

# Erie Pennsylvania Sport Fishing Association

The EPSFA was formed to educate, enhance and protect the sport fishing in Pennsylvania, especially in Lake Erie, Presque Isle Bay and its tributaries.

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March 11, 2025

The Honorable Mike Kelly  
17 S. Park Row  
Suite A430  
Erie, PA 16501

## **RE: Sea Lamprey treatments**

Dear Representative Kelly,

The winter cold has finally released its grip on Erie, PA and the temperatures are rising. Summer outdoor activities, including fishing will be in full swing soon. The Lake Erie fishery is a huge contributor to the economy here, and many local business rely on it. Hotels, restaurants, gas stations, tackle shops, campgrounds, charter and guide services, and numerous other businesses thrive here during the summer months.

The success of our fishery is currently threatened by an invasive parasite. The purpose of this letter is to ask for your help to restore the applicable funding needed to continue the fight against the invasive Sea Lamprey. Treatments to control the Lamprey are essential to maintain not only the Lake Erie ecosystem, but all of the Great Lakes.

Fish raised and stocked in Pennsylvania including Steelhead and Brown Trout are perfect targets for the Lamprey. Federal funds support Lake Trout stocking, and these fish are also a prime target. These fish contribute to a multi-billion dollar fishery, creating tens of thousands of jobs for Pennsylvanians. Without a program in place to control the Lamprey, these fish and the revenue they bring are in danger of being lost.

As the Secretary of the Erie Pennsylvania Sport Fishing Association as well as an avid fisherman and fishing charter captain, I ask that you support the funding needed to continue the fight against the invasive Sea Lamprey in 2025 and beyond. Please help restore the funding needed to provide the necessary staff to implement the program.

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The Great Lakes fishery is valued at more than \$7 billion annually to the people of the United States and Canada. This fishery was nearly decimated in the past by this same invasive species. What saved it was the years of research and efforts by the Great Lakes Fishery Commission. Those treatments discovered back then are still used now to control the Lamprey Eel population.

If you are interested in learning more about the destruction that the Lamprey Eel caused on the Great Lakes as well as those efforts that brought them under control, I suggest watching *The Fish Thief: A Great Lakes Mystery* is available here: [www.thefishthief.com](http://www.thefishthief.com). This is a remarkable movie which tells the story.

Thank you for your consideration and please contact me if you have any questions or comments. I can be reached via email: [GKuhns@yardmaster.com](mailto:GKuhns@yardmaster.com) or by phone: (814)-434-1462.

Sincerely,

George Kuhns  
Secretary  
Erie Pennsylvania Sports Fishing Association