



## Pennsylvania Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs

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Providing leadership and advocacy for the enhancement of fish and wildlife resources for the benefit of all hunters, anglers and conservationists

Good evening and thank you for allowing me the opportunity to attend your sportsmen's forum this evening. My name is Melody Zullinger. I am the Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs, Inc. (PFSC)

For nearly 75 years the PFSC has been the voice for sportsmen and women in the Commonwealth. During the course of those years many issues have come and gone, as have many of the faces affiliated with the organization. However, a few things have remained constant. The organization's commitment to protecting our resources and sportsmen & women's rights and privileges, and our commitment to representing the views of our members to Pennsylvania's decision makers.

PFSC works tirelessly to stay on top of all the issues that could potentially harm our resources and the Outdoor Heritage that we all cherish. Attending meetings and reading page after page of bills introduced by our legislators is not always fun. Nonetheless, it is vital that someone is keeping a close eye on things. Without PFSC's constant presence on Capitol Hill, with our Resource Agencies and Commissions, your favorite fishing hole, hunting spot, or hunting & fishing in general could be taken away from you in an instant.

As a result of PFSC's continued work on legislative matters, the National Rifle Association (NRA) named PFSC its Approved Organization for Legislative Affairs. In addition, PFSC is among the groups who sit on the Chronic Wasting Disease Task Force. With confirmed CWD cases in New York and West Virginia, there could be a potential devastating impact on Pennsylvania hunters.

The PFSC has also been asked to offer its time and opinions as Pennsylvania's Department of Environmental Protection develops stronger mercury emission laws. Among the energy industry representatives and conservation groups, the PFSC is the only organization there to represent the views of sportsmen and women in Pennsylvania. In all these cases, the PFSC is honored to be seated at the table and recognized for its commitment to sportsmen, as policy is shaped.

In turn, the Pennsylvania Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs has become an influential force as the state's top decision makers look to push their agenda's. Time and time again legislators and other groups look for support of the PFSC on a variety of issues because they know the voice of sportsmen and women in this state is still a powerful one. Sportsmen & women generate millions of dollars for our state's economy each year. And it's our wildlife that brings tourists to this state for vacations. It is not, nor will it be, a high rise hotel or golf course built on our state parks.

The Pennsylvania Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs remains opposed to commercial development at Erie Bluffs State Park and our other state parks. We believe there's enough private land remaining adjacent to the state park providing ample opportunity for development by the private sector if there's a need for it.

It should be remembered that a vast percentage of the use of this park will be by fishermen and hunters, and facilities should reflect and be located in a manner that recognizes this fact. Elk Creek is a world-class steelhead fishery. Opportunities to catch steelhead trout are better in Elk Creek than in many Alaskan rivers. This area is also very important as a staging area to birds, butterflies, etc. migrating across Lake Erie both spring and fall. Development with its associated light and noise pollution would have a significant negative impact.

The PFSC would support an alternative proposal for development of Erie Bluffs State Park such as presented by the Northwest Sportsmen's Coalition; a plan that calls for minimal impact from development. We also feel that there should be no development west of Elk Creek, with the exception of perhaps a decent, maintained changing and restroom building near the present west-side access, and a small launch and safe harbor at the mouth of Elk Creek, on the east side of the stream. Being able to launch and retrieve properly sized lake boats at the mouth of Elk Creek would add millions of dollars to the economy in Girard and surrounding townships. We feel that all support facilities will develop nearby, by the private sector, if the Erie Bluffs State Park users create the need for them.

The PFSC has no agenda, other than representing the views and opinions of the majority of its membership to PA's decision makers, so we can continue to carry out our mission ***"To provide a statewide, united voice for the concerns of all sportsmen & women and conservationists; and to insure their rights and interests are protected, and to protect and enhance the environment and our natural resources."***

Erie County does not currently have a voice with the PFSC. We would like to invite you to join with us, so Erie Co. can be a part of the largest sportsmen's organization looking out for the best interests of our resources and our Outdoor Heritage.

As a sportsman you have a powerful voice; let's make sure it gets heard!