PAFBC Update 28 March, 2020

**Statewide Mentored Youth Program and Opening Day**
The PFBC will operate under a consolidated statewide schedule for all counties during the 2020 trout season. Under this revised plan, **a single Mentored Youth Trout Day will occur on Saturday, April 11, and a Statewide Opening Day of trout season will take place on Saturday, April 18.**

As a result of these changes, separate, earlier regional mentored youth and opening days will no longer occur in the 18 southeastern counties, including: Adams, Berks, Bucks, Chester, Cumberland, Dauphin, Delaware, Franklin, Juniata, Lancaster, Lebanon, Lehigh, Montgomery, Northampton, Perry, Philadelphia, Schuylkill, and York. Anglers in these areas should revise their plans as necessary to adjust to the statewide schedule.

These changes, made by the PFBC under direction provided by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the Pennsylvania Department of Health, are intended to reduce large gatherings of people and the number of anglers traveling into the regional area (18 southeastern counties), which is already heavily affected by the COVID-19 outbreak.

**Accelerated Trout Stocking Operations and Volunteer Participation**
Trout stocking for 2020 will be conducted on an accelerated schedule, and**volunteers will not be permitted to assist with stocking activities.**

"We realize that many of our stocking volunteers look forward to helping us, but we must take these necessary precautions to ensure public safety during this vital period," said Schaeffer. "Just as we've counted on our volunteers for decades to help us stock trout, we're counting on them now to play it safe and stay home. We appreciate their service throughout the years, and we hope that we can invite them back to join us again very soon."

Moving forward this season, trout stockings will be announced upon their completion, rather than in advance on the FishBoatPA mobile app and PFBC website ([www.fishandboat.com](http://www.fishandboat.com/)). **The change in stocking procedures will not result in any reduction in the approximately 3.2 million trout scheduled to be stocked statewide in 2020,**and stocking will occur seven days a week until further notice.

"This change in our stocking approach is necessary to fulfill a critical mission of our agency and our obligation to anglers," added Rick Kauffman, PFBC District 8 Commissioner. "We're trying to get as many fish in the water as possible as quickly as possible while we still have the best access to waterways and available staff. While our methods may be different this season, people will have the same opportunity to get outdoors and fish, which has proven benefits to our physical and mental health."

**More Convenient Ways to Purchase and Display Your Fishing License, Launch Permits and Boat Registrations**
To reduce unnecessary travel and social contact amid health concerns, anglers and boaters will be able to display their fishing license, launch permit, or boat registration renewal digitally on a phone or other mobile device as proof of possession.

This change will allow customers who may be unable to, or feel uncomfortable visiting a store to purchase a fishing license, launch permit, or boat registration renewal to make the purchase using the FishBoatPA app or computer through The Outdoor Shop ([www.pa.wildlifelicense.com](http://www.pa.wildlifelicense.com/)) and not have to possess a printed copy of the document. Upon purchase of a fishing license, a .pdf file containing an image of your license is provided, which can be saved to your mobile device or computer. Similarly, with each boating related transaction, customers will receive a digital receipt that serves as a temporary permit or registration valid for immediate use. Eventually, customers will receive validation decals and registration cards in the mail from the PFBC, which can take several weeks.