

PA COUNCIL OF TROUT UNLIMITED
STREAM ACCESS POLICY
June 2014

Preamble

The Pennsylvania Council of Trout Unlimited (PATU) currently has over 13,000 members and is the largest state council within the national Trout Unlimited organization. The vast majority of TU members in Pennsylvania are avid fishermen and have become members of TU to help conserve and protect our coldwater resources and quality trout fishing for present and future generations. As fishermen, we became members of Trout Unlimited not only because we support the mission and goals of this organization, but because we are personally connected to TU through our love of trout fishing and desire to preserve and protect public trout fishing opportunities in the future.

Because of this, we view public access to streams as being fundamental to the core mission of Trout Unlimited, and therefore we see assuring public access to streams as being the linchpin to giving every member a personal stake in the mission and business of the organization. Protecting watersheds, improving stream habitat, and fighting for needed legislation and funding won't be successful in the long-term if members see these efforts for naught, because they are being denied access to the trout waters they helped to protect.

In summary, the Pennsylvania Council believes a proactive access policy is central to the future effectiveness of the entire organization and the long-term growth in the membership of Trout Unlimited.

Stream Access Policy

1. The Pennsylvania Council of Trout Unlimited supports creating new opportunities for public access while protecting existing public access to our coldwater streams.
2. We support working with other interested stakeholders, such as PFBC, DCNR, PGC, sportsmen's clubs, conservation districts, land trusts and conservancies to help maintain and create public access opportunities.
3. For privately owned lands, we respect the rights of private landowners and encourage voluntary actions to provide stream access for public fishing. We will work with private landowners to better understand and address their specific concerns with providing public stream access. We support strengthening voluntary programs to secure lands or easements, create rights of way, or other contractual arrangements to provide needed stream access.
4. For public lands, we support programs and funding to acquire more public lands and stream access, to improve access to existing streams (i.e. parking and related improvements), and to assure better information on the availability of fishing opportunities.
5. Generally, we support new governmental initiatives at the federal, state, and local levels that will create more public lands and access. We also support initiatives that will promote and strengthen partnerships between government, businesses, landowners, non-profits, and other organizations and individuals for the long term protection of stream access.