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**Pennsylvania Council of Trout Unlimited**

**Leaders Operating Manual**

Revised 12/15/19

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**A. Purpose**

This manual was created to provide guidance to potential, newly-elected and current Council officers and committee chairs on the duties and responsibilities of their Council positions.

The information is intended to be used as a tool to ensure that all officers are speaking with one voice and working towards the same mission.

Some of the material presented in this manual is part of the Trout Unlimited Leadership Manual which can be found in the Leaders Only section at [www.tu.org](http://www.tu.org). Other information was created by the PA Council for specific guidance at the state level. It is encumbent upon all current or nominated officers to read through and understand these documents to ensure that they are familiar with the duties and responsibilities of the position they hold or are nominated for.

This manual will be updated periodically to ensure that the information is up to date with current policies, tasks and Council positions.

The successful operation of the Pennsylvania Trout Unlimited Council is very much dependent on the degree and depth of commitment of the Council leadership. The Council is not simply another chapter and should be regarded as a coalition, the vital thread that binds all the chapters together for mutual support and assistance. The Council deserves the active participation of every chapter in its state.

**B. What is a State Council?**

All TU chapters within a certain geographical region are organized into a council (most often this is within state boundaries). The state council serves as the umbrella organization for its chapters. The council officers are made up of volunteers from around the state who may have previously or are currently serving as officers or directors of a local chapter. Council officers are elected annually by chapter representatives (delegates). Councils are the key link between the National TU organization and local chapters. They play a critical role in advocating for coldwater resource issues at the state level. In accordance with the Chapter Focus project, councils also recommend to TU's National Board of Trustees when to charter, recharter and decharter chapters within their state. Some councils also employ professional staff.

**C. Responsibilities of a State Council:**

* Facilitating communication between volunteers in the state and the National TU office.
* Ensuring that TU members within the state are effectively represented and served by all levels of TU's organization.
* Working with the National TU staff and all available resource experts to form statewide policy for TU.
* Providing routine organizational, administrative and supervisory support for chapters in their state.
* Working as representatives with important government and private groups that affect trout and salmon resources.
* Working on projects of statewide importance.
* Working with other councils and National TU staff on regional projects.
* Acting as an arbitrator or mediator if problems arise that cannot be resolved within the chapter, such as interpretations of council and chapter bylaws, personal conflicts among officers, etc.
* Coordinating the financial activity and financial reporting of local chapters throughout the state.
* Ensuring that the council files its annual financial report with National TU on time (before May 15) and assisting chapters in doing the same.
* Recommending the chartering, rechartering and dechartering of chapters in accordance with the Chapter Focus project.
* Conducting an annual membership meeting.
* Filing a Return of Organization Exempt from Income Form 990 with the IRS on or before August 15 of each year,

**D. What Makes a Successful Council?**

Trout Unlimited state councils are a level of the organization that requires excellent leadership, strong committees, effective communications, and active involvement by all the chapters in the state. A successful council is one that has the support of the local chapters. It is effective at dealing with state-level conservation issues, as well as communicating the status and needs of issues pertinent to the national organization. A successful council provides direction and sustainable leadership while developing key partnerships with state, federal and local agencies, as well as other organizations, while collaborating with National TU staff on National Conservation Agenda issues.

**E. PA Council Composition**

The officers of Pennsylvania Council (PATU) are the President, two Executive Vice Presidents, a number of Regional Vice Presidents (RVPs) corresponding to the current number of designated regions, Secretary, Treasurer, National Leadership Council (NLC) representative, and the Immediate Past President. All but the Immediate Past President are elected annually by the membership of the Council. These officers constitute the Executive Committee (EXCOM) of the Council.

**President**
The chief executive officer of the Pennsylvania Council is the President, who presides at all meetings of the Council and the Executive Committee. The President coordinates the activities of the Council and acts as the official spokesperson for the Council within the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The President appoints the chairpersons of all standing and special committees and serves as chairperson of the Executive Committee.

The President is responsible for:

* Ensuring that Council is fulfilling its mission to “To conserve, protect, restore and sustain Pennsylvania’s coldwater fisheries and their watersheds, especially our wild trout resources.”
* Enforcing PATU and National TU policies.
* Preparing a president’s report for quarterly EXCOM meetings.
* Submitting a quarterly president’s message for the PA Trout newsletter.
* Convening and chairing the Governance Committee.
* Providing oversight and collaboration with PATU staff.
* Providing guidance to Council officers, committee chairs and chapter presidents as required.
* Collaborating with National TU staff (primarily staff in PA and Volunteer Operations).
* Working with the National Leadership Council representative on current initiatives.
* Reviewing the strategic plan and coordinating plan updates.
* Representing PATU at regional and National TU meetings.
* Participating in conference calls with National TU staff and partners, and representing Council as needed.
* Participating in PATU regional trainings.
* Drafting letters providing comment or support of a position (as required).
* Participating in selection and awarding of PATU grants (as required).
* Participating in legislative visits (as required).
* Attending Pa Fish & Boat Commission quarterly meetings (as required)
* Approving Embrace-A-Stream grant applications from PA chapter applicants.
* Assisting in the planning of Keystone Coldwater Conferences.
* Identifying and grooming replacement candidates for open Council positions.
* Ensuring that requests to PATU from National TU, Council and chapters are acted upon.
* Assisting in chapter reorganization and re-chartering/de-chartering processes.
* Assisting with risk management and conflict resolution.

Initial duties when taking over as President:

* Become familiar with the entire [TU Leadership Handbook](http://www.tu.org/member-services/welcome-to-my-tu/tackle-box/business-practices/leadership-manual) *(paying particular attention to the sections on liability and risk management)* and the PATU Officers Operating Manual..
* Communicate with the outgoing President and review lessons learned.
* Confer with the Council Treasurer to make sure the signatories on the Council bank account are current and proper controls are in place *(e.g. no use of personal accounts for Council funds, double signature requirement for large checks, periodic review of records, etc.)*
* Work with National Leadership Council representative on current initiatives in coordination with National TU.
* Ensure outgoing President enters you as the new President on the Council officer roster and Council contact information in the Leaders Only Tools section of the National TU website. This is critical for many reasons as it allows access to rosters, printing mailing labels, emailing members and making chapter or leadership changes, as well as viewing and downloading various membership reports. It is also the only way National TU recognizes you as a Council President and gives them the ability to communicate with you about important information specifically for Council leaders.

**Executive Vice Presidents**
The PA Council has two Executive Vice Presidents. Each is an ex-officio member of approximately one half of the standing committees. They ensure that their committees meet in a timely manner, and that committee quarterly reports are submitted to the Council Secretary for inclusion in the Executive Committee packet, with action items highlighted. When committee chairpersons cannot attend Executive Committee meetings to give their quarterly oral report, their respective Executive Vice President may do so in their behalf. The Executive Vice Presidents are responsible for facilitating communication between committees and chapters needing advice and aid. The Executive Vice Presidents will assist the President in filling open chairs for their committees. Following the annual membership meeting election, the President assigns each Executive Vice President the committees he or she will be responsible for.

Each of the two Executive Vice Presidents shall also be responsible for oversight and accountability for those Regional Vice Presidents as mutually determined and agreed to.

In the event that the President is unable to attend an Executive Committee meeting and/or serve out the remainder of an elected term, the Secretary will notify the members of the Executive Committee, and one of the two Executive Vice Presidents shall be appointed to serve in behalf of the President. The two Executive Vice Presidents serve as members of the Governance Committee.

**Regional Vice Presidents**The primary goal of a Regional Vice President is to promote and enhance communication and representation for the chapters in each region of the state. The number of Regional Vice Presidents corresponds to the current number of geographical regions as designated by the Executive Committee. Each Regional Vice President is assigned to the chapters shown within the geographical boundaries of his or her region as shown on the chapter map. The Regional Vice President must be a resident of his or her designated region. Regional Vice Presidents report to and are accountable to one of the two Executive Vice Presidents.

Regional Vice Presidents are responsible for:

* Attending at least one membership and/or board meeting with each chapter annually.
* Having at least two verbal communications with a chapter officer quarterly, either in person, by telephone, or electronic communication, to discuss chapter issues and express appreciation for their accomplishments.
* Assisting chapter officers with chapter management issues and acting as a liaison between the Council and its chapters.
* Providing support and coordinating the activities of chapters within their designated region.
* Filing quarterly activity reports for their respective chapters, including an overview of the RVP’s activities, to be filed at least one week prior to Executive Committee meetings.
* Coordinating and conducting at least one regional meeting annually, preferably at least six weeks prior to Council’s annual membership meeting.
* Keeping chapters updated on state, national and local issues.
* Developing relationships with each chapter and its officers, with an eye toward developing future chapter leaders.

Day-to-day chapter operational or administrative problems should be resolved at the regional level, with the Regional Vice President assuming responsibility to properly address the problem and its ramifications and ensure that a satisfactory resolution to the problem be obtained. In the event such problems cannot be resolved at the regional level, they will be brought to and addressed at the Council level.

Regional Vice Presidents must hold at least one regional meeting per year, preferably at least six weeks prior to Council’s annual membership meeting, for the purpose of selecting a nominee or nominees for the position of Regional Vice President to serve for the ensuing fiscal year. Additional regional meetings may be scheduled at the discretion of the Regional Vice Presidents as required to adequately address other matters pertinent to their respective regions. A minimum of thirty days advance notice of regional meetings should be provided by Regional Vice Presidents to their respective chapter presidents.

In the event that a vacancy occurs during a Regional Vice President's term of office, the Council
Secretary will call for a special election. Candidates for the office of Regional Vice President will submit a brief resume of their past duties and responsibilities to the Council Secretary, and the Council Secretary in turn will distribute their resumes to all chapter presidents within that respective region for a vote on the candidates. Election of Regional Vice Presidents will be determined by at least a two-thirds majority vote of their respective chapters, with each chapter submitting one vote, which in turn will be approved by a vote of the Executive Committee.

**Secretary**The Secretary will record minutes of all Executive Committee and Council meetings and file a copy of the same with National TU as required. The Secretary will maintain accurate records of Council policies, Council directories, and Council activities, including the determination and maintenance of an official list of chapter “delegates to Council.” It is the Secretary’s duty to officially register chapter delegates at Council meetings, determine majority, and record votes taken.

The Secretary is responsible for:

* Council communications, ensuring that all policy statements and pertinent information are circulated on a timely basis as needed to all officers and committee chairpersons.
* Providing written notice of all Council and Executive Committee meetings with a minimum of 30 days’ notice prior to the scheduled dates.
* Providing updated officer and contact information to National TU within 30 days of any change.
* Serving on various committees as appropriate.
* Retention of the following records:
	+ - Council bylaws and revisions.
		- Executive Committee and committee chairperson rosters.
		- Executive Committee meeting agendas and minutes.
		- General membership meeting agendas and minutes.
		- Newsletters.
		- Public event promotional flyers and records of event.
		- Media releases.
* Coordinating with the newsletter editor and Council president to write and send all meeting notices of the Council.
* Preparing the slate of Executive Committee nominees for the annual membership meeting.
* Preparing and distributing notices of general membership meetings to members.
* Coordinating with officers, committee chairpersons and web editor to ensure website content is current and accurate and conforms to TU established standards.
* Other duties as assigned, such as important correspondence with outside organizations, individuals and partners.
* Recording minutes of all Executive Committee and Council meetings and distributing copies to all officers and committee chairpersons within 7 days after the meeting date.
* Working closely with the Council web editor, Constant Contact editor, and newsletter editor in providing announcements and updating information for their respective media.
* Registering chapter delegates at annual membership meetings, determining majority, and recording votes taken in the election of officers.
* Compiling agenda and quarterly reports for all EXCOM meetings.

**Treasurer**The Treasurer has custody of all funds and property of the Council. With the President, the Treasurer may sign and execute, in the name of the Council, all contracts, agreements and other obligations of the Council. When necessary or proper, the Treasurer will endorse for collection on behalf of the Council all checks, notes, drafts and electronic credits and transfers and deposit same and all other revenues to the credit of the Council in such bank or banks as the Executive Committee designates. The Executive Committee may impose such alternate authority or limitations of authority to execute contracts, sign checks, or use other forms of payment as the Executive Committee deems appropriate.

The Treasurer keeps full and accurate accounts of monies received and paid on account of the Council, and gives a financial report at each meeting of the Council and the Executive Committee. Whenever required by the Executive Committee, the Treasurer will also render a statement of the Council’s accounts and report same to the Council.

The Treasurer prepares a complete Annual Financial Report (AFR) for the Council and submits the report to Trout Unlimited prior to the deadline set by National TU. The AFR will be in compliance with the policies and requirements of Trout Unlimited and will contain a complete and accurate accounting of all revenues, expenses, volunteer hours by members of the Council, and any additional items prescribed within the AFR form.

The Treasurer also makes all necessary filings when due with the Internal Revenue Service and state and local authorities. The Treasurer oversees all accounting and bookkeeping as required by grant contracts.

The Treasurer, upon request, will permit access by any Council officer, Council representative, or designated representative of Trout Unlimited to the Council’s books, records and accounts. The
Treasurer will be audited annually.

Initial duties when taking over as Treasurer:

* Become familiar with the entire [TU Leadership Manual](http://www.tu.org/member-services/welcome-to-my-tu/tackle-box/business-practices/leadership-manual) *(paying particular attention to the chapter on liability and risk management)* and the PATU Officers Operating Manual*.*
* Communicate with the outgoing Treasurer and review lessons learned.
* Confer with the outgoing Treasurer to make sure the signatories on the Council bank account are current and proper controls are in place *(e.g. no use of personal accounts for Council funds, double signature requirement for large checks, periodic review of records, etc.)*
* Ensure the Council President enters you as the new Treasurer on the Council officer roster and Council contact information in the Leaders Only section. This is critical for many reasons as it allows access to the Annual Financial Report, as well as identifying you as Council Treasurer, allowing National TU to communicate with you about important Leaders Only information.

**National Leadership Council (NLC) Representative**
The National Leadership Council representative is a member of the Executive Committee. He or she will be elected at the annual membership meeting and serve for one year, with a maximum of
five consecutive terms. The NLC representative’s responsibilities are:

* To bring Council issues to TU’s national conservation agenda-setting process and help determine priorities for the National TU agenda.
* To meet two times per year with the body of TU NLC representatives, once in person at the annual business and membership meeting, and by teleconference as scheduled.
* To serve on a working group or committee of the NLC.
* To report on the affairs and priorities of the NLC at Executive Committee and Council meetings.

The duties of the NLC representative are as provided for in the Bylaws of Trout Unlimited. The Council Secretary will promptly notify national TU of the name, address, email address, and telephone number of the newly elected NLC representative. The NLC representative is the conduit between Council and National TU. NLC representatives bring issues and concerns from their state to the national level and then bring decisions and initiatives from the national level back to their state council. They also serve on workgroups that focus on specific conservation or organizational issues that span more than two states. The National Leadership Council meets annually in person at the National TU annual meeting and via teleconferences throughout the year. A travel stipend for the annual meeting is available for NLC representatives from National TU.

**Term of Office**All officers of the Council serve for a term of one year commencing on October 1 of the year elected and ending on September 30 of the following year. All officers of Council are limited to four consecutive terms of office. The National Leadership Council representative may serve for five consecutive terms.

With the exception of the Regional Vice President positions, the President shall be responsible for filling any vacancies which may occur in offices of the Council, subject to approval by the Executive Committee.

Any officer may be removed at any regular or special Council meeting, at which a quorum is present, by a two-thirds majority vote of the delegates, officers and committee chairpersons in attendance.

**F. Committees**

The committees form the backbone of our Council, developing a variety of programs and policies which are adopted by the Executive Committee for dissemination to our chapters and other organizations as appropriate.

No compensation is paid to any committee chairperson or committee member for his or her services, or for their services in any capacity or pursuant to any other contractual arrangement whatsoever. Chairpersons and committee members will be reimbursed for expenses incurred by them in the performance of their designated responsibilities when such a request has been approved by Council. Reimbursements are duly made and recorded by the Council Treasurer.

New standing committees may be formed as necessary at the discretion of the Executive Committee.

Special committees of the Council may be established on an ad hoc basis from time to time by the Executive Committee. Staffing of such committees is the responsibility of the President. Such committees will serve for a limited purpose and time.

Each committee chair is responsible for:

* Recruiting a group of qualified committee members.
* Conducting meetings and conference calls to meet the mission of the committee and TU.
* Setting the agenda and establishing a budget and work plans for the committee.
* Following Council’s strategic plan to reach committee goals.
* With the respective Executive Vice President’s approval, submitting a quarterly activity report to the Council Secretary at least one week prior to Executive Committee meetings.

**Governance Committee**The Governance Committee monitors and ensures compliance with National TU's mission, policies and bylaws, and the policies and bylaws of the Council. Membership of the committee consists of the President, the Immediate Past President, the two Executive Vice Presidents, Treasurer, Secretary, and National Leadership Council rpresentative. The functions of the committee are to recommend to the Executive Committee for approval any required revisions to the policies or documents relating to the governance of the Council, including the bylaws and procedures for conducting the business of the Council, policies regarding acquisition and disposal of real property, procurement of goods and services, fiduciary responsibility and risk management. The Governance Committee meets in person or by teleconference at least once prior to each Executive Committee meeting.

**Standing Committees**
Awards Committee:Solicits nominations and selects chapters and individual members for recognition on an annual basis.

Budget Committee:

Communications Committee**:** Develops and implements all Council print publications and website content, as well as being responsible for the issuance of media news releases.

Delaware River Committee: Monitors conditions and recommends actions to enhance flow regimes for preservation of the wild trout population in this premier fishery resource.

Development Committee: Assumes the primary responsibility for matters pertaining to fund raising and capital giving.

Environmental Committee:Develops statewide policies and programs relative to Council’s conservation and environmental goals.

Membership Committee: Develops programs designed to promote continuous membership growth through the local chapters.

Trout Management Committee: Acts as a liaison with the PA Fish & Boat Commission to establish guidelines for effective cold water fisheries management programs.

Youth Education Committee: Aids chapters in establishing and maintaining programs consistent with Council's youth education goals.

Diversity Initiative:This initiative is responsible for developing strategies and programs to assist with recruitment of a more diverse membership, encouraging participation in leadership, programs and projects within each chapter.

Veterans Service Partnership: The PATU Veterans Service Partnership is a family fishing program for veterans conducted by the Pennsylvania chapters in our local communities and waters.
 **G. Other Council Positions**

**Program Director:**This position reports directly to the PA Council Executive Committee and Coldwater Heritage Partnership Committee. The program director’s primary objective is to implement the Council's involvement in the Coldwater Heritage Partnership (CHP) Program. This program targets the conservation and protection of Pennsylvania's coldwater streams and is a joint effort of PATU, PA Fish & Boat Commission, the Foundation for Pennsylvania Watersheds and the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources.

Duties and responsibilities include:

• Provide assistance and technical support to Trout Unlimited chapters and eligible watershed groups on the conservation and protection of PA’s coldwater fisheries.

• Assist groups in identifying problems, and developing solutions and implementation
 strategies.
• Work to educate the public and promote the conservation of PA’s coldwater streams.
• Administer and manage the Coldwater Heritage Partnership (CHP) grants program.
• Serve as liaison between multiple agencies involved in PATU programs.

• Oversee PATU website updates and assist with social media sites.

• Oversee the implementation of the Trout in the Classroom program.
• Fundraise and administer budgets and project reports.

• Grant writing and reporting.

• Coordinate and facilitate the Keystone Coldwater Conference.

• Organize, facilitate, and attend trainings / meetings that pertain to protecting PA’s
 coldwater streams.

 • Oversee the day to day operations of the Pennsylvania Council including; responding to emails
 and phone calls, writing letters, campaigns, problem solving, leadership development, and

 assisting with meetings and trainings.

• Supervise any part-time staff or interns.

**Website Editor**:

* Is responsible for maintaining the Council website.
* Updates the content frequently to ensure that what is shown is both current and pertinent.
* Serves as an active member of the Communications Committee.
* Acts as liaison with the newsletter editor to coordinate information for publication.
* Responds on a timely basis to inquiries received through website contact service.

**Newsletter Editor**:

* Coordinates content for quarterly Council newsletter, *PA Trout.*
* Edits article and photo submissions for newsletter.
* Designs and lays out newsletter.
* Works with printing company to produce and distribute newsletter.
* Solicits advertising for the newsletter.
* Creates and distributes digital edition of the newsletter.
* Posts digital edition of newsletter on Council’s website, [www.patrout.org](http://www.patrout.org).
* Serves as an active member of the Communications Committee.

**Constant Contact Editor:**

* Maintains the appropriate PATU contact lists in Constant Contact.
Solicits and coordinates content for My PATU Monthly email to chapter leaders.
* Solicits and coordinates content for quarterly email to all members & other subscribers. This email is how PATU distributes the link to the digital version of the PA Trout newsletter.
* Coordinates with committee chairs to produce committee specific emails (e.g. Diversity Initiative, Youth Education, Veteran's Service Partnership) as needed.
* Designs and lays out Constant Contact templates as needed.
* Serves as an active member of the Communications Committee

**Advertising Sales Representative:**

* Solicits advertising from statewide or local businesses and other organizations for the website and *PA Trout* newsletter to help offset the cost of newsletter printing and other PATU programs.

**Financial Reviewer:**

The Financial Reviewer shall review periodically each of the Council's bank-account records (including the records of any debit-card and electronic-banking transactions) and the records of any credit-card transactions.
The Financial Reviewer shall be a Council officer who is not authorized to sign checks, otherwise withdraw funds from the accounts, or make charges on a council credit card..

The Financial Reviewer shall either have electronic access through the relevant financial institution and credit-card company or through hard copies of bank and credit-card statements, but the records reviewed must show the date, amount, and payee of the transactions.

The Financial Reviewer shall not be given electronic access of the type that gives him (her) the power to withdraw or transfer funds from the Council's accounts. If hard copies of bank or credit-card statements are used, they must be mailed directly from the financial institution or credit-card company to the Financial Reviewer, who can then forward the statements, after review, to the Treasurer.

The Financial Reviewer must review Council’s accounts and credit card statements at least monthly and must report any inappropriate checks, debits, or charges to the Executive Committee..

**H. Operating Procedures**

**Trainings and Annual Meetings**The Pennsylvania Council holds one annual membership meeting each year in the fall. This is an opportunity to get members together to discuss the upcoming year and important issues pertinent to the organization. A variety of training opportunities also occurs throughout the year to provide leadership, coordination and guidance for chapters in their efforts to meet the mission of Trout Unlimited. Council evaluates the need each year and provides the necessary training for chapters.

**Authority to sign contracts on behalf of PA Council**
The authority for executing contracts on behalf of PA Council shall be vested with the President, Treasurer, Secretary and Program Director. All contracts must be submitted to National TU for approval of the contract terms and conditions prior to approval by the Executive Committee and signature of the authorized signer.

**Communications with National TU**National TU, in conjunction with the Council President, coordinates at least two teleconference meetings per year. The Council President, or a designated alternate, is expected to participate in these teleconferences to ensure good communications within the organization. The Council President is also expected to attend National TU's annual meeting. Attending TU's annual meeting is a legitimate (and encouraged) expense to be covered by Council. National TU covers the costs of the teleconferences.

**Communicating on Behalf of Trout Unlimited**Whether as a Council or chapter representative, or simply as a member of Trout Unlimited,
we are often asked by regulatory agencies, legislative bodies, non-government organizations, or the media to provide comment, take a position, or sign on to a coalition statement on various issues. The following guidelines are suggested when acting in various capacities in the name of Trout Unlimited.

When providing comment, taking a position, or speaking for Trout Unlimited, it is important that we speak with one voice in order to maintain credibility and follow established guidance. The first question you need to ask yourself is," does the subject fall within the mission of Trout Unlimited?" If the answer is no, you should not be providing comment in the name of Trout Unlimited. It is of the utmost importance that any comment is in line with the TU mission and Council and National TU policies.

***As an individual*:** When providing comment, taking a position, or speaking for Trout Unlimited, the first thing to consider is whether or not you are the correct person to be speaking on the subject. Are you authorized to speak on behalf of Trout Unlimited? If it's a local issue, has it been discussed with and approved by your local chapter’s board of directors? Do you have in-depth knowledge of the subject and Trout Unlimited policy on the issue? Further information and guidance on the subject can be obtained through your chapter president, Council Regional VP, or appropriate committee chair. If it's an issue with statewide or national significance, always contact Council or National TU to determine if a formal position has already been taken on the subject.

***As a chapter representative*:** When providing comment, taking a position, or speaking for your chapter, has your chapter board adopted a formal position on the subject? Has the chapter provided notification to Council of the plan to take a formal position on the issue? Are you authorized to speak for your chapter? Do you have in-depth knowledge of the subject and Trout Unlimited policy on the issue? If it's an issue with statewide or national significance, always contact Council or National TU to determine if a formal position has already been taken on the subject.

***As a representative of State Council*:** When providing comment, taking a position, or speaking for Council, has Council adopted a formal position on the subject? Are you authorized to speak for the Council? Do you have in-depth knowledge of the subject and Trout Unlimited policy on the issue? If the issue is specific to a local chapter, always contact the chapter president to see if a position has already been taken. Similarly, for an issue with national significance, National TU should be contacted to determine their formal position. You can also contact a representative of the Council Governance Committee for guidance.

As chapter and Council representatives, we are often asked to sign on to coalition letters, either in support of, or opposing, various issues. Again, the first consideration should be whether the sign-on request falls within the mission of Trout Unlimited. If the answer is no, we should not sign on. Caution should also be taken that the mission statements of the other organizations are closely aligned with ours. We should always reserve the right to withdraw our signature based on the signatories on the final draft. In many instances, it is preferable for us to provide our own letter when time and circumstances permit. The content of the letter should be checked for accuracy before signing on.

For administrators of our social media pages (Facebook) and other social media, caution should be taken in that all posts are appropriate and cannot be deemed offensive in any way. It is of the utmost importance that any comment is in line with the TU mission and Council and National TU’s policies. If questionable, a representative of the Council Governance Committee should be contacted for guidance.

Council policies covering the following subjects can be found on the Documents page at [www.patrout.org](http://www.patrout.org): Acid and Mercury Deposition, Co-op Hatcheries, Forest Practices, Hazardous Waste Management, Mining and Mining Reclamation, Oil and Gas Activities, Riparian Habitats, Stream Access, Stream Channelization, Trout Management, Water Withdrawals and Inter-Basin Transfers, and Wetlands. Important National TU policies such as the North American Salmonid Policy can be found in the Tackle Box section at [www.tu.org](http://www.tu.org). Click on Tackle Box – Important TU policies.

In summation; (1) does the issue fall within the mission of Trout Unlimited, (2) are we speaking with one voice (one TU) and, (3) is the correct person speaking on behalf of Trout Unlimited on the issue?

If the answer to all three questions is yes, then we can be assured of representing Trout Unlimited with a credible and unified voice.

**Suggested Guidelines on Using Electronic Mail**To streamline communications and eliminate extraneous e-mails, some forethought is required before sending out and responding to others with e-mails. We need to respect our colleagues’ time and send only to those affected what is pertinent to the issue at hand. Here are some suggestions to make everyone’s life a bit less cluttered:

* When originating an e-mail, choose only those recipients who have a stake in the subject you’re writing about. If you are accessing a group listing from your address book, sometimes this means that you need to take the time to delete the addresses of those to whom the subject does not apply. And if replies should be sent to you only, just add a note to that effect in your e-mail.
* When receiving an e-mail which requires a response, examine the content to determine if a reply is appropriate for the originator only, or whether it should be sent to the entire distribution list. While it’s easy to just hit the ‘reply all’ button, this reaction is often what causes receipt of so many unnecessary e-mails.
* By the time a string of e-mails reaches some considerable length, in some instances the original subject has been lost or altered to the point that it is no longer relevant. It is suggested in these situations that you simply revise the content in the subject box to whatever the current subject might be before responding.
* Time-sensitive requests should always specify a “drop-dead” date for replies. Vague expressions such as ASAP are open to interpretation and often cause unnecessary follow up communications to clarify the original request.
* When reports are requested, it is helpful to the recipient if you send these as file attachments (Word, Excel, Adobe, etc.) rather than including in the body of your e-mail message.

**Conducting a Productive Meeting**Like most organizations, TU chapters conduct their business primarily during face-to-face meetings. Because the meeting participants are volunteers, it is particularly important to keep meetings productive and effective. The fastest way to lose volunteers for your chapters is to have ineffective meetings. There are six key elements to a successful meeting: agenda, facilitation, preparation, atmosphere, inclusion, and decision-making.

* Every meeting should have a written agenda that allows the participants to come to the meeting with a clear idea of the goals for the meeting and allows the meeting to stay on track.
* The role of the facilitator is to use the agenda to keep the meeting on track on behalf of the group.  The facilitator should also make sure that all participants are heard from and the conversation remains constructive.
* Preparation for the most important business meetings should include advance mailing of the draft agenda and attachments, and finding a meeting place that is consistent with the nature of the meeting, but varies to retain interest.
* A good atmosphere is key to a successful meeting, particularly when volunteers are involved. If people have fun, they will be more likely to come back. Remember that a volunteer-based group depends for its very survival on the recruitment of new members and potential leaders.
* Identify members who are potential leaders and include them in a board meeting and introduce them when they attend. Potential members to a group frequently make their decision as to whether to stick with a group based on their reception at their first few meetings.
* Nothing is more frustrating to a group than not understanding how decisions are made. Be clear for each meeting as to the method that will be used to make decisions (Roberts Rules of Order, majority rule, consensus, etc.). Be clear about how the group is going to make up its collective mind and then stick to it.

**I. PATU Financial Controls Policy**

**ARTICLE #1**
No accounting or auditing firm that has handled PATU’s accounting or bookkeeping in the preceding fiscal year shall be permitted to complete an annual audit and/or financial review for that same year
***Purpose:*** *To ensure the independence of the audit/financial review and ensure compliance with the PATU Bylaws, TU’s financial control policy, and generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP)*

**ARTICLE #2**
No firm may handle PATU’s annual audit/financial review for more than six (6) consecutive years
***Purpose:*** *To ensure compliance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles*
**ARTICLE #3**
Any individual or entity receiving compensation from PATU for services rendered, via contract, grant or otherwise, shall submit reports identifying the nature and scope of the services provided and the time spent on the individual efforts, and submit the reports to the Governance Committee on a monthly basis
***Purpose:*** *As employees or independent contractors, any person receiving compensation shall document their efforts taken on behalf of PATU to assist with strategic planning and budgeting for the next fiscal year.*

**ARTICLE #4**The Treasurer shall submit to the Executive Committee at least one week prior to each EXCOM meeting an up-to-date balance sheet, income and expense statement, and statement of transactions.
***Purpose:*** *To provide an accurate snapshot of PATU finances in a format consistent with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles*

**ARTICLE #5**
A Financial Reviewer will be appointed and granted personal access to all PATU accounts and banking institutions, and provided with all account access information to permit him (her) to conduct monthly reviews in compliance with TU’s Financial Controls Policy and to provide monthly reports to EXCOM.
***Purpose:*** *To comply with TU’s Financial Controls Policy*

**ARTICLE #6**
Article III, Section 8, of the PATU Bylaws will be amended to impose a 4-year term limit on all members of the Executive Committee, including the Treasurer and Secretary.
***Purpose****: To achieve uniformity in the Bylaws and to comply with the intent of TU’s Financial Controls Policy.*

**ARTICLE #7**
In January of each year the Budget Committee will publish a schedule and work plan to achieve an EXCOM-approved annual budget by April 1, the beginning of the TU fiscal year
 ***Purpose:*** *To provide a timeline and process for adopting a budget for each fiscal year (April 1-March 30).*

**ARTCLE #8**
Each year, in accordance with the schedule and work plan provided by the Budget Committee, all Committee Chairs shall prepare and submit a Program Plan and Budget Proposal for the coming fiscal year.
***Purpose:*** *To assist the Budget Committee in its budget preparation and ensure that committees are moving toward achieving the goals identified in the PATU Strategic Plan.*

**J. TU Code of Ethics**

At TU we are committed to honest and ethical behavior and to accomplishing our mission with integrity. Integrity in all aspects of our operations is key to our success as a credible broker of scientifically and economically responsible conservation solutions. This Code of Ethics is designed to put in place a system to ensure we are aware of and can take prompt action against any questionable behavior. It is also intended to help each of us focus on the duty we owe to each other, to the public, and to others with whom we do business to conduct ourselves at all times with integrity and in a way which would always make us proud if our actions were reported in the front page of our local newspapers. This Code applies to each and every one of TU’s volunteers on the chapter and council level. We each are responsible for safeguarding and promoting TU's reputation. Of course, doing the right thing won't always be easy. Many situations will involve subtleties and complexities that lead to difficult choices. When in doubt, take a step back to ask yourself whether the situation feels right, and consider whether you feel confident that your actions would withstand scrutiny. If necessary, take another careful look at this Code for guidance and seek advice from national TU’s Volunteer Operations staff. Your actions should not have even the appearance of impropriety. You should be able to feel comfortable that your actions would not embarrass yourself, your fellow volunteer leaders or TU's membership should it turn out that your conduct becomes “front page” news.

**Organization Assets**TU chapter or council assets must be safeguarded and used only for accomplishing TU’s mission. This includes, without limitation, protection (including from loss or theft) of the TU chapter or council’s physical facilities, office equipment (including for example, all computer-related equipment, furniture and supplies), computer software, records and donor information. Employees also must safeguard TU’s trademarks and other proprietary information, as further discussed in the section “Confidential Information.”

**Legal Compliance**TU and every volunteer acting in TU’s name must obey and comply with all applicable laws and regulations. It is every volunteer’s responsibility to be aware of and to comply with legal requirements applicable to his/her position.

**Openness and Disclosure**It is TU’s responsibility to provide comprehensive and timely information to the public, the media, and all stakeholders about its operations upon request. All information about the organization will fully and honestly reflect TU’s current operations. In raising funds, TU will respect the rights of donors, as follows:

* To be informed of TU’s mission, the way the resources will be used, and TU’s capacity to use donations effectively for their intended purposes;
* To be informed of the identity of those serving on the organization’s Board of Trustees and to expect the board to exercise prudent judgment in its stewardship responsibilities;
* To have access to the organization’s most recent financial reports;
* To be assured that all restricted gifts will be used for the purposes for which they were given;
* To receive appropriate acknowledgement and recognition;
* To be assured that information about donations is handled with respect and with confidentiality to the extent provided by the law;
* To expect that all relationships with individuals representing TU will be professional in nature;
* To be informed whether those seeking donations are volunteers, employees of the organizations, or hired solicitors;
* To have the opportunity for their names to be deleted from mailing lists that TU intends to share; and,
* To feel free to ask questions when making a donation and to receive prompt, truthful and forthright answers.

**Confidential Information**While TU strives to be as open as possible about its operations, certain information is by nature confidential and should not be disclosed to the public, including, but not limited to:

* All donor and member personal information;
* Information relating to hiring decisions, and to current, former and prospective employees; and
* Financial reports and data that have not been formally reported to the public through presentations to the Board of Trustees, Federal Form 990, 990N, or audited financial statements. Such information represents a valuable corporate asset that should be protected as we protect other valued assets.

**Conflicts of Interest**Volunteers must avoid any personal activity, investment or association that could interfere with or could appear to interfere with good judgment concerning TU's best interests. Volunteers may not use TU property, information or position for personal gain, including taking for personal opportunities that are discovered through the use of TU property, information or position. Volunteers should avoid even the appearance of such a conflict. For example, there is a likely conflict of interest if an employee:

• causes TU to engage in business transactions with relatives or friends;

• uses nonpublic TU, donor or vendor information for personal gain by you, relatives or friends
 (including securities transactions based on such information);

• has more than a modest financial interest in TU's vendors, donors or competitors; or

• competes, or prepares to compete, with TU while still serving on the chapter or council board
 of directors.

There are other situations in which a conflict of interest may arise. Any volunteer who becomes aware of any material transaction or relationship that could reasonably be expected to give rise to such a conflict of interest, or has concerns about any situation, must follow the steps outlined in the section "Reporting Violations."

**Fair Dealing**No volunteer may take unfair advantage of anyone through manipulation, concealment, abuse of privileged information, misrepresentation of material facts, or any other unfair-dealing practice. Volunteers should endeavor to deal fairly with TU’s donors, suppliers, competitors and employees.

**Gifts, Bribes and Kickbacks**Other than for modest gifts or benefits given or received in the normal course of business (including travel or entertainment,) no volunteer may give gifts to, or receive gifts from, TU's donors and vendors. In no event should a volunteer put TU or himself/herself in a position that would be embarrassing if the gift were made public. Dealing with government employees often is different from dealing with private persons. Many governmental bodies strictly prohibit the receipt of any gratuities by their employees, including meals and entertainment. Volunteers must be aware of and strictly follow such prohibitions. Any volunteer who pays or receives bribes or kickbacks will be subject to corrective action, and reported, as warranted, to the appropriate authorities. A kickback or bribe includes any item intended to improperly obtain favorable treatment.

**Loans**No volunteer may request or accept a loan from National TU, council or TU chapter.

**Political Contributions**
No TU funds may be given directly to political candidates. Volunteers may, however, engage in political activity with your own resources on your own time, subject to applicable law and the TU policies and rules governing such political activity.

**Reporting Violations**Any volunteer who becomes aware of a suspected violation of law, TU policy, or any provision of this Code, whether before or after it has occurred, must promptly report it to Volunteer Operations staff. Any volunteer who remains concerned after speaking with Volunteer Operations staff, or feels uncomfortable speaking with such persons (for whatever reason,) should contact TU’s Chief Executive Officer. In any such situation, the volunteer will be protected from retaliation for initiating a report under this section.

**Anti-Harassment Policy**
1. Statement of Philosophy: TU has a longstanding commitment to a culture that respects the dignity and worth of each individual. Inappropriate behavior and unlawful harassment create conditions that are wholly inconsistent with this commitment. The purpose of the policy set forth below is not to regulate the personal morality of volunteers, but rather to foster an environment that is free from all forms of harassment, whether that harassment is because of race, color, gender, age, religion, national origin, disability, veteran status or any other characteristic protected by law.

2. Discriminatory Harassment Prohibited: Discriminatory harassment, including sexual harassment, will not be tolerated by TU. This policy applies to all harassment occurring in any TU-related setting, and applies regardless of the gender of the individuals involved.

3. Sexual Harassment Defined: For purposes of this policy, sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when: submission to such conduct is either explicitly or implicitly made a term or condition of an individual’s involvement with the chapter or council; or submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for involvement with the chapter or council; or such conduct creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment.

4. Other Harassment Defined: For purposes of this policy, other harassment is defined as verbal or physical conduct that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual because of his/her race, color, gender, age, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, veteran status or any other characteristic protected by law, and that creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment.

5. Reporting Discriminatory Harassment: TU strongly encourages the prompt reporting of all incidents of discriminatory harassment. If you believe you are being harassed or have observed harassment, TU encourages you to notify promptly Volunteer Operations Staff

6. Investigation: When a volunteer reports harassment as specified above, TU will undertake a prompt investigation appropriate to the circumstances. The steps to be taken during the investigation cannot be fixed in advance, but will vary depending upon the nature of the allegations. Confidentiality will be maintained throughout the investigative process to the extent practicable and consistent with TU’s need to undertake a full investigation.

7. Resolving the Matter: Upon completion of the investigation, appropriate remedial action will be taken, if necessary and supported by the facts.

8. Non-retaliation: An individual who reports incidents that the volunteer, in good faith, believes to be violations of this policy, or who is involved in the investigation of harassment, will not be subject to reprisal or retaliation. Retaliation is a serious violation of this policy and should be reported immediately. The report and investigation of allegations of retaliation will follow the procedures set forth in this policy. Any person found to have retaliated against an individual for reporting discriminatory harassment or participating in an investigation of allegations of such conduct will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

**K. Prohibited Council Activities**

Councils are expressly prohibited from engaging in the following activities, some of which would result in jeopardizing Trout Unlimited’s 501(c)(3)non-profit status while others could place national TU in a position of defending legal action. For more detailed information on TU policies, please be sure to consult the Tackle Box in the Leaders Only section at [www.tu.org](http://www.tu.org).

* Endorsing a political candidate for election.
* Granting scholarships.
* Donating council funds to a non-exempt organization.
* Engaging in litigation or acquiring land without first notifying and obtaining approval from national TU.
* Serving alcohol at council events except when using a licensed hotel, caterer or restaurant.
* Charging separate council dues.
* Providing the council membership list to an outside individual or organization.