



Trout Unlimited Annual Awards



2019 Program



THANK YOU FOR BEING A TU VOLUNTEER!



Trout Unlimited's 4,000-plus passionate and dedicated volunteer leaders who drive our more than 420 chapters and councils are the heart of our organization's strength and the major drivers of the impact we make together improving our rivers and watersheds.

Thanks to all of you, and the local level work that each of you do every day, TU is one of the most effective coldwater conservation organizations across the country and a model of how effective, local grassroots action and advocacy can change the world.

Last year, our chapters and councils recorded an astounding 737,000 hours of volunteer service.

Together, you planted a better future and restored rivers with over 1,038 conservation projects, ignited a spark in the next generation with more than 1,595 youth education programs and raised more than \$10.3 million for your local programs and services.

Thank you for making TU the powerful, grassroots organization that it is. We would not be able to accomplish all that we do without you.

Please consider nominating someone in your chapter or council, or a community or agency partner, for a TU award in the future.

To make a nomination for 2020, please visit www.tu.org/awards.



Since the early 1960s, Trout Unlimited has bestowed awards to publicly recognize the outstanding achievements of its members, chapters and councils that have embodied the values of TU and fulfilled its mission to conserve, protect and restore North America's coldwater fisheries and their watersheds. TU also recognizes the contributions and accomplishments of individuals and groups outside the organization that have demonstrated significant leadership and success in the world of coldwater conservation.

Today, TU is proud to showcase an exceptional group of achievements by these award winners who represent grassroots conservation successes, professional commitment to conservation excellence and organizational strength within our chapters and councils.

Congratulations 2019 Trout Unlimited National Award recipients.

Chapter Awards

Gold Trout Award: 436 — Upper Chattahoochee Chapter (GA)

Silver Trout Award: 056 — WestSlope Chapter (MT)

Volunteer Awards

Distinguished Service Leadership: Scott Hood (OK)

Distinguished Service Leadership: Norma & Don Haynes (MD)

Distinguished Service Conservation: Robb Smith (MI)

Distinguished Service Youth Education: Andrew Dang (NJ)

Distinguished Service Veteran Services: Lynn Marilla (NC)

Distinguished Service Communications: North Carolina Council

Partner Awards

Jack Williams Award for Applied Conservation Science:

Jeff Kershner, U.S. Geological Service (MT)

Conservation Professional: Urban Eberhart, Kittitas Reclamation District (WA)

Communications Professional: Emily & Dave Whitlock (OK)

Corporate Conservation Partner: Kinross Gold



KINROSS GOLD



KINROSS

With support from Kinross, Trout Unlimited is working to re-open over 25 miles of fish passage on Dry Creek in Nevada - waters that were blocked during mining road development in the 1960s.

Kinross Gold puts their environmental policy into practice by partnering with Trout Unlimited on several ambitious conservation initiatives. These acts, and others, make them a leader in responsible mining in North America.

While many companies focus on the bottom line exclusively, Kinross made one of the largest and most ecologically significant water rights donations in history when they signed an agreement with TU, resulting in three billion gallons of water per year remaining instream in critical tributaries of Montana's Yellowstone River.

Their support of Trout Unlimited's work to pass Good Samaritan legislation, a policy needed to facilitate a public/private partnership in cleaning up the tens of thousands of abandoned mines polluting America's rivers and streams, included a trip to Capitol Hill by their President & CEO, Paul Rollinson, an avid outdoorsman, who joined TU in lending a voice of support to the effort.

Along with supporting policy and restoration efforts, Kinross also supports our youth education work, including sponsoring the Youth Fly Fishing Camp in Nevada and involving their employees and children in the program.

They are truly a partner in every sense of the word.



436 — UPPER CHATTAHOOCHEE CHAPTER (GA)

Like many chapters, the Upper Chattahoochee Chapter in Georgia does amazing work partnering on stream restoration projects. Their long-term project with the US Forest Service on Wilkes Branch, doing improvements such as large woody debris additions, is a perfect example of this on-the-ground conservation.

Strong veterans service programs, effective fundraising, and intentional leadership development also make the chapter thrive.

But what truly makes these volunteers who are “Straight Out of the Hooch” stand out is their progressive mindset and innovative approach to take our conservation mission to new audiences and levels.

A long-time partner of “Sweep the Hooch,” a cleanup event that covers 100 miles, recruits nearly 1,200 volunteer and hauls over 40,000 pounds of garbage from the river, the chapter could have rested on the laurels of an amazing event. But they didn’t.

To reach new rivers and connect with new people, they launched an Instagram contest using the hashtag #CLEANMYWATER. This effort engages communities by challenging people to pickup garbage while out fishing or on the river. The idea went viral and the chapter saw their Facebook following climb to 1,264 and their Instagram audience climb to 1,569.

In 2019, they exported the idea to the entire region, helping chapters across the Southeast benefit from their new approach to connecting people to an easy way to make a difference for clean water.



How do you engage thousands of families and river-lovers to make the streams that flow through their communities cleaner? Launch a unique and innovative social media campaign, and then share it with the rest of TU.



SILVER TROUT AWARD



056 — WESTSLOPE CHAPTER (MT)



The WestSlope Chapter challenged all chapters in the state to tie flies donated to the Warriors and Quiet Waters program. This past year, they donated 17,944 flies, bringing the total to over 32,000.

Not every chapter is blessed to be located in Missoula, Mont., but even with the incredible resources at its doorstep, it is what the WestSlope Chapter does with that good fortune that is truly astounding.

The chapter models collaboration and support across all levels of TU through its conservation funding. In just the past year, the chapter has contributed \$133,750 to local conservation projects, including critical funding for the work of a staff project manager for Rock Creek, helping provide the “seed money” for the position that will improve the entire watershed.

At the community level, monthly meetings have been taken to new levels, drawing an average 100-125 people. This success is partly driven by powerful speakers and topics, but magnified by an investment in communications that include mailed postcards, follow-up phone calls, and outreach that goes far beyond the chapter’s membership roster.

WestSlope’s Women’s Initiative has exploded, with a staggering 13 events in May to August — most of those with a wait list — and a growing “Missoula Flygals” with more than 100 women actively engaged.

The chapter is growing fast, and sharing its learning along the way with fellow chapters in Montana, and across the country.



DISTINGUISHED SERVICE: LEADERSHIP

In memory of Stan Griffith



SCOTT HOOD (OK)

Give Scott Hood a flyrod and a green woolly bugger — which he refers to as TFTCE (The Fly That Catches Everything) — and he'll find a way to catch trout, carp, catfish and more on his beloved Lower Illinois River, where he is an ardent champion and advocate.

Give him a pen and some paper, and he'll fire off 100 letters to partner organizations, state legislators, and members of Congress to ensure that same river is protected.

Give him an urban pond and some stocked trout, and he'll create a day of lasting memories for an entire new generation of anglers and their families. Scott is a leader both locally and nationally for building community for youth and veterans within TU.

Whatever tool you put in Scott Hood's hand, he will quickly turn that into a resource for TU to grow membership, motivate leadership, drive regulatory change, and more.

From his first days as a volunteer with the 420 - Oklahoma Chapter through his leadership with his Council, to his service on the National Leadership Council, TU's Headwaters Youth Education Board, and as a national Board of Trustees member, Scott has dedicated so much of his life — and his family's support — to ensuring that TU continues to grow and make a difference across the country.



Scott Hood is enthusiastic about all fish as every fish caught proves his local river is on the path to protection and recovery. That enthusiasm is carried over into his national-level leadership for TU.



DISTINGUISHED SERVICE: LEADERSHIP

In memory of Stan Griffith



NORMA & DON HAYNES (MD)

Sharing a passion for conservation comes easy to Norma and Don Haynes, who have dedicated decades of combined service to TU's mission.

From City Catch, a program that connects Baltimore families to the importance of keeping local rivers clean, to the launch and revitalization of many local chapters, they have poured heart and talent into TU as a couple.

Steadfastly focused on ensuring the next generation of leaders follow in their footsteps, the pair have helped guide and mentor countless new volunteers and helped recruit young and passionate members into the leadership ranks.

As a chapter president, Norma has driven diversity and membership engagement home locally. As a council chair, and now a member of the National Leadership Council, Don has used TU's online Leaders Forum as a way to spread ideas, foster creativity and connect and support TU volunteers well outside his immediate geographic reach.

Whether you know it or not, your own chapter has likely benefitted from an idea fostered in Norma's chapter or a resource designed or shared by Don in the Tacklebox or Community Forum. Thanks to Norma and Don, TU is thriving in the Mid-Atlantic, and their model of investing in the future leadership is being spread far and wide.



Norma & Don Haynes exemplary leadership has had significant impacts on advancing the effectiveness of chapters and councils nationwide.



DISTINGUISHED SERVICE: CONSERVATION



ROBB SMITH (MI)



Robb Smith of Michigan chairs the Great Lakes Workgroup for the National Leadership Council, and has led the development of “A Case for the Great Lakes,” a rallying cry and plan to protect and restore the watersheds that feed into the largest body of fresh water on earth.

One-fifth of all the fresh surface water on the planet can be found in the Great Lakes, which receive water drainages from Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Pennsylvania and New York.

This immense natural resource, home to everything from native brook trout and grayling, to wild reproducing salmon, steelhead, trout and more, deserves TU’s focused effort, and Robb Smith is making sure that happens.

As chair of the Great Lakes Workgroup of the National Leadership Council, Robb has been an irrepresible advocate for doing more to protect the lakes from invasive species, water pollution, micro-plastics, mining, fish-farming and more. He has immersed himself in learning the issues and impacts of all the threats, worked with TU staff and state councils to develop shared goals and actions that must be taken, and has taken that effort on the road to build support among chapters, councils, staff and partners across the region.

While all conservation is local, Robb has proven that one person can make a difference, even if their “backyard” watershed is more than 95,000 acres!



CONSERVATION PROFESSIONAL



URBAN EBERHART—KITTTITAS RECLAMATION DISTRICT



Urban Eberhart on a tour of one of the Yakima Basin Integrated Plan's first projects, which increased water conservation on the Kittitas Reclamation District and allowed the district to pump water backward into Manastash Creek to keep water flowing for fish during a drought.

Photo: TJ Mullinax / Good Fruit Grower

Urban Eberhart's impact on fish, farms and towns in the Yakima River Basin cannot be overstated. He is a farmer, an irrigation district manager and one of the Yakima Basin's best advocates.

A driving force behind the Yakima River Basin Water Enhancement Project, Urban helped create a diverse and effective coalition, including Trout Unlimited, that worked for years to pass the Yakima Basin legislation, as part of the John Dingell Conservation Act, into law.

Urban's home in Kittitas County in the Yakima Basin is a leading producer of hay, fruit trees and wines. The key to the Basin's agricultural production is its water that comes from winter snowpack in the eastern Cascade Mountains. However, the same water that supports a multi-billion-dollar agricultural economy also once supported the second largest salmon runs in the Columbia Basin. The Yakima Basin Integrated Plan provides water security and certainty to sustain the farms, families, and fish towns throughout the basin, and through seemingly endless travel and promotion, Urban is helping find new ways to conserve water, protect farmers, and restore streams for fish and wildlife.



JACK WILLIAMS AWARD FOR APPLIED CONSERVATION SCIENCE



DR. JEFF KERSHNER — U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY



Dr. Jeff Kershner followed his heart into conservation, a path which led him from one incredible opportunity to another, all dedicated to preserving our rivers and streams.

A researcher, scientist and author, at his heart Dr. Jeff Kershner is a lover of trout—and the wild places they inhabit.

During his working hours, he has sampled fish populations, measured the impacts of climate change, knocked down small dams, proven the impact of big dams, developed the research needed for large scale policy changes, and written extensively on the plight of native salmonids. In his off hours, he has spent the past several decades chasing trout and salmon across the Pacific Northwest and the Rocky Mountains, taking special pleasure in targeting native fish in their natal streams.

While Dr. Kershner closed out his career with the U.S. Geological Survey as Director of its Northern Rocky Mountain Science Center, his stints with the California Department of Fish and Game, the U.S. Forest Service and various universities helped him develop a network and deep set of friendships with colleagues from Trout Unlimited and a wide range of agencies.

His most recent project, a collaboration with TU's former Senior Scientist Jack Williams, is the publication of a new book Trout and Char of the World.

ANDREW DANG (NJ)



Andrew Dang has turned his love for fishing into a lifelong passion for engaging more youth in Trout Unlimited's conservation mission.

Andrew Dang first popped up on the national radar in 2015 at the TU Teen Summit when he was just heading into ninth grade. By that time, however, this young man and passionate angler and conservationist was already deeply engaged in his local 123 - Central New Jersey Chapter and finding ways to bring his skills and perspective to TU.

No one in his family fished, but after watching anglers fly fish in a local park, he wanted to try, and quickly fell in love with the sport and the fish he chased.

Having attended five years of Teen Summits, Andrew leads by example and is one of the most active contributing members of the Youth Leadership Council, made up of a handful of the most passionate and committed teen volunteers nationwide.

He has produced three videos, multiple newsletters, developed social media campaigns to engage more youth in TU's mission, and continues to be active in his local chapter and on the New Jersey Council. He has also been asked to join our national Headwaters Advisory Board and bring his experience to bear as we plan for the growth and improvement of our youth education work.

Andrew has already made such a big impact at TU, and we can't wait to see what the next chapter brings!



DISTINGUISHED SERVICE: COMMUNICATIONS

In memory of Jean Bollinger



NORTH CAROLINA COUNCIL



The Drift, The Mend, a new website, and an entirely new approach to statewide communications, have magnified the impact of the North Carolina Council’s efforts across the state.

A slick, polished, web-based magazine, called The Drift, that reaches nearly 5,000 members quarterly, a more frequent email newsletter, called The Mend, that is eagerly opened when it hits inboxes, and a powerfully designed new website and social media presence are what’s quickly noticed when you take a look at the North Carolina Council communications.

Dig a little deeper, however, and you’ll find logos that speak to purpose and place, graphics meant to tie all the chapters and councils in North Carolina together, and messaging that makes it clear that there is a cohesive and powerful force for coldwater conservation in the state.

Filled with rich content from conservation news, to chapter activities, TU staff updates, and news from the many great partnerships the council manages, these publications make every member in North Carolina feel proud of the great work they are supporting.

Driven by a strong and collaborative council leadership, and shepherded by the husband-and-wife communications duo of Charles and Suzanne Crolley, the communications efforts of the North Carolina Council don’t just hit it out of the park in one arena, they make an impact in every media imaginable.

To turn the pages of their magazine, scroll through the e-mails, or click away on the website is to open a window into a thriving and vibrant TU community that is restoring rivers, educating youth, supporting veterans, building a better future for cold, clean fishable water, and making sure everyone knows it!



LYNN MARILLA (NC)

North Carolina is home to more than two dozen unique Veterans Service Partnership programs, connecting with military veterans and their family members through a range of partners and efforts.

Much of the success and growth of this program can be attributed to Lynn Marilla, Veterans Service Partnership Coordinator for the state council, an active volunteer with her local 032 - Hickory North Carolina Chapter, and founder and executive director of Eagle Rock Camp, a retreat designed especially for military families.

Exposure to the outdoors helps veterans recover from the stress and seen and unseen wounds of war. Working through the act of fly tying, casting and other aspects of the sport helps redevelop fine motor skills and concentration. Connecting these veterans to a community like TU where they can continue to serve and find and forge friendships makes this effort sustainable and long-lasting.

Lynn and her volunteers teach essential life skills to empower military families, help them find new purpose here at home, and to connect them to people in their communities in meaningful ways.

With her efforts and drive, the Veterans Service Partnership programs are growing throughout the state, and helping countless veterans in the process.



Lynn Marilla's passion is to help military veterans - and their families—heal and reconnect through fly fishing retreats.



EMILY & DAVE WHITLOCK (OK)



Emily and Dave Whitlock have made their life's work around fly fishing and sharing a love for the fish, rivers and resources needed to protect them.

It would be impossible to count the thousands of anglers and conservationists who have been inspired and moved to action by the art, writing and advocacy of Dave and Emily Whitlock who continue to eagerly share their passion for fishing and conservation with the world.

A research chemist who retired more than 40 years ago to pursue a career in fly fishing, art, fly tying and more, Dave is a prolific writer whose articles have appeared in countless issues of *Fly Fisherman Magazine*, *Fly Fishing and Tying Journal*, *Trout Magazine* and others, as well as five books on the topics of aquatic insects, fly tying and fly fishing.

His impact on conservation is most notably seen in the Whitlock-Vibert Box System, a unique and efficient in-stream salmonid egg incubator and nursery devise. He worked for seven years researching and developing this system which is used throughout the world for introduction or enhancement of wild trout, char and salmon.

Along with Emily, who has degrees in biology and botany, the two continue to lead fly fishing instruction programs from their home in Oklahoma.



**IF YOU TAKE CARE OF THE FISH,
THE FISHING TAKES CARE OF ITSELF**

NOMINATE YOUR LOCAL VOLUNTEERS

WWW.TU.ORG/AWARDS