



LEHIGH COLDWATER
FISHERY ALLIANCE

www.thelehighriver.org

Lehigh Coldwater Fishery Alliance Talking Points

Mission Statement: Our mission is to obtain a consistent release of cold water (55f.) from the F.E. Walter Reservoir to enhance the Lehigh River's wild trout fishery.

Activities:

- Formed in 2004 as an advocacy and awareness group for the Lehigh River and its coldwater fishery and ecosystem, with a primary focus of enhancing the wild trout fishery.
- Solicited non-federal co-sponsors for Sec. 22 Planning Assistance to the States Recreational Enhancement Study at Francis E Walter Reservoir (facilitated through the Army Corps of Engineers, Philadelphia Office). Organized co-sponsorship of \$400,000 study with the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC) and the Department of Conservation of Engineers (DCNR). Study proved modifications at Francis E. Walter Reservoir could influence water temps consistently below 68 degrees Fahrenheit to the town of Jim Thorpe (20 miles + downstream from FEW Reservoir).
- Provides feedback to the Army Corps' annual Flow Plan with emphasis placed on maximizing angling opportunities during prime time trout season as well as limiting low flows from Francis E Walter during the stressful summer months.
- Advocates for increased access points up and down the watershed; specifically multi-use boat ramps that can accommodate trailers.
- Advocates for higher and steadier coldwater releases from Beltzville Reservoir, on the Pohopoco Creek (a vital tributary to the Lehigh) in order to maximize the thermal refuge capability of the coldwater plume at the confluence with the Lehigh River.
- Frequently speak to local angling and conservation organizations regarding the resurgence of the Lehigh River trout fishery. Formed a work group with the local Trout Unlimited groups up and down the Lehigh River watershed.
- Vocal advocates of the economic benefits of a wild trout coldwater tailwater fishery to federal, state and local politicians. Potentially \$1 million/river miles to local economy.
- Partnered with the PFBC to assist in studying the effectiveness of annual fingerling stockings.
- Hosts Lehigh River Workday's for local politicians and stakeholders to showcase the value of a wild trout fishery.
- Assisting Army Corps with finding Non-Federal co-sponsor for a \$3 Million Dollar Feasibility Study. Co-sponsor to assist in 50% of funding. Federal Government the other 50%. **Feasibility Study required to determine ability for operational and structural changes at FEW and for future construction and Federal legislative authority changes.**