

TU's Chapter Focus Project:

Eight years ago, the NLC developed and the Board of Trustees approved a system for increasing the effectiveness of chapters called the Chapter Focus Project. The fundamental goal of this effort is to help chapters evaluate and then increase their effectiveness in the four areas of: conservation, youth education, service to members and business practices. To do this, the Chapter Focus Project introduced three tools: the Chapter Effectiveness Index (CEI), the Tacklebox, and the chapter rechartering process.

The Chapter Effectiveness Index (CEI) is a series of a few questions at the bottom of the Annual Financial Report. It is to be filed at the same time (October 1-November 15) from year to year. The questions were developed to help chapters evaluate and quantify progress over time. Some chapters are inclined to score their progress on [a 1-100 scoring scale](#); however, it's important to note that the CEI is meant as a self-evaluation tool only. Scores are only intended for chapter use to measure the chapter against itself, not against other chapters or any national standard.

To help chapters achieve their goals, [Volunteer Operations staff](#) developed [the Tacklebox](#). This online resource was originally organized into the four core areas of focus for the CEI: conservation, youth education, membership tools and business practices; however over time new areas like chapter fundraising, board policies, etc... have been added. Each area has a list of downloadable documents and links. [The Tacklebox](#) is accessible to all TU members and is a great resource for any TU member active in their chapter, particularly if they are a committee member. Because it is an online resource, it is constantly updated and improved with new chapter programs, examples, tools, links and ideas.

Councils track their chapters' progress using their own set of rechartering criteria with which to recommend a chapter for recharter to TU national. Council recommendations are compiled by [Volunteer Operations staff](#) for the Board of Trustees to approve at either the February or September Board meetings. For chapters that are showing measurable progress in effectiveness or a sustained high level of effectiveness, councils recommend rechartering. For chapters that are struggling, councils help them develop a reasonable plan for increasing their effectiveness and assist with carrying out that plan. Councils monitor chapter progress in conjunction with the chapter. If progress is made (as determined by the council,) then councils recommend rechartering. If progress is not being made, then councils recommend dechartering and the chapter's members will be reassigned to active chapters. Every chapter must be recommended for rechartering (or dechartering) every four years. Chapter rechartering status and deadlines are available for review in [the Tacklebox](#).