



NATIONAL CONSERVATION AGENDA FOR TROUT UNLIMITED CANADA

*Program Structure in support of TUC's
Mission and National Conservation
Themes and Policies*



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November 2010
Revised August 2010

CONSERVATION PROGRAM STRUCTURE FOR TROUT UNLIMITED CANADA

The National Conservation Agenda of Trout Unlimited Canada was developed with the support and input of our members through the National Resource Board. The key Conservation Themes identified by our members and ratified by the NRB are: water quality; water quantity, habitat management; and fish community management. These themes are supported by core policy statements and provide direction for the conservation efforts of our organization in support of our Mission.

This brief outlines the policy statements and sets a structure and intent for the development of a National Conservation Programs for Trout Unlimited Canada.

MISSION STATEMENT

To **conserve, protect** and **restore** Canada's Freshwater Ecosystems and their Coldwater Resources for Current and Future generations.

GOALS

1. To conserve and protect Canada's freshwater fish and their ecosystems and restore their coldwater resources to a healthy and productive state
2. To develop and apply effective, science-based and measureable coldwater conservation solutions in the field
3. To inform the public about coldwater conservation issues and educate communities about their watersheds
4. To build and sustain a healthy organization

NATIONAL CONSERVATION AGENDA THEMES AND KEY POLICIES

Theme 1: Water Quality

Policy: Conserve and Restore Clean, Cold Water

Policy Detail: Maintain the quality of Canada's freshwater ecosystems or restore them to a level that ensures the health and life cycle requirements of aquatic species

Theme 2: Water Quantity

Policy: Conserve and Restore Cold, Clean Water

Policy Detail: Manage water quantity in order to balance the need of human society for water while ensuring it to integrity of aquatic ecosystems

Theme 3: Habitat Management:

Policy: Conserve and Restore Coldwater Habitats

Policy Detail: Conserve and protect coldwater habitats to ensure the physical health and sustainability of watersheds for coldwater species and their communities

Theme 4: Fish Community Management

Policy: Protect and Restore Existing Native Coldwater Fish Species and their Communities

Policy Detail: Protection and wise management of existing coldwater fish species is paramount, followed by restoration of coldwater species and communities where they have been damaged or lost. We treat native naturally reproducing species as a first priority, naturalized populations where they currently exist as a second priority and as a third priority support the development of new fisheries using naturalized stocks where no social and or ecological conflicts exist

TUC'S PROPOSED CONSERVATION PROGRAM STRUCTURE

The proposed program structure for Trout Unlimited Canada has been developed initially by the National Resource Board of TUC and subsequently supported and endorsed by our members and TUC's National Board of Directors in September 2006. The following program structure identifies three (3) major program areas: conservation and restoration; protection; and science development. These three areas contain a total of six (6) major programs with subsequent activities under each program.

The Program Areas recognize our interest in Conserving, Protecting and Restoring our Nations freshwater ecosystems and coldwater resources and the additional need for good science to inform our opinions and activities. The Program Areas also recognize the need for specific programs that differentiate and emphasize conservation and restoration activities on one hand and protection programs on the other hand. Protection, in a proactive way, is one of the most cost-effective tools for maintaining healthy ecosystems, but is often overlooked as a distinct course of action in its own right.

PROGRAM AREA - CONSERVATION AND RESTORATION PROGRAMS

1. **COUNTRY STREAM LEGACY PROGRAM:** A program to guide and assist landowners in conserving and restoring water quality, water quantity, stream channel and riparian habitat on their land
 - Cows and Fish
 - Yellow Fish Rural

2. **HEMOWATERS CONSERVATION PROGRAM:** A program to guide and assist TUC's membership and partners in monitoring, conserving and restoring water quality, water quantity and riparian habitat in their homewaters. Activities include:
 - Watershed Renewal – Can also include components of below and also be directed both by staff and through our Chapters
 - Monitoring the Resource and Watershed
 - Linking Top to Bottom – Connectivity
 - Stream and Stream Corridor Restoration

3. **WILD TROUT CONSERVATION PROGRAM:** A program to conserve and restore native salmonids to their traditional habitats. Examples of activities under this program include:
 - National Digital Angler Diary
 - Population Enhancement/Restoration
 - Lake Ontario Atlantic salmon Restoration

PROGRAM AREA – *PROTECTION AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS*

4. **STREAM CORRIDOR PROTECTION** - This program will focus on two elements working with communities to protect waters of exceptional value and working with landowners to acquire riparian easements or properties to protect critical streams and their corridors of life:
 - **EXCEPTIONAL WATERS** - A community-based watershed planning and management program for exceptional waters.
 - **STREAM CORRIDOR PRESERVATION** (Not yet defined): A program to protect relatively untouched watersheds by purchasing a conservation interest in them
 - **AQUATIC RENEWAL** – Development and implementation of an instructional and educational program to help increase the knowledge and capability of our chapters and partners to do sound stream and watershed rehabilitation.
 - **CHAPTER GUIDANCE** – Provision of technical support and conservation and rehabilitation mentoring to chapters.

5. **YELLOW FISH ROAD PROGRAM:** An community-based action program to teach children and communities about their local watershed and water pollution introduced through storm drains.

PROGRAM AREA – CONSERVATION SCIENCE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

6. COLDWATER ECOSYSTEM SCIENCE - Trout Unlimited Canada is not in the business of exploring pure research oriented questions. Rather, our aim is to support applied research that provides useful information on the biophysical and ecological characteristics of watershed and river form and function in relationship to coldwater communities. Three specific program areas fall within this applied research area:

- **Conservation Success Index:** Creation of a GIS-based analytical tool to identify landscape sensitivity.....
- **Ecological Flow Protection Program:** A program to develop science that helps to understand the critical range of flows and water volumes essential to the maintenance of ecological functions in streams. (i.e. water quantity; essential habitat needs for aquatic communities)
- **Stream Corridor Science Program:** A program to promote the application of best practices and design and planning for functional streams and their corridors. This includes designs that benefit people and the health of the stream, including floodplain management, stream channel restoration, impacts of dam removal on stream health, etc.
- **Coldwater Fish Community Ecology:** This program focuses on science development for management and restoration of native coldwater fishes across Canada. Research includes their ecology, life history characteristics, habitat needs, genetics and hybridization issues. Examples of activity under this program include:
 - i. Coastal Cutthroat Research
 - ii. Westslope Cutthroat and Bull Trout Ecology and Hybridization
 - iii. Athabaska Rainbow Trout
 - iv. Coaster Brook Trout Habitat
 - v. Salter Brook Trout Research