



Operating Procedures for TU Alternative Engagement Groups

One important task for Trout Unlimited's (TU's) chapters and councils is the cultivation of younger members and volunteers. From time to time, chapters and councils may find that certain folks who are otherwise very motivated by the TU mission may not want to participate with the TU chapter in the traditional way – board meetings, bylaws and IRS filings may lack a certain appeal. However, in order for a local TU presence to be legitimate and to be able to raise money and to do activities that are covered by TU's insurance, these things are necessary. One way some chapters and councils have worked around this is to create an alternative engagement group that in effect act as a committee of the parent chapter or council.

These groups would be comprised of members with an interest in and connection to a local area, combined with the support and guidance of an existing “parent chapter” or “parent council.” The structure of the new group would include official representation within the parent chapter or council in the form of the president of the alternative engagement group and, if consistent with the bylaws of the parent chapter or council, a board position. The alternative engagement group could then take the time to identify members for leadership positions, increase active membership with events of their own, raise funds, manage revenue and expenses under the parent chapter or council's umbrella, and establish their own style of operation, based on the blessing of the parent chapter or council.

The alternative engagement group must work within the structure of the parent chapter or council to assure compliance with TU's bylaws and its 501(c)(3) non-profit status and to assure that the activities of the group and its members are covered under TU's insurance policies. The alternative engagement group and their parent chapter or council must comply with the following:

- An alternative engagement group is organized as a committee of the board of directors of a chartered TU chapter or council, pursuant to a duly enacted resolution of the board of that chapter or council.
- The group will at all times operate in accordance with the bylaws of the parent chapter or council and Trout Unlimited.
- The group cannot undertake any action or incur any obligation on behalf of the new alternative engagement group, the parent chapter/ council, or any other branch of TU, without the express authorization of the board of the parent chapter/ council.
- With the approval of the board of directors of the parent chapter/ council, the group may establish a checking account, or other financial account, under the name and tax identification number of the parent chapter/ council for purposes directly related to the group.
- All financial activities shall occur under the supervision of, and with the approval of, the treasurer and the board of directors of the parent chapter/ council.
- The parent chapter/ council is responsible for all required financial reporting.
- If the alternative engagement group were to disassemble, the funds in any account established for the group shall be maintained with the parent chapter/ council.
- If the alternative engagement group chooses to identify itself with a name other than that of its parent chapter/ council, that name must always be used in conjunction with the name of the parent chapter/ council for all communications and activities, including newsletters, websites, advertising, fundraising events, conservation activities, and business cards. (*Note this is key for the purposes of extending our insurance to the new group.)
- New members signed up by the alternative engagement group will be assigned to the chapter chosen by the member or automatically assigned by ZIP code. Any new member rebates will be paid to the chapter as existing practice dictates. The parent chapter or council may choose to give a portion of that rebate to the group.
- With the authorization from the parent chapter president/ council chair, alternative engagement groups may use TU's internal communication platforms, such as Action Alerts or the bulk email tool.
- Alternative engagement groups may not independently provide official TU comments on an issue, sign on to letters with other organizations, enter into litigation, make statements to the media, enter into contracts, or obligate TU in a binding manner. These types of activities must be carried out and approved by the parent chapter/ council and must be in compliance with TU's bylaws and policies.
- With the authorization of the parent chapter president/ council chair, designated leaders and members of the alternative engagement group may have access to the Leaders Only Section of the TU website and to the roster of members.