

Agreement between Fraternal Order of Police Conservation Police Officers Lodge #114 & PA Fish & Boat Commission Officials is a success

The fall ushers the annual steelhead run into Erie County PA, along with thousands of steelhead anglers that flood to Lake Erie's tributaries. This is in large part due to the huge success of the Commission's steelhead program that stocks over 1 million steelhead smolts every year. The steelhead fishery brings approximately 9 million dollars into the local economy and with it an increased need for conservation law enforcement.



Walnut Creek, picture courtesy of B. Tolbert

FOP Lodge #114 and the Commission's Bureau of Law Enforcement officials successful worked on an agreement to assign additional Waterways Conservation Officers (WCO) to assist the three assigned Erie County WCO's during this time of increased angler activity. This annually negotiated agreement resulted in the best protection of Northwest Pennsylvania's greatest fishery.

The agreement covered assignments from September 15th through December 15th and resulted in over 307 issued citations and over 811 verbal warnings.

Conservation Officers worked with local law enforcement and US Board Patrol throughout these additional law enforcement patrols to the success of all involved. The increased number of Conservation Officers resulted in the issuance of citations for snagging, foul hooking, over limit of the daily creel, the lack of assorted fishing license and stamps, illegal fishing devices, litter and Commission property violations. Additionally, several hundred warnings were issued by Conservation Officers for other violations of the Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Code.

The increased numbers of Conservation Officers also help detect other associated crime such as: persons driving under suspension, driving under the Influence,



Confiscated snagging hooks, picture courtesy of B. Tolbert

underage drinking, disorderly conduct as well as successfully detain several individuals who were wanted by other police departments. The Fraternal Order of Police Conservation Police Officer Lodge officials attribute the success of this agreement to the dedication and professionalism of the Conservation Officers who participated to protect this tremendous resource.