KEYSTONED STEEL — FREE SAMPLE

Deer Creek

Gibsonia to Harmar · Allegheny County, Pennsylvania — our home water.

AN EXCERPT FROM THE **DEER CREEK DEEP DIVE** — THE FULL LIVING GUIDE IS $12.99

This sample is real pages from the Deer Creek Deep Dive — the same access detail, rules and tactics the full guide carries — so you can judge the format before you spend a dollar. Everything below is drawn from the guide itself.

About Deer Creek

Deer Creek is the Allegheny County stocked creek most anglers drive past. PA DEP listings carry about 10.5 miles of main stem (Cold Water Fishes designated use), rising near Bakerstown and Gibsonia and running south through Indiana Township to its mouth on the Allegheny at Harmar — roughly 52 square miles of watershed, drained by tributaries like Little Deer Creek, Long Run and Rawlins Run.

Its modern identity was made in two pieces. Up top, PFBC carved out 1.9 miles of Delayed Harvest Artificial Lures Only water from the SR 910 bridge at Martin Road down past the Campbell Road bridge to the lower boundary of Rose Ridge Golf Course — artificials only, a June-to-Labor-Day harvest window, and spring, in-season and fall stockings (browns, rainbows and goldens from Pleasant Gap) that turned a suburban creek into a holdover fishery with a local reputation for outsized browns. Down below, the middle creek runs through Indiana Township's 59-acre Emmerling Community Park — the stocking trucks' meeting place, with trails and a wooden footbridge on the water — and the greenway around it grew by 266 acres in 2025 when the Deer Creek Conservation Project moved from the Allegheny Land Trust to the Game Commission.

The creek carries a coal-country past — DEP's impaired-waters listings have flagged segments for abandoned-mine-drainage metals over the years, which the watershed groups keep chipping at. And it is, completely, ungauged — which is why the full guide teaches a two-step check: Pine Creek's gauge for timing at home, then your own eyes at the SR 910 bridge or the Emmerling footbridge for color.

Access — where to get on the water

SR 910 bridge at Martin Road — top of the Delayed Harvest section

Parking: Bridge-area pull-offs near the SR 910 crossing at the top of the section, Gibsonia side; the winery on 910 is a local landmark for the upper stocking point. Park off the pavement — SR 910 is a busy road.

The water: The Delayed Harvest Artificial Lures Only section starts at the SR 0910 bridge at the Martin Road (T-678) intersection and runs 1.9 miles downstream. Artificials only from here down — check your vest before you cross the line. This is the top of the special water, and where the section's fish actually stack:

per the owner's 2025 log, the majority of the season's fish held under Martin Road and the SR 910 bridge, not spread through the section. First pools below the bridge hold fresh stockers in spring and again after the October stocking.

Best: Prime and low bands; stocking weeks in March, April and late October. If you fish one Deer Creek access, fish this one first.

Pin source: PFBC stocking GIS record, Deer Creek Section 3 upper limit.

Campbell Road pull-off — the DHALO's working entrance

The mid-section entrance to the special water. The guide fishes this water as a walk-down from SR 910 or a walk-up from Campbell Road; the pool slots below Campbell Road are where the guide's core tactics are built, and the flat water below Campbell Road is the spot for risers on the low-and-fishable band. Park well off Campbell Road, and stay in the creek corridor.

Emmerling Community Park, Indiana Township — Section 4 corridor

Parking: The park's large lot at 152 Cove Run Road, Cheswick — about half a mile off Rt. 910, across from the township building. PFBC stocking trucks meet volunteers here for the creek's sections.

The water: A 59-acre township park whose trails follow Deer Creek, with a wooden footbridge over the water — the middle creek's public front door and the color-check spot for the lower water. Standard stocked-trout water (Section 4 corridor): wider and slower than the Gibsonia special water, warming earlier in summer. Park hours sunrise to dusk.

Best: Spring stocking season and after fall cool-downs; summer evenings for the park's shade.

Pin source: Indiana Township listing, Emmerling Community Park (152 Cove Run Rd).

Rose Ridge Golf Course lower boundary — bottom of the Delayed Harvest section

Parking: No public lot here — older accounts of golf-course-lot parking describe a thing of the past. Reach this end by walking the creek corridor down from Campbell Road, and respect course property.

The water: The Delayed Harvest section ends at the lower boundary of Rose Ridge Golf Course (4769 Gibsonia Road, Allison Park) — Deer Creek winds through the course's back nine. Below this line the creek returns to standard stocked-trout water. Know which side of the line you are standing on. The deepest DHALO bends, against the golf course woods — fish it as water fresh stockers pass through on their way down from the top of the section, not as a destination.

Access caution (2026): Rose Ridge Golf Course was sold in 2026 — ownership changed, and course-side access posture may change with it. Confirm conditions before relying on any course-adjacent access, and never park in the course lot.

Pin source: PFBC stocking GIS record, Deer Creek Section 3 lower limit.

Delayed Harvest Artificial Lures Only — the rules that matter

- **Artificials only** — no bait or baitfish may be used or possessed in the section.
- **Open to fishing year-round** — the DHALO never closes, including the March window when standard stocked sections shut.
- **Catch & release right now** — trout may be kept only from June 15 to Labor Day (minimum 9″, creel limit 3).
- **License required** — a valid PA fishing license and trout permit.

Tactics — how the guide fishes it

The Gibsonia DHALO fishes like a spring creek in freestone clothing: drag-free drifts, 5X–6X tippets in clear water, and nymphs (Pheasant Tail, Hare's Ear, zebra midges) through the pool slots below Campbell Road. Stocked fish in the standard sections eat like stocked fish — egg patterns, squirmy worms and bright nymphs in the first two weeks after a planting, then the naturals take over. Evenings April into June are the creek's dry-fly hours — BWO and sulphur activity concentrates on the DHALO flat pools at dusk.

Technique by flow band — the Prime band, in full: Pine Creek gauge 40–100 cfs and falling: Deer Creek is usually in shape within a day — confirm color at the bridge. Fish the full menu: nymph the slots, emergers at the flats, small streamers in the undercuts — and stay for the evening rise. Fish hold everywhere in the section, top-heavy as always — the bridge water first; fish prowl the edges at dusk. Prime flows make the creek's crossings pushy: cross at tail-outs, and never above a drop.

The full guide plays all five bands — too low, low and fishable, prime, high and fishable, and blown out — each with its rig, holding water and safety notes.

First trip — bring

- PA license and trout permit
- 5X–6X tippet and small nymphs (Pheasant Tail, Hare's Ear, zebra midges)
- Emergers and spinners for the evening of your season
- A thermometer in summer

Etiquette: The DHALO lives between a golf course and people's backyards. Stay in the creek corridor, park well off Campbell Road, and pack out line. Artificials only in the section — no bait, no exceptions.

THE FULL GUIDE

The Deer Creek Deep Dive — $12.99

This sample is a taste. The full living guide adds: live weather & radar for the creek on every visit · the complete access map — every pin with parking, walk and water notes · the season playbook and month-by-month calendar · the hatch & forage matrix · technique for all five flow bands · the species checker, bite clock and what-if lab · fall stocking coverage · the trip builder and your catch logbook. It is a living web edition — updated in place, and every update is free to owners.

Get the Deer Creek Deep Dive — $12.99

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