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Big River Trout Unlimited Chapter #000- Strategic Plan- Created February 10th, 2015

Conservation

During our strategic planning retreat, our board acknowledged that “conservation” work doesn’t always mean actual shovels in the ground. Conservation work takes on many forms, from advocacy, to culvert removal, to in-stream habitat improvement projects, and countless other ways of improving our coldwater fisheries. Recognizing our Chapter’s strengths, and building on our relationships with Big River University and River City DFW, BRTU decided that **Angler Science** will serve as our signature conservation work and help establish our chapter’s “identity” within our local community and the broader TU landscape. We have broken down our conservation work into TU’s **Protect**, **Reconnect**, and **Restore** pillars to ensure our conservation agenda aligns with neighboring chapters, our state Council, and TU National’s efforts.

Protect

Big River Spawn Surveys

Data collection for struggling steelhead populations in the Big River watershed was identified as a top priority by the Chapter’s Board of Directors. The data the chapter collects will inform future restoration work, including habitat enhancement, culvert removal, or advocacy work. Working with the River City Department of Fish and Wildlife (RCDFW), the Chapter will participate in redd surveys on Big River over a three month period between January and May. BRTU will consult with TU’s science department staff to ensure data gathered is relevant to identified conservation priorities, that data is collected in a consistent and reliable fashion, and that all monitoring protocols are the most up-to-date and scientifically sound methods available.

Big River Chapter will organize six survey weekends and offer overnight camping opportunities during two of the survey weekends to provide for chapter socializing and the opportunity for chapter members to fish together. With RCDFW guidance, we will select six weekends on a semi-weekend basis, to conduct surveys over a three month period. The chapter will provide dinner the night before the survey (usually a Friday night), as well as breakfast and lunch on survey day (usually on Saturday). This will allow participants to socialize Friday night and follow up the survey efforts with fishing opportunities Saturday afternoon and Sunday (if participants prefer). **Projected cost for survey weekends is \$200 for a total of \$1200 for the season.**

- Chapter Lead- Conservation Chair and Conservation Committee Members
- Date(s)- Six dates to be held January through May, bi-weekly
- RCDFW Contact- Rebecca Redd (555)555-5555 or rredd@rcdfw.rc.us

Reconnect

Big River Restoration Project

Using information collected through our spawn survey efforts, BRTU will develop a restoration plan in cooperation with RCDFW beginning in 2017. In 2016, the conservation committee will convene a meeting with representatives from Big River Watershed Council and RCDFW to discuss potential projects, associated funding



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needs, and the role that BRTU members could play in the proposed projects. Following identification of candidate projects, BRTU will consult with TU's Western Water Project staff to ensure the project we elect to pursue aligns with WWP's work and goals for the selected watershed. **Cost for Restoration Project is unknown at this time but will be funded through grant writing, individual donations, and funds raised through Chapter activities.**

- Chapter Lead- Conservation Chair and Conservation Committee Members
- Date- To begin following analysis of 2014-2016 spawn survey data (likely May or June 2016)
- RCDFW Contact- Rebecca Redd (555)555-5555 or rredd@rcdfw.rc.us
- BRWC Contact- Willie Watershed at (555)555-5555
- SRWC Contact- Heather Headwaters at (555)555-5555

Restore

Adopt a River

Two yearly cleanups, one in June and one in October, serve as opportunities for new volunteers to “get their feet wet” in conservation work. Both river cleanups are followed by a picnic to welcome new members and provide opportunities for socializing and fishing. The June cleanup will be focused specifically on families, with designated youth events, women's specific activities, scheduling convenient for working families with children, and advertising targeted at our family membership holders (using Bulk Email, advertised at local schools, etc.).

Costs for each river cleanup is projected to be \$200 for food, garbage bags, and gloves, or \$400 for the season.

- Chapter Lead- Conservation Chair, Conservation Committee Members, Membership Chair, Youth Education Chair, Women's Initiative Chair

Communications

Chapter Website

Big River Chapter's website is the primary means for posting all relevant meeting dates, project updates, and other important information for chapter membership. Secretary will maintain the website and keep all content up to date, including monthly meeting times, locations, and guest speakers, meeting minutes, project updates, and other relevant information. **Annual Bluehost server account cost is \$60/year and the Chapter's WordPress account is \$100/year for a total of \$160 per year.**

- Chapter Lead- Secretary
- Bluehost (web server) Contact-
- WordPress (site host) Contact-

Chapter Quarterly Newsletter

Big River Chapter's Newsletter is sent twice a year via snail mail. Despite the associated costs, this was articulated as a priority of the chapter because e-mail and social media only reach so many members and potential members. Newsletter committee will solicit content from Conservation Chair, Membership Chair,



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Women's Initiative Chair, President, and others with news relevant for the general membership. **To reach our 300 chapter members via a hard mailer, envelopes and printing are projected to cost \$300 and postage is projected to cost \$150 for a total of \$450 for each mailer and a total of \$1800 for the year.**

- Chapter Lead- President, Vice President, and Secretary
- Printer Contact- www.tu.ticketprinting.com

Chapter eNewsletter

On a monthly basis, the chapter will send out an e-newsletter that serves as a snapshot of the website with upcoming meeting reminder, ongoing project highlights, and chapter news. The e-newsletter is sent one week after each Chapter meeting and will include agenda for the following month's meeting. Secretary will solicit content from Conservation Chair, Events Chair, Membership Chair, and President.

- Chapter Lead- Secretary

Media Relations and Local Advertising

In order to reach out to and recruit potential new members, BRTU will advertise chapter meetings, events, and project work in our local community through press releases to local media, poster around town, and seeking PSA radio advertising for major efforts. Utilizing www.tu.ticketprinting.com has proven a cost effective means for creating high-quality print materials and will be used whenever possible.

- Chapter Lead- Media and Communications Chair

Social Media

Recognizing younger generation's participation in social media platforms, the BRTU Board of Directors identified developing Facebook, Instagram and Twitter accounts as well as an active presence on TU.org's community site as a top communications priority for 2015. The Media and Communications Chair will serve as the point of contact for submitting content. The chapter will make at least five posts/ tweets per week related to the chapter's efforts (photos and updates from Chapter projects, event reminders, etc.), or relevant regional coldwater fisheries news (links to news sites, other groups websites, etc.).

- Chapter Lead- Media and Communications Chair
- If you'd like to submit a photo, story or link for inclusion on the TU.org community site, FB page, Twitter or Instagram please contact bigriverTU@gmail.com

Engagement

Spring

RCDWF Fishing Lessons

In partnership with RCDWF, Big River Chapter will offer introductory fishing classes once each spring at Big River Park. RCDWF will handle all participant registrations and registration costs will include a one year



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introductory membership to Trout Unlimited using www.tu.org/intro in exchange for Chapter members leading the class.

- Chapter Lead- Conservation Chair and Conservation Committee Members
- RCDFW Contact- Carson Caster (555)555-5555 or rredd@rcdfw.rc.us

Spring Fishing Trip

Chapter members spend one weekend each spring on the North Fork Big River fishing for steelhead or trout. Chapter reserves campsites and provides dinner Friday night, breakfast and dinner Saturday, and breakfast Sunday for all members who RSVP for the weekend. **Fishing weekend cost is \$600 for food, campsites, and other costs.**

- Chapter Lead- Events Chair

Summer

Snorkel Surveying

With the Chapter's newly acquired snorkel equipment, we are presented with an unparalleled opportunity to provide our membership with river snorkeling experiences the average member would not usually pursue. Chapter leadership will work with RCDFW to coordinate three snorkeling opportunities on the North Fork of Big River to observe adult summer steelhead during summer months when water is clear and weather is agreeable. The chapter will also pursue additional snorkeling opportunities as they arise through partner organizations (e.g.- local watershed groups, partner conservation non-profits, school groups, etc.). **Project cost for snorkel events is \$100 or \$300 for the season.**

- Chapter Lead- Conservation Chair and Conservation Committee Members
- Date(s)- Three dates to be held each summer
- RCDFW Contact- Rhianna Redd (555)555-5555 or rredd@rcdfw.rc.us

Fall

SalmonWatch

Working with Big River Watershed Council and the Small River Watershed Council to provide salmon lifecycle education to River County youth presents an excellent opportunity for the Big River Chapter to have a presence in education while leveraging the organizational efforts of paid staff at BRWC and SRWC. **The Big River Chapter will support SalmonWatch efforts with a \$500 annual donation** and the Education Chair will continue to work to support SalmonWatch by recruiting Chapter volunteers to help with the effort.

- Chapter Lead- Education Chair
- BRWC Contact- Willie Watershed at (555)555-5555
- SRWC Contact- Heather Headwaters at (555)555-5555

River City Brewfest held each September (see below under "Fundraising")



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Winter

Fly Fishing Film Tour held every February (see below under "Fundraising")

Fundraising

Fly Fishing Film Tour

Held on a Saturday during the first two weeks of February, the Fly Fishing Film Tour (F3T) serves as BRTU's main fundraising activity. Chapter members work to organize and host an independent screening of F3T at the Riverside Independent Theater. Membership chair organizes new member signups using www.tu.org/intro and chapter laptops/tablets, and partner groups are invited to setup booths to promote their work in the theater. Auction and raffle items are solicited by Partner Fly Shop and events chair leading up to event. **Silent auction, raffle items, and ticket sales are projected to bring in \$6,000 per year for Chapter activities.**

- Chapter Leads- President, Vice President, and Events Chair
- Date(s)- Mid-February
- Theater Contact- Betty Bigscreen at Local Independent Theater (555)555-5555
- F3T Contact- Chris Keig at Mayfly Media (keig@webeyegroup.com)

Rivercity Annual Beerfest

Held at the Rivercity Annual Beerfest, this event is the Chapter's main public outreach and awareness effort. The Big River Chapter hosts a booth with limited raffle prizes, TU signups using www.tu.org/intro, and casting lessons, and casting contest. **Raffle and casting contest projected to raise \$1,000 per year for Chapter activities.**

- Chapter Lead- Events Chair and Beer Fest Committee Members
- Date(s)- First Wednesday in September
- Beerfest Contact- Hal Hopman (555)555-5555 or halhops@beerfest.com

Chapter Development

Monthly Chapter Meetings

The core of our chapter engagement efforts revolves around monthly meetings, held September through May each year. Chapter Vice President will arrange meeting speaker schedule to include local fishing guides, RCDWF staff members, partner nonprofit group staff, and others to present on issues or topics of concern to the chapter. Meetings are held at River City Fly Shop from 7-9pm on the first Wednesday of each month. Speakers and agenda will be distributed by the Vice President or Secretary, with agenda for the upcoming meeting sent four weeks before meeting date and meeting reminder sent one week before meeting date. Meeting minutes are taken by Secretary and placed on Chapter's website week following each meeting. Monthly meetings are an opportunity to conduct Chapter business and provide informative presentations for membership.



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- Chapter Lead- Vice President and Secretary

New Member Recruitment

At all events where BRTU has a presence and recruitment is allowed, we will offer new member signups using chapter tablets/laptops and wireless access to www.tu.org/intro. Not only will recruitment improve our volunteer base, but the current offer of \$17.50 for new members will yield \$15 for the chapter's coffers.

- Chapter Lead- Membership Chair

Leadership Development

Leadership development is a crucial component to the long-term viability of BRTU. While we are lucky to currently enjoy passionate, energetic chapter leadership, our board recognizes that folks will move on or life circumstances will necessitate decreased involvement in leadership positions. All board members are encouraged to recruit and train a mentee for their responsibilities. To ensure our chapter has a sustainable pool of leaders for board positions, we will offer incentives for members to become involved and step up to board responsibilities. **As our budget allows, we will set aside \$2000 per year to fund travel to TU Regional or National Meetings for board members.** Depending on distance and cost of attending these meetings, BRTU will provide \$500-1000 per board member to cover travel, lodging, and expenses.

Succession Planning

All Executive Officers are asked to keep a duties log for all major responsibilities they undertake as part of their role as a volunteer chapter leader. The chapter secretary maintains chapter officer responsibility descriptions. Executive Officers should work with the Secretary to update and modify position descriptions as new duties arise and old responsibilities become outdated. By maintaining current Executive Officer position descriptions, the chapter can ensure organizational knowledge is maintained for future leaders.



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Appendix

Calendar of Activities

Activity

SalmonWatch
Fly Fishing Film Tour
Big River Spawn Surveys
Officer Travel to Regional Meeting
Snorkel Surveying
RCDFW Fishing Lessons
Rivercity Annual Beerfest
Adopt a River
Chapter Quarterly Newsletter
Chapter eNewsletter
Monthly Chapter Meetings
Chapter Website
Media Relations and Local Advertising
Social Media
Big River Restoration Project

Timing

Fall
Winter
Winter through Spring
Spring
Summer
Summer
Summer
Summer and Fall
Quarterly
Monthly
Monthly
Ongoing
Ongoing
Ongoing
TBD

Annual Income and Expense Projections

Chapter Income

River City Beerfest	\$1000
F3T	\$6000
Private donations	\$2000
TOTAL INCOME	\$9000

Chapter Expenditures

Spawn surveys	\$1200
Adopt-a-River Cleanups	\$400
Chapter Website	\$160
Quarterly Newsletter	\$1800
Local Media Advertising	\$250
Facebook	\$200
Snorkel Outings	\$300
SalmonWatch Contribution	\$500
Western Regional Travel for Officers	\$2000
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$7060