

# TIGHT LINES



## TOP NEWS OF THE MONTH - JANUARY 2024

### JANUARY MEETING EXCITEMENT!

#### ➤➤➤ READ MORE

The first general meeting of 2024 is going to be an exciting one! Not only is it a joint meeting with TU, but the PSA will be presenting a check to Gannon University in memory of Bob Hetz. Additionally, there is an extra special raffle going on at the meeting for a Redington fly rod!

#### READ MORE <<<

The PA Steelhead Association holds meetings each month except May, June, July, and December at 7:00 PM on the second Wednesday of each month. Most meetings are held at the American Legion Post 773 at 4109 West 12th Street, just east of the Erie Airport. We meet in the banquet room and encourage members as well as the public to attend and share their views and opinions. Meetings focus on items pertaining to the mission of the club, fundraising events, and local public and political issues affecting our fisheries. The PFBC is asked to be represented at our meetings for reports and questions. If you are unable to attend in person, join us on Zoom: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81084538949?pwd=anRZMG1GQkE3Y092SWZmUzRkQlQvUT09>

Meeting ID: 81084538949 Passcode: 257378

### JOIN US AT A MONTHLY MEETING.

**A NOT FOR PROFIT 501(C)3 CORPORATION**  
PO BOX 8892 ERIE, PA 16505



Editors: Emma Mader & Sam Zacour

# LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

By Chris Larson

## >>> FROM THE TRIBS

My hope is that everyone had a very enjoyable holiday season. The start of the New Year for the PA Steelhead Association is a busy one with our upcoming January 10th general meeting. Some of the highlights of that meeting are:

- Combined meeting with Trout Unlimited
- Check presentation of a memorial donation of \$12,000 in honor of Bob Hetz will be made to the Gannon Freshwater and Marine Biology Degree program
- Redington flyfishing outfit (4-pc 9-ft 7-wt fly rod, reel, line and travel case) will be raffled off at the end of the meeting (this fly fishing outfit was donated by FishUSA)

So remember to mark Wednesday, January 10th, at 7 PM on your calendar. The PSA Board met on December 6th. A number of issues were discussed, but I am only going to highlight a few in my Letter:

### UPCOMING MEETINGS

Date	Location	Speaker
01/10/24	American Legion 773 7 PM	Combined Meeting with TU & Gannon
02/14/24	American Legion 773 7 PM	Mike Hosack, PFBC Biologist-Steelhead Stocking
03/13/24	American Legion 773 7 PM	Dr. Sarah Ewing, Gannon Project NepTWNE
04/10/24	American Legion 773 7 PM	Sister Pat Lupo-Pennsylvania Lake Erie Watershed Association

Dan Hill will be honored posthumously with the PSA Angler Award at the 2024 Fall Run Picnic on Saturday, September 28th. As everyone knows Dan tragically passed away this past September. He was an accomplished fly fisherman and fly tier who was admired and beloved by everyone he met (*you can read more about Dan on page \*\**).

Dan Hill’s widow, Colleen McCarthy, donated 15+ bins to the PA Steelhead Association. The bins were filled with an unbelievable array of fly tying materials and equipment, reels, rods and spools of monofilament.

A number of the bins have been given away to Trout Unlimited, Healing Waters, and Gem City Fly Tiers. From the bins that remain we will raffle off a number of the contained items at the PSA general meetings. We will also bring in containers of various furs and feathers for our avid fly tiers to peruse. If there is something that you can use — take it.

But leave a small donation to the Fruit Basket program in a provided container. One last thing, Colleen McCarthy asked that pictures of the flies that you tie or the fish that you catch using them be emailed to her.

Her email: [colleenmcarthy9@gmail.com](mailto:colleenmcarthy9@gmail.com)



# LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

2

By Chris Larson

## >>> CONTINUED

The PA Fish & Boat Commission requested a meeting with some PSA Board members to discuss possible stream and/or access improvement projects that could be done collaboratively. The meeting is tentatively scheduled for the end of January. I will keep everyone posted on what happens at this meeting.

The Fruit Basket program was discussed. Some of the issues were the costs (\$35.99 per basket x 92 baskets = \$3,311.18). Are the delivery maps that we currently use up-to-date? Should we develop a fundraiser to help pay for this program? We also discussed whether we should be gifting something else (gas cards or grocery store gift cards) other than fruit baskets. Interestingly, several of the teams took an informal poll during the deliveries on December 9th and found that all the landowners who were queried replied that they enjoyed receiving the fruit baskets and would prefer them over gas or gift cards. Ryan Novatnack is heading up this program and we will sit down with him to discuss some of the issues raised during the Board meeting and plan for December's Landowner Appreciation program.

The decision was made at the Board meeting to eliminate the August meeting this year. Everyone is still busy with picnics, vacations, golf, etc. , during that time of the year. With tentative plans for a stream or access improvement project for this coming summer plus the July 20th Hot Dog Day there is plenty to keep PSA members busy and allow opportunities to interact with one another.

The Board also wanted to thank Rich Sherwin for all of the time and effort that he put into having the Fairview Gravel Pits Pond renamed as the Bob Hetz Memorial Pond and the ensuing dedication of the boulder with the new name on it on November 11th.

Time to sign off. Tight Lines!  
Chris



P.S. The boy in the picture holding a recently caught fish is my grandson, Ben. He is an avid fisherman, collector of insects, and wants to be a paleontologist when he grows up.

## ➤➤➤ LANDOWNERS FRUIT BASKET WRAP-UP

Keeping the tradition going with the landowners' fruit basket program, this year's delivery was split between 2 weekends. Eleven fruit baskets were delivered along Walnut and Elk Creek to property owners on Saturday, December 2nd. The rest (81) of the deliveries were done on Saturday, December 9th.

Members of the PA Steelhead Association, Gem City Outdoorsmen Fly Tiers, SONS of Lake Erie, 3CU, and NWTU delivered the 92 fruit baskets to property owners who allowed access to the tributaries through their property. This year, the beautiful baskets came from Mason Farms on the Peninsula Drive at \$35.99 each, for a total of \$3,311.18. Thank You, to the landowners who allowed access, and Thanks to those who volunteered to deliver the baskets!



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Pages 1-4: President Letter and PSA Board  
 Pages 5-11: Upcoming Events & Updates  
 Pages 12: Fishing with Confidence  
 Pages 13-14: Veterans Park Stocking  
 Pages 15-16: Keeping an Eye on the Stream  
 Page 17: Membership Application  
 Page 18: 2023 PSA Membership Review  
 Pages 19-22: Reading Room  
 Pages 23-24: Featured Fly

## ➤➤➤ CHECK OUT OUR NEW WEBSITE!

For the last several months the PSA has been updating our website, check it out below!





# MEET THE TEAM

## OUR MISSION, OFFICERS, AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS.

### >>> OUR MISSION

The purpose and objectives of the Association shall be to enhance and preserve the steelhead fishery in Pennsylvania including:

- Improving public access to steelhead fishing,
- Encouraging private landowners to maintain public access to steelhead fishing,
- Implementing stream enhancement and habitat improvement projects for steelhead, and
- Assisting nonprofit organizations which operate nurseries for spawning or raising steel head, or
- Which acquire land or access easements for steelhead fishing, or which engage in activities that complement the purposes and activities of the PA Steelhead Association.

### >>> OFFICERS & BOD

Chris Larson- **President**  
 Roger Latimer- **Vice President**  
 Chris Fatica- **Treasurer**  
 Dan Beck- **Secretary**

#### Board of Directors

Jack Barr  
 John Hall  
 Paul Krott  
 Emma Mader- *Newsletter Editor*  
 Marie Scalera  
 Skip Simmons  
 Tim Weeks  
 Karl Weixlmann  
 Sam Zacour- *Newsletter Editor*

## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

Woody Anselmo  
 Adam Korman  
 Bill Luffy  
 James Miller  
 Spencer Ort  
 Larry Price  
 Terry Smith

### >>> ADDITIONAL CONTACT INFORMATION

#### Erie County WCO's & Region offices Contact Info:

Sgt. Tyler Soety: 814-722-8643

NW Fish & Boat Regional Office: 814-337-0444

#### Matt Visosky

Central Erie 814-573-3638

#### Jacob Schwartzmiller

Western Erie 814-337-0444

#### Logan Schuller

Eastern Erie 814-908-6371

#### Walnut Creek Access

814-833-2464

(Note: The Walnut Creek office is the best # to call to report poachers)





# UPCOMING EVENTS & UPDATES

## >>> UPCOMING JANUARY MEETING OVERVIEW

The January 10th meeting will be a busy one. It is a combination meeting with the Northwest PA Chapter of Trout Unlimited. We did this last year at the January meeting, and it was well-received by members of both organizations. It is a way for each organization to educate the members of the audience about their mission and activities. Both the PSA and TU will give an overview of their programs.

The PSA is donating \$12,000 to Gannon University's Freshwater and Marine Biology degree program in memory of Bob Hetz. The check presentation will be made at this meeting. The PSA Board originally voted to create a scholarship in memory of Bob, but as we delved into the nuts-and-bolts of establishing a scholarship we realized that there were a lot of complexities and problems with doing so. As an alternative, the Board voted to make a one-time directed donation to the Freshwater and Marine Biology degree program at Gannon. This program educates college students in the areas of freshwater biology, water quality, and freshwater environmental issues (along with similar areas of study concerning marine environments). Our hope is that one of the graduates from this program will follow a career path that enables them to maintain and preserve the quality of Lake Erie, and subsequently our steelhead fishery, for many, many years into the future.

The director of the Freshwater and Marine Biology degree program, Dr. Christopher Dempsey, will give a brief overview of his program. Dr. Dempsey is excited about the PSA's donation and will put it to immediate use, including purchasing some much-needed equipment.

For those of you looking for that perfect fly rod and reel combination for steelhead fishing, then you don't want to miss the January PA Steelhead Association meeting on Wednesday, January 10th. A Redington Path fly fishing outfit that includes a 9'0" 7 wt. fly rod, reel, weight forward fly line, and traveling case, will be raffled off at the end of the meeting. Raffle tickets can be purchased at the door. All proceeds from the raffle will go to the Fruit Basket Landowner Appreciation Program fund. This fly-fishing outfit was generously donated by FishUSA.



The American Legion Post #773 will be providing a bartender at this meeting to serve drinks. It is a cash bar. Please

leave a tip when you order.

Looking forward to seeing everyone there.

# UPCOMING EVENTS & UPDATES

## >>> EVENTS IN THE AREA

Date	Location	Event
01/10/24	American Legion 7 PM	NW TU/PSA Combined Meeting featuring Gannon
Ongoing	Van Kamp Road	Gem City Fly Tiers 2nd Thursday of the month @ 6:30 PM
01/22/24	Polish Falcon Club 7 PM	S.O.N.S. General Membership Meeting
09/28/24	TBD	PA Steelhead Association Fall Run Picnic

## >>> PSA \$12,000 GANNON DONATION

The PSA is donating \$12,000 to Gannon University's Freshwater and Marine Biology Degree Program in memory of Bob Hetz. The donation to the Gannon Freshwater and Marine Biology Program is a one-time, unrestricted donation. Dr. Chris Dempsey, the program director, already has some good ideas on how to use the money including buying some much-needed equipment and making small grants available to students in the program doing research. Dr. Dempsey will be one of the speakers at the January meeting and will give a short presentation on the Freshwater and Marine Biology Degree Program.

Gannon is so greatly appreciative of the PSA's Bob Hetz Memorial Donation to their FMB Degree Program. We placed NO restrictions on how the money is spent other than it had to be used to support the FMB Degree Program. We are planning to present the check at the January PSA / TU Combo meeting on January 10th. It will be at the American Legion.





## ➤➤➤ DONATION OF DAN HILL'S FISHING SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT

Dan Hill was a greatly admired and beloved gentleman of the local fishing community. He was an accomplished fly tier, fly fisherman, custom rod builder, and fly reel repairman specializing in Pflueger Medalist reels. He fished far and near, including unusual places like Brazil, Bolivia, and Eastern Russia. Sadly, Dan passed away on September 10th, 2023. Many, many individuals within the PA Steelhead Association, Trout Unlimited, and Gem City Fly Tiers expressed their grief and sorrow over his loss.

Dan's widow, Colleen McCarthy, contacted Karl Weixlmann and asked him to take all the fishing supplies and equipment left behind by Dan's death. She donated the contents of 17 bins to be used by the various local fishing organizations. The bins contained a huge amount of fur, feathers, fly-tying equipment, thread, hooks, reels, sinkers, monofilament, and so on. The contents of the bins have been shared with several organizations: Trout Unlimited, Gem City Fly Tiers, Healing Waters, and the PA Steelhead Association. The PA Steelhead Association will raffle off some of the materials contained in several of the bins at our general meetings. We will also have many of the furs, body hairs, feathers, and dubbing materials on display at our meetings for members to look over. If you see something that you can use while tying your flies, you are free to take it. We only ask that you donate (big or small) to 3-CU when you take something. There will be a donation can nearby. Colleen McCarthy asked that you send pictures to her of the flies that you tie or the fish that you catch using those flies. Dan's legacy will live on in those pictures.

Colleen's email address is: [colleenmccarthy9@gmail.com](mailto:colleenmccarthy9@gmail.com)

If you want to find out more about Dan, then see his obituary [here](#).



## ➤➤➤ REMEMBERING THE 2023 FALL RUN PICNIC- HONORING ROGER LATIMER

On Saturday, September 30th, the PA Steelhead Association had our 2023 Fall Run Picnic at the Pleasant Ridge Park Pavilion in Fairview. 80 people attended the event which ran from 2 PM to 6 PM. We honored Roger Latimer with the “2023 PSA Angler Award” for his many years of service to the PSA and 3-CU. Roger is one of the few guys who seem to always be available to help plan, run, or help with any event or project the PSA runs. Volunteering is probably not the right word for Roger as he fully commits to making our events the best they can possibly be. He has been deeply involved with many of our projects for many years. Roger helped plan our Fall Run Banquets and Picnics and garnered many of our sponsor donations. He is the first to volunteer for our hot dog sale to Walnut Creek boaters, or our stream cleanups and access projects. He has been a past President of the PSA and is the current vice-president. He also has been a regular at the Fruit Basket delivery Program as well as a contributor with articles to TightLines.

You can often find Roger working the table at other organizations' events soliciting memberships to the PSA or hawking raffle tickets at our events. He is also instrumental in helping with stocking or any other needs 3-C-U has! It is an honor richly deserved and long overdue for the important contributions to the success of our club. To quote our current President Chris Larson, “It was special honoring Roger, we all know how much better the club is because of him.”

The Picnic had something for everyone, for the whole family. Casting demonstrations, fly-tying for kids and beginners, and cornhole boards. There was a 50:50 raffle, bucket raffles for assorted items, and silent auctions. A wonderful buffet dinner with free water and soft drinks was provided. A big Thank You to those who worked the kitchen during the banquet, including Patty Larson, Marie Scicchitano, and Marie & Lou Scalera. PSA President Chris Larson presents the Angler Award to Roger Latimer Roger and his wife Nancy!

Gem City Fly Tiers taught beginners how to tie a fly. Emma Mader had a magnetic fishpond for kids (and adults) to hone their fish-catching skills Jack Barr, owner of Raise the Barr Guide Service, did fly-casting demonstrations. A lot of individuals participated and were given instructions on the basics of fly casting. As we were cleaning up and closing down the picnic pavilion, Jack was still coaching a handful of interested would-be fly fisher anglers.

The weather was perfect, the food was really good, and over 25 items were raffled off. Next year's Picnic will be on Saturday, September 28th. Enjoy some photos from the 2023 Fall Run Picnic on the next page.

**Editor's Note:** We had articles on our web page and our Facebook page, but due to an oversight on my part did not have this article in TightLines about our Fall Run Picnic in which Roger Latimer was given long overdue recognition for his many contributions over the years. So here it is. Sorry, Rog!

S. Zacour



PSA President Chris Larson presents the Angler Award to Roger Latimer



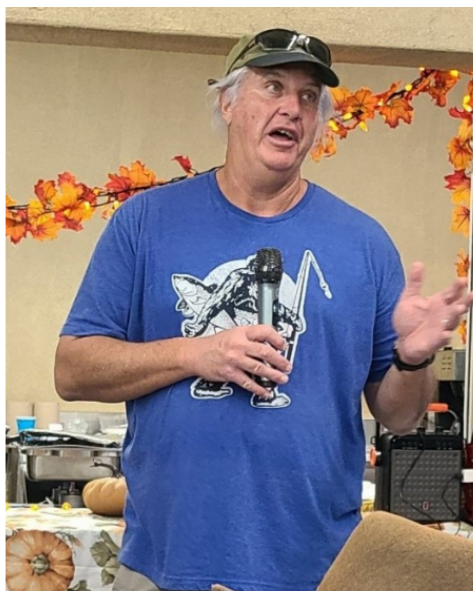
Roger and his wife Nancy!



PSA Staff work the registration and welcome table at the picnic.  
From left: Skip Simmons, Jim Simonelli, Dan Beck, and Chris Fatica.



Long standing member Frank Scicchitano gave the invocation.



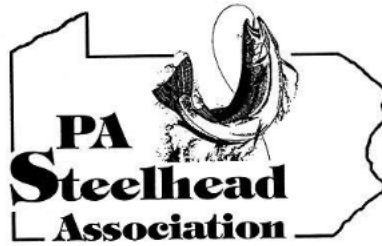
Founding father of the PSA John Bodner asked to speak on the importance of the PA Steelhead Association.



Jack Barr offering tips to young angler on Fly Casting at the picnic.



## ➤➤➤ PSA LETTER



From The Desk of Roger Latimer  
 Pennsylvania Steelhead Association  
**501(c)(3)** Organization  
 Board Member

DATE: 12/19/23

REF: Raising Steelhead

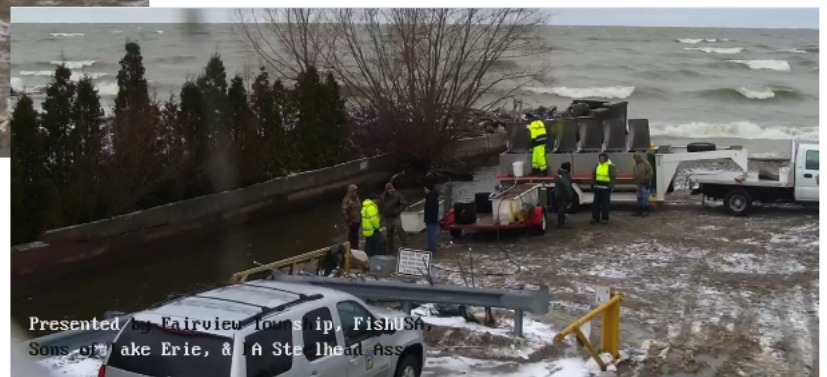
Next time you go Steelhead Fishing remember the Back Story to what you are able to do. Do you think the Steelhead just magically appear each fall for your enjoyment? A lot of work goes into raising the Steelhead. The first step is retrieving the eggs for the future stocking by the PFBC. As you can see in the photos, it is just another beautiful day at Avonia Beach (Trout Run) for doing just that.

Weather: a balmy 27°F, feels like 17°, winds gusting off the lake at 25-30 MPH.

Nothing these dedicated workers like more than standing in ice cold water, mist freezing on their face and hands getting wet, possible boots leaking, and what for? So the Steelhead fishery that we so love continues to get better and better each year.

So the next time you speak to an employee of the PFBC including our waterways conservation officer....thank them.

Rog





# FISH ON!

## >>> SEND US YOUR FISH PICS!

We would love to publish your Steelhead fishing photos in our monthly newsletter.

Please send photos to: [info@pasteelhead.com](mailto:info@pasteelhead.com) with "Fish Pic for TightLines" in the subject area!



PSA President Chris Larson with his grandson Ben after Ben caught his **first** Steelhead!!



Karl Weixlmann with a pretty Steely!



I caught this feisty baby Steelhead in West Erie County just a couple of weeks ago! Pretty fantastic to see that natural reproduction is happening in our creeks. I'm very curious if we could work as a group to count Redds in April and May—each Fall Spring Creek Trout Unlimited in State College holds a "Redd Count" for Spring Creek Brown Trout. Obviously, with the vast amount of anglers traveling to Erie for Steelhead, coupled with the stocking of 1 million Steelhead annually, our fishery is realistically a put-grow-take fishery. However, that does not mean we should ignore the natural reproduction that has been happening in our creeks since the early 1900s. 3CU trapped those feral Steelhead descendants in the late 60s and then here we are today!

- Ari Capotis

# FISHING WITH CONFIDENCE

➤➤➤ BY: SAM Z

A while back I read something on the Dark Sky Fly fishing blog that stuck with me. It was an article about Fishing With Confidence. We all tend to experiment a lot with different fly patterns. I often go through phases like using streamers only or a specific nymph pattern or only egg patterns. Some seasons it is a specific tandem like the Little Precious and an egg pattern such as the 3 Loop Pink Lady or a Blood Dot. After I wrote an article in my top six confidence flies I noticed a lot of Pink Ladies in the trees around my favorite spots and they seem to lose some effectiveness. I started to think maybe the fish saw too many of them so I switched it up. I had lost some confidence in the fly. What is your confidence fly? The one that when you tie one on, you knew you'll catch a fish.

We all have favorite flies. My brother has flies that he uses with confidence that I don't. But often we can both be catching Steelhead while using completely flies. So what's the secret? Probably having confidence in your fishing abilities and in the fly you're using. Having that confidence in your fly can help you concentrate on getting a good drift and be ready for the strike!

So if you are patient and confident in your fly AND your abilities to read the water and get a good drift, your should have success (if you are fishing over fish)! I really believe that you don't need a thousand-dollar rod or be able to cast 70' to be a successful Steelhead fisherman in our Steelhead Alley. I believe you need a decent reel with good low start-up inertia. What is startup inertia in a fly reel? Startup inertia is something you'll often hear relating to drag system performance. This term describes the force needed to start to pull the line off the spool. A drag with low startup inertia allows the drag to engage smoothly and without any noticeable pause or hesitation that could cause your line to break on a big fish. Other than that it is your ability to read the water flow and depth to figure out how much weight you need, and how far ahead of the fish you need to cast to get your fly down to their level in time.

That comes with experience and the more you fish the more confident you will become. There's that word again, "confidence" is an important ingredient to being a successful fly fisherperson! Get out there and Fish!  
~Sam Z





# VETERANS PARK BROOD STOCKING ENDS?

>>> BY: SAM Z

Ten years ago almost to the day the PFBC started placing some of their brood stock in Veterans Park on Walnut Creek. It all started with a conversation I had with Fish Culturist Scot Fedei at a stream improvement project I volunteered for on W.C. It was at the old Cassidy Campground on the corner of Love and Zimmerly Roads. Millcreek Township had gotten a hold of the campground and was in the process of turning it into a park. I asked Scot "What do you do with the Brood Stock you take out of Avonia and Godfrey run after you are done with them"? He told me they put them back in Elk Creek and a few other places. I then asked why not Walnut since Elk has plenty of fish and few fish were making it up Walnut like they used to. (I used to catch fish behind the Millcreek Mall and all through the Asbury Woods area, but at that point they were only making it up during very high water events.)

Scot then proceeded to explain to me that broodstock can't be shot out of a tube from the truck like stocked browns because they are too big. They needed direct access to the stream to "slide" them in down a chute from a truck within 15' or so from the water.

Well, I mentioned this to fellow PA Steelhead Association member Rich Sherwin and he said "let's make it happen"! If you know Rich, once he decides to make something happen, he is a real bulldog! He doesn't stop until it gets done. So Rich set about getting the Millcreek Parks and Recreation Director Jim Sperry together with PFBC representatives including Scot Fedei. Pretty soon things started to happen and an access road was put in at Veterans park. Pictured to the right are some of the first fish that made their way down the slide and in W.C., and a new phenomenon was born. Within a few years the crowds at the park the week or two after the brood stocking looked like a smaller version of the Wall at the Walnut Creek access area at the project waters.





# VETERANS PARK BROOD STOCKING ENDS?

>>> BY: SAM Z

Veterans Park became a great place to experience Steelhead fishing in a place with easy access and wading. For the older fisherman or the brand new kid learning it was a huge success. I took the picture below on Dec. 10, 2013 (I think), of the 3 men who had the most to do with making it possible – Rich Sherwin, Jim Sperry and Scott Fedei.



Sadly, it may be coming to an end, unless the PBFC go back to their normal spawning practices which have changed due to biosecurity. We thank them for their many years of service and stocking here and hope they do it again someday.

# DID YOU FILL OUT YOUR STEELHEAD SURVEY TODAY?

15

## >>> STEELHEAD ANGLER SURVEY LETTER

For the 3rd straight year, the PA Steelhead Association is managing an online survey about steelhead fishing in Pennsylvania. The first fishing season (fall 2021-spring 2022) we collected 408 surveys. The following fishing season (2022-23) we collected 475 surveys. We are opening up the survey again for the 2023-24 steelhead season.

The information from last season's survey was given to the Lake Erie Research Unit of the PA Fish & Boat Commission for analysis. The LERU will publish this information on the Fish Commission's website in the Biologist Reports Area 9 section. By comparing catch rates from year to year, this data may be helpful in monitoring the health of the fishery over time. The more surveys that are submitted, the more accurate the data.

We are encouraging everyone to fill out a survey every time that they fish for steelhead in northwest Pennsylvania --- whether you catch a fish or not. It only takes a minute or two to complete. You can use your cell phone to access the survey via the following QR code:



iPhone cameras read QR codes and will get you connected to the survey. Most android phones require that you download a QR code reader app first in order to get connected. You can also access the survey through the following hyperlink: [PSA Steelhead Survey 2023-24](#)

*You can save the link on your phone for easy access later on.*

The survey asks for your email address which allows us to identify how many surveys were submitted by individual anglers. Last year a total of 475 surveys were submitted by 164 anglers which averages out to 2.9 surveys per angler. Email addresses are required to fill out the survey but are only shared with the PA Fish & Boat Commission.

Some individuals have expressed concern that the PA Steelhead Association uses the survey to identify the best places to fish on the tributaries for its members. The only information that the survey asks for is which stream that you fished --- nothing more specific than that. The only exception to this is whether you fished from the "Wall" or in the stream on Walnut Creek. When the Lake Erie Research Unit releases the survey analysis on the PA Fish & Boat Commission website, we will provide a link to the information on the PSA website and in our newsletter, Tight Lines.

Again, we are encouraging everyone who fishes for steelhead to fill out our Steelhead Fishing Survey --- whether they catch a fish or not.

Thank you.



# KEEP AN EYE ON THE STREAMS

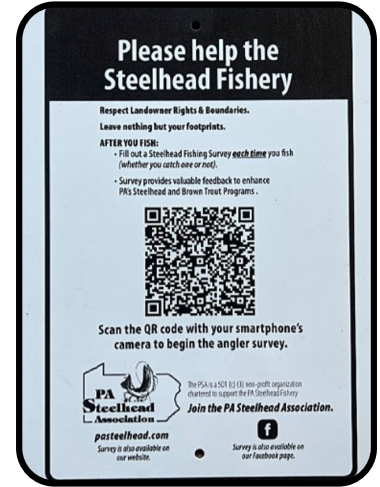
## ➤➤➤ STEELHEAD ANGLER SURVEY UPDATE

Please fill out a survey every time that you fish - even if you don't catch anything.

The survey was created by and is managed by the PA Steelhead Association. This information is shared with the Lake Erie Research Unit of the PA Fish & Boat Commission. The data is analyzed by the LERU to gather knowledge about the northwest Pennsylvania steelhead fishery. The results of the 2022-23 survey data analysis will be published on the PA Fish & Boat Commission website sometime in 2024.

You can access the survey by using the QR reader on your smart phone. Then save the web address on your phone for easy access in the future. Takes less than 2 minutes to fill out.

Every survey submitted adds useful information about our steelhead fishery. Last year we received 475 surveys. Let's see if we can double that this year! Access the survey by scanning the QR code your smartphone.



## ➤➤➤ AVONIA BEACH LIVE CAMERA

The Pennsylvania Steelhead Association has worked together with SONS of Erie, FishUSA, and the Fairview Township to install a camera at the mouth of Trout Run. It is now operational and has gone live!

We have committed to 1/3 of the cost of the camera and installation. Fish USA will be the host platform for the application The Avonia Beach Live Camera Feed is a great way for anglers to keep tabs on current water and weather conditions at the foot of Avonia Road in Fairview, PA.

<https://www.fishusa.com/avonia-webcam>



PM Avonia Beach Fairview PA



Presented by Fairview Township, FishUSA,  
Sons of Lake Erie, & PA Steelhead Assc



# MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

INTERESTED IN BECOMING A MEMBER? LOOK NO FURTHER!



## PA STEELHEAD ASSOCIATION

WORKING TO PROTECT OUR FISHERY

• ACCESS TO WATERWAYS • EDUCATION, PROTECTION, AND PRESERVATION • LANDOWNER COOPERATION

[www.pasteelhead.com](http://www.pasteelhead.com)

FOUNDED IN 1996

The PA Steelhead Association (PSA), a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, was formed by three avid Steelhead anglers to address a rash of property postings on prime Steelhead streams in Erie County. Like-minded anglers gathered and they got the ball rolling for the development of landowner relations and working relationships with the PFBC and local and State governments to address the issues of fishing access. Today the PSA is a vital player in the protection and preservation of Pennsylvania's Lake Erie Steelhead fishery. The PSA's continued efforts to gain access easements, maintain and promote favorable landowner relations, undertake stream-improvement projects around the area, and work closely with 3-CU cooperative nursery to raise steelhead for local stocking are central to our efforts. And in addition to all that, we still find time to fish!

The strength of our membership drives our mission. If you love to fish for Steelhead in the Lake Erie Watershed, please join the PA Steelhead Association today!

### MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Individual</b> \$20.00                   | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Family</b> \$25.00 *   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Senior</b> \$15.00 (65 and older)        | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Student</b> \$10.00 ** |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Military</b> \$15.00 (Active & Veterans) | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Business</b> \$50.00   |

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

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

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

(We NEVER disclose your personal information to ANY third parties)

Return this completed form with payment to:

**PA Steelhead Association**

**P.O. Box 8892**

**Erie, PA 16505**

\*Family Membership includes spouse and all children under 13 years.

\*\* Student is 13 years and older with valid school ID.

12 MONTH MEMBERSHIP BEGINS WHEN PAYMENT IS RECEIVED.





# 2023 PSA MEMBERSHIP REVIEW

## >>> LETS TAKE A CLOSER LOOK!

The accompanying spreadsheet shows the change in PSA membership numbers over the course of 2023. Overall, we had an increase of 10% in our total membership during the year with an increase of 25 memberships since the end of 2022. The efforts of the many PSA members who brought in new members at events like Hot Dog Day, FishUSA Chrome Fest, and Folly's End Steelhead Kick-off Party are to be commended. Many thanks! Let's keep up the good work going forward in 2024.

Level	Date	Individual	Family	Senior	Military	Business	Comp	Student	Total	Δ% YTD
Active	12/31/2022	144	35	28	13	9	9	2	240	
Active	12/31/2023	145	21	57	20	11	9	2	265	
		1	-14	29	7	2	0	0	25	10%



Photo by Ryan Novatnack



# THE READING ROOM

## RECOMMENDED BOOKS/NOVELS/ARTICLES RELATED TO FISHING AND/OR THE GREAT OUTDOORS!

### >>> BOOKS & NOVELS

- **“Steelhead Dreams: The Theory, Method, Science and Madness of Great Lakes Steelhead Fly-Fishing”**. By Matthew Supinski, Frank Amato Publications; 2nd edition (October 1, 2013)
- **“Selectivity: The Theory & Method of Fly Fishing for Fussy Trout, Salmon, & Steelhead”** By Matthew Supinski, Stackpole Books, 1st Ed. 2014.
- **“The Tug is the Drug: 37 Fly-Fishing Essays from the New York Times & Beyond”** by Chris Santella (STACKPOLE BOOKS 2014)
- **“Sight Fishing for Trout”**, by Landon Mayer (STACKPOLE BOOKS 2010)
- **“The Unreasonable Virtue of Fly Fishing”** by Mark Kurlansky and published by Bloomsbury Publishing in 2021. Thirteen chapters and 256 pages of entertaining history, trivia, and anecdotes that even a long-time angler can learn something from reading it. : Recommended by Rick Sherbondy, Erie PA.
- **“Trout from the Hills: The Confessions of an Addicted Fly-Fisherman”** by Ian Niall (Author) Hardcover – January 1, 1991, ISBN 10: 0854932054 / ISBN 13: 9780854932054 Published by Victor Gollancz, 1991
- **Trout Bum: Fly Fishing as a Way of Life.** (John Gierach's Fly-fishing Library) Paperback – January 15, 1988 by John Gierach (Author)
- **Sex, Death, and Fly-Fishing** – August 15, 1990, by John Gierach (Author) - **Publisher:** Simon & Schuster; First Edition (August 15, 1990), **Hardcover:** 240 pages; **ISBN-10:** 0671707388; **ISBN-13:** 978- 0671707385
- **“Going Fishing”** - by Negley Farson. (1942, Hardcover 1st Edition: original Publisher - Country Life Limited); 1973 edition published by White Lion Publishers; n.e. 156 pages; ISBN-10: 0856179507
- **“All the Time in the World”**, the latest book by John Gierach (Publisher: Simon & Schuster 2023), will take the fly fishing enthusiast to locations in Colorado, Montana, Alaska (March 21, 2023) 22ISBN13: 9781501168659
- **“Great Lakes Steelhead & Trout: Essential Techniques For Fly Fishing The Tributaries”** By Karl Weixlmann; Photos by Jack Hanrahan; Stackhole Books 2009; ISBN 978-0-8117-3583-4

***If you would like to share a book title that you think would interest others email it to:***

*info@pasteelhead.com, with “Reading Room Suggestions”, in the subject line!*

*Hopefully, we will be able to start a regular page of The Reading Room.*



# THE READING ROOM

RECOMMENDED BOOKS/NOVELS/ARTICLES RELATED TO FISHING  
AND/OR THE GREAT OUTDOORS!

20

## >>> INTERESTING ARTICLES

### First Drive Down Steelhead Alley

By: Mike Watts

At the November general meeting, **Mike Watts** (Jack Barr's friend), talked to our organization for a few minutes about his online fishing journal, [riversandfeathers.com](http://riversandfeathers.com). Mike wrote a great article about his steelhead fishing experience with Jack as his guide in his online journal. It's a great article that we can all relate to and it has a few, but very complimentary sentences about the PSA.

To read entire article click on link below:

<https://riversandfeathers.com/first-drive-down-steelhead-alley/>

### Yesterday was almost the last day of my life: a cautionary tale

By: Todd Tanner, Hatch Magazine Blog

*This story, originally shared by the author in 2014, should serve as a reminder of the dangers that all rivers pose, especially in extreme conditions. Be safe out there.*

I have a cautionary tale I'd like to share. Forgive me for not painting a more eloquent picture, but everything is still a bit too real, and raw, to gussy it up with pretty writing.

Yesterday was January 2, 2014. It was also very nearly the last day of my life.....

To read entire article click on link below:

[https://www.hatchmag.com/articles/yesterday-was-almost-last-day-my-life/7714521?  
utm\\_source=newsletter&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=weekly](https://www.hatchmag.com/articles/yesterday-was-almost-last-day-my-life/7714521?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=weekly)

### Catch and release concerns for winter fishing: It's not just extreme heat that can be fatal to fish!

By: Matthew Reilly, Hatch Magazine Blog

Several winters ago, about the time I settled into wild trout country, I fell in love with winter fishing—the conditions, the solace, and the fish. For when the air turns cold, all but the hardiest abandon the water. The lucky angler may even find themselves solitary among mountains blanketed in white—the air aroar with the static of snowflakes crashing into Earth—and with an honest chance at a truly large trout that are relatively unpressured and intent on consuming the largest number of calories for the fewest expended. However, while fishing in the winter can be very productive and enjoyable, just like during the hot, low water summer and fall seasons, there are some oft-unconsidered catch and release concerns specific to the frosty months that should be kept in mind when handling fish.

#### FROZEN FISH

There's much debate within the fishing community over the ethics of fishing during specific times of the year and targeting fish during critical points in their life cycles. The spawn, post-spawn, low water, warm water—some even contest the act of fishing when air temperatures drop below the freezing mark. While such a self-imposed prohibition may seem a bit harsh, the motive is true...

To read entire article click on link below:

<https://www.hatchmag.com/articles/catch-and-release-concerns-winter-fishing/7714530>



# THE READING ROOM

RECOMMENDED BOOKS/NOVELS/ARTICLES RELATED TO FISHING  
AND/OR THE GREAT OUTDOORS!

## >>> INTERESTING ARTICLES CONTINUED

### Handling Trout in Cold Weather Requires Special Care

By: Louis Cahill, Gink and Gasoline blog.

When temperatures drop below freezing good catch-and-release practices become critical. We think of trout as needing special handling care when water temperatures are high, but fish are just as vulnerable when air temperatures are low. Mishandling fish in cold weather can easily be fatal.

Fish are, of course, cold-blooded. Their bodies do not produce heat like ours do and this leaves them especially vulnerable to frostbite. The fragile tissues of their gills can freeze in an instant when air temps are below freezing. Again, they have no body temperature to stabilize their cells, so it happens quickly.

We adapt very well to cold temperatures. We have evolved to survive wide temperature swings. Fish on the other hand have evolved in a world that never drops below freezing, so taking them out in the cold air is as alien to them as dropping us on the surface of Mars.

*The solution is simple. Don't take fish out of the water when air temps are below freezing...*

To read the entire article click on link below:

<https://www.ginkandgasoline.com/fly-fishing-tips-technique/handling-trout-in-cold-weather/>

### Steelhead Flies, Half as Much

By: Louis Cahill, Gink and Gasoline blog.

*WHEN THE RAIN WON'T STOP, THE LIGHT IS FAILING, AND THE RIVER SWELLS, STEEL  
HEADERS DRINK WHISKY AND STARE DARKLY INTO THEIR FLY BOXES.*

Maybe that's a bit dramatic, but we all do it. I spent an evening like this with a group of friends recently. One of the guys had just started tying his own steelhead flies and they were pretty nice. Beautifully tapered, undulating forms with ostrich hurl and marabou and jungle cock eyes. They looked pretty deadly. He would sort carefully through the box, selecting the perfect specimen, and passing it to Barrett, our guide. Barrett would give each fly a brief glance and toss it carelessly back across the table. Half as much," he'd say and go back to his drink. "They're great flies," he went on, "and they'll catch fish, just not as many fish." The reason is pretty simple. Bulky flies with lots of materials look great, but they don't sink as quickly or as deep as sparse flies do. That's one of the reasons simple flies often catch the most fish...

To read the entire article click on link below:

<https://www.ginkandgasoline.com/gink-gasoline-fly-patterns/steelhead-flies-half-as-much/>

### Swimmable, Drinkable, Fishable: Public Input on Great Lakes Water Quality

By Rachel Wyatt Nov 21, 2023 from the International Joint Commission newsletter

To read the entire article [click here](#).

In fall 2022, the International Joint Commission asked "Are the Great Lakes swimmable, drinkable and fishable?" The hundreds of people who answered that question helped inform IJC recommendations to the Canadian and United States federal governments that appear in the new Triennial Assessment of Progress Report on Great Lakes Water Quality.

### Public Engagement as Part of the Triennial Assessment of Progress

Public input is an important part of the IJC's Triennial Assessment of Progress, or TAP. In fall 2022, the IJC heard from people across the Great Lakes basin about how they think the federal governments are making progress toward the [Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement's objectives](#).

# THE READING ROOM

## RECOMMENDED BOOKS/NOVELS/ARTICLES RELATED TO FISHING AND/OR THE GREAT OUTDOORS!

### >>> INTERESTING ARTICLES CONT.

#### PUTMBAK!

By: Louis Cahill, Gink and Gasoline blog.

*I wonder what the Great Lakes Steelhead would think if he knew what a controversial fish he is.*

No, he's not a native fish. Yes, it's a completely man-made fishery. No, it's not a wild and scenic experience. Is he a real steelhead? Who cares. I love fishing the tributaries of the Great Lakes for the biggest toughest trout this side of the Mississippi and so does everyone else who's tried it. I have to wonder though, as I stand in the river with my fly rod watching the horde of bait fisherman stack their catch on the bank, if these fish got the respect enjoyed by their West Coast cousins, couldn't this be a whole lot better? I'm not dogging the fishery, it's awesome, but it just seems like common sense. It's true that Great Lakes steelhead do not successfully reproduce but left in the river they will continue to come back year after year, providing a better angling experience and saving state hatcheries money. I'm with this angler whose license plate I found in New York in a parking lot on the Oak Orchard.

#### PUTMBAK!

Read the full article [here](#).

Louis Cahill; **Gink & Gasoline**; [www.ginkandgasoline.com](http://www.ginkandgasoline.com)

**Sign Up For Their Weekly Newsletter!** [hookups@ginkandgasoline.com](mailto:hookups@ginkandgasoline.com)

#### PA Sea Grant's Tom Cermak Recognized With Great Lakes Sea Grant Individual Achievement Award

By: Pa Environment Digest

<http://www.paenvironmentdigest.com/newsletter/default.asp?NewsletterArticleID=59252&SubjectID=>

Tom Cermak, Pennsylvania Sea Grant Coastal Outreach Specialist was recently honored with the 2023 Great Lakes Sea Grant Individual Mid-Career Achievement Award. The Mid-Year award recognizes individual Sea Grant professionals (>7 years of service) who have shown noteworthy enthusiasm, performance, accomplishments and impact during their Sea Grant careers. Specifically, the award criteria areas include excellence of performance, personal interaction, initiative and creativity, outstanding achievement, and impact. Cermak began working for Pennsylvania Sea Grant in 2012 as a Coastal Outreach Specialist working in the Lake Erie watershed. He brings unique perspective and leadership in development and implementation of projects that pertain to invasive species outreach and management, public access improvement, land conservation, water quality and quantity management, and social science.



# FEATURED FLY

By "Fly by Night Guy"

23

## >>> POPSICLE FLY PATTERN

When Steelhead first hit our local streams from Lake Erie, they are used to dining on baitfish. So when there are fresh fish and good water flow I like dead drifting or swinging baitfish imitations.

I have had a lot of success dead drifting Karl Weixlmann's Little Precious streamer, but when there is a little high water I like to fish something a little bigger. I have tied some different Intruder style patterns in the past, but this fly has movement properties without having to use a stinger hook.

It's called the Popsicle, obviously named for the tri-color orange, red and purple frozen treats from our youthful days. Large soft hackle marabou flies are an important weapon for the winter and early spring steelhead fly fisherperson.

George Cook was a guide, a casting instructor and a fly fishing industry representative. Cook is credited with coming up with the Popsicle back in the 80's during while guiding in Alaska. Fly tiers realized the value of marabou because of the way it moves in the water. Using marabou for salmon and steelhead flies has been done for decades. But by they keep evolving with the advent of a multitude of colors and flash materials.

With all the colors of marabou today, the number of possible color variations of popsicle-type flies is almost endless.



## MEET THE FLY

**Fly Type:** Attractor wet fly steelhead pattern

**Target Species:** Steelhead and Atlantic Salmon

**Recommended Region:** North America for Atlantic Salmon/Steelhead

**How to Fish:** Wet fly swinging or dead drifting near the bottom

## MATERIALS

**Hook:** Salmon Fly Hook Mustad 36890, Tiemco 7999, size 2-6

**Thread:** Red 0/6

**Body:** Silver Mylar tinsel, medium

**Hackle:** Marabou plumes: fluorescent orange, red, and purple.

**Flash:** 3 or 4 strands of Flashabou.

**Adhesive:** Head cement.

# FEATURED FLY

By "Fly by Night Guy"

24

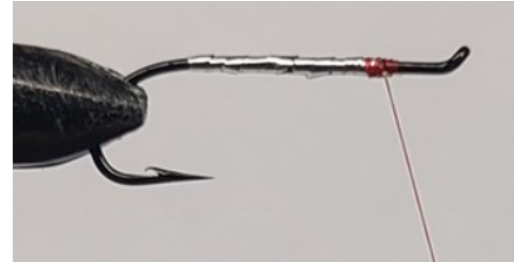
## >>> STEP BY STEP INSTRUCTIONS:

**Step 1.** Pinch down the barb and get the hook secured in the vice.



**Step 2.** These hooks are sharp, so as a precaution you can cover the hook point with a point protector that comes with some salt water hooks or just use a pencil eraser. Start your thread with a jam knot and close the hook eye return with a few wraps.

**Step 3.** Use a 6 to 8 inch piece of medium sized silver Mylar tinsel. Tie it in just behind the return, silver side down so when you wrap it, it's easy to get the silver side up. If you have a rotary vise, use a couple of half hitches to secure the thread and then place the bobbin out of the way. Rotate your vise to spiral the tinsel down the shank to the barb and back to the eye with slightly overlapping turns. If you don't have a rotary vise just wrap it by hand keeping steady pressure on the tinsel so it doesn't slip or sag. When you reach the hook return, tie the Mylar off securely and cut it close. Use a few more wraps to cover up the end.



**Step 4.** Select a single fluorescent orange marabou plume. Cut off the top third of the plume and pull a few fibers from either side of the stem. Pull the fibers back to expose the tip, and then snip the tip off. With the pulled back fibers and stem in your fingertips take wraps around both to secure the plume to the hook. Use hackle pliers to get a hold of the butt end of the marabou and pull straight up. Here it helps to have a wet sponge available to wet your fingers to help to fold the fibers rearward as you wrap. Marabou can be hard to control the marabou, so wet fingertips can help to stroke the fibers back.

**Step 5.** Then begin taking wraps around the hook shank pulling the fibers back as you go. Use a couple of wraps to secure the stem to the shank of the hook and then snip the stem off close. Use a few nice tight wraps to finish securing the marabou to the hook.



**Step 6.** If you want to add a little flash to your fly, snip 2 or 3 strands of Flashabou from the pack and fold it around the barrel of your bobbin then bring it up and secure it to the top of the hook. Trim the Flashabou to about the same length as the marabou fibers.

**Step 7.** Now, working your way up the hook toward the eye, repeat the marabou wrapping process, first with red marabou and then with purple to finish. Whip finish to form a small smooth head and cut off the thread.



**Step 8.** Apply head cement to the wraps all the way around. Stroke the fibers back to free any that have been trapped.

If any Steelhead Association members have questions about a fly or wish to see a fly featured in this column of the newsletter send an email to [info@PaSteelhead.com](mailto:info@PaSteelhead.com) with "Fly by Night Guy" in the subject line!





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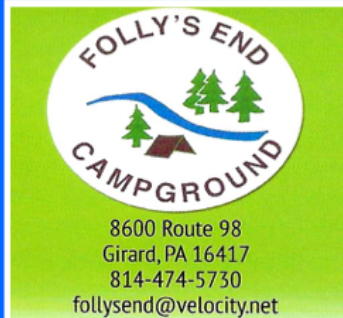
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**Julie**

