



Sportsmen Report

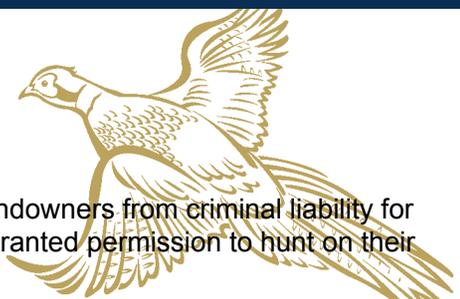
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New law encourages landowners to open property to hunters



A recently enacted state law, Act 83, shields landowners from criminal liability for unlawful acts committed by people who were granted permission to hunt on their property.

Most hunting in Pennsylvania is done on private property, and this law encourages farmers and landowners to keep their property open to hunters. This is a positive step because hunting is an important part of our heritage and state economy.

Landowners who willfully aid, abet, assist, or conspire in an unlawful act on their property would not be protected from prosecution under the new law.

The legislation was a top priority of the Pennsylvania Farm Bureau and I was proud to vote for it.



Hunting and our economy

- **Nearly 1 million people hunt** in Pennsylvania each year.
- **18.2 million days** are spent hunting in Pennsylvania.
- Hunters support over **15,000 jobs** in Pennsylvania.
- Hunting generates **\$529 million in salaries and wages**.
- Hunters in Pennsylvania spend **\$986 million** annually.
- The average Pennsylvania hunter spends **\$1,260 each year**.
- Hunters generate **\$121 million in state and local taxes**.
- The total ripple effect from hunting in Pennsylvania is **\$1.6 BILLION**.



The Coachmen's Club has beautiful grounds. It's always a pleasure to visit the club and speak with the members.

Web links for sportsmen

Pennsylvania Game Commission
www.pgc.state.pa.us

Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission
www.fish.state.pa.us

Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
www.dcnr.state.pa.us

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
www.fws.gov

National Rifle Association
www.nra.org



Life jackets required for cold weather boating

It's always a good idea for boaters to wear a life jacket, especially in cold weather.

From Nov. 1 to April 30, state law requires everybody on a boat less than 16 feet in length and on all canoes and kayaks to wear a life jacket. The requirement applies to all Pennsylvania waters.

About 80 percent of boating fatalities happen to boaters not wearing a life jacket. A large number of those deaths happen between November and April. During these months, boaters' risk of drowning increases because of cold water temperatures.

When a person unexpectedly plunges into water below 70 degrees, the body often responds with an involuntary gasp. Some people inhale water and drown without coming back to the surface. If they are able to surface, their ability to swim is restricted because of a shortness of breath or hyperventilation.

Here's some cold water boating survival tips from the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission:

- Never boat alone.
- Leave a plan with family or friends and know the waters you plan to boat.
- Bring a fully charged cell phone with you.
- Wear clothing that still insulates when wet, such as fleece or polypropylene.
- If you are about to fall into cold water, cover your mouth and nose with your hands to reduce the likelihood of inhaling water.
- If possible, get back into or climb on top of the boat.
- While in cold water, do not remove clothing.
- If you can't get out of the water, get into the Heat Escape Lessening Posture with knees to the chest, hugging them with your arms.
- Once out of the water, remove wet clothes and warm up as soon as possible.
- Seek medical attention when necessary. Some effects of exposure to cold temperatures can be delayed.



Pennsylvania has a proud tradition of outdoor activity such as hunting, fishing and boating. The Lawrence County Youth Sportsman Day at Coachmen's Club helped pass those traditions to the next generation of Pennsylvanians.

Mentored hunting program to expand

A recently enacted state law looks to build on the success of the Mentored Youth Hunting Program by expanding it to people of all ages.

The Mentored Youth Hunting Program was created for children younger than 12 and launched in 2006. Its intent was to create a new generation of sportsmen and sportswomen by building a love of Penn's Woods.

Regulations for the expanding program are being developed. They won't be in place until the 2014-15 license season, or later.

Text messages aid study of deer movements

During the two-week firearms hunting season for deer, Pennsylvania Game Commission researchers tracked some white tails using GPS collars that were controlled by text messages.

The collars were placed on deer in Bald Eagle State Forest in Centre, Union and Snyder counties; Rothrock State Forest in Centre, Mifflin and Huntingdon counties; and Susquehannock State Forest in Potter County.

Short text messages were sent from the collar to researchers to record the location of the deer. The new texting collars provide detail not possible with traditional radio collars.

Researchers hope to learn more about deer movements and behavior, particularly during hunting season, and make recommendations to increase, decrease or hold steady deer populations in different areas throughout the commonwealth.

Bill would increase hunter education courses

I voted for a bill last year that would increase the availability of certified hunter education courses in our public schools. House Bill 126 would require all school districts to make available, at no-charge, a classroom or instructional facility to the Pennsylvania Game Commission for hunter education classes. After-school, evening, or weekend classes would be made available free to students.

I support this legislation because the number of hunters – most importantly, junior hunters – has been declining.

The bill passed the House and is awaiting consideration in the Senate.

Mentored Youth Fishing Day program to expand

The Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission will expand the Mentored Youth Fishing Day program statewide in 2014.

The program was launched last year on the Saturday before the regional opening day of trout season. More than 3,700 adult anglers registered 5,110 kids.

The first Mentored Youth Fishing Day of the 2014 fishing season will be held on 11 waters on March 22, which is the Saturday before the regional

opening day of trout season in 18 southcentral and southeast counties.

The second Mentored Youth Fishing Day will be held on 29 waters on April 5, the weekend before the traditional opening day of trout season.

Some locations in nearby counties include North Park Lake in Allegheny County, Harbar Acres Lake in Butler County, Buhl Lake in Mercer County and Canonsburg Lake in Washington County.

To participate in the program, anglers 16 or older must possess a valid fishing license and trout/salmon permit and be accompanied by a youth. Youth anglers must obtain a free Fish and Boat Commission-issued permit, which will be available beginning Feb. 1 at www.GoneFishingPA.com or at any of the more than 900 licensing agents across the state.

For more information about the Mentored Youth program, visit www.GoneFishingPA.com.

Turn In a Poacher

The Pennsylvania Game Commission has a "Turn-In-a-Poacher" program to apprehend people who are suspected of killing threatened or endangered species or big game animals. Witness reports are instrumental in securing a successful conviction. You can get involved by either calling a toll-free-telephone number – 1-888-PGC-8001 – or filling out a "TIP" Reporting Form on the commission's website, www.pgc.state.pa.us.

The TIP program was authorized by the General Assembly as part of a legislative package I supported to deter crimes against wildlife.

The act authorizes the Game Commission to increase fines by \$500 against individuals convicted of killing threatened or endangered species or unlawfully taking big game animals. That money is then placed in a special fund from

which \$250 will be used to pay the individual providing the "tip," as long as the district justice imposes the additional \$500 fine. The additional fine money will be used to maintain the TIP Hotline.

Calls to the TIP telephone number are always answered by a secure recording device. Tips submitted using the new online reporting system will be delivered electronically to a special email account in the agency's Bureau of Wildlife Protection. Access to the recording device and email account is limited to ensure confidentiality and program integrity. Both methods of reporting are available to the public 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

People who provide tips can choose to remain completely anonymous.



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New permit options available with multi-year fishing licenses

New permit options are available for customers who buy multi-year fishing licenses. Beginning this year, anglers can add a single-year Trout/Salmon Permit, Lake Erie Permit, or Combination Trout/Salmon/Lake Erie Permits to a multi-year license. Previously, anglers were required to buy a multi-year permit which matched the expiration date of the license.

Anglers must fold the printed permit and place it in front of their multi-year base license.



2014 MULTI-YEAR FISHING LICENSES

Type of license or permit	Age	Cost
3-year resident	16-64	\$64.70
3-year senior resident	65 & up	\$31.70
3-year trout/salmon permit	16 & up	\$25.70
3-year Lake Erie permit	16 & up	\$25.70
3-year combo trout/salmon/Lake Erie Permit	16 & up	\$43.70
5-year resident	16-64	\$106.70
5-year senior resident	65 & up	\$51.70
5-year trout/salmon permit	16 & up	\$41.70
5-year Lake Erie permit	16 & up	\$41.70
5-year combo trout/salmon/Lake Erie Permit	16 & up	\$71.70
1-year trout/salmon permit	16 & up	\$9.70
1-year Lake Erie permit	16 & up	\$9.70
1-year combo trout/salmon/Lake Erie Permit	16 & up	\$9.70



The Lawrence County Coon & Fox Club has many dedicated members, and I always enjoy visiting with them.

New law aids Nuisance Wildlife Control Operators

A state law enacted this year allows Nuisance Wildlife Control Operators (NWCOs) to use electronics to remotely check their traps, saving time and money.

The monitored systems also immediately alert NWCOs when a trap has been triggered so the animal can quickly be removed. NWCOs are licensed by the Pennsylvania Game Commission.