Rethinking Youth Engagement

with TU's Headwaters Youth Program
University of Georgia 5 Rivers Club
North Paulding High School TU Teens Club

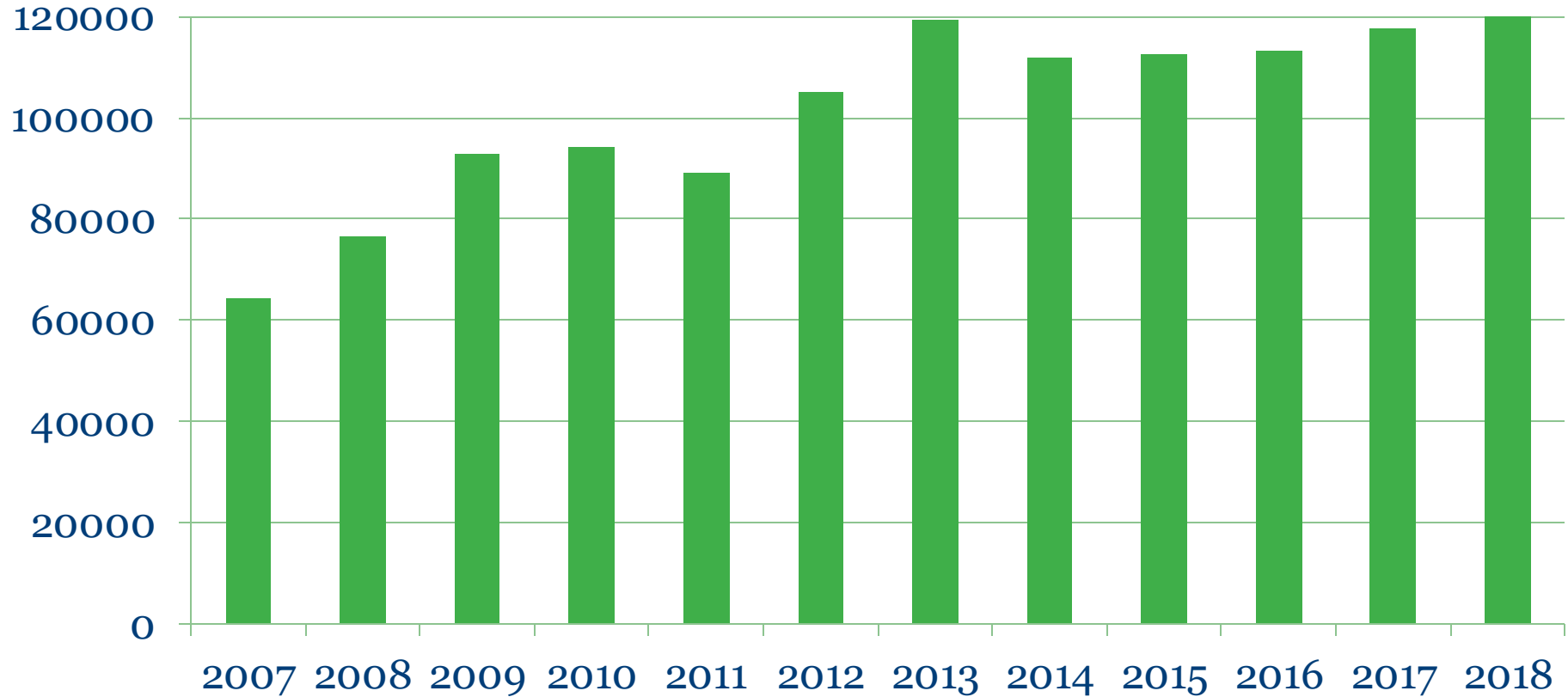Southeast Regional Rendezvous – Dillard, Ga - May 4th, 2019

1. Headwaters Youth Program

2. Challenges TU chapters face around youth engagement & the Power of Partnerships

3. UGA TU Costa 5 Rivers Club intro

4. TU Teens/High School Fishing Club intro

5. Q & A Session

6. What's next? How young people can diversify and strengthen your chapter
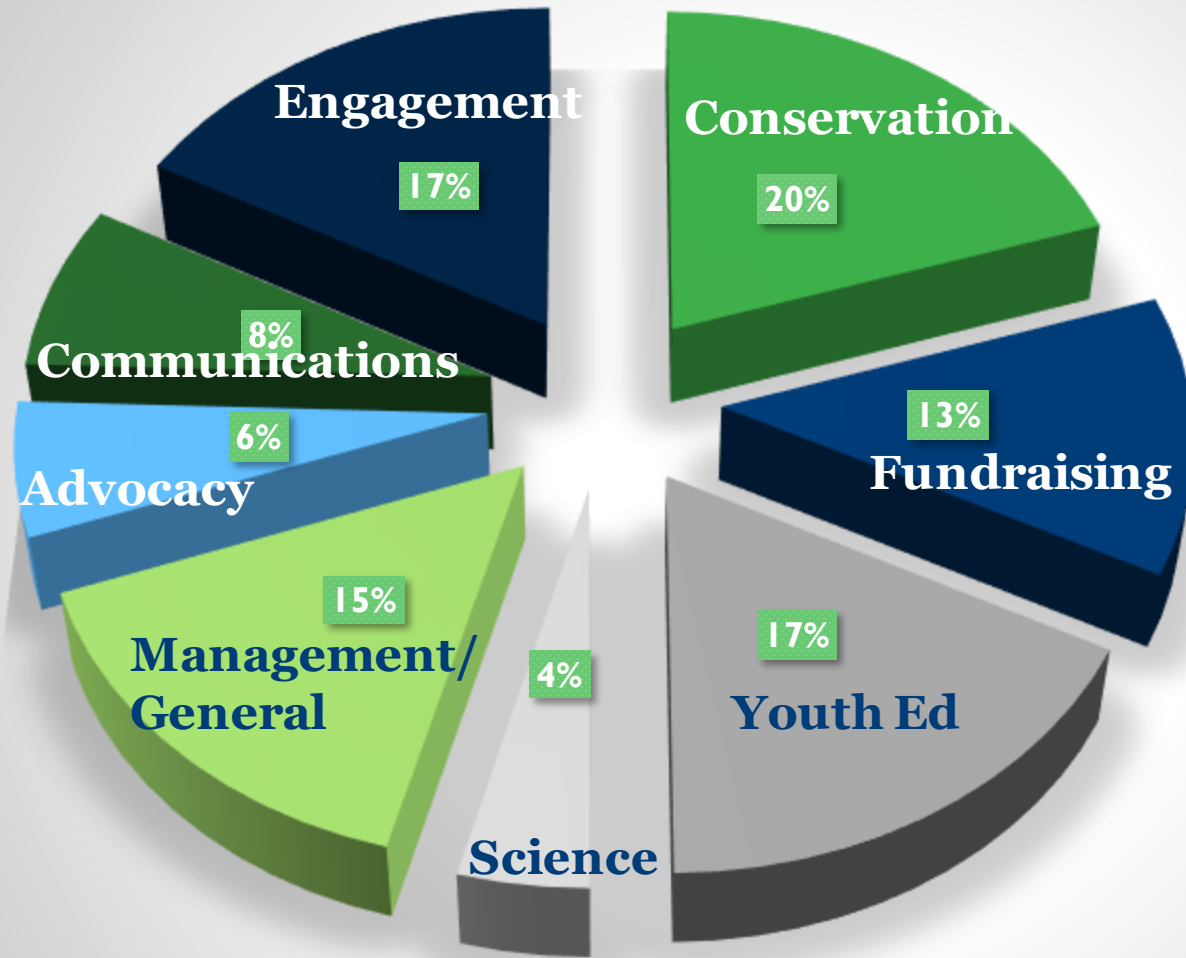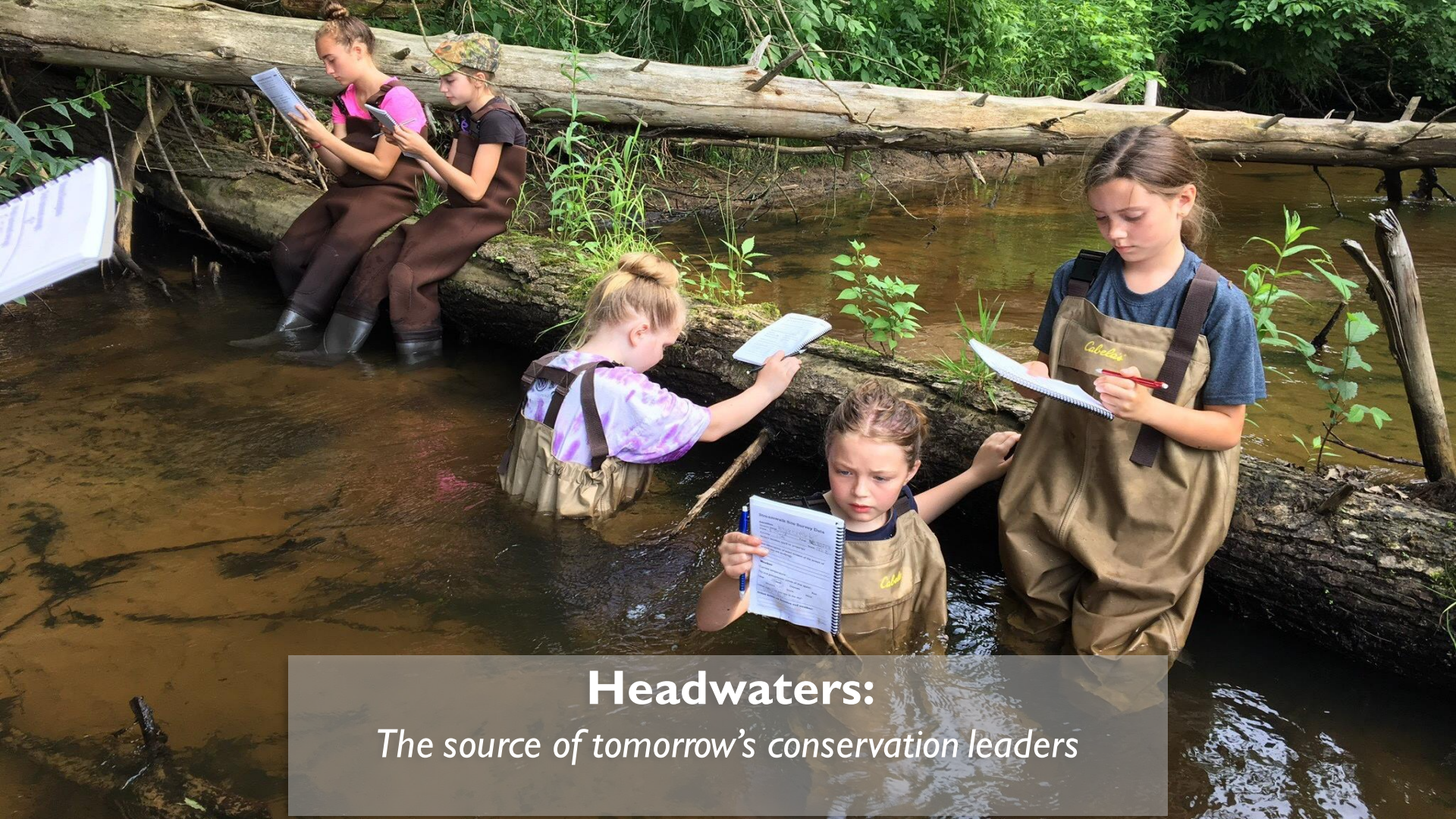
7. Final Thoughts/Questions

Chapter and Council Youth Education Hours 2007 - 2018

Engagement 17%

Conservation 20%

Communications 8%

Advocacy 6%

Management/General 15%

Science 4%

Youth Ed 17%

Fundraising 13%

737,194 Volunteer Hours

FY2018 Broken Down

Headwaters:

The source of tomorrow's conservation leaders

Headwaters Program

Our role as staff is to build grassroots capacity

- Trainings
- Program support
- Online resources
- Memberships

Challenges around youth engagement

1. The Intimidation Factor
2. What do we do with them?
3. Recruitment of young people to the event
4. Finding volunteers and volunteer capacity
5. Retention of young people & volunteers

Challenges: The Intimidation Factor

- Getting over the hump

- Kids are scary!!

- Liability concerns & insurance

- Safety

- No education background

Challenges: What the heck do we do with them?

- The blank stare

- What is an age appropriate activity?

- Hands on or lecture?

Challenges: Recruitment of young people

- We organized an event but no sign ups

- Having a hard time getting interest

- Kids don't care about this stuff

- Young people are too busy with sports & school

Challenges: Finding volunteers & volunteer ability

- We don't have the people

- We sent an email but no one volunteered

- We don't have the proper training – "I'm not an educator"

- "How do we get them to come back?"

- What's the point if they can't be members?

- Will they come to our chapter meetings?

The Power of Partnerships

Partners bring to the table:

- Experience and paid staff

- Established infrastructure/programs

- Young people!

- Event space

- Transportation of said young people

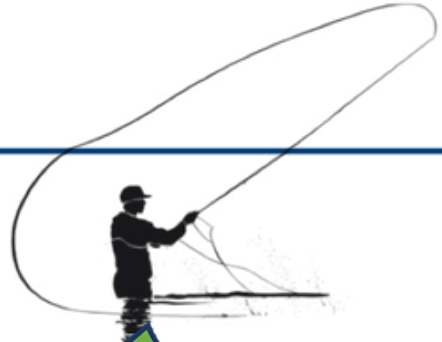- Training?

- Funding?

The Power of Partnerships

- Scouts, 4H, FFA

- Big Brothers Big Sisters, YMCA

- Summer Camps, After-School

- Schools, universities, and teachers

- Museums, Zoos, Parks, Nature Centers

Working with clubs

University of Georgia TU Costa 5 Rivers Club & North Paulding High School TU Teens Club

5Rivers Fly-Fishing Club at UGA

- *First Organized: February 2016*
- *Restructured: August 2017*
- *Steps Taken to Improve Efficiency and Membership Engagement:*
  - *Fly-Shop/Guide Guest Speakers*
  - *Club Fishing Trips*
  - *Fishing/River Cleanup Combos*

UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA
FLY FISHING

BREVARD TRIPS

Every Fall and Spring, the club takes a trip to Brevard, NC, with the Oconee River Chapter of Trout Unlimited.

FFT MOVIE NIGHT

In Fall 2017, the club organized a movie night using clips from the Fly Fishing Film Tour that were provided by Costa.

December 4, 2018

At the end of Fall 2018, 5Rivers had its first Christmas Party. It was held at KOA Bowls on College Avenue – in the upstairs venue. Bands were $15 and included a SweetWater* and bowl.

*for those 21+

RIVER CLEANUP

In Fall 2018, the club organized a cleanup of the North Oconee River. Members photographed their "unique" finds and won prizes through the Upper Chattahoochee Chapter of Trout Unlimited.

GUEST SPEAKERS

At our monthly meetings, we try to expose our members to experts from across the state in both the public and private sector.

UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA FLY FISHING

Some solutions to challenges

- What age group do we want to work with?

- Look for inspiration

- Who can help?

- What resources are already available?

What's next?

How young people can diversify and strengthen your chapter

- Recruit their peers
- Be a photographer
- Manage Trout in the Classroom at school
- Youth voice at meetings
- Manage media
- Represent at Teen Summit/YLC
- Teach others to fish!
- Bring family members
- Diversity liaison
- Make them a part of the "us"

Questions? Comments?