



Rainbow Trout Heading for the Lehigh

LEHIGH RIVER STOCKING ASSOCIATION

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The Lehigh River Report

The Voice of the Lehigh River Stocking Association

2014 Spring Update from the LRSA

LRSA's Running Total:

Trout Stocked:
336,400

Inside this issue:

| | |
|--|---|
| Stocking Map and Tips | 2 |
| Memorial Trophy Browns | 3 |
| Lehigh River Fly Fishing | 4 |
| Stocked Trout Now Transition to River Food | 5 |
| Explore the Lehigh—Something Looks Fishy | 6 |
| Lunkerfest 2104 Details and board Members | 7 |



This angler below Parryville dam on April 27 with 2 fine bows

On March 29th, LRSA stocked 1,900 lbs of 50/50 rainbow/brown trout in the 12-15" class at Northampton, Laurys Station, Treichlers, Walnutport, and Slatington. On April 12th, LRSA stocked the same quantity and size fish at Glen Onoko, Packerton, Lehighton, Parryville, Bowmanstown and Palmerton. We had some snow on the trails to contend with on the 29th but the trout were in fine shape. The trout had remarkably great colors and good fin condition. Everyone who came out to help were very impressed with the fish and we of course all enjoyed spreading them out in the Lehigh for the enjoyment of the fisherman.

Hats off to Big Brown, they did a great job delivering quality fish and were able to get their big truck and fish down into all our favorite stocking locations. As always it was great to meet and work with our sponsors who come out to help stock the river.

We particularly like to see the youngsters come out. We received a nice note from new sponsor Barry Storch that said—"On Saturday April 12 your organization went a long way into making my

9 year old grandson a "trout fisherman" - You guys invited him to help stock the river at the Bowmanstown Bridge. He just love it, that's all he

talked about." That's Barry with his grandson in the photo below getting a LRSA intro from Vince.

We have a couple bits of news. Back in

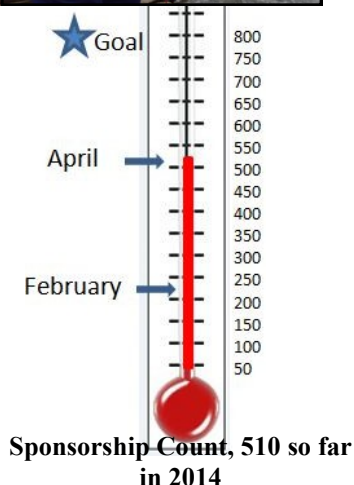


January of 2011 we sent a letter to PFBC Director Arway requesting help for the LRSA in sustaining this trout fishery. In March of this year, we are pleased to report that Dave Arnold and Daryl Pierce, both fisheries managers from PFBC attended our meeting and indicated that it is likely that they will contribute adult trout in 2016. It is not final yet and we don't know how many fish, but this is a huge step forward. Also, the LRSA has a meeting with PFBC and US Fish and Wildlife regarding our application for a fishway on the Parryville dam. The PFBC put forth 5 areas that we need to work on and we are welcomed to resubmit. This fishway could open miles of prime spawning habitat for Lehigh brown trout while helping provide a path for the abundant wild trout in Pohopoco creek to migrate to the Lehigh.

Please do plan to support the LRSA by participating in the annual Lunkerfest at the Bowmanstown East Penn boat ramp area.

The in-season stocking will be done on Sunday May 11th (Mother's Day, sorry). Meet truck at Jim Thorpe parking lot at 9am. From there we head to Packerton, Lehighton, Parryville, Bowmanstown, Palmerton, Slatington, Walnutport, Treichlers, Laurys Station and Northampton. One truck, 1,900 lbs of 50/50 rainbow/brown split in 12-15" class.

Our sponsorship numbers are better than last year at this time and the spring ticket sales were great. Thanks everyone for the support.—M. MacConnell



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"Light at the End of the Tunnel". This photo was taken from a kayak inside the Lausanne Tunnel, built in 1906 to de-water coal mines in the Jim Thorpe area.-MM

LRSA stocks trout in four main areas along the 29 miles or so between Northampton and Jim Thorpe. A listing of most popular spots are:

Jim Thorpe—train station parking lot where the rafts put in (just below the 903 bridge). Or walk up river a bit. Also try **Glen Onoko**—follow 903 over river and stay left into park. Great trout pool a short walk from parking lot or walk or ride bike up into gorge to park bench, Bear Creek tributary area is very good.

Packerton—pull off 209 where the road dips down steeply between Lehigh and Jim Thorpe. You can park and walk straight back to the river, lots of good access. Head down river about 100 yards to pump house, riffle has a deep pool behind it.

Lehigh—Make a right off 209 at Dunbar's Beverages and take the road all the way back to the rocky beach at the river. Or drive down river on access road that runs parallel to 209 and walk in.

Parryville—Pull off 248 at the Rock Hill Cement Company and park at the Canal Park area. The Pohopoco Creek confluence with the Lehigh provides very good, cold, conditions for trout. The Pohopoco holds fish too, particularly below the dam.

Bowmantown—Fishing is good above or below the Rt 895 bridge. You can park under the bridge. Or drive down to the new boat ramp (south about 1/2 mile, past Lizard Creek, on west side of river), the large pool we call the Musky pool and where we hold Lunkerfest.

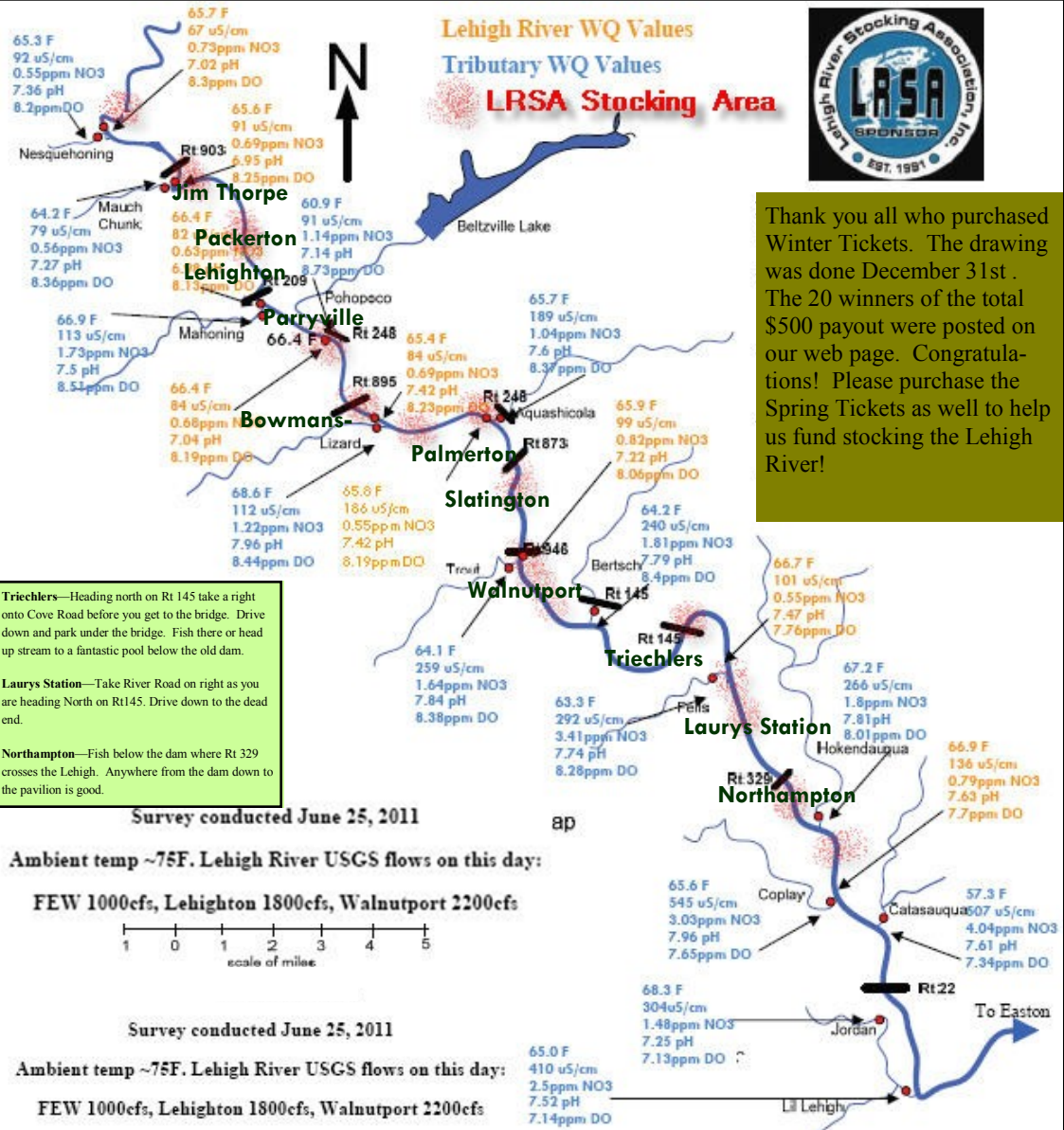
Palmerton—Heading south on 248, take Palmerton exit. Take 2nd dirt road right and head down to the "horseshoe". The river forms a big bend and pool just below a good set of rapids.

Slatington—Heading east on 248 take right over the 873 bridge and on your left you will see Slatington Fabricators. You can find a place to park along the road there and walk back to the river (you will pass the Szokes Bros. building). This spot is just below shale riffles and lots of good fishing pools.

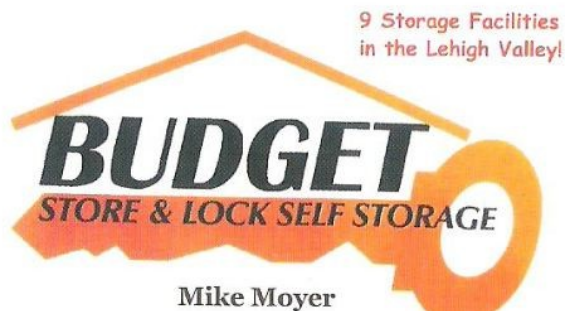
Walnutport—Head into Walnutport and the Canal Park is on the east side of the river just below the Main St bridge. Head down to pavilion (about 1/4 mile down) and walk to river. Canal runs about 1 mile down to Bertsch Creek. Lots of good pools along the way.

Monthly Meeting Location—Now Closer to Allentown/Bethlehem Area Sponsors

Market Café, Wegmans, 3900 West Tilghman St. Allentown. Meeting time from 7:00 to about 9:00 pm the last Tuesday of each month. Everyone is welcome to come visit and get involved!



Thank you all who purchased Winter Tickets. The drawing was done December 31st. The 20 winners of the total \$500 payout were posted on our web page. Congratulations! Please purchase the Spring Tickets as well to help us fund stocking the Lehigh River!



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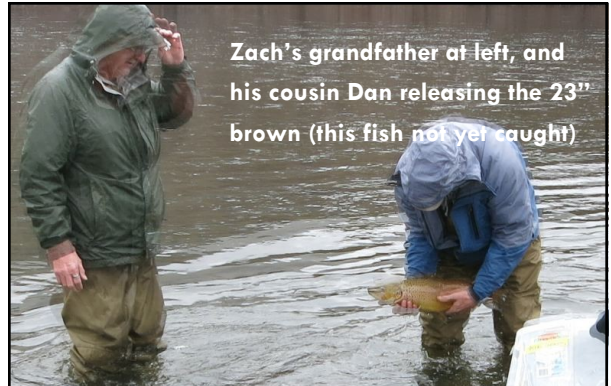


Memorial Trophy Browns—A Tribute to Zachary Paules

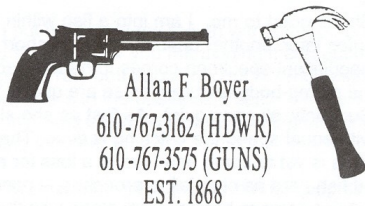
The LRSA is thankful to the Paules family, who made significant contributions to the LRSA in memory of Zachary Paules, who passed away at 23 years old in December. Zach was an avid Lehigh River enthusiast and sponsor of the LRSA. It was fitting to release the two 23" trophy brown trout in his memory. The first was released on March 29th and the second on April 12th, both were tagged. Zach's parents, Lori and Dwaine, have offered a prize for catching either of the tagged fish. It didn't take long before one of the two fish were caught.

On Monday April 14th Justin Moyer caught the 23in brownie at 2pm on a cast master minnow imitation on his first cast from the East Penn boat ramp in Bowmanstown. He reported the tag to us and a meeting was set with the Paules' on Sunday April 27th. Justin had his wife and two young boys and father with him. He said he has been fishing the Lehigh since he was 8 yrs old and is keeping up the tradition with his boys. Lori and Dwain Paules were happy to present a choice of a fly fishing outfit and a spin fishing outfit. Justin chose the fly fishing outfit. He said he always wanted to fly fish and was going to go out and get a fly rod this year anyway. We talked about the Paules' son Zachary and his love of fishing and boating in the Lehigh. Justin was proud to bring the fish for the photograph. He said he will go after the other tagged fish at the 873 ramp. The LRSA also presented the Paules' and Justin with LRSA Shirts for helping to bring attention to our organization with this award.

We posted a video of the 29March brownie release on the LRSA facebook page and it almost went viral with the number of "likes" and positive comments received. We know that there is little anyone can do to assuage the pain of the loss of a loved one, but this is one thing LRSA can do and the family has appreciated these tributes.—MM & TG



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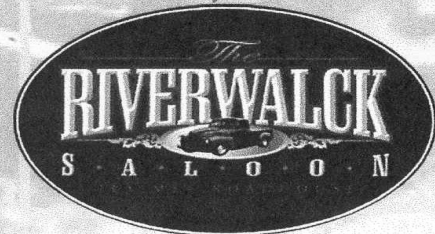


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Lehigh Fly Fishing Journal—By Tom Gyory

Spring fishing has been good this year. It was slow to start on the Lehigh due to persistent cold temperatures and high water but these conditions should extend the fishing season a bit longer into the summer.

Early in the year I like to take a float trip through the Lehigh Gorge before the water levels get too low for rafting. I ventured down the 12 miles of the Lehigh this April from Rockport to Glen Onoko with my wife Mo and our friends Chuck Morgenstern and his fiancée Sue. The water on this part of the Lehigh can be challenging so I like to make some modification to my 17 foot raft the Trout Scout before the trip. I remove any extra weight so I can more easily maneuver through the rapids and boulders and I take off any sharp parts of the boat like the fishing lean bars so we don't injure ourselves when we get bounced around.

There are some requirements and suggestions before making a float trip through the Gorge. Flow rates should be between 400cfs and 2000cfs out of the Francis Walter Dam for fun safe whitewater rafting. The day we took the trip the flow was 400cfs. Water temperatures at this time of year are cold so it is required that you always wear a life vest and I suggest having extra clothes in a dry bag in case you get wet. I like to wear waders in case you have to get out of the raft to push off a rock. They are warm and keep you dry. Sue had a common sense idea to keep her feet dry, she rapped them in grocery bags. There are requirements for the raft itself depending on the flow. At the 400cfs level the raft must be a minimum of 8 feet long and must have 3 separate air chambers. For more information you can check out the DCNR website at <http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/stateparks/findapark/lehighgorge/lehighgorge-whitewater/index.htm>

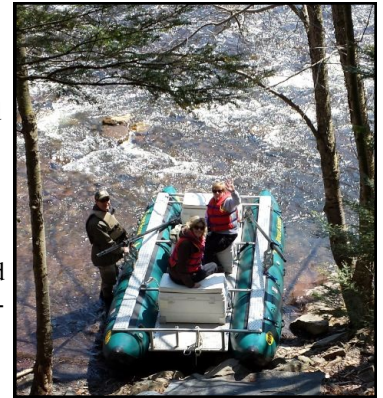
The Rockport boat launch is very steep and is difficult to launch. Basically you need to slide your raft down a steep hill that has

been covered with a rubber tarp. We used a winch to get the raft down to the water. Sometimes the launch area is crowded especially on release weekends but this day it was not too busy. Once the raft is in the water it is a great float trip with beautiful scenery and thrilling class II and class III rapids. Wild life abounds and the fishing is good because very few people fish this part of the river.

The low water level made the trip challenging because many rocks are just under the surface. You need to pick your path through them carefully otherwise you end up on top of them. We had three hang ups during our 4 hour trip. I want to thank the rafting guides from Pocono Whitewater and Jim Thorpe Whitewater who were passing by and were very helpful giving us tips on how to dislodge ourselves from the rocks.

The fishing was a bit slow due to the cold 50 degree water temperature but we did see quite a few trout follow our spinners and rising for flies in the afternoon. The caddis hatch was heavy all afternoon and a good Hendrickson hatch came off at about 3pm. We did not have a lot of time to fish because we had to keep moving to get to the Glen on time. I recommend the Gorge for a good time fishing and rafting.

See you on the Lehigh.



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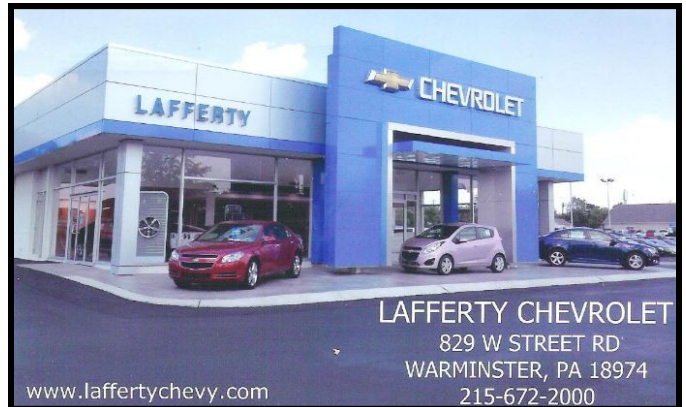
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Stocked Trout Now Transition to River Food

Those who have been catching or who helped stock the trout were treated to great coloration. Rainbows and browns both were in full color and the fins looked great. Compliments to Big Brown for the fine fish, and apparently the good food they raised them on. Now the fish will transition to bugs. A quick macro invertebrate survey was conducted on the Lehigh and Nesquehoning Creek as part of a study to determine

the impact of the Lausanne Tunnel discharge (AMD) on the aquatic ecosystem. Jim Deeble and Bob Dunstan below use a kick net to collect samples. One surprise that Matt found when he brought all the bugs home to inspect was that there was a 3" lamprey (pics at right). I had thought it was a lively worm when I put it in the jar but apparently we have lampreys in the Jim Thorpe area. We found a lot of caddisfly larvae (freeliving and in stone houses), several stonefly and mayfly nymphs, lots of aquatic earth worms, a big juicy crane fly larvae and snails. We plan to conduct more surveys and will combine this information with data from the water quality probes. - Matt MacConnell



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EXPLORE THE LEHIGH SOMETHING LOOKS FISHY

The other day my friend Steve and I were fishing. We were at a place just upstream of the turnpike bridge on rt. 248. Here the river is wide, fast and deep. There is an island is about 40 yards off the bank and the tail of the island provides some very interesting water, But there is no way to reach it from shore and this is not a place to wade. Not the thinnest Nanofil line, not the best double haul you can muster will get



"Much of the allure of the Lehigh is its size, its swiftness, its power, what roams its depths. As fishermen we all look at the water and wonder just what is in there and where are they. "



your bait to that area. The only way to hit that spot is drifting to it. We both agreed that the place looked "very fishy"

Steve said to me, as we looked across the river.... "That is a lot of water" I said yeah, it sure is. As we continued fishing I hung on his words. He is an accomplished angler. Lived years in Alaska and then years more in Colorado fishing some of the best Blue Ribbon water in the country. He has been on big water before and the Lehigh is big by all accounts. It is about as big as trout water gets anywhere. So, this article is more about what to look for when selecting a spot to cast than it is about where to go and cast.

Much of the allure of the Lehigh is its size, its swiftness, its power, what roams its depths. As fishermen we all look at the water and wonder just what is in there and where are they. Our quarry is Trout, the apex predator in most places of the river. They are strong and fast swimmers, smart and aware. Like ghost they don't often give themselves up. They can be right in front of you and you will never see them. One mis-step or shadow cast on the water and they can be gone and a bad cast will put down that fat brown rising on Sulphurs in a heartbeat. In the Lehigh the fish are big, much bigger than you will find in most other streams. They have room to fight and in

such vast water often find a way to use the river against you. A big day on this river is without compare, at least in our area. But its size can be frustrating too. Where should you go? Where would you give yourself the best chance of success? You can go to those places we all know. Those tried and true fishin holes that continue to produce but seem to always have angling pressure or you could go off the beaten path.

If you choose to take the road less traveled you need to narrow your selection to the best opportunities the section has to offer. Following are a few common sense things to look for or water environments to narrow your search.

START WITH; DOES THE WATER LOOK FISHY? Trout prefer a certain type of habitat. Well oxygenated, fast water that is 2 foot deep or deeper is a start. There are many places on the river that look like that so it has to have more than just this. It has to look "Fishy". just ask yourself, if you were a trout would this be a place you would live? Is there food, a place to rest, a place to hide and plenty of clean fresh water? If you wouldn't live there then move on and find a more "Fishy" place.

THE BACK OF IS-

LANDS: Usually a hot spot in most instances. Big or small islands, it doesn't matter, the water on the downstream side of an island is a good bet.

DEEP CURRENT WITH SLIPS OR

SEAMS: You will find many places like this. Look for the edge where the fast and

slow water meet as a great potential place for trout. They stay out of the main current while the fast water pushes all type of food their way. Trout will rush from the seam into the fast water for a meal then back to the soft water of the seam.

THE BANK: Go to the bank by fishing the bank. The most often overlooked place on the river. Often we are in a hurry to fish the great hole in mid river so we slog up to the bank and jump in without even looking at the water close by. Trout like the bank. There is lots of food and shade on hot days, often times there are cold water seeps that they know about and we don't. It is always worth at least on cast up and one down so approach with care. During the year I will catch 2 dozen or more trout no more than 3-4 foot off the land.

THE HEAD OF A

RAPID RUN: This is the place where the water is pulling hard downstream to a rapid. Not the easiest place to fish. A place to catch large trout that are on the feed. They will move up into the strong pull of water to intercept anything coming down. Strikes will be quick and hard as they don't have much time before the potential meal is gone. It is also a place for losing big fish as the first reaction to the hook set is retreat to the rapids downstream and zinging your line.

PIERS: Popular places to fish the water usually carves deep channels around the sides of the pier that prove to be good holding water for trout of all shapes and sizes. If possible wade to the piers that are fished less often either on the other side or in mid river and target some fresh fish.

Something Looks Fishy (cont'd)

EDDYS: They are usually associated with a rapid run, where one side or the other will form an eddy that rotates against the general current. These can be feeding stations with lots of species of fish using them. I like to fish them deep and slow.

STRUCTURE: Boulders, large rocks and even the occasional tree can provide a great home for resident trout. The further you fish up through the gorge the more Rock you will find that is actual structure size. I have found that the water 5-10 feet from the back of the boulder where the current picks up again most productive. I haven't had much luck directly behind them.

HARD TURNS: A personal favorite I have for years fished anywhere the river bends. Around most turns of

the river, the bottom will be worn and gouged on the outside of the turn. As the water accelerates around the turn a higher degree of erosion occurs here so typically it is deeper and faster than the river above and below a turn. A good and easy choice when looking at new water to fish.

LASTLY

HIGH QUALITY TRIBUTARY CONFLUENCE: There are many good and high quality tributaries of the Lehigh. These are excellent places and usually provide excellent trout potential. A confluence adds to a trout's food selection and can provide unique habitat that they prefer. Some tribs such as the Pohopoco provide excellent thermal refuge that trout seek during the warmer months of the year. Some tributaries of

note are Hayes Creek, Lizard, Pohopoco and the Hokendaqua. The river is also lined with many springs and cold water seeps that should be noted as higher potential sites to stop and fish.

On such a large river as the Lehigh it only makes sense to eliminate low quality, low productive water and specifically target the habitat and water that trout prefer. Through the process of success and failure, keen observation and making note of the water that works for you, you will get more casts in the areas that hold river monsters. Venture out and try new areas, explore but continue to target the best places for the best results. By doing this you will certainly reach your full potential on the Lehigh.

I wish you luck and please keep us all posted on how your fishing year is going. We love

to hear from our sponsors. The easiest way to connect with your fellow river fishermen is through our email or Facebook postings.

Best Regards and keep those lines tight

Vince

"Some tribs such as the Pohopoco provide excellent thermal refuge that trout seek during the warmer months of the year. "

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Email _____ Do you want to be contacted to help stock the river _____

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Gold Sponsorship---\$60. You will receive a LRSA Hat (or _____don't send hat)

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Lunkerfest 2014—May 17 Details:

What: Fishing Contest for Great Prizes. Food and Fun!

When: May 17th 2014, (high water date June 7st 2013)

Sign up starting at 7:00 am

Fishing from 9:00am-3:00pm

Where: Lehigh River, East Penn Boat Launch, Bowmanstown, PA

Fee: Adults and Youths \$20, (\$15 early mail in or online registration), Kids under 12 free

The LRSA will stock about 500 trout 14" to 27" in the pool for Lunkerfest. ~50-100 trout will be tagged. Free giveaways, LRSA memberships, and raffle tickets available at sign up. Food and drinks will be available for purchase. Picnic tables and port potty bathroom on site. Sponsor's demonstration tables will be on display. No alcohol allowed.

In 2013 we had 150 contestants and gave out 80 prizes. We hope to do as well again in 2014.