

Director's Message



BY DAVE CHANDA

During my more than 30-year career with New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife I have seen many changes and marked many milestones. None are as personal or special to me as those associated with the Pequest Trout Hatchery and Natural Resource Education Center which celebrates its 30th anniversary this year.

Even as a young biologist I was impressed by the foresight of former DEP Commissioner Jerry Fitzgerald English who insisted that if New Jersey were to construct a state-of-the-art trout production facility, it should also include a state-of-the-art natural resource education center. At that time, the State

Commission on Environmental Education stressed the importance of developing natural resource interpretative centers throughout New Jersey. The Pequest Natural Resource Education Center is, and continues to be, an excellent example of a successful center.

One of my first tasks at Pequest was to develop the visitor experience and create a set of interpretative exhibits that were more than the traditional "nature trivia." A key component of the education programs at Pequest was—and still is—to help visitors understand their role in the conservation of our fish and wildlife resources. The exhibits were designed to have visitors develop an awareness of natural resources, the good and bad impacts our actions have on fish and wildlife and the important role we all play collectively in the wise use and management of our natural world.

Developing such an ambitious education program and raising the quality trout New Jersey's anglers have come to expect from Pequest can be quite challenging. However, Fish and Wildlife is fortunate to have a dedicated group of professionals managing this resource. In addition, as with many successful programs, we are also extremely fortunate to have an equally dedicated group of fish and wildlife volunteers to assist our agency. More than 1,400 individuals are now recognized as part of Fish and Wildlife's Wildlife Conservation Corps, the largest volunteer force for a natural resource group in the state. This dedicated group of volunteers has been instrumental in the success of the operations of the Pequest Trout Hatchery and Natural Resource Education Center.

On the trout production end, these volunteers assist in distributing trout throughout the entire state. The education center couldn't operate without volunteer assistance. Each year they contribute thousands of hours of time and help Fish and Wildlife to staff the visitor center and to provide instruction to thousands of kids at the fishing education pond and during special events such as the annual open house.

I am very proud to have worked with the professionals and volunteers who helped to make the Pequest Trout Hatchery and Natural Resource Education Center one of the best facilities in the nation. As we look to the future, know that you are in good hands as the staff and volunteers at this facility are just as dedicated today as those who came before them.

Please join us at Pequest this year for the March Open House to celebrate this shining example of fish and wildlife resource management and outdoor education that is thriving thanks to 30 years of support from hunters and anglers like you. 

Dave Chanda is the Director of the Division of Fish and Wildlife.

▶▶ GET ON THE LIST!

The Freshwater Fisheries e-mail lists, that is. This free service provides the latest information about Fish and Wildlife events, public hearings and other matters related to our freshwater fishing resources. And we have seven other lists so you can maximize your enjoyment of New Jersey's fish and wildlife resources.

Sign up today at: NJFishandWildlife.com/lstsub.htm



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Attention Anglers: RIVER HERRING CLOSURE!

The New Jersey DEP's Division of Fish and Wildlife is reminding recreational and commercial anglers who fish in New Jersey's fresh, tidal or marine waters of important regulatory changes for river herring made in 2012. These regulations were put in place due to concerns about the significant coastwide decline of river herring stocks. The exact cause for these coastwide declines remains uncertain, but numerous factors such as loss of spawning habitat, impediments to fish passage (i.e. dams), water quality degradation and fishing all likely played a role.

The term river herring is collectively applied to two species of fish, the alewife (*Alosa pseudoharengus*), and blueback herring (*Alosa aestivialis*). The fresh waters of New Jersey have both migratory and landlocked populations of herring. Migratory populations reside in the marine environment and migrate each spring into freshwater rivers and streams and even into some lakes to

spawn. Landlocked populations do not migrate and complete their entire life cycle in a number of freshwater lakes across the state. There are no distinctive identifying characteristics to determine between a landlocked or migratory herring regardless of species. Individuals in landlocked populations, however, are notably smaller in size than their migratory counterparts.

These changes are necessary to comply with Amendment 2 of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission's (ASMFC) Fisheries Management Plan for Shad and River Herring (FMP). Amendment 2 of the ASMFC fishery management plan for river herring prohibits both the recreational and commercial harvest of river herring in the waters of states that do not have an ASMFC-approved river herring sustainable management plan. New Jersey does not have an approved plan since the available information on river herring stocks is not sufficient


to definitively prove the state's river herring stocks are sustainable. Other states along the East Coast—Delaware, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, Massachusetts and Rhode Island—have closed their river herring fisheries as well.

Freshwater Closure— Effective February 18, 2012

In order to comply with the required fishery closure for migratory herring while still allowing landlocked fisheries to remain open, the Fish and Game Council—in coordination with the Division of Fish and Wildlife—has adopted the following:

1. The possession, take, attempt to take, sale or purchase of alewife or blueback herring from **any freshwater stream or river is prohibited.**
2. Up to ten alewife or blueback herring, no greater than six inches in length, may be taken for personal use, from **freshwater lakes in Morris, Passaic, Sussex and Warren counties, and from Spruce Run Reservoir located in Hunterdon County.** Landlocked herring taken from lakes within these counties may only be used on the lake from which they were taken. Any unused herring must be returned to the waterbody upon the conclusion of the angler's fishing trip. They may not be transported away from the shoreline of the lake by any mechanism. They may not be sold.
3. For all other freshwater lakes, regardless of ownership (public or private), **only purchased herring no greater than six inches in length may be possessed for up to seven days from date of purchase, when accompanied by a receipt.** The receipt must list the name, address and telephone number of the place of purchase, date of purchase and quantity purchased. This receipt must be without erasures or alterations of any kind and must have a control number.

Marine Closure—January 18, 2012

No person shall take, possess, land, purchase, sell or offer for sale any river herring (alewife and blueback) in the marine waters of the state. Only commercial vessels fishing exclusively in federal waters while operating under a valid federal permit for Atlantic mackerel and/or Atlantic herring may possess river herring up to a maximum of five percent by weight of all species possessed. 

New Jersey
WILD
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September 14 & 15, 2013
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RAMSEY OUTDOOR

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FISH AND WILDLIFE 2013 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- **Fisheries Forums,**
Feb. 23 and Dec. 7; page 7
- **Pequest Open House
and Flea Market,**
March 23-24; page 34
- **Opening Day of Trout Season,**
April 6; page 18
- **FREE Fishing Days,**
June 15-16; page 34
- **NJ Coldwater
Conservation School,**
June 27-30; page 45
- **Teen Angler Youth Day,**
July 20, page 34
- **Wild Outdoor Expo,**
Sept. 14-15; page 6

FRESHWATER FISHERIES FORUMS

1st Forum:

February 23, 2013; 10 a.m.
Batsto Village Visitor's Center
in Wharton State Forest

2nd Forum:

December 7, 2013; 10 a.m.
Hackettstown Hatchery
Warren County

Come and share your views and recommendations for the future of freshwater fisheries in New Jersey and learn about current research, management and fish culture activities!

The forum at Hackettstown will include a tour of the fish production facilities.

For more information or to pre-register (helpful, but not required) please call (908) 236-2118 or send an e-mail to njfwfish@earthlink.net. E-mails should include name, address, phone number and number of people attending.

Presented by NJ Department of Environmental Protection's Division of Fish and Wildlife



Shawn Crouse/NJ Div. Fish and Wildlife

Note the fluorescent tag behind the eye of this wild brook trout which was marked and released for a trout movement study.