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OCTOBER 26 GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Our club has been the fortunate recipients of various types of used fishing equipment thanks to the generosity of many people. We in turn repair and distribute to other organizations mostly kids, school and veterans. A lot of the gear is too advanced for novice anglers. Since it has been used we can't use it for door prizes so we decided to include this in an auction. There's line counter reel/rod combos numerous fishing rods, reel, minnow buckets, antique gear, and lots of potential great deals. We even have some odds and ends of SONS Merchandise for the auction block. It should be fun. Join us. Bring some cash, no cards.

HELP WANTED!!

The SONS of Lake Erie has grown in size and respect throughout the fishing community thanks to the hard work and dedication of our members and officers and directors. Our members come from all walks of life with experience and talents acquired from many sources. In order to keep up with the times it is necessary to incorporate the use of technology in club business. Doing business nowadays requires this. We publish a monthly newsletter which requires computer skills utilizing programs such as Microsoft Word and digital imaging programs. We must record and organize our membership using programs like Excel. We publish and maintain our web site using programs like Microsoft Front Page, Publisher and an HTML editing program. We need to manage our Facebook page and utilize email for communication. I have chosen to assume the role of publisher, webmaster, and technician. Our secretaries have had computer skills to perform their duties. Our treasurers have learned to use accounting programs as well as other computer tools for that job. At 83 years olds I expect that I will not be able to keep up with my duties. We have decided that maybe we should add some other positions to our leadership and split up the duties.

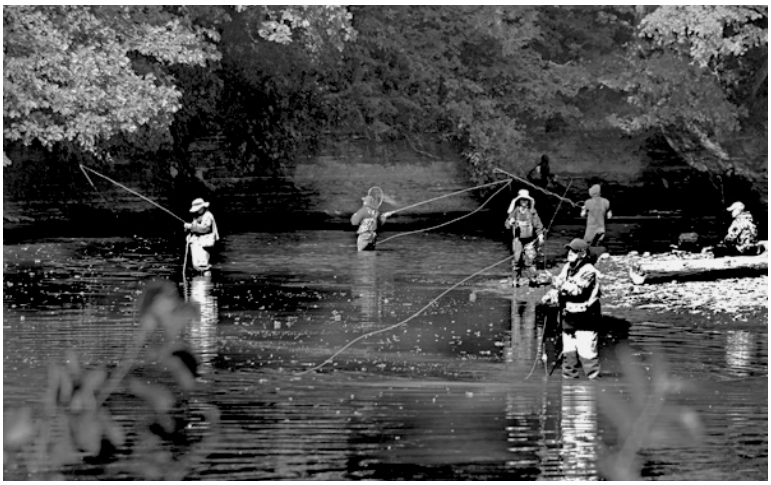
Nominations for officers and directors will be held at our November meeting.

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 skills to our nominating committee at sonslakeri@aol.com or the SONS of Lake Erie, 3411 Peach St. Box 233, Erie, PA 16508.

A documentary about Erie's Maritime heritage is being shown daily at the TREC Center on the big screen. Its Free and well worth seeing.

FISHING REPORT:

It's time for a season change but fishing opportunities still abound. Facebook posts have reported that walleye are still being caught and limits of perch too in the Lake. The perch will soon be moving into the bay and lake conditions may prevent venturing out into rough waters. There's enough public access available to provide numerous fishing opportunities and then there's **Steelhead** fishing. As the weather cools, the steelhead start heading for the streams and anglers from all over the world start heading there too.



Fly fishermen at Elk Creek trying their luck

IT IS ESTIMATED THAT:

MORE THAN 100,000 pounds of fish waste were collected at the three Erie County fish cleaning stations according to PFBC's Mark Haffley They estimate about 3000 lbs/day on some days through July and August.

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

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RECORD OF MEMBERSHIP **2025**

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HABITAT WORK CONTINUES

For Thirty Years straight the SONS of Lake Erie , The PA Fish and Boat Commission's Habitat Unit and Presque Isle State park have partnered together to enhance the fishery in and around Presque Isle Bay. In that time over 700 fish habitat structures have been assembled and placed in these waters.

This year on Wednesday October 8th twenty three SONS volunteers joined with the PFBC habitat crew and DCNR maintenance men assembled at the PI Marina boat launch area to prepare and place 60 more fish habitat structures.

Following instructions by PFBC team leader, Ben Page, the structures were made ready to launch by the volunteers who attached bundles of brush to them in order to make them more attractive to the fish. This year the structures were purchased pre-assembled using funds appropriated from the purchase of the Lake Erie Stamp.

The assembled structures were transported out into the Bay by a specially equipped PFBC boat. Using special electronic gear they are placed in predetermined pattern. They were placed into the waters of Presque Isle Bay about half a mile east of the Presque Isle Marina to the deep waters of the ship channel in PI Bay.

A lunch for all of the participants was prepared and served by SONS volunteers.

To download a map of the structure locations go to the PFBC web site at:

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

DINGELL-JOHNSON ACT IS 75 YEARS OLD

Dingell-Johnson Act: 75 years of Sport Fish Restoration funding The Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration Act, known as the Dingell Johnson Act, was passed by Congress in 1950. We're celebrating its 75th anniversary this year, and the more than $12 billion the Act has generated for the conservation and restoration of sport fish species and their habitats. Under the Dingell-Johnson Act, an excise tax is collected on sport fishing equipment including rods, reels, tackle, lures, lines, motorboat fuel and import duties on fishing equipment. The money is deposited into the Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund, which is administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Funds are then distributed to state fish and wildlife agencies.

The program requires states to match federal funds with revenue from fishing licenses and other local sources. This structure ensures anglers and boaters, the people who most directly benefit from the resource, are also the primary investors in its management. The impact of the funding is visible across the country. More than 9,000 public boating and fishing access sites have been built or improved with Dingell-Johnson money. Over 320 state fish hatcheries receive support, producing more than a billion fish annually for stocking in public waters.

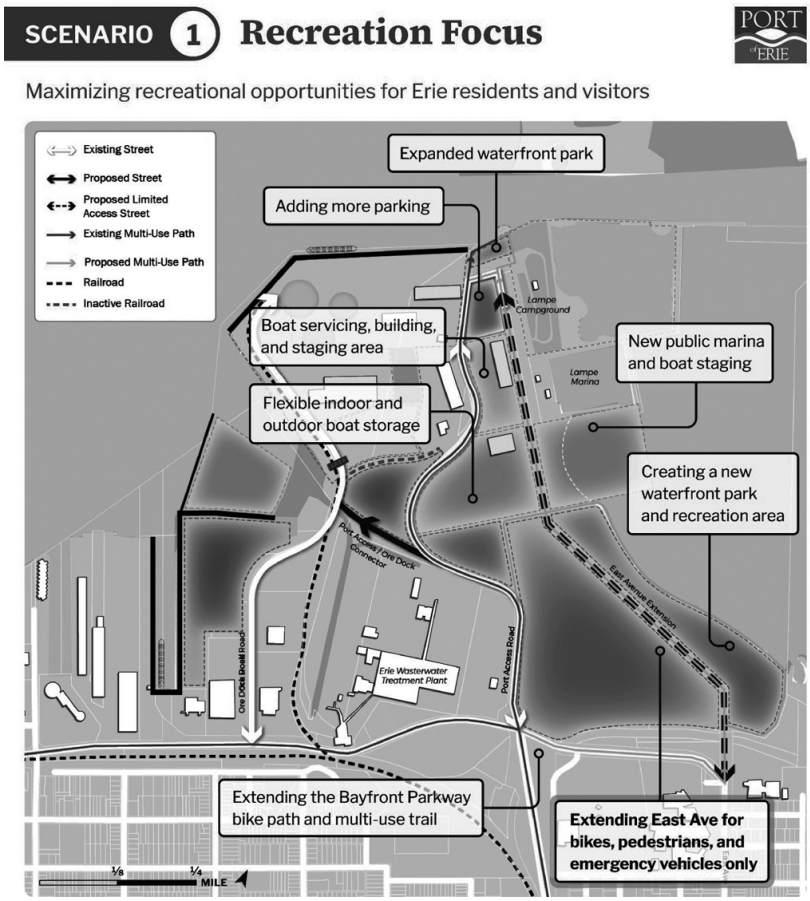
The 1984 Wallop-Breaux Amendment was a major turning point for the program. By adding excise taxes on motorboat fuel and expanding the base of taxed equipment, the amendment significantly increased revenue. It also broadened the list of eligible projects, allowing states to invest in boating infrastructure and safety initiatives in addition to fisheries restoration. For anglers, the results have been incredible. Improved fish populations, healthier waters, and more public access to lakes and rivers have resulted.

In many rural areas, projects funded by Dingell-Johnson dollars have created economic opportunities by drawing visitors and tourism dollars providing both an economic return and intrinsic value. As the 75th anniversary of Dingell Johnson is celebrated in 2025, federal and state agencies, as well as conservation organizations, have issued releases highlighting its legacy. The USFWS released figures showing the scope of the program: billions of dollars invested, thousands of facilities built, and millions of people educated. Leaders of the angling and boating community described the law as a cornerstone of modern conservation policy.

EWPPA PRESENTS PLANS FOR FORMER COKE PLANT PROPERTY

On October 8th the Erie Western PA Port authority called a public meeting in order to exhibit the potential plans for the use of the former Erie Coke Co. property after contaminant remediation is completed. There were three drawings on display that depicted the property used for recreational focus as shown in the scenario #1 below. Two other scenarios showed a recreational & industrial mix and a balanced mix.

All three scenarios included plans for the expansion of Lampe Marina and additional boat storage and service buildings. Unfortunately it has been estimated that cleanup of the site will take 10 years. I won't live to see it. You may also comment and see more about the plans on line at http://www.porterie.org/eriecoke/



Finding Opportunities to Grow Erie's Economy

The Port of Erie plays a significant role in the local economy. Annually, the Port has the following impact on the region:

$115 million generated by fishing and boating in the Erie region

- **$41 million** generated by recreational boating and tours
- **$73 million** generated by recreational fishing and lodging
- **$2 million** generated by fishing charters

805 total jobs supported by the Port and its activities

- **719** jobs directly supported by fishing and boating
- **85** jobs supported indirectly through local spending
- **$34 million** in wages paid to workers

In addition to measuring the Port's economic impact, we completed three additional analyses that help us understand what investments would make the greatest impact for the Port and the Erie community.

Real Estate

Where is growth happening in the Erie region, and for what types of land uses?

Job Market

What industries drive job growth in Erie? How can reinvestment support that growth?

Port Movement & Logistics

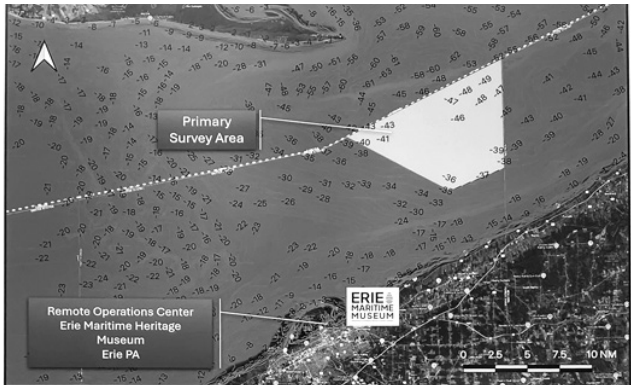
What do Port stakeholders and tenants see as the most important investments to keep the Port growing and running smoothly?

ECOMONIC IMPACT OF FISHING AND BOATING

Included in the EWPPA presentation was a slide (shown above) that estimates the economic impact on fishing and boating to Erie's economy. We have been trying to make this point clear to our civic leaders for years, but yet they have pushed almost all of the boating and fishing support businesses off of our waterfront. There is only one full service boat repair facility where at one time there were 4 or 5. There are no bait stands or tackle shops. In order to attract hotels two of them are exempt from paying property taxes and the third hotel has received millions in state support. In order to make up for the lost revenue the property taxes had to be raised for the remaining businesses forcing out the maritime support businesses. There is one piece of land that could be used to remediate the problem at the former vacant McAllister Marine property. There's a perfect place to fill in that void. These businesses could be attracted by offering them incentives too. We need it now not ten years from now.

IT'S NOT AN ALIEN SPACE CRAFT

It is a 30 foot long, remotely operated, diesel powered watercraft which is equipped with state of the art equipment which is mapping the floor of Lake Erie. The equipment was brought here by a research team from the Center for Coastal & Ocean Mapping Joint Hydrographic Center of the University of New Hampshire at the beginning of October. The LR30 Drone was built and equipped by Chance Maritime Technologies. The survey work was commissioned by NOAA. It was doing survey work near the area off of Erie we call the mountain.



Lake survey area in light shaded area

The drone was sent out onto the lake by technicians operating from a trailer behind the Erie Maritime Museum. The researchers are not permitted to disclose their findings until the complete surveys are done. They did comment that they have found numerous sink holes in the lake bottom. Some of them are over 80 meters in diameter. They are quite deep in that area.

Last year the NOAA vessel the Thomas Jefferson was also at work off of Erie and was due back this Spring but due to budget cuts it was postponed. Hopefully to be resumed in Spring of 2026.

EMMAUS FISH FRY

On Friday September12, 2025 twenty SONS of Lake Erie volunteers set up a truckload of equipment at the Emmaus Soup Kitchen on East 11th St. In Erie. All these logistics were in preparation for our annual fish fry that is prepared for our less fortunate brothers and sisters. For about eight years now we have produced this event at this facility. More than 100 lbs of walleye fillets were trimmed, battered and fried for serving to over two hundred clients of the soup kitchen. In addition to the walleye fillets the dinner, it included rolls potato salad, coleslaw, etc. The walleye for the fish fry were donated by members of our fishing community who participated in three separate fishing tournaments that were held this summer. This fish fry would not take place without their generous support. Thanks are also in order for SONS Director Chuck Miller for taking the lead in planning these annual events and for the rest of our volunteers who worked preparing and serving the meals. Many of them generously volunteer every year.

WILL MASSIVE WATER NEEDS OF DATA CENTER ETC. BE TOO MUCH FOR THE GREAT LAKES

This is a question raised by Caitlin Looby in an article in the Milwaukee Sentinel recently? She wrote “While the Great Lakes may seem to offer an endless supply of water, the balance is actually quite delicate.

Each year, only 1% of the water in the Great Lakes is replenished by rain, snow and groundwater.

Now, a new report from the Alliance for the Great Lakes shows that this delicate balance may be at risk because of rising demand from industries that use tremendous amounts of water, like data centers, mineral mining, and agriculture, all of which put pressure on groundwater resources.

Further, the increased water demand is happening just as climate change is making it more difficult to manage and plan water use, because precipitation no longer follows historical trends. That’s something Milwaukeeans saw firsthand earlier this month during the 1,000-year flood event.

Tax incentives from many of the eight Great Lakes states have lured industries that need water, like data centers, to the region. Further, any industry that needs access to that much water has to come, because the Great Lakes Compact ensures that large-scale, long-range diversions of water outside the basin won’t happen.

But, the report warns that the region is ill-prepared for the overwhelming needs on the horizon. No one has prepared, for example, for summer days when parched fields need to be irrigated and sprawling data centers need to be cooled. That’s food for thought.

REMINDER–MANDATORY LIFE JACKETS REQUIRED

November 1 through April 30

BOATING THIS FALL? WEAR IT!

Anglers who plan to fish from a boat this fall and winter are reminded that water temperatures can drop rapidly, presenting added dangers. All boaters are reminded to wear a life jacket. and make note of the upcoming annual Cold Weather Life Jacket Requirement.

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.

For more information on year-round fishing and boating opportunities in Pennsylvania, visit Fishandboat.com.

CLEER RESEARCH FACILITY OPENS

The Center for Lake Erie Education and Research (CLEER) opened at the Erie County Library recently. It provides visitors with interactive experiences and hands-on learning opportunities related to the rich biodiversity and ecosystems of not only Lake Erie, but the Great Lakes and the world's freshwater resources at large.

With much of the space accessible and free to the public and library staff during regular library hours, the center will welcome visitors of all ages to explore on their own or as part of a visiting group.

CLEER will be home to educational and research opportunities, supporting educators, scientists and students in their efforts to study and protect the Great Lakes and share findings to help inspire the community to invigorate the Erie region's blue economy.

This area opens to the library and will feature interactive exhibits accessible to the public during library business hours. This space will include:

- Interactive Floor in the map of the Great Lakes
- Digital Video wall featuring changing informational programming related to the Great Lakes region
- Relevant books available to be checked out of library
- Local Lake Erie Table
- Fish & Wildlife Display

The most attractive exhibit is *NOAA's Science On a Sphere®*, a room-sized, global display system that projects visualizations onto a six-foot diameter sphere to help illustrate Earth System science to people of all ages. It is a fantastic display, You should see it.

There are laboratories and equipment space for training and research also located in the facility.

The research generated from this facility will help us understand the needs of our fishery and our lake so that we can preserve and protect it as we promised to do when our club was formed in 1981.

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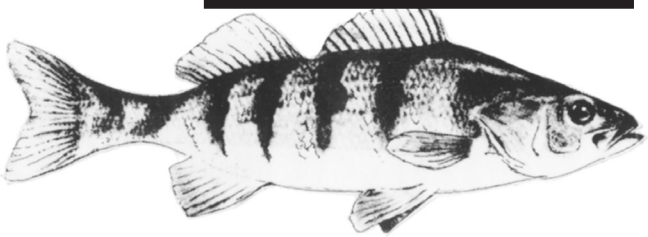

"A Replenishing Species"

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

MONDAY, OCT. 27, 2025 7:00 PM

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PROGRAM: Fishing Gear Auction

WOULD YOU LIKE TO GET YOUR SONS NEWS LETTER BY EMAIL?

If so, send us an email to sonslakeri@aol.om list your name, address and note that you would like to change to the electronic version. So far we have about 760 members who have requested the change so far. You can always read the current and past issues of the Bucket at our web site, sonsoflakeerie.org.at any time.

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OUR SEPTEMBER MEETING

The speaker was FishUSA's pro staff member Josh Feltenerger. The program was titled "Early Season Steelhead". He noted several factors that trigger steelhead activity, for example, shorter days trigger steelhead migration to streams for spawning. Water temperatures start cooling down; steelhead thrive in waters 40-58 degrees. Water levels dictate how far they can swim upstream. It also distributes scent into the lake. Steelhead can move up to 8 miles per day if the water conditions permit it.

You must adapt. If the water is low and clear, find the deeper pools and shadows. It's incredible how well the fish blend into its surroundings. High water is what we want. After a heavy rain blow out, the fish will move as the water recedes into upstream pools. Follow them as they move. If there is no water then fish the beach.

Try different methods like bobbers, minnows, egg sacs, etc. Using a float make it easier to detect a hit. Bottom bouncing works well once you get the weight adjusted. This methods works when the fish don't want to move. Shiny spoons and other hardware work well early in the season, if not try copper or silver hardware.

Josh did a great job and held the interest of the over 75 members who were in attendance. We all learned something, that simple methods do work to catch steelhead.

FALL AND WINTER TROUT STOCKING BEGAN OCTOBER 1!

HARRISBURG, PA (September 30) – As the fall season arrives across Pennsylvania, anglers should mark their calendars to take advantage of stocked trout fishing opportunities on dozens of popular waterways!

Beginning October 1, 2025, and continuing through mid-December, the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC) will stock approximately 116,500 hatchery-raised adult Rainbow, Brown, and Brook Trout in 118 stream sections and lakes. These stockings will immediately replenish some of the most popular fishing spots across the Commonwealth and provide ice fishing opportunities as conditions allow throughout the winter. Trout that are stocked during fall and winter can be fished for immediately. For more information see https://fbweb.pa.gov/TroutStocking

EXTENDED TROUT SEASON REGULATIONS

Trout anglers can take advantage of the Extended Trout Season which began on September 2, 2025, and lasts through February 16, 2026. During the extended season, the daily creel limit is three trout of combined species with a minimum size of seven inches, unless a water is managed under special regulations. Extended Trout Season regulations apply only to designated Stocked Trout Waters, and harvest of trout in other waters during the extended trout season is prohibited.