

# Pennsylvania TROUT



Fall 2024

Publication of the Pa. Council of Trout Unlimited

[www.patrou.org](http://www.patrou.org)



Eric Null

## Null named executive director

Pennsylvania Council of Trout Unlimited announces the appointment of Eric Null as the organization's executive director.

Null will serve as PATU's representative and provide his leadership to the Coldwater Heritage Partnership, which is the coalition of PATU, Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission and the Foundation for Pennsylvania Watersheds.

Null brings more than 20 years of experience working in coldwater conservation to PATU. He most recently served as Lake Manager, Deep Creek Lake Natural

See **DIRECTOR**, page 2

## Appeal funds support PATU

By Bob Neu  
*Development Committee Chair*

Pennsylvania Council of Trout Unlimited's Annual Appeal letter has hit mailboxes. Please give generously! Your donation provides vital support to ensure the conservation and protection of coldwater habitats in all areas of our Commonwealth.

PATU is a federally certified 501(c)3 Non-Profit Charitable Organization, and contributions are tax-deductible. Donations made to PATU go to work immedi-

ately within Pennsylvania to protect and maintain our pristine rivers, streams, and watersheds.

Of course, you don't need to wait for the Appeal Letter to make a contribution. Visit [www.patrou.org](http://www.patrou.org) and click on the blue "Donate Today!" button.

Want to lock in an extra tax deduction? Here are several ways to qualify. (Be sure to check with your tax advisor or the IRS.):

**Give directly from your IRA:** Many  
See **APPEAL**, page 2

## Oven Run's Resurgence...



Lenny Lichvar Photo

Eric Null, center, newly-appointed executive director of PATU and adjunct instructor for Garrett College of Maryland, leads an electro-fishing survey on Oven Run in Somerset County. For more on Oven Run's rebound after historic abandoned mine drainage remediation, see PATU President Lenny Lichvar's message on page 4.

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## APPEAL

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supporters over 70½ years of age can donate directly from their traditional Individual Retirement Accounts and count the amount toward their annual minimum required withdrawal. With an IRA gift, it's possible to reduce your tax obligation and help build thriving coldwater habitats in Pennsylvania at the same time. You pay no tax on the gift amount, and PATU receives the total contribution tax-free. Talk to your tax advisor or get more information at [www.investopedia.com/taxes/can-i-use-money-my-ira-donate-charity](http://www.investopedia.com/taxes/can-i-use-money-my-ira-donate-charity).

**EITC contributions:** If you own a business or are influentially-placed in a Pennsylvania corporation, you may be able to reduce your corporate PA tax obligation by making a business contribution to PATU under the Educational Improvement Tax Credit program (<https://dc.ed.pa.gov/programs/educational-improvement-tax-credit-program-eitc>). EITC contributions go directly to support Trout in the Class-

room, PATU's signature education program. Each year, over 400 schools across the state participate in TIC.

**Employer match:** Ask your employer if the company has a program to match your individual contribution to PATU. Many businesses have charitable giving policies aligned with the interests of their employees.

**DAF funds:** Do you or your family maintain a Donor-Advised Fund (DAF) for charitable giving at your financial institution or your local community foundation? If so, this is the perfect way to help conserve Pennsylvania waterways and maximize your tax savings at the same time.

**Planned giving:** It's never too early to consider placing a bequest to PATU in your will. Contributions of this type accrue strong tax advantages to your estate and provide long-lasting benefit for PATU's conservation projects. Ask your lawyer or tax adviser.

Have questions? Contact Bob Neu, Development Committee chair, at [development@patrout.org](mailto:development@patrout.org).

## DIRECTOR

from page 1

.....  
Resources Management Area for the Maryland Department of Natural Resources Park Service in Swanton, Md.

Null graduated from California University of Pennsylvania with a Bachelor of Science degree in Wildlife and Fisheries Biology. He has worked in the private sector, county government, state government and the non-profit sector. His primary responsibilities have always been water quality and program management. He is an adjunct instructor of Fisheries Biology and Water Quality Analysis at Garrett College. An avid fly-fisherman and hunter since he was 12 years old, Null has been a fly-fishing instructor since 1999.

"I feel honored to come back to my home in Penn's Woods and direct an organization that I have worked with as a consultant and volunteer member since 1999," Null said. "It feels great to work in Pennsylvania, home to the legacy of some of history's greatest conservationists."

PATU President Lenny Lichvar said,

"Eric's role as PATU executive director signals a change for PATU from the previous position of program manager. The expanded role will allow Eric to maximize his skill sets to assist our State Council as well as our volunteer members to achieve their project goals in coldwater and wild trout conservation. This is the beginning of a new era for PATU."

Since the founding of PATU in 1963, the mission has been to "conserve, protect, restore and sustain Pennsylvania's coldwater fisheries and their watersheds, especially our wild trout resources." Trout Unlimited chapters restore streams through habitat improvement projects. They also conduct education and outreach programs to educate the next generation about the importance of clean water and wild trout.

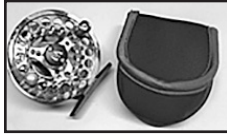
PA Council provides grant support to local chapters, tracks and comments on coldwater conservation issues and state agency trout policy programs and serves as a unified voice for the 49 local chapters representing over 15,000 members statewide. Additional information can be found at [www.patrout.org](http://www.patrout.org).



# Holidays are the perfect time to pick up some PATU merchandise

If you're considering giving your trout fishing buddies something meaningful, or simply want to treat yourself to a gift for the holidays, you need to look no further than what's currently available from the PATU Merchandise Collection at [www.patrou.org/index.php/merchandise](http://www.patrou.org/index.php/merchandise).

As an example, we're offering a really cool fly-reel with a unique brook trout finish in two sizes; a 3/4-weight that will pair beautifully with our Ultralight 9-foot, 3-weight fly-rod, and a 5/6-weight to use with our 9-foot, 5-weight 7-piece Traveler fly-rod. These durable large arbor all-aluminum reels feature a rugged adjustable disc drag and are easily convertible from left to right-hand retrieve.



Or consider purchasing our custom-tied leaders in both dry- and wet-fly configurations, PA-TU-logoed hats and T-shirts, "Back the Brookie" decorative license plates and refrigerator magnets, "Catch & Release" license frames, plus a number of books on PA fly-fishing.

It's easy to order merchandise online using a credit card or PayPal, or simply fill out the order form on page 9 and mail with your personal check to the address on the form. And please remember...your purchases help fund your Council's coldwater conservation projects in PA!

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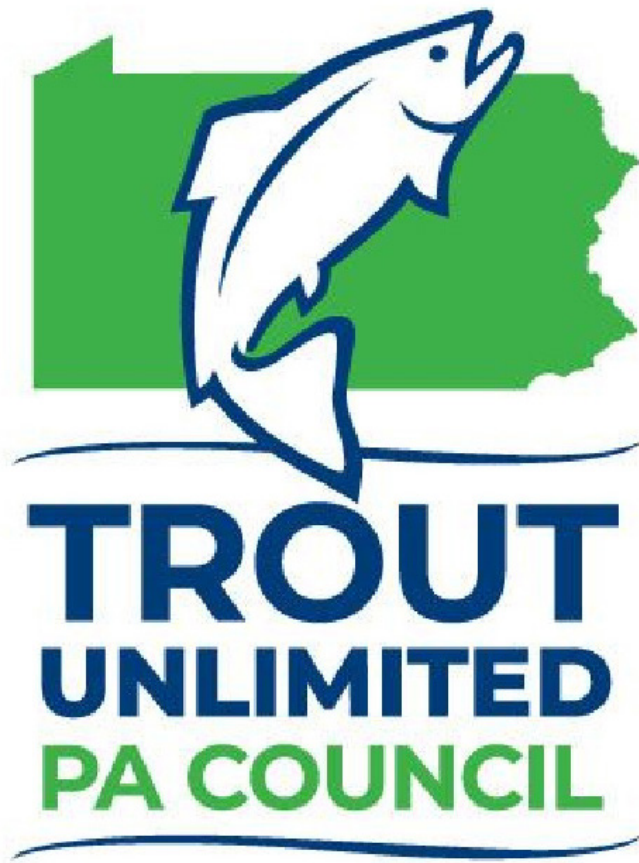
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The Pennsylvania Council of Trout Unlimited would like to thank the businesses on the next page for sponsoring the digital edition of *PA Trout*.

For information on how to become a sponsor of the digital edition or to advertise in the printed newsletter, please contact Brad Isles.

Contact information is available on pages 2-3.

*Digital edition sponsorship is \$25 per issue for an approximately 3.5-inch by 3-inch ad that runs online only.*

*Print ad costs vary by size.*



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# Headwaters

**A message from PATU President  
Lenny Lichvar**

In 1992, the Johnstown-based Mountain Laurel Chapter of Trout Unlimited was asked to sponsor the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service's federally required public meeting to inform the community about the significant amount of funding and effort that was about to be invested in the local region on an initiative known then and now as the "Oven Run Project."

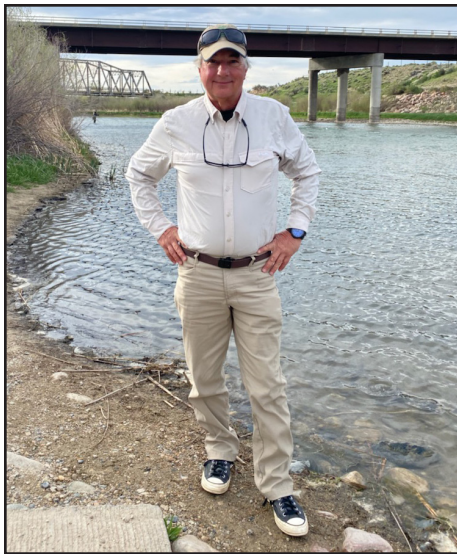
I was one of the principle speakers at the gathering who, along with other speakers, made a bold promise that one of the most polluted waterways in the northeastern United States was going to be significantly improved. Many of the attendees visibly scoffed at what we claimed was going to occur.

Here is a brief summary of what actually transpired in the following years.

The primary goal of the historic abandoned mine drainage (AMD) remediation efforts, centered in the Oven Run watershed, a sub-watershed of the Stonycreek River in Somerset County, initiated in the early 1990s was never intended to restore the aquatic life of Oven Run itself.

Those efforts, pioneered by the Somerset and Cambria County Conservation Districts, led to the formation of the Stonycreek-Conemaugh River Improvement Project (SCRIP) which then empowered federal and state agencies along with local non-profits and volunteer groups to begin the daunting task of constructing AMD treatment systems. The Stonycreek River was the target to be improved. Oven Run was to be the sacrificial lamb.

Fast forward to over 25 years later and with the reconstruction of four of the Oven Run systems by the Somerset Conservation District as well as a fifth system completely rehabilitated by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection Bureau of Abandoned Mine Reclamation (PADEP BAMR), more alkalinity is being generated, more metals are being removed and more water is now treated. Also contributing are 19 other AMD treatment systems that have been constructed in the



Stonycreek River watershed as a result of the momentum generated by the Oven Run projects.

The sampling data collected by InnoH2O, under contract by the Somerset Conservation District, has clearly demonstrated that water quality in the Stonycreek River is being improved beyond the initial enhancements initially generated by the original Oven Run treatment systems.

This documented data knowledge led the Somerset Conservation District to attempt to determine what impact all this just might be having on Oven Run, which has been devoid of aquatic life for 125 years. The District organized an electro-fishing expedition, in cooperation with Garrett College of Maryland, on Oven Run in August 2024.

This first-ever fish survey of Oven Run made a monumental discovery. In the 100-meter section that was sampled, five species of fish were found. A total of 58 individual fish were documented, which included white suckers, creek chubs, northern hog suckers, longnose dace and blacknose dace. A young of the year creek chub was identified, indicating that natural reproduction is occurring in Oven Run. In addition, caddis larva and crayfish were also found.

A newspaper article dated July 9, 1993, in the *Johnstown Tribune-Democrat* headlined that the Oven Run project, "Aims to resurrect the Stonycreek River." Today it can be readily seen that this multi-million dollar effort, combined with thousands of

**Continued on next page...**



Lenny Lichvar Photo

**Fish captured during the survey of Oven Run.**



...Continued from previous page

hours of professional and volunteer contributions, has done just that. The result has been the creation of opportunities for outdoor recreation that has created an eco-tourism boom and generated an economic engine that had previously not existed in the Cambria-Somerset region. This natural resource conservation effort is the foundation that all the other more recent recreational oriented initiatives in the region have been built on.

Recent articles in the *Johnstown Tribune-Democrat* have been titled “Outdoor Enthusiasts give Tour of Region’s Amenities” and “National Coalition visits Johnstown to see examples of rural reinvention.” These and many other realizations now demonstrate that the foresighted vision generated over 30 years ago by a small group of local conservation-minded citizens, as described back in 1993, have more than achieved their intended goal.

Inquiries have now been made to take an even greater leap of faith by potentially transferring wild native brook trout into Oven Run to reestablish a sustainable population.

In the end, the resurgence of Oven Run may be just a footnote in a much larger saga. However, for those of us such as myself, who still vividly remember the horrifically polluted conditions of both the Stonycreek, much less tributaries such as Oven Run, and believed it could change when many naysayers thought otherwise, it is an important and satisfying milestone nonetheless in coldwater conservation.

## CHP announces 2024 Coldwater Conservation grants are now open

The Pennsylvania Council of Trout Unlimited is pleased to announce that Round 29 of the Coldwater Heritage Partnership’s Coldwater Conservation Grant Program is now open. Non-profit organizations, conservation districts, and municipalities are among those eligible to apply. Proposals for planning grants up to \$10,000 and implementation grants up to \$25,000 will be accepted until December 18, 2024.

CHP grants are made possible with financial assistance from the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) through a Community Conservation Partnerships Program (C2P2) grant administered by the Bureau of Recreation and Conservation, and through funding from the Foundation for Pennsylvania Watersheds. The Coldwater Heritage Partnership is a collaboration between PATU, PA DCNR, the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission, and the Foundation for Pennsylvania Watersheds.

New this year – In addition to traditional CHP funds, funding is also available for cold-water conservation projects in 18 counties that were impacted by the Mariner East 2 and Revolution pipeline construction projects. This funding is made possible through a grant from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Office of Attorney General.

Eligible applicants in the following counties can apply for settlement funding



in addition to regular CHP funds: Allegheny, Beaver, Berks, Blair, Cambria, Chester, Cumberland, Dauphin, Delaware, Huntingdon, Indiana, Lancaster, Lebanon, Juniata, Perry, Washington, Westmoreland, and York.

Successful applications require 1:1 match of cash and/or in-kind services. Mini-grants cannot be used as match toward any other DCNR-funded projects.

Additional information, along with the grant application form, can be found on the Coldwater Heritage Partnership website at [www.coldwaterheritage.org](http://www.coldwaterheritage.org). Website users can view an interactive map and searchable list of plans and projects that will aid grantees in locating existing plans and projects and identifying potential new projects in their watershed of interest.

Applicants are asked to contact CHP Executive Director Eric Null to discuss potential projects prior to applying. He can be reached at 724-640-1022, email [executive.director@patrout.org](mailto:executive.director@patrout.org).

**The Pennsylvania Council of Trout Unlimited has nearly 15,000 members in nearly 50 chapters statewide, with one common goal: The conservation and enhancement of Pennsylvania’s coldwater streams and fisheries, specifically our wild trout resources. Trout Unlimited is an IRS 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, functioning for charitable, educational and scientific purposes. Donations are deductible to the extent provided by law. For information on advertising in PA Trout, email [bisles@live.com](mailto:bisles@live.com). See pages 2-3 for Council contact information, officers and committees.**

Pennsylvania Trout is a supporting member of the Pennsylvania Outdoor Writers Association



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## PATU Executive Committee Meeting

*Minutes of the Sept. 14, 2024  
Executive Committee Meeting  
PATU Annual Meeting*

**Attendees:** Lenny Lichvar, Russ Thrall, Greg Malaska, Russ Collins, Gary Parzanese, Todd Burns, Dean Druckenmiller, Brian Wagner, Bob Neu, Dave Rothrock, Eric Null, Sigrid Shariff, Erick Lewis

Minutes of the Aug. 4, 2024, EXCOM meeting were approved as submitted.

**President's Report:** Submitted by L. Lichvar.

**Secretary's Report:** Submitted by E. Lewis.

**Treasurer's Report:** Submitted by R. Thrall.

*\*Motion to approve by G. Parzanese. Approved.*

*\*Motion to hire Eric Null as PATU Executive Director by T. Burns. Approved.*

**Executive Director Report:** Submitted by E. Null.

**PATU Treasurer Position:** Update by R. Thrall. He is term-limited. Efforts are underway to recruit a replacement. R. Thrall will continue to serve until a replacement or other option is implemented.

**Annual Meeting Date and Location:** L. Lichvar provided details and requirements for the Annual Meeting.

**Southcentral Region VP:** Position is vacant. R. Thrall has a potential candidate.

**Officers' Status:** G. Malaska reviewed. B. Wagner is term-limited but can hold over for another year. E. Null beginning Sept. 14. R. Thrall is term-limited but can hold over for another year. G. Malaska will announce nominations at Annual Meeting.

**Trout Policy Committee Report:** Submitted by D. Rothrock. RE: Stocking Class A waters, timing is important. Emily Baldauff has put together an information sheet for Annual Meeting distribution. E. Hussar and D. Rothrock will discuss it at Annual Meeting. D. Rothrock has asked for a list of the most recently listed streams that were stocked. Will look at trout populations, for example, Freemans Run with three times the population. PATU's goal is data-driven decision-making. Need PATU representation at PFBC Commissioner's meeting. There is an online committee meeting on Oct. 2. Need to watch for comment period. R. Thrall asked for bullet points for distribution to chapter members,

to be distributed by E. Baldauff.

**TIC Report:** Meeting with PFBC. PATU is not satisfied with management of the program. Hiring by PFBC of full-time EE has not made progress. A. Daniel is transferring her TIC work to new coordinator. Another new coordinator will take over R. Kester's work.

### OLD BUSINESS

**PFBC Office Occupancy:** Is the PFBC Center Region Office available? PFBC says yes.

### NEW BUSINESS

**Annual Appeal:** PATU's Annual Appeal will begin prior to Thanksgiving, in mid-November. B. Neu needs accomplishments over the past one to three years to include in the appeal letter; also needed for information to donor organizations. B. Neu and E. Null to get together to cover fund-raising strategic priorities. PATU's fund-raising database was built by B. Neu and has limited access. Need to look a CRM application that can handle donations, event scheduling/payment. The price of these applications is going down.

**Next meeting date:** Jan. 19, 2025. Will be virtual. The 2025 meeting schedule will be set.

*Respectfully submitted,  
Erick Lewis – Secretary*



Lenny Lichvar Photo

## 2024 Award Winners

Mountain Laurel Trout Unlimited Chapter Treasurer Pat Buchanan, left, and Chapter President Dave Maher, accept the Edward Urbas Award Best Chapter Award for 2024 at the Pennsylvania Council of Trout Unlimited Annual Meeting.

Other award winners recognized at the meeting were:

Greatest Membership Increase (Number) – Northwest Chapter and Ken Sink Chapter (tied)

Greatest Membership Increase (Percentage) – Hokendauqua Chapter

Dr. Jack Beck Award for Youth Outreach – Mike Kashuba

Outstanding Volunteer – Todd Burns

Doc Fritchey Outstanding Coldwater Conservationist Volunteer – Dave Wright

Outstanding Cold Water Conservationist Professional – Adam Smith

Ken Sink Award for Contribution to PATU's Conservation Mission – Bob Vierck

Best Chapter Project – Perkiomen Valley Chapter

Diversity Award – Spring Creek Chapter

Samuel Slaymaker Award for Best Chapter Newsletter – Brodhead Chapter

Best Chapter Website – Hokendauqua Chapter



# Memories of Russ Blessing – creator of the Woolly Bugger

By Bob Pennell  
*Doc Fritchey Chapter*

If you're a fly-fisher, I'd be willing to bet that at one time or another you've used a Woolly Bugger to catch not only trout, but virtually any type of fish that inhabits fresh or salt water.

Pennsylvania angler Russell Blessing created this pattern many years ago, most likely to imitate a hellgrammite, and it has since become a mainstay in just about every angler's fly-box.

Although Russ is most remembered for his creation of the Woolly Bugger, he was equally creative at tying and fishing dry flies. I asked him one time about the origin of the Bugger's name, and he told me that while at his vice one day tying a fly, his daughter remarked, "that sure is a wooly bugger," and the name stuck for all time.

With the widespread fame that the Woolly Bugger had achieved with the angling community, I asked Russ if he had ever thought of copyrighting the pattern and collecting royalties from the commercial tyers who were marketing his pattern. I'm not sure if a copyright was ever obtained, but Russ did reach a royalty agreement with Umpqua who at the time was probably the largest supplier of commercially-tied flies. This arrangement only lasted for a couple of years, however, until Umpqua started to market a bead-head version which they insisted was not part of the original pattern.

Russ passed away on October 27, 2009, after a long and hard-fought battle with cancer. He was first and foremost a gentleman, both on and off the stream. Russ loved to fish Manada Creek near his home just outside of Harrisburg, and I would often find him there with his good friend Russell "Pete" Peterson. Many times, I would see Russ and Pete just sitting together on a log kibitzing about what flies to use, or the fish each had caught that day.

One rather sultry day when the deer flies and black flies were particularly pesky on



Contributed Photo

**Russ Blessing of the Doc Fritchey Chapter of TU ties up one of the most popular fly patterns in angling history – the Woolly Bugger.**

Manada, I spotted Russ on the stream, and something about him appeared to be different. As I got closer, I noticed that his hat was literally covered with a variety of dead insects. Noting my quizzical look, but before I had a chance to ask, he simply said "flypaper." Russ's inventiveness often resulted in his finding simple solutions to everyday problems such as this.

Russ was active in the Doc Fritchey Chapter of Trout Unlimited in earlier years, having served in a number of positions, including chapter president. Of great concern during those years was his observation of an increasing sedimentation problem on Manada Creek, which he suspected was originating in the stream's

headwaters at Fort Indiantown Gap.

In 1997, at Russ's urging, the chapter contacted the Dauphin County Conservation District to arrange a meeting to tour the Manada headwaters on FTIG property. The tour revealed a number of areas where tracked vehicles were causing sediment to enter the tributaries, and it was not too long after that when FTIG finally began to take remedial measures to correct the problems.

Russ was also a talented musician and a devoutly religious individual, profoundly active in his local church. We miss his gentle ways and hope that his spirit has found a final resting place on some of the best trout waters in the great beyond.

# Fly Patterns of Pennsylvania

by Nick Cobler

## Marabou Muddler

*A streamer that can be tied in a variety of sizes to target hungry fall trout.*

### Fly Design / Highlights

- Constructed with mostly natural materials.
- Easily adjusted to match a variety of larger food sources for fish.
- Gets down fast in the water column and is easy to see.

### Background

I've read the Marabou Muddler fly pattern has been credited to Dan Bailey (1904-1982)—who was a staunch conservationist and fly-shop owner in Livingston, Mont. He was an innovative fly-tyer and had employed his knowledge gained from folks like Lee Wulff and Joe Brooks to adapt eastern patterns for the west.

### About the Marabou Muddler

Like all fly-pattern recipes, things can be adjusted. You might not have the exact materials on hand, and I think that forces tyers to think creatively. This pattern or sequence can be easily modified with various materials to respond in the water as you prefer.

Don't like the color combinations? Change the deer hair and marabou colors. Want it to sit closer to the surface of the water? Remove the weight and cone head. Need more action? Try a marabou tail. Look at the materials surrounding your tying desk—tie up some experiments and then test them out on the water. And remember to just have fun. Tight lines all, and I'll see you on the water this fall!



### Materials

- **Hook:** Streamer
- **Head:** Cone head to match hook
- **Thread:** Your preference
- **Tail:** Your preference
- **Body:** Your preference
- **Wing:** Marabou
- **Collar:** Deer hair

Note: In this example I used silver tinsel for the body and dyed deer hair for the tail. For additional bulk I included a few turns of non-lead weight. Experiment!



Insert a hook into your vise, secure a cone head, and create a thread base. Tie in a tail—here a stack of dyed deer hair. Wrap forward toward the cone head to create an even body.



Attach a length of body material at the base of the tail and wrap over the deer hair toward the front of the fly. This should create a nice body. If you wish, taper by overlapping.



Gather some marabou and tie in at the top of the hook with nice strong wraps. The length should be about the same as the tail, or even a little shorter.



Pluck a couple strands of peacock herl and tie at the top of the marabou. The length is to your preference, however I try to make them a little longer than the marabou.



After securing the items from the previous step, clean a stack of deer hair. Tie in on the far side of the hook. Repeat this step on the side closer to you.



Continue to clean, stack, and attach deer hair moving forward to the cone head. Then trim to create a collar of your liking. Whip finish, cement, and go fish it!



# Merchandise Order Form

Thank you for supporting the efforts of PATU in protecting, conserving, and restoring PA's coldwater streams. Please allow 7 to 10 days to receive your order. Most items should arrive sooner. For pictures and complete descriptions of these items please go to [www.patrou.org/merchandise](http://www.patrou.org/merchandise). If you have questions about the availability of any specific items, please feel free to contact Bob Pennell at [rpennell37@comcast.net](mailto:rpennell37@comcast.net) or 717-395-5124.



	Item Description	Qty.	Unit Price	6% PA Tax	Total w/Tax	Line Total
1	"Back the Brookie" License Plate		\$24.50	\$1.47	\$25.97	
2	"Catch & Release Wild Trout" License Plate Frame		\$17.95	\$1.08	\$19.03	
	PATU Ballcap (circle) Khaki Olive		\$19.50	None	\$19.50	
	PATU Ballcap – Digital Camo		\$23.50	None	\$23.50	
3	Men's PATU T-shirt (circle size) S M L XL		\$23.00	None	\$23.00	
	Men's PATU T-shirt (circle size) 2XL		\$26.00	None	\$26.00	
	Men's PATU T-shirt (circle size) 3XL		\$29.00	None	\$29.00	
	Custom-tied Leaders					
	Dry Fly – 4X Tippet		\$6.50	\$0.39	\$6.89	
	Dry Fly – 5X Tippet		\$6.50	\$0.39	\$6.89	
	Dry Fly – 6X Tippet		\$6.50	\$0.39	\$6.89	
	Wet Fly – 4X Tippet w/ 2 Droppers		\$6.50	\$0.39	\$6.89	
	Wet Fly – 5X Tippet w/ 2 Droppers		\$6.50	\$0.39	\$6.89	
	"Pocketguide to PA Hatches" Book		\$22.95	\$1.38	\$24.33	
	"Keystone Fly Fishing" Book		\$29.95	\$1.80	\$31.75	
	"Favorite Flies of PA" Book		\$24.95	\$1.50	\$26.45	
4	Traveler Fly Rod – 9-ft., 5-wt., 7-piece		\$130.00	\$7.80	\$137.80	
5	Ultralight Fly Rod – 7-ft., 3-wt., 4-piece		\$115.00	\$6.90	\$121.90	
	"Brookie" Fly Reel 3/4 wt.		\$46.50	\$2.79	\$49.29	
	"Brookie" Fly Reel 5/6 wt.		\$49.50	\$2.97	\$52.47	
	"Back the Brookie" Refrigerator Magnet		\$3.75	\$0.23	\$3.98	
	PATU Sticker		\$1.50	\$0.09	\$1.59	
* Prices effective November 8, 2024			<b>Total:</b>			



Shipping and handling costs are included in above prices.

Mail this form, along with money order or check payable to "PA Trout" to:

**PATU c/o Merchandise**  
**2319 Valley Road**  
**Harrisburg, PA 17104**

Or order directly online using a credit card at <https://patrou.org/index.php/merchandise>

## Ship to:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

**\*\* Phone number and email are needed should PATU have questions regarding your order.**

## Public comments on draft Trout Management Plan

The PA Fish and Boat Commission has initiated two actions that can and will impact trout management decisions.

An internal Work Group, consisting of Commissioners and fisheries staff, has been formed to examine the language and regulations currently in place that enable hatchery stocking of 13 Class A Wild Trout stream sections. In addition, a new Trout Management Plan has been drafted that, when finalized, will guide trout management decisions for the next several years.

PATU placed comments on the record to the Commission regarding both of these important items. At the October Commission meeting, PATU submitted in-person verbal and written comments in relationship to the Work Group. PATU then submitted written comments regarding the draft Trout Management Plan.

For more information on PATU's input on these initiatives, contact Trout Policy Committee Chairman Dave Rothrock at [daver2@comcast.net](mailto:daver2@comcast.net).

Lenny Lichvar  
*President, PATU*

### Speaker #1 Emily Baldauff

Good morning, my name is Emily Baldauff and I am the Mid-Atlantic Policy Manager for National Trout Unlimited, the chair of the Pennsylvania Sportsmen & Women Policy Work Group, as well as a lifelong citizen of the Commonwealth and an avid angler.

On behalf of Trout Unlimited, which is comprised of over 15,000 members in Pennsylvania alone, we are here today to express our concern in regards to the motion to revise the Class A Wild Trout stream list and criteria for consideration of requests for continued and new stocking over Class A Wild Trout streams that was proposed after the July 9, 2024 Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission Commissioners meeting.

TU's mission is to "bring together diverse interests to care for and recover rivers and streams, so our children can experience the joy of wild and native trout." First and foremost, TU aligns with PFBC as being a "resource first organization" and has

partnered on countless efforts and projects to protect, conserve, and restore the

Commonwealth's native and wild trout populations. To that, we are forever grateful for our partnerships.

Trout Unlimited supports a clear and concise stocking policy on Class A streams aimed at protecting the water resource and native wild fish populations. We urge PFBC to seriously consider the science that proves the impacts that stocked fish can have on a native naturally reproducing wild trout population, and not consider allowing stocking on any more Class A stream segments.

### Speaker #2 (Stream Designations) Dave Williams

Appropriate stream designations are the key to protecting the water resources in the Commonwealth. Under Chapter 93 Water Quality Standards, a surface water may be considered High Quality if it has been designated as a Class A Wild Trout stream. High Quality and Exceptional Value designated stream uses under the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection protects streams from development pressures and other pollution events. Alignment between the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission and Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection designations would ensure uniform regulatory oversight while also providing a more timely action to protect water quality and surviving coldwater trout habitat.

As all of us know in this room, trout are an indicator species for clean water. They are the focal point of what we look for while we are accessing streams to decide which are worth efforts to protect and conserve using these designations of importance for two agencies. It is because of PFBC's top-notch unassessed water initiative program that thousands of streams have been able to be protected across the state in just over a decade. If we have gone to the trouble of seeking out and conserving these pure waters, then why would we want to risk stocking over those original, wild, and self-maintaining, clean water indicators?

### Speaker #3 (Angling Science) Dave Walters

In regard to the new current special



regulations of release of brown trout and allowable creeling of stocked rainbow trout in the designated stocked Class A sections, Trout Unlimited believes that the concept compromises the mission of PFBC to protect the aquatic resources of Pennsylvania and should not be used to justify further expansion of Class A stockings.

This perceived compromise, used to justify minimal impact on wild trout, actually negatively compromises wild trout by adding to competition for space that stresses the existing wild trout population. It also compromises wild trout by placing additional angling pressure on the wild trout population due to the attraction of anglers through the stocking process. It also compromises the agency's ability to expand angling opportunities on many miles of water throughout the Commonwealth where water quality has improved, but not enough hatchery trout are available to be used to establish these new fisheries.

Hatchery trout should first and foremost be utilized to restore populations of trout that have been negatively impacted by pollution and other water quality issues which is the function and goal that hatchery trout production was originally initiated to achieve. The use of hatchery trout for supplementing already recreational angling opportunity providing waters with existing wild populations is a non-scientific and non-essential approach that results in a misuse of the stocked trout resource.

### Speaker #4 (Habitat/Ecosystems) Jonathan Daniels

Stocked trout can compete with native species for food and habitat, which can lead to the displacement of native species. When new or stocked species are entered into a new ecosystem there can be an increase in predation on other fish and invertebrates, which can alter the food web and ecosystem in general. Ecosystem disruptions may displace, weaken, and potentially permanently alter a wild fish population.



According to Dewald & Wilzbach in a 1992 publication, “habitat use by native brook trout differed when the hatchery brown trout were introduced, and the brook trout feeding rate was significantly reduced.”

Another study done in 1984 by Bachman indicated that, “wild brown trout tend to minimize the energy they use and stay in small range of the stream they are familiar with for their lifetime. Hatchery fish rarely engage in minimizing behavior and move more frequently. This movement disrupts the feeding hierarchy that wild fish have already established and leads to some hatchery fish occupying ideal stream positions.”

This type of habitat and ecosystem disruption blatantly displays the adverse effects of stocking over wild trout populations. I strongly urge the commission to create and uphold a strong regulation to decrease if not eliminate stocking over Class A waters in PA.

#### **Speaker #5 (Economic Impact)**

##### **Russ Collins**

Hello. My name is Russ Collins, and I am the vice president of the Doc Fritchey Chapter of TU. Today, I want to highlight the significant economic benefits of preserving non-stocked Class A Wild Trout streams. A recent study conducted in the Pocono Mountains region illustrates this well, focusing on the economic impact of High-Quality (HQ) and Exceptional-Value (EV) waterways.

Maintaining and preserving these watershed ecosystems – encompassing stream systems, river networks, and waterbodies – offers considerable social and economic advantages for surrounding communities. The study estimates that HQ and EV streams contribute approximately \$2.1 billion in annual ecosystem service value. Additionally, increased tourism linked to these waterways could lead to visitor spending between \$245 million and \$982 million. This influx of visitors also supports job creation across the region.

It's worth noting that nearly all these streams are non-stocked Wild Trout streams, which have historically driven eco-tourism in the Poconos for over a century. While we recognize the eco-tourism potential of stocked trout in various areas,

we firmly believe that introducing stocked fish poses an unacceptable risk to the integrity of Class A Wild Trout fisheries. Research consistently supports the notion that these wild systems' ecological balance and economic vitality far outweigh the short-term gains from stocking.

Trout Unlimited is keen to explore the costs and benefits associated with Pennsylvania's stocking program in future discussions. We believe a science-based approach is essential for sustaining our natural resources and local economies. Thank you.

#### **Speaker #6 (Mission Reminder)**

##### **Walt Nicholson**

Hello, my name is Walter Nicholson and I am the immediate past president of Trout Unlimited's Susquehanna Chapter in Lycoming County with over 300 members.

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

The first part of the mission statement is the most important and is the intentionally stated foundational key to all of the Commission's work. Its prime directive to protect, conserve, and enhance the Commonwealth's aquatic resources is absolutely necessary for creating and sustaining first-rate fishing and boating opportunities for citizens of our Commonwealth. The Commission's "Resource First" policy has been directly derived from and supports its mission, and therefore the Commission's work and actions must reflect that directive.

Stocking fish of any species in Class A trout waters has been documented by numerous peer-reviewed scientific research to be detrimental to the aquatic health of the wild trout fishery. If you have interest and want us to point you in the right direction of literature on this subject, we would be happy to do so. Most stocked fish do not possess the skills to survive long outside of a hatchery environment and are ill-equipped to deal with the variable and harsher flows, temperatures, habitats, food sources and predators found in natural streams. Stocked fish compromise naturally supported wild trout populations.

The number of quality holding places in

a Class A Wild Trout stream is finite and critical to the sustainability of a wild trout population. When hatchery fish, regardless of species, are introduced, the wild fish are forced to flee in search of new habitat. The result is increased mortality among a population that, in the absence of stocked fish, is self-sustaining without cost to the Commission. The cost to raise and deliver stocked trout is a misuse of Commission funds and resources because it cannot be justified when compared to the much lower cost of protecting a viable and sustaining wild trout population.

Actions of the Commission which may compromise the aquatic health of Class A Wild Trout streams of the Commonwealth are contradictory to its stated prime mission and should not be entertained regardless of the social pressures to do so.

#### **Speaker #7 (Youth Perspective)**

##### **Jack Peters**

Throughout my childhood I was raised to respect and protect our waterways. Fishing is a way for me to escape the pressures of school, extracurricular activities, but also time and space to bond with the people I love.

Through these experiences, PFBC's mission as a "resource first" agency resonates with me, and I hope to work with the Commission towards upholding that torch in any way I can.

After reading countless studies and articles that claim the negative impacts to wild fish, bugs, habitat, and sometimes water quality by introducing stocked fish to a wild stream system, it just doesn't make sense to me why we would even consider risking the compromise of a resource. Until there is scientific evidence that shows no displacement or harm will come to a wild trout population when introducing stocked fish, it should be a no brainer that we should not be stocking the classified Class A areas.

It is my hope that PFBC will continue to do the right thing for the resource and not enlist any other Class A stream sections to be stocked.

#### **Speaker #8 (Potential)**

##### **Dave Rothrock**

It is obvious that the discussion regard-

***Continued on next page...***

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ing stocking hatchery-reared trout over a self-sustaining Class A equivalent wild trout population can prove to be ... interesting, at the very least.

While there are numerous arguments raised by those who support this practice one of them revolves around that fact that, despite the continued stocking of trout in a particular stream section, the wild trout population has managed to increase to a level which meets or exceeds that of Class A equivalency. This being the case, the question that follows is why not just continue stocking? After all, it doesn't seem to have an impact on the wild trout, does it?

One of the greatest benefits of discontinued stocking in a Class A stream section is providing that wild trout population the opportunity to realize its greatest potential. There are numerous examples of this being the case when comparing before and after survey data. For reference I take you back to the March 2022 Fisheries and Hatcheries Committee meeting when some of these examples were presented by staff.

Another significant benefit of the cessation of stocking a Class A stream section

is the potential for increased angling opportunities for those anglers, both local and those willing to travel. I believe that one of the goals of the strategic plan is to pursue increasing angling opportunities. By adding additional streams, lengthening stocked stream sections or increasing stocking allocations within the area you provide additional choices to anglers and even spread out angler participation. It is difficult to argue that moving the stocked trout allocation from a Class A stream section to other waters isn't a win for both PFBC and the local area.

In summary, so much of this is about realizing or inhibiting potential. You, as PFBC Commissioners, are the ones to determine this choice.

### **Speaker #9 (Conclusion)**

#### **Lenny Lichvar, PATU President**

Trout Unlimited is not against anything in regard to the wild trout resource. Instead, we are in favor, support, and are for the following:

We are for the best management practices that protect and enhance our wild trout resource.

for the benefit of all anglers in increasing angling opportunities.

Under Topic 3, all efforts to address fish health can only positively impact management of trout in the Commonwealth.

Under Topic 4, ensuring water quality, quantity and habitat protection, including implementing habitat projects, benefits both anglers and trout. The greater the level of water quality along with improved habitat the greater the probability that trout will remain in residence.

Under Topic 5, considering the incredible trout angling opportunities which exist in the Commonwealth there has long been underperformance in promotion of our coldwater fisheries and the angling opportunities available. While a fair number of anglers beyond the borders of PA are aware of this it is believed that promoting these angling opportunities and increasing angler awareness, this may result in both increased attention but also increased license sales as more anglers act to sample

We are for the appropriate use of the hatchery trout resource.

We are for the re-evaluation and reallocation of current hatchery stocked waterways as stated in the draft Trout Management Plan.

We are for the creation of new recreational fisheries that can and should be created by the reallocation of hatchery trout.

We are for the increased education and information initiatives focused on wild trout as stated in the draft Trout Management Plan.

We are for the elimination of hatchery raised brook trout so that our designated state fish is what it is supposed to be and that is a wild and native brook trout.

We are for the implementation of the Commission's motto of "Resource First" since wild fish, not even just trout, embody the finest and most important natural resource we have in Pennsylvania.

Wild fish are the indicators of clean water, which is an essential necessity for not just recreation and economic vitality but for survival for all life on earth and we better put that first.

what the Commonwealth has to offer.

Under Topic 6, optimizing production and use of hatchery-raised trout along with improving their allocation, if approached wisely, can afford anglers a wider range of angling opportunities. This is especially true when factoring in the streams which support strong populations of wild trout. Reallocation of stocked trout from these streams frees up these fish to add additional stocked trout fishing opportunities on stream sections which would only support trout during that period of time when anglers typically fish for them.

While the plan provides no specific implementation strategies, Pennsylvania Council of Trout Unlimited would be interested in understanding how PFBC would pursue achieving these goals as the criteria for doing so is developed. We would welcome the opportunity to provide input in the form of data or other information as this process moves forward.

## **PATU comments on draft Trout Management Plan**

Having reviewed the draft Trout Management Plan for 2025-2028 there are a number of points which warrant comment.

Under Topic 1, continuing to identify coldwater streams which harbor wild trout populations as well as those which support populations meeting and exceeding the minimum threshold for Class A designation is essential to the success of managing these valuable resources to the fullest extent.

In addition, the continued collection of stocking data will allow for a greater understanding of this practice across the Commonwealth and will be invaluable to the pursuit of the goal of adopting the policy of requiring approval by all parties of all stockings. It is important to note that Pennsylvania is in the minority of states which has yet to adopt such a policy.

Under Topic 2, partnerships working to improve public access can only work



## Chapter Reports

### Brodhead Chapter #289

Russell Thrall III

570-620-8677, russ@thrall3.com

www.brodheadtu.org

The Brodhead Chapter held its Summerslam online auction in August and raised \$1,136 to help with our projects. Our volunteer workday to build the first of four log cross-vanes at the Pocono Heritage Land Trust Yankee Run Nature Preserve near Mt. Pocono was Sept. 7. We also did a post-treatment electro-fishing survey on the site of our habitat improvement project in conjunction with PFBC at the PHLT Pomeroy McMichaels Creek Nature Preserve. Last year, prior to the start of the project, a total of four wild brown trout were captured, each approximately nine inches in length.



## GET A CUSTOM TROUT UNLIMITED PENNSYLVANIA LICENSE PLATE!

Want to show others that you're a proud member of PATU and support the mission of Trout Unlimited? Well, you can, and it will only cost you a onetime charge of \$28 for a specialty PA license plate. The custom plate fee is in addition to your annual registration fee, and the plate is available for passenger cars and trucks 14,000 lbs. or less, motor homes and trailers.

To order your Pennsylvania Council of Trout Unlimited PA state license plate, send your name, TU membership number and current PA license plate number by email to eelewis@tds.net or mail to:

Erick Lewis

70 Brentwood Circle  
Bloomsburg, PA 17815

In return, you'll receive an application form to complete and send with your \$28 payment to PennDOT.

This year, after the construction of log-framed deflectors and a large stone-throated cross-vane, the survey produced 29 trout. Of these trout, one was a stocked rainbow and the other 28 were wild brown trout. The largest brown was 15 inches. On Sept. 11, Don Baylor presented his program on Eastern Hatches at the Kettle Creek Environmental Education Center. The chapter held a Boy Scout Fishing/Fly-Fishing Merit Badge Weekend with Troop 99 from Effort, Pa. on Sept. 21-22. Nine scouts completed requirements for the two merit badges. A STREAM Girls event for a local Girl Scout troop is being scheduled for Spring 2025. An up-to-date chapter calendar is available online at: <http://brodheadtu.org/chapter-calendar/>

### Hokendauqua Chapter #535

Art Williams

610-266-1788, awilliams1947@hotmail.com

<http://hokendauqua.tu.org>

We have resumed our monthly "Ties and Lies" and use this time to instruct new and advanced fly-tyers with different methods of tying. Monthly chapter meetings resumed in September with a speaker covering "Musky on the Fly." His talk centered on the Schuylkill River and techniques and flies used for pursuing muskies. In October, we hosted local WCO Zack Rudd who presented "What's new for 2025 from the PA Fish and Boat Commission." In September, we held an educational class for women interested in learning to fly-fish. The class included topics such as basic instruction of fly-fishing equipment, understanding what trout eat, fly-fishing knots and different types of flies and how to use them. The group then proceeded to the outside and were shown techniques for casting a fly-rod. Each participant had an instructor observe their efforts and helped them with their casting. We're planning our annual fly-tying course, held for eight weeks on Saturday mornings in January and February. All our meetings and activities are free and open to the public. Check our website for details of any of our events.



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In July, staff at Lackawac Sanctuary presented the Streamkeepers program to their Leadership Academy campers, comprised of 16 youths ages 13 to 15. We coordinated activities with Pike and Wayne Conservation districts. The program took place on Oct. 5 at Carton Drake Memorial Park in Newfound, Pa. The chapter participated in the 11th annual Canal Festival at Lock 31 in White Mills hosted by Wayne County Historical Society. Chapter members from Healing Waters provided fly-tying demonstrations, other members provided fly-fishing instructions and lessons, knot-tying, and chapter recruitment. Despite inclement weather over 500 people from the community attended. PWTU members from Healing Waters also hosted an event for veterans, fishing on the Lackawaxen River. Chapter members also volunteered at Casting for Recovery hosted at Sky Top Lodge. Monthly meetings are the second Tuesday of each month from October to April at Cora's Bistro in Hawley, starting at 5:30 p.m.

### Western Pocono Chapter #203

Janet Schmitt

[jreichel@ptd.net](mailto:jreichel@ptd.net)

[www.tu.org/connect/groups/203-western-pocono](http://www.tu.org/connect/groups/203-western-pocono)

WPTU hosted members of the Philadelphia Botanical Club in August for a visit to Penrose Barrens near Weatherly/Hazleton. Dr. Tim Block of the University of Pennsylvania, Morris Arboretum and Brian Wagner, former PATU president, also joined the group. Penrose has 2700 acres of PA Bureau of Forestry land and 100 acres of rare climbing fern that WPTU volunteers were instrumental in obtaining along with the Wildlands Conservancy. The area is open to year-round hunting and fishing and other appropriate recreation. There are four Class A Wild Trout streams on the tract. WPTU founding father Ray Youngblood and Brodhead TU director Don Miller, both accomplished amateur botanists, naturalists, and fly-fishermen, helped as guides and several other outdoor enthusiasts were present. Will Thomas and Assistant District Forester Heather Yeager of the Bureau of Forestry assisted. WPTU members are currently monitoring and assisting Hazleton Rails to Trails to develop a plan to join the Weatherly Trail being built and accessed by Weatherly Municipal Authorities along Hazle Creek in Weatherly and Penn Haven Junction near the Lehigh River. Weatherly Borough is already nearing completion of the trail, which will provide hiking and fishing access near the Lehigh River. Congresswoman Susan Wild, Weatherly Borough officials, Harold Pudliner and Tracy Grover and Ellen Lott of the Trust for Public Lands, along with other borough officials, were instrumental in obtaining funding and construction of the trail. Hazle Creek flows through the Penrose Barrens for several miles to the town of Weatherly and beyond to other tribes and the Lehigh River. Chapter officials were invited to attend a special program

*Continued on page 15...*

# EBTJV request for proposal period now open

The Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture, as one of the 20 partnerships under the National Fish Habitat Partnership, is requesting project proposals that are focused on brook trout conservation actions. Federal funding is available through the National Fish Habitat Partnership as outlined under the America's Conservation Enhancement Act of 2020 (Ace Act).

This RFP opened on Nov. 26, 2024. We have some changes this year. First, we have an intent to apply/feedback form that is required by Jan. 14, 2025. This form serves to check eligibility and that you have initiated coordination with the state agency representative. It will also provide the EBTJV feedback on projects that decide not to apply for FY26 funding. We encourage you to fill it out even if you decide not to apply; it should not take more than 20 minutes of your time. It is a required element for those who do decide to apply.

We are utilizing an online platform, Jotform, to accept applications. In prior years we had required a Word or PDF file to be uploaded to the EBTJV website. The Jotform entry minimizes the potential for missed elements and standardizes the response formatting.

The final deadline for submitting your brook trout conservation project proposal

is 5 p.m. (Eastern Time) on Feb. 14, 2025. Incomplete applications will not be considered, and late applications will only be considered in rare circumstances. Funding for FY2026 projects will likely not be appropriated by Congress until after January 2026 and will likely not be available to project leaders until March 2026 or later.

Eligible projects:

The maximum award amount for an individual project is \$50,000. EBTJV expects to fund 3-5 projects for FY26. These funds can only be used for on-the-ground brook trout conservation and restoration projects in the native eastern range, and related design and short-term monitoring activities; they may not be used for research projects.

To ensure available funding is being directed most effectively, proposed projects must be geared toward meeting the EBTJV's range-wide habitat goals and objectives, as well as its key conservation actions. Projects must also fall under at least one of the NFHAP National Conservation Priorities. EBTJV prioritizes projects that are most likely to be fully implemented in the two-year EBTJV/NFHAP project performance period.

Successful applications are well thought out with input from partners and state and/or federal agency biologists. The EBTJV application contains many required ele-

ments including information on the project location, applicant, objectives, approach, project planning, budget, monitoring, biological, ecological and socioeconomic benefits, state coordination, and presence of (or intent to restore) brook trout in the catchment.

Examples of eligible projects include (but are not limited to):

- Restoring aquatic connectivity by removing small dams and replacing undersized culverts;
- Executing strategies that eliminate competition from non-native species (including removal);
- Planting native shrubs and trees in riparian zones to provide shade and stream bank stabilization;
- Adding large woody material to streams to add complexity, improve sediment sorting, and reconnect groundwater;
- Restoring native brook trout to watersheds where it has been extirpated.
- Implementing watershed conservation practices that reduce sediment and nutrient pollution

This is not a complete list, and furthermore, specific project actions may be

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by DCNR held recently in White Haven, Pa. along the Lehigh River. White Haven was recently honored as a special Blue Print Community and will proceed with various funding in developing the town for future recreational, conservation, and economic development that will help create the town as a welcoming destination site in the future. Members of the Lehigh River Stocking Association were also present at the meeting. WPTU and LRSA members offered comments about the importance of the historic and legendary Lehigh River fishery and its role in the town of White Haven and all the Poconos. Longtime Evening Hatch Fly Shop proprietor Kenny Shiffert passed away recently. He supported WPTU programs and provided items for WPTU raffles. Our sincere thanks for his contributions and condolences to his family and friends. The Evening Hatch is still open along Route 940 in the Lake Harmony area and east of White Haven.

## **Oil Creek Chapter #424**

**Jennifer Lyons**

**814-671-1292, lyons3876@gmail.com**

**www.oilcreektu.org**

Barry Wilson, OCTU website chairman has been making some much needed updates and revisions to the chapter website. These include folders for Trout in the Classroom participating schools, Veterans Service Program events, Dirt and Gravel Roads information, and updating events. Repairs and up grades were made to the chapter storage shed. Vaughn MacGregor attended the Annual Meeting on Sept. 14. Our 40th annual banquet was Sept. 7. We changed venues this year to the Franklin VFW. The facility worked very well, and a very good caterer provided the food. Barry Wilson, our TIC chairman, has been doing a great job visiting and keeping in touch with all the TIC classes, along with Bailey Kozalla, watershed specialist with the Venango Conservation District. There is a new TIC classroom at Oil City Middle School. Macroinvertebrate studies are being done

by Venango Conservation District for the TIC program. We purchased four nets for the VCD to use. Member Al Rickerson has been involved with PATU regarding STREAM Girls, an independent program of the Girl Scouts. Our Veterans Service Program event took place on May 18 at the Sandy Creek Conservancy. Fishing instruction was provided, and several guides provided help. Chairman Tom Young secured approval for additional places to take some vets if we needed additional room on the stream. We had attendees from Erie, Titusville, and Meadville. Jennifer Lyons did casting instruction. We have donated to the Cranberry High School Conservation Club and the Franklin YMCA again this year. Again this year, we provided support and assistance for the Oil Creek Classic Trout Tournament and Community Day, hosted by the Titusville Rotary Club, which took place May 10-11. Scenic train rides were available on the Oil Creek and Titusville Railroad and the museum at Drake Well Park was open to visitors. Our chapter Christmas Dinner is Dec. 18 at King's Restaurant in Franklin.



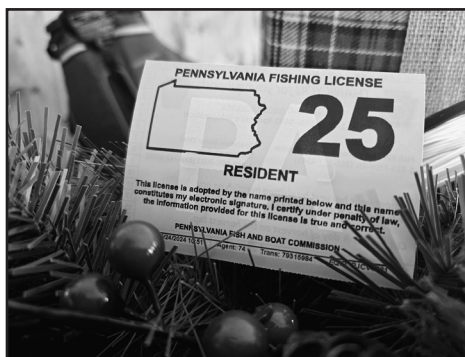
# 2025 Pennsylvania licenses, permits, gift vouchers now on sale

Fishing licenses, permits, and vouchers for the upcoming 2025 season can be purchased through the HuntFishPA online portal on the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission website (Fishandboat.com), on your smartphone using the FishBoatPA mobile app, or by visiting one of nearly 700 retail license issuing agents. 2025 licenses, permits, and vouchers purchased now are valid immediately for up to 13 months, from Dec. 1, 2024, through Dec. 31, 2025.

Fishing licenses, permits, and vouchers can be purchased easily, conveniently, and safely online from your computer or smartphone. Customers can choose from annual or multi-year licenses and permits with 3-, 5-, and 10-year options, and all documents may be printed immediately upon purchase or saved digitally to a smart device which serves as proof of possession. While many customers still prefer to purchase fishing licenses in person from local issuing agents, online purchases can save time and help you avoid long lines, especially right before the spring trout season, which begins statewide on Saturday, April 5, 2025. For added convenience, customers can choose an auto-renew option at the time of purchase, so they never miss a fishing season.

In addition to licenses and popular permits, such as the trout, Lake Erie, or even unpowered boat launch permits, customers may choose to purchase vouchers that can be given as gifts and be redeemed by recipients.

Once again for the 2025 license year, customers can purchase a collectible fishing license button. This year's button features a classic keystone design familiar from many vintage fishing license but-



Contributed Photo

## A 2025 PA fishing license, permit or gift voucher makes for a perfect holiday gift.

tons, highlighted by a vibrant conservation green and navy blue color scheme. In 2025, a limited-edition production of 10,000 buttons will be produced, and customers will receive a randomly numbered button between 00001-10000. Please note that buttons are not issued at the time of purchase and will be mailed to the buyer.

Anglers who visit a license issuing agent in person can receive the 2025 Fishing Summary/Boating Handbook free of charge. The book outlines current fishing and boating regulations, seasons and creel limits, and safety information, and includes advertising and coupons. A digital version of these publications can be viewed and printed for free on the PFBC website, or viewed on the FishBoatPA mobile app.

Customers should note that 2025 Fishing Summary/Boating Handbooks are still being shipped to retail locations in early December and may not be immediately available at all locations. Customers should access the free online version or return to a retail location later for a free printed copy.

### Voluntary Permits

Customers who purchase a 2025 fishing

license can once again support their favorite PFBC programs through the purchase of voluntary permits for Bass, Musky, Wild Trout/Enhanced Waters, and Habitat/Waterways Conservation. These permits are not required for fishing and carry no additional privileges, but all funds generated through them are reinvested into their respective program. Thanks to the generosity of anglers, the PFBC has invested more than \$720,500 into special projects funded by the sale of voluntary permits since 2019.

While youth anglers under age 16 do not require a fishing license, they must have either a Voluntary Youth Fishing License or a free Mentored Youth Fishing Permit to participate in any special youth opportunities throughout the 2025 season. This includes the statewide Mentored Youth Trout Fishing Day on Saturday, March 29, 2025.

The PFBC reminds anglers and boaters to protect themselves by always wearing a life jacket while on the water. From November 1 through April 30, all boaters aboard boats less than 16 feet, including all kayaks, canoes, and paddleboards, are required to wear a life jacket. Anglers should also wear a life jacket while ice fishing.

### Important 2024-25 Fishing Dates:

December 1 (2024) – 2025 Pennsylvania Fishing Licenses, permits, and vouchers on sale

March 29, 2025 – Statewide Mentored Youth Trout Day

April 5, 2025 – Statewide Opening Day of Trout Season

November 1, 2024, through April 30, 2025 – Mandatory Cold Weather Life Jacket Requirement in effect

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deemed appropriate in one location and not in another.

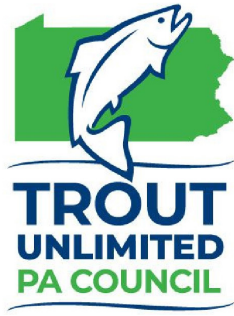
Projects are evaluated in context of whether the root causes of brook trout decline have been or will be addressed as a first step, and if available physical and biological data have been considered: e.g. data on population genetics, invasive species, stream temperatures, and available habitat and watershed variables.

Additionally, efforts to maintain or improve public access, educate the public and other stakeholders about the conservation actions, and monitor project outcomes should ideally be included as components of a successful project (but are not eligible as a standalone project).

For details, please see: <https://eastern-brooktrout.org/news-events/news-inbox/ehtjv-fy26-rfp-now-open>.

The EBTJV is a network of fisheries

managers, scientists, nonprofits, state and federal agencies, regional and local governments, businesses, conservation organizations, academia, scientific societies, and Tribal organizations that is working to conserve healthy populations of brook trout in the eastern native range. We work collaboratively with partners at multiple geographic and jurisdictional scales to reverse the declining trend for wild Brook Trout, and are one of the twenty members of the National Fish Habitat Partnership.



**PENNSYLVANIA COUNCIL  
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