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# THE Bucket

VOLUME 23 • ISSUE 11
OCTOBER 2026

*Official Publication of the S.O.N.S.*

S.O.N.S. PHONE NUMBER 814-453-2270 (ALSO FAX NUMBER)
sonslakeri@aol.com • www.sonsoflakeerie.org



## AUTUMN WALLEYE

Rick Makowski caught this nice 28 inch Walleye while fishing from the Holland St. Pier on 10-29-26

## FISHING REPORT:

After nearly three straight weeks with no rain the steelhead fishermen saw very light action then it all got better as the rains began and the temperatures cooled. With water in the Lake Erie tributaries the silver bullets are moving upstream. Check out the action on the webcams that are in operation 24/7 on Trout Run and the Walnut Creek Access area to see for yourself at https://www.fishusa.com/webcams/ (The Trout Run Camera had 99,800 visitors in October). With the marinas closing more opportunities and access has become available notably in the Presque Isle Marina which prohibits fishing from the piers during boating season. During the phenomenal weather we had in late October many anglers were still catching some nice walleye. Perch are moving into PI Bay too.




## BOATING THIS FALL? WEAR IT!

From November 1 through April 30, anyone on a boat less than 16 feet in length, including all canoes, kayaks, and paddleboards, is required to wear a life jacket. Children ages 12 and under must always wear a life jacket while paddling.



## DRONE'S EYE VIEW

This photo of the Walnut Creek Access Area was posted on Facebook Nov. 1



## FISHING OPENED AT THE PI MARINA

Fishing from the piers at the Presque Isle marina, meanwhile the Lampe Marina and fish cleaning station are now closed for the winter.

## SONS 2026 MEMBERSHIP BUTTON

is a smallmouth bass this year. This is in keeping with featuring a native species fish on the button. You can pick up the 2026 pin at anyone of our events or meetings or you can get one by sending $3.00 to SONS of Lake Erie, 3411 Peach St Box 233 Erie, PA 16508

**JOIN A FRIEND TODAY!**

**MAIL TO: S.O.N.S., 3411 Peach St Box 233 Erie, PA 16508**

**RECORD OF MEMBERSHIP** **2026**

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☐ Renew ☐ New ☐ $5.00 ADULT ☐ $4.00 SENIOR CITIZEN (over 65) ☐ $4.00 JUNIOR (under 16)

## BICENTENNIAL TOWER CELEBRATION

The EWPPA hosted a celebration commemorating 30 years since the building of the Bicentennial tower on Dobbins Landing. The event took place Oct. 15-19 beginning with a drone show over the East Canal Basin on the 15th. We were asked to participate by hosting a public fishing event on Sat. 10-17, we used the fishing pier on State St from 10-1. The weather was cool and windy but we still had a few participants. We also set up a display of the flags of the original 13 colonies which we used during the 1995 City of Erie bicentennial celebration along with the flags of all the United States. On display was a replica of the Liberty Bell commemorating the 250th birthday of the United States which was decorated with pictures of fish painted on it by local child artists.



## THE 2027 MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

will be starting soon so keep your eyes on your mail for your membership package. We thank you for your past membership and support and hope that you continue to be part of our club. Our goal is to get back up to 2500 members.

## WELCOME ABOARD EMERALD PRINTING COMPANY

We are happy to announce that the Emerald Printing Co. of 3212 Cherry Street has been chosen to print our newsletter.





## Safe Ice Thickness*

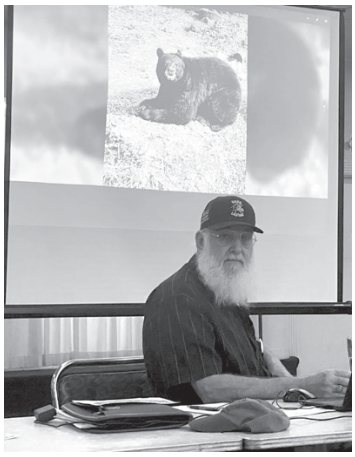
| Ice Thickness | Permissible Load |
|---|---|
| 3 inches | Single person on foot |
| 4 inches | Group in single file |
| 7½ inches | Passenger car (2-ton gross) |
| 8 inches | Light truck (2½-ton gross) |
| 10 inches | Medium truck (3½-ton gross) |
| 12 inches | Heavy truck (8-ton gross) |
| 15 inches | 10 tons |
| 20 inches | 25 tons |
| 30 inches | 70 tons |
| 36 inches | 110 tons |

***Solid, clear, blue/black pond and lake ice**

*Slush ice has only half the strength of blue ice. The strength value of river ice is 15 percent less.*

## THE SPEAKER AT OUR OCTOBER MEETING

was SONS Director and Activities Coordinator Rich Brine. He presented a slide show about his recent trip to Alaska with his wife and daughters. His slide show demonstrated the fantastic beauty that one can experience in America's last frontier.





*Rich Brine at the slide show computer and holding a nice halibut he caught while fishing in Alaska.*

## NOMINATIONS TO BE TAKEN AT NOVEMBER GENERAL MEETING

The offices of President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary are all open for nomination as well as 4 directorships which are currently held by Jack Klapthor, Rich Brine, Ron Morrow and Dave Mikeska have all reached the end of their terms and must run for office.

If you are interested in becoming a member of the board and possibly assuming some of the technical oriented jobs, please mail or email a resume listing your experience and computer skills to our nominating committee at sonslakeri@aol.com or the SONS of Lake Erie, 3411 Peach St. Box 233 , Erie, PA 16508.

## WATER PENETRATES SALT MINE UNDER LAKE ERIE

*Fox 8 News Cleveland*

The Morton Salt Mine in Fairport Harbor, Ohio, was shut down on October 22, 2026, after a significant inflow of water forced an emergency evacuation and complete halt of underground operations. The mine sits about 2,000 feet beneath Lake Erie and is a major supplier of road salt in the region.

Morton Salt detected a "significant inflow of water" underground on October 22, 2026, prompting an immediate evacuation. All miners exited safely, and no injuries were reported.

The company ceased all underground operations and notified regulatory authorities, including the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA), which had inspected the mine quarterly in 2026.

Surface activities at the mine are now severely limited while investigations continue.

The mine remains closed indefinitely while independent experts and regulators assess the cause and impact of the water intrusion.

Morton Salt has declared the event a force majeure, notifying customers and vendors of potential supply disruptions. The Fairport Harbor mine is a major source of rock salt for winter road maintenance across Northeast Ohio and beyond.

We have always have had a terrible concern that this salt mine could cause contamination to Lake Erie. The cavern is huge and even though it is located 2000 ft below the lake bottom there is always a chance it could collapse especially since the Lake Erie basin experiences periodic earth quakes. We will keep our fingers crossed while praying that the water in the mine is normal ground water not a breech through the walls of the mine.

**REMINDER– TO SAVE PAPER AND POSTAGE, WE MAIL ONLY ONE COPY OF OUR NEWSLETTER TO THE SAME ADDRESS.**

## SONS HONOR VETS

Military Veterans and SONS Directors Rich Brine, Chuck Miller and members John Kovach and Larry Lipinski stop for a picture as they wait for their turn to March in the annual Erie Veterans memorial parade on Nov. 7th. We have dedicated a lot of effort over the years to honor our military veterans by providing free fishing opportunities and other support. We would like the public aware of our programs and join in the activities. The parade gave us an opportunity to do so.




## ACTION TAKEN AT THE 168TH MEETING OF THE PFBC

One of the actions taken by the PFBC at their October 26, 2026 meeting included regulations that affect McQuarries Pond at the Harborcreek Community Park.

Commissioners voted to approve the publication of a notice of proposed rulemaking pertaining to Miscellaneous Special Regulations (58 Pa. Code § 65.24). Under this proposal, the PFBC would be able to set special regulations on waters being considered for a rebranded community fishing initiative beginning in 2027 which aims to utilize improved hatchery operations to provide a cost-effective option for stocking juvenile and adult warm-water and trout species in small impoundments within or adjacent to urban, metropolitan, or densely populated communities. One of the waters under consideration for the special regulations include Harbor Creek Community Park Pond, Erie County; If adopted on final rulemaking at a future meeting, this amendment will go into effect upon publication of a second notice in the Pennsylvania Bulletin.

## ARTICLE RECOMMENDS USING BIG BAITS

*FROM THE GLSFC MONTHLY NEWSLETTER*

Use big baits to catch while fishing in the autumn. An on line article says that using big baits will attract larger fish. You probably won't get as many bites, but when you do get bite, chances are it's going to be a larger than average fish.

Why are big baits more productive for big fish in the fall? First, the days are getting shorter and the water is getting cold signaling the fish that it's time to put some fat on. They prefer to eat one large meal instead of several smaller ones. It requires less energy for them to eat one big meal than it does for them to chase several small meals. Less energy used means more weight added.

Larger baitfish are more appealing to larger fish. Predator fish that eat oily baitfish grow big faster. Walleyes, muskies, and northern pike are especially attracted to this baitfish. If you're after largemouth bass, many of the most successful bass-catchers will have a rubber-legged jig with a bulky piece of plastic attached. A Hack Attack Jig or Tour Grade Swim Jig tipped with a Rage Hawg is proven big bass bait. Use the Hack Attack when fishing the deep weed line and the Swim Jig when the bass are active and move into the shallower areas.

When a trophy walleye is the target, try trolling crankbaits at night on one of those lakes that has the fall spawning baitfish. Find a shoreline area with a hard bottom that is close to deep water or a shallow reef that is surrounded by deep water. The baitfish move shallow at night and the walleyes follow them.

Autumn is a great time to be on the water. In many places you'll have the lake or river to yourself. The opportunity to see wildlife is good, and the colorful leaves on the shoreline can be spectacular. And your chances for catching a trophy are perhaps better than in any other season. Head to a big-fish body of water, tie on big-fish bait, and see what happens. This is an opportunity for a truly memorable fishing experience.

## SONS Stuff Make Great Gifts

Christmas is just over a month away. If you're looking for some gifts may we suggest some of our logo merchandise? We have hats, T-shirts, 1/3 zip shirts , insulated stainless steel mugs and thermos bottles, towels and much more. You can see a full list at our website sonsoflakeerie,org. Click on Sons Stuff. Ron Morrow will have the stuff available at our upcoming general membership meetings. Or you can email us at sonslakeri@aol.com or text Ron Morrow at 814-651-3262 and leave a message. Include description, color, size and quantity in your correspondence

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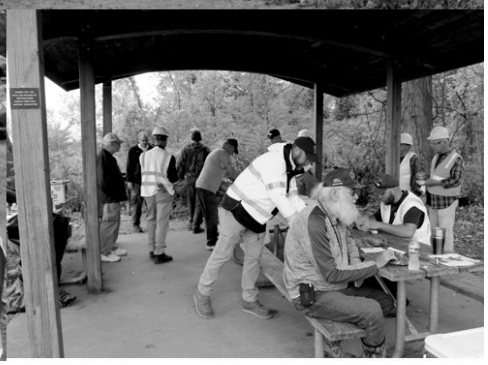












## MORE HABITAT ADDED TO PI BAY

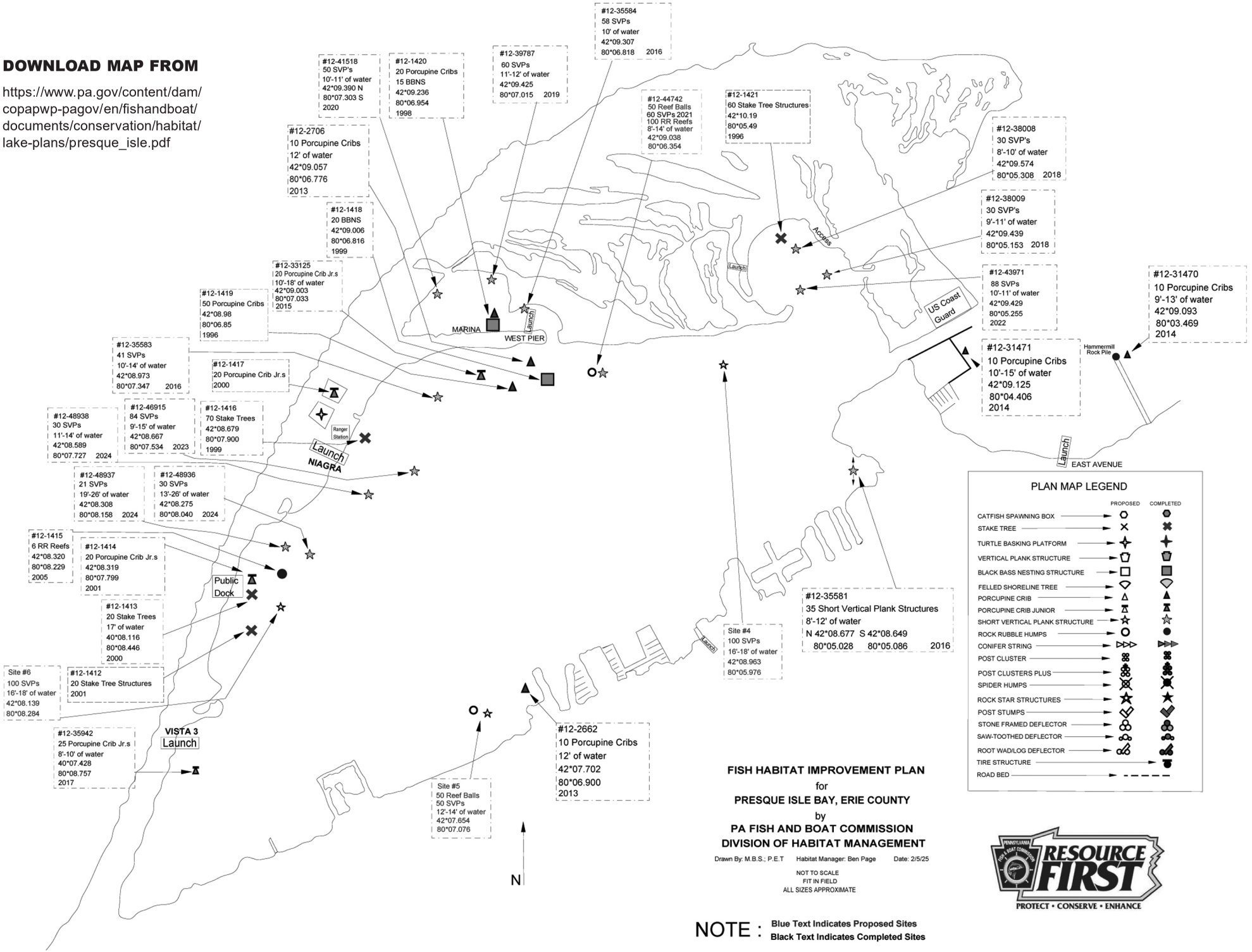
On October 14th, 2026 twenty five of our volunteers, met with the PFBC fish habitat team along with PFBC President Don Anderson, Executive Director Tim Schaeffer at the Niagara Boat launch on PISP Also on hand to pitch in was Lake Erie Unit Mark Haffley. Sixty pre built fish habitat structures were readied for deployment by the crew by attaching bundles of brush to each structure. After that process was completed the structures were moved by a high lift operated by a DCNR crew member and loaded on the habitat crew's specially equipped pontoon boat for transport to the deployment area in Presque Isle Bay. SONS director Chuck Miller and Keith Cauvel prepared lunch for the crew.

This project has always been a fun project for us since 1995 and always attracts a lot of volunteer participation. Since the program was instituted we have prepared over 800 structures that have been deployed into the bay and its adjacent waters.

# FISH HABITAT STRUCTURES PRESQUE ISLE BAY

**DOWNLOAD MAP FROM**

https://www.pa.gov/content/dam/copapwp-pagov/en/fishandboat/documents/conservation/habitat/lake-plans/presque_isle.pdf




PLAN MAP LEGEND

| | PROPOSED | COMPLETED |
|---|---|---|
| CATFISH SPAWNING BOX | ○ | ⬢ |
| STAKE TREE | × | ✖ |
| TURTLE BASKING PLATFORM | ✦ | ✦ |
| VERTICAL PLANK STRUCTURE | ⬠ | ⬠ |
| BLACK BASS NESTING STRUCTURE | □ | ■ |
| FELLED SHORELINE TREE | ◇ | ◆ |
| PORCUPINE CRIB | △ | ▲ |
| PORCUPINE CRIB JUNIOR | ⧖ | ⧗ |
| SHORT VERTICAL PLANK STRUCTURE | ☆ | ★ |
| ROCK RUBBLE HUMPS | ○ | ● |
| CONIFER STRING | ▷▷ | ▶▶ |
| POST CLUSTER | ⁘ | ⁘ |
| POST CLUSTERS PLUS | ⁘ | ⁘ |
| SPIDER HUMPS | ⁘ | ⁘ |
| ROCK STAR STRUCTURES | ☆ | ★ |
| POST STUMPS | ⌿ | ⌿ |
| STONE FRAMED DEFLECTOR | ⌀ | ⌀ |
| SAW-TOOTHED DEFLECTOR | ⌀ | ⌀ |
| ROOT WAD/LOG DEFLECTOR | ⌀ | ⌀ |
| TIRE STRUCTURE | ● | ● |
| ROAD BED | - - - | |

**FISH HABITAT IMPROVEMENT PLAN**
for
**PRESQUE ISLE BAY, ERIE COUNTY**
by
**PA FISH AND BOAT COMMISSION**
**DIVISION OF HABITAT MANAGEMENT**

Drawn By: M.B.S.; P.E.T Habitat Manager: Ben Page Date: 2/5/25

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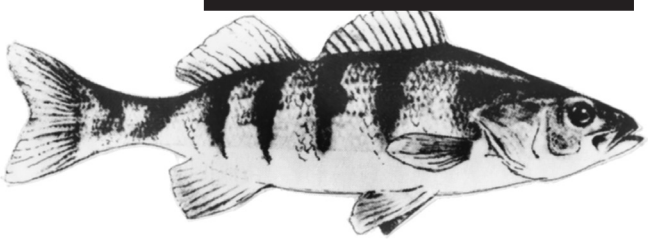
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"The Bucket" published monthly
by the S.O.N.S. of Lake Erie

VOLUME 23 • ISSUE 11
NOVEMBER 2026



## "A Replenishing Species"

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## GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

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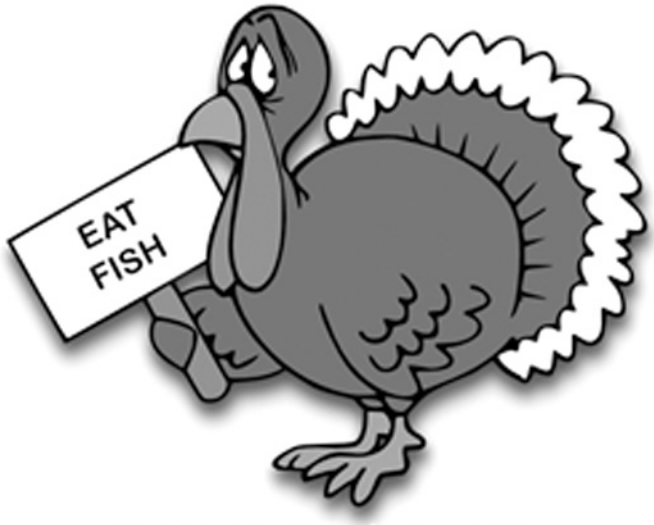
**PROGRAM:** Presentation on Keeping Pennsylvania by Don Benczkowski. Don is a former SONS director, PA DEP specialist, and Deputy WCO.

## NEW STATE RECORD CHANNEL CATFISH RECORDED

*News Release October 21, 2026*

On the evening of Saturday, October 3, 2026, angler David Taylor, Jr., 44, of Munhall, Allegheny County (shown below holding his fish), departed from the Southside Public Boat Launch in Pittsburgh on his 18-foot fishing boat. Taylor and his friend, Alex Atkinson, of Rillton (Sewickley Township), Westmoreland County, were fishing in the Tri-State Hawg Hunters fishing tournament on the Allegheny River and had just set their lines below the Highland Park Lock and Dam near Sixmile Island. Just after 8 PM he caught a record breaking Channel Catfish. This fish was weighed with WCO Luteri present, the Channel Catfish tipped the scales at 36 pounds, 2 ounces, officially exceeding the previous state record, which had been caught in the Lehigh Canal, Northampton County, in 1991, by 9 ounces. While only weight is considered for state record certification in Pennsylvania, Taylor's fish also measured 42 inches long with a girth of 26 inches.




Happy Thanksgiving from the Officers and Directors of the SONS of Lake Erie

## Send us your Fish Pictures!