



TU Women's Member Retention Program

Dear TU Leader,

As Trout Unlimited continues to grow its membership, outreach to women is a component of the overall grassroots efforts. Many chapters are utilizing the free and introductory TU membership promotions along with women's outreach programs to recruit new women members. Only 5% of new TU members who come onboard through a free membership renew after their first year.

Implementing a simple member retention plan will help to increase renewal percentages and grow the number of members in your chapter. This document is intended as guidance only and you are encouraged to augment this program and customize the sample letters and survey.

Where do you begin?

If you are a Council or Chapter WI coordinator, you should have access to the leaders only tool to see membership rosters for your state/chapter. In addition, sign up for WI chair call and get on the mailing list for information.

Start by contacting **Trout Unlimited Volunteer Operations** to better understand how and where to identify new women members. Check these lists every month as you will be contacting every new woman member as part of your retention program strategy. Contact is crucial in the first three months to encourage integration into the local chapter and also a couple of months before their membership expiration.

Both Council and Chapter Membership Leaders need to create contact lists of new women members and insert their registration date and dates for follow-on phone calls, emails, letters and surveys.

****Creating a membership mentor program will help to focus efforts on that first contact to invite a new member to their first chapter meeting.***

- 1) Identify new women members-create a contact list
 - a. Send Chapter Membership leader list of new women members in their chapters
- 2) Council Leader or WI coordinator sends the **WI Chair Council Welcome Letter**
- 3) Chapter Membership Leads sends **Welcome to Your Chapter** letter
 - a. Assign a mentor to the new woman member
- 4) Assigned Chapter Mentor calls to invite the new woman member to a Chapter Meeting/Event
 - a. Make sure the new member is on the distribution list for all women's outreach events
- 5) **Chapter New Member Survey** is sent (email or snail mail) to find out why they joined and their interest in participating in the chapter
- 6) Council Leader calls to see if the new woman member has any questions or comments about their local chapter
- 7) Chapter involvement for invitation to activities whether established or new.
- 8) Assign a greeter for monthly chapter meeting. This job will detail welcoming all new and or returning members.
- 9) Creation of new activities that are inclusive of all members- introduction/refresher courses, conservation projects, outreach to other civic organizations, mentor programs, capsule classroom before monthly meeting
- 10) Chapter Membership Chair calls to invite new member to Chapter Banquet or Primary Fundraising Event
- 11) Council Leader sends, **Thank you for being a TU Members** letter that recognizes how important their support and continued membership is to the State Council and local chapter



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12) Continue working with chapters and councils to encourage women to attend meetings, events and contribute

Documents: WI Chair Council Welcome Letter, Welcome to Your Trout Unlimited Chapter, Chapter New Member Survey, Thank you for being a TU Member (renewal reminder).

Women's Initiative Council Chair-Action Planning Guide

As the WI Council Chair you have the opportunity to grow your State's Trout Unlimited Membership, work with your chapters to improve the TU member experience and create new TU leaders. While you will focus on outreach to women, many of the strategies, programs and techniques will work for all members.

As you begin to organize you will have activities that are focused at Council level and chapter level. It is crucial that you work with your chapters to support and assist with their women's initiative efforts. Breakdown your strategic plan into four distinct groupings; **Engage, Communicate, Recruit and Leadership**. Review the four groupings to help plan your strategy for the year and then develop your budget. Submit your budget to the Council for approval. Start small, but think BIG and only take on a budget and workload that is sustainable with your current resources!

ENGAGE

Engage-Who are the people in my State interested in Women's Outreach:

- Send a survey to chapter leaders (use www.surveymoneky.com)
- Collect the names
- Schedule a meeting/forum for idea generation
- Schedule follow-on meeting for council and chapter to develop annual WI strategic plans, (get everyone on the same page and moving in the same direction)
- Create a resource center for chapters
 - URL to women's initiative area on the TU Tacklebox
 - Supply Council/State versions of flyers, brochures, presentations, etc.
 - Offer to speak/present at local chapter meetings
 - Promote WI program via TIC (Trout in the Classroom) program

Engage-Welcome to our Chapter:

- Work with chapter membership chairs on a 'welcome to our new woman member' strategy
 - Phone calls, emails, letters, personal invitation to a meeting, event or project
- Encourage chapters to provide women centric meeting components
 - Review the Tacklebox women's resources for meeting topic ideas
- Add information/column to newsletter- spotlight on women's events



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Engage-Special Events:

- Create hybrid fishing events -casting clinics, women's fly fishing 101 and women's fly tying
- Invite wives and significant others of current TU Members to a special Wine and Fishing Day
- Family Conservation Day
- TU Women's Chapter Open House-(bring a friend to a chapter meeting)

**Identify the budget expenses for meetings, collateral creation and event support*

COMMUNICATE

Communicate-1st Impressions: Council and chapters should take a fresh look at website, flyers, brochures, expo displays, and other public-facing materials to make sure they include an impression that says, 'DIVERSITY'. Include pictures of youth programs, families, young men, young women and seasoned chapter members. Update Council documents and provide copies to chapters to get them started.

Communicate-We Want You! Work with chapters on a women's membership drive and help them

- Plan a kick-off event
- Create press releases for local distribution
- Develop flyers, brochures, newsletter promotions and website updates
- Utilize the free or introductory TU women's membership url

Communicate-Know Your Women Members-Developing Your Contact List

- Keep track of your new women members
- Send a special welcome letter from the State Council
- Call and introduce yourself and find out why they joined TU

RECRUIT

Recruit-Practices, Opportunities and Publications

- Use Social Media-Start a Facebook page and contribute regularly
- Create a women's fishing blog at the Council/State level
- Use bring a friend/neighbor to branch out and introduce new women
- Create a women's conservation blog at the Council/State level
- Utilize TU National website for community information/portal
- Women in TU video for promotion at local community events, outdoor events
- Use Local Libraries to get the work out-post on their website, post flyers
- Partner with other groups such as F&G, Scouts, 4H, etc on events and expos



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LEADERSHIP

Leadership-Council and Chapter Roles

- Establish of WI coordinator at chapter/council level with access to TU national Tacklebox info
- Encourage WI to attend board/council meetings
- Encourage TU women members to sign-up as a special committee chair
- Educate TU women members about all the leadership opportunities available to them
- Host leadership networking events and invite a panel of TU women leaders in your region
- Invite women to attend regional meetings and network with other WI coordinators
- Invite women leaders in your community to join TU and participate at the BOD level
- Start looking for your replacement

CONCEPT MAP

The below image represent a four stage process to the retention program. It can be used as a visual for a meeting or presentation.



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TU WI Retention
Concept Map

