Year Senior Resident	227
Senior Lifetime	14,284
Total Resident Fishing Licenses	670,146
1-Day Tourist	4,941
3-Day Tourist	23,043
7-Day Tourist	8,229
Non-Resident	49,524
Non-Resident PA Student	1,128
3-Year Non-Resident	565
5-Year Non-Resident	98
10-year Non-Resident	16
Total Tourist and Non-Resident Fishing Licenses	87,544
POW Resident Annual	0
POW Resident Lifetime	0
Reduced Disabled Veteran	882
PA Resident National Guard/Reserve	77
Voluntary Youth	8,430
Total Other Fishing Licenses	9,389
Total Licenses	767,079
2024 Fishing Permit Types	
December 1, 2023 - December 31, 2024	Permits Sold
Trout Permit	419,054
3-Year Trout Permit	11,723
5-Year Trout Permit	3,915
10-Year Trout Permit	880
Total Trout Permits	435,572
Lake Erie Permit	23,383
3-Year Lake Erie Permit	263
5-Year Lake Erie Permit	54
10-Year Lake Erie Permit	9
Total Lake Erie Permits	23,709
Combination Lake Erie and Trout Permit	71,460
3-Year Combination Lake Erie and Trout Permit	2,288
5-Year Combination Lake Erie and Trout Permit	722
10-Year Combination Lake Erie and Trout Permit	170
Total Combination Lake Erie and Trout Permit	74,640
Total Permits	533,921

Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Report (unaudited)

EXPENDITURES

Fish Fund

Personnel	\$30,974,415
Operating	\$15,493,843
Fixed Assets	\$2,810,884
Grants	\$687,480
Fish Fund Total	\$49,966,622

Boat Fund

Personnel	\$14,590,343
Operating	\$6,067,089
Fixed Assets	\$2,759,948
Grants	\$411,060
Boat Fund Total	\$23,828,440

Fish Fund and Boat Fund Total

Personnel	\$45,564,758
Operating	\$21,560,932
Fixed Assets	\$5,570,832
Grants	\$1,098,540
Fish Fund and Boat Fund Total	\$73,795,062

Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Report (unaudited)

REVENUE

Fish Fund

Licenses and Fees	\$32,282,976
Fines and Penalties	\$246,721
Miscellaneous	\$3,684,386
Federal and State Grants	\$12,416,246
Fish Fund Total	\$48,630,329

Boat Fund

Licenses and Fees	\$9,045,699
Fines and Penalties	\$195,974
Miscellaneous	\$11,330,955
Federal and State Grants	\$4,313,451
Boat Fund Total	\$24,886,079

Fish Fund and Boat Fund Total

Licenses and Fees	\$41,328,675
Fines and Penalties	\$442,695
Miscellaneous	\$15,015,341
Federal and State Grants	\$16,729,697
Fish Fund and Boat Fund Total	\$73,516,408

2024 Cooperative Nursery 50 Year Award Certificates

- Beartown Sportsmen's Association
- Lost Creek Trout Club
- Marysville Sportsmen's Association
- Norwich Township Sportsman Club
- Starview Sportsmen's Association
- Valley View Gun Club

Trout Stocked by PFBC

Trout Species	Lifestage	Amount
Brook Trout	Adult	184,374
	Fingerling	183,504
Brown Trout	Adult	894,027
	Fingerling	795,500
Rainbow Trout	Adult	2,049,362
	Fingerling	577,358
Golden Rainbow Trout	Adult	15,382
Total Trout Stocked by PFBC		4,699,507

Trout Distributed to Cooperative Nurseries

Trout Species	Lifestage	Amount
Brook Trout	Fingerling to Coops.	100,725
Brown Trout	Fingerling to Coops.	281,214
Rainbow Trout	Fingerling to Coops.	742,999
Golden Rainbow Trout	Fingerling to Coops.	10,720
Total Trout Distributed to Coops.		1,135,658

Total Trout Species (Stocked and Distributed) 5,835,165

Warmwater/Coolwater Fish Production and Stocking

Species	Lifestage	Amount
American Shad	Fry	118,192
Black Crappie	Fingerling	41,250
Blue Catfish	Fingerling	20,000
Blue Catfish	Yearling	12,388
Bluegill	Fingerling	89,400
Brown Trout - ERIE	Yearling	93,264
Channel Catfish	Fingerling	15,250
Channel Catfish	Yearling	80,910
Fathead Minnow	Adult	14,500
Golden Shiner	Fingerling	105,700
Lake Trout	Fingerling	19,000
Lake Trout	Yearling	40,200
Largemouth Bass	Fingerling	17,500
Largemouth Bass	Adv. Fingerling	5,700
Muskellunge	Fingerling	13,000
Muskellunge	Yearling	4,675
Northern Pike	Fingerling	1,200
Rainbow Trout - Steelhead	Fingerling	298,006
Rainbow Trout - Steelhead	Yearling	732,791
Spottail Shiner	Adult	250
Striped Bass	Adult	12,800
Striped Bass	Fingerling	323,213
Striped Bass hybrid	Fingerling	78,092
Tiger Muskellunge	Yearling	4,215
Walleye	Fry	12,875,000
Walleye	Fingerling	782,675
White Crappie	Fingerling	29,500
Yellow Perch	Fingerling	80,500
Grand Total of all Species		15,909,171

Website Statistics

Top 10 Pages by Page View

1. Buy A Fishing License – 373,373
2. Homepage – 361,663
3. Trout Stocking – 187,557
4. Fishing Regulations – 116,942
5. Register/Title A Boat – 76,363
6. Register/Title Unpowered Boats – 67,669
7. Stocking – 53,007
8. Fishing Licenses and Regulations FAQ – 51,344
9. Snakes – 47,770
10. Mentored Youth Program – 46,625

Total Sessions

2,336,466

Total Users

1,503,700

Web Page Visits by State

1. Pennsylvania – 936,187
2. New York – 252,795
3. Virginia – 151,525
4. Florida – 86,905
5. Ohio – 59,866
6. Georgia – 48,986
7. New Jersey – 47,019
8. Michigan – 30,956
9. North Carolina – 28,698
10. Indiana – 21,980

Social Media 2024

(1/1/24 to 12/31/24)

Facebook

Followers	129,738
Posts	485
Impressions	11,449,211
Engagements	163,924
Engagement Rate	1.26%

X

Followers	13,437
Posts	465
Impressions	226,485
Engagements	4,192
Engagement Rate	2.78%

Instagram

Followers	24,647
Posts	418
Impressions	1,247,603
Engagements	86,647
Engagement Rate	3.43%

YouTube

Followers	5,233
Posts	35
Impressions	1,936,015
Engagements	7,339
Engagement Rate	1.40%

LinkedIn

Followers	1,297
Posts	62
Impressions	22,031
Engagements	379
Engagement Rate	1.69%

For More Information:

Headquarters

1601 Elmerton Avenue
P.O. Box 67000
Harrisburg, PA 17106-7000
Phone: 717-705-7800
Hours: 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Monday through Friday

Boating Safety Education Courses

Phone: 888-723-4741

Centre Region Office

595 East Rolling Ridge Drive
Bellefonte, PA 16823
Lobby Phone: 814-359-5124
Fisheries Admin. Phone:
814-359-5110
Hours: 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Monday through Friday

Fishing Licenses:

Phone: 800-838-4431

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 **Outreach and Education** for information about fishing and boating programs and boating safety education.

Northwest Region

11528 State Highway 98, Meadville, PA 16335
Law Enforcement: 814-337-0444
Outreach and 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 and 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 and Education: 814-359-5127
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. If you see anything suspected to be a pollution, a disturbance, or poaching on any waterway, regardless of how seemingly insignificant, report it immediately by calling the local PFBC Region Law Enforcement office listed above during business hours or call the PFBC toll-free hotline: 855-Fish-Kill to leave a message. A pollution or disturbance may also be reported to the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection at 1-800-541-2050 (24 hours a day, 7 days a week).

Southcentral Region

1704 Pine Road, Newville, PA 17241
Law Enforcement: 717-486-7087
Outreach and Education: 717-705-7919
Fax 717-486-8227 Fax 717-705-7831
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 and Education: 570-477-2206
Fax 570-477-3221
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 and Education: 215-968-3631
Fax 717-626-0486
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
P.O. Box 531
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
Bellefonte, PA 16823
814-359-5132

•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

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

FishandBoat.com