

Fish and Boat Commission State Documents

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Finding aid written in English

Pennsylvania Department of Education, Bureau of the State Library

Forum Building
607 South Drive
Harrisburg, PA, 17120

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Summary Information

Repository: Pennsylvania Department of Education, Bureau of the State Library

Creator: Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission

Title: Fish and Boat Commission State Documents

Identifier: FISH-BOAT

Date: 1903 - Present

Date: Majority of material found within 1984 - Present

Physical Description: 12416 Megabytes (938 PDF files (2 files from Fish and Boat Commission generally, 936 from Angler-Boater magazine collection))

Language of English

Materials:

Scope and Contents

The Fish and Boat Commission sets rules and regulations governing fishing and boating in and on all inland and boundary waters of the Commonwealth. In addition to managing and protecting the state's aquatic resources, the Commission also is mandated with the responsibility for all of the state's reptiles and amphibians. As an independent state agency, the Commission is supported by anglers' and boaters' dollars generated through the sale of fishing licenses and boat registrations. The Commission consists of ten members serving four-year terms. Eight members represent specific geographic locations, while the ninth and tenth are members-at-large and must be experienced boaters.

The publications of the Fish and Boat Commission contain educational guides and periodicals. Selected topics from these publications include fishing and boating regulations and tips, and the Angler and Boater magazines. The bulk of the current material is dated from 1984 to present.

Biographical / Historical

Legislation in 1866 created a Commissioner of Fisheries, empowered to force dam builders on the Susquehanna to pay for passageways for anadromous fish to continue their natural annual upstream spawning journey. A series of laws applicable to various localities was consolidated in 1866, annual fishing periods were established, and the capturing of fish in sluices was outlawed.

In 1873, the single Commissioner was reinforced by a Board of Commissioners. In 1883, a system of state hatcheries began which replenished depleted species. In 1903, the Board of Commissioners became a department-level state agency. In 1905, the legislature created a board with the short title Fish Commission (as distinct from the Board of Fisheries Commissioners), for the purpose of cooperative action with the neighboring states, and this was perpetuated until about 1910. In the short-lived Administrative Code of 1923, the Fisheries Commission was turned into an independent commission, and renamed the Fish Commission. The Administrative Code of 1929 continued the use of "Fish," but relegated the unit to "Board of Fish Commissioners", although informally "Fish Commission" sometimes still appeared. In 1925, a Fish Fund was established, and the Commission was also involved with a newly created Clean Water Board. In 1949, the Board was by statute elevated to independent commission status and officially renamed the Fish Commission. Its head, still bearing the 1866 title of Commissioner of Fisheries, was made executive director of the agency. In 1931, licensing of motor boats was imposed and the Fish Commissioners were primarily

responsible for enforcement; fish wardens shared the work with State Police and forest and game wardens. In 1933, the Department of Revenue was charged with the administration of motor boat licenses, which continued as the arrangement until 1949. In 1963, the standards for appointments to the Fish Commission were altered to require that one commissioner be knowledgeable in boating, and a regulatory statute was passed conforming to the Federal Boating Act. By 1965 the Fish Commission had a Division of Watercraft Safety. In 1991 the agency name was changed to Fish and Boat Commission, and powers now extended to all pleasure boats.

Legacy Agency Names and Related Agencies

Board of Fisheries Commissioners (former agency name), Fish Commission (former agency name)

Angler and Boater Magazine Titles

The Pennsylvania Angler and Boater magazine was formerly titled "Pennsylvania Angler: News Bulletin for Fishermen" from December 1931 to September 1933, "Pennsylvania Angler" from October 1933 to December 1969, "Pennsylvania Angler: Pennsylvania's Official Fishing and Boating Magazine" from January 1970 to October 1984, "Pennsylvania Angler: The Keystone State's Official Fishing Magazine" from November 1984 to June 1996, "Pennsylvania Angler: The Keystone State's Official Fishing and Boating Magazine" from July 1996 to December 1996, "Pennsylvania Angler and Boater: The Keystone State's Official Fishing and Boating Magazine" from January 1997 to present.

The Boating Advisory Board also published the magazine "Boat Pennsylvania" from May 1984 to a winter issue in 1996 before being incorporated into the Pennsylvania Angler and Boater magazine.

Conditions Governing Access

The issues of Angler and Boater magazine presented from the Fish and Boat Commission are a subscription service, and therefore recent issues may not be available. If any material is reproduced for any use from the publication, in print or digitally, acknowledgement must be credited to the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission, and must include a source citation to the specific issue (month and year). Magazine issues are copyrighted, but permitted for educational use.

More information on the Angler and Boater magazine, as well as partial issues and articles digitally-accessible, can be found at:

<https://www.fishandboat.com/About-Us/Angler-and-Boater/Pages/default.aspx>

Conditions Governing Use

The Pennsylvania Fishing Summaries are copyrighted publications, for which the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission has permitted educational use.

Other Finding Aids

For more information concerning the records of the Fish and Boat Commission at the Pennsylvania State Archives, please visit:

<https://gencat.eloquent-systems.com/pennsylvania-state-archives/permalink.html?key=class674>.

Administrative Information

Publication Statement

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Controlled Access Headings

- Fishery law and legislation
- Pennsylvania Politics and government
- Politics and government
- State government publications