

Trout Unlimited's Social Media Community Guidelines

When interacting with other TU community members, remember to treat each other with kindness and respect. Our mission on social revolves around productive discourse about conserving our rivers and streams, enjoying our natural resources, and experiencing the joys of wild and native trout and salmon.

DO'S

- ✓ Do know that you can hide a comment or block someone if they are participating in hate speech, bullying, discrimination, and/or harassment.
- ✓ Do be extra careful when dealing with young people online. Whether or not you frequently interact with youth online, remember that they are out there, and your content may reach them. Consider that your posts are appropriate for people of all ages.
- ✓ Do help out if someone is looking for information on a TU-related issue and you know where to point them to find the information.
- ✓ Do stop and think before you post anything attributed to yourself. Once you say something online, you cannot take it back. Other people can and will share your communications, you do not always have control over where your posting goes or who sees it. So, take care about what you send and if it feels questionable / on the line, don't post it.
- ✓ Do be kind and courteous. We're all in this together to create a welcoming environment. Let's treat everyone with respect. Healthy debates are natural, but please do not personally attack your fellow commenter during a disagreement.
- ✓ Do refrain from self-promotion, spam, posts for political gain and irrelevant links on our social media channels.
- ✓ Do respect everyone's privacy - being part of our social media community requires mutual trust. Authentic, expressive discussions make groups great, but may also be sensitive and private. Make sure you have permission from identifiable persons' likenesses before posting.
- ✓ Do respect intellectual property - Before posting, make sure you have the right to post protected intellectual property, including copyrights, trademarks and service marks.

DON'TS

- ✓ Don't engage in any form of discrimination, harassment or retaliation based on any factor prohibited by law, including age, sex, race, color, creed, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, citizenship, disability, or marital status or any other legally recognized protected basis under federal, state, or local laws, regulations or ordinances.
- ✓ Don't post any statements that maliciously disparage the goods and services provided by TU, or its staff, volunteers, members, contractors, applicants, donors or supporters.
- ✓ Don't initiate or instigate a dispute with others who are critical of TU and/or its personnel, for example in the comments sections of online media, news articles, or social media posts. These areas are full of "trolls" – people looking to pick fights on a variety of subject matters. If you see a significant misstatement about TU, you may refer it to Laura Buckmaster (me!), Social Media Manager.
- ✓ Don't forget to have fun and connect! Our social accounts give you the opportunity to connect and interact with other anglers and conservationists. Engage and enjoy!

Dealing With Trolls

What qualifies as a 'troll'?

A troll is a person whose intention is to create conflicts and controversy, generate provocative debates, use insults, and send offensive messages.

Trout Unlimited has a zero-tolerance policy for online bullying. As TU social media account managers, we all reserve the right to hide comments, delete comments, or block users that fall outside of our values and guidelines outlined above. Interacting on our social media platforms and our online community is a privilege, not a right. You are well within your right to block someone if they include foul language, bullying, or are exhibiting malicious behavior.

Think “when we have new folks and existing community members visiting our group or page, how do we want them to feel? Do we want them to see hateful content?”

What actions can I take if there’s negativity on my page?

You have a couple options: block the user, hide the comment, delete the comment, ignore the comment, or respond. Here’s a breakdown on when/why I take one if these actions.

Action: Blocked the user

Reasoning: The person is exhibiting bullying, name calling, hate speech, violating our community guidelines, and is unlikely to have a constructive conversation / be a contributing community member on our social page in the future.

Action: Hide the comment but did not block the user

Reasoning: This is possible on Facebook but not on Instagram. Most likely, this was a rude comment that I don’t want others to see, however I think this person can still have positive interactions with us in the future. They are probably upset about specific content vs. Trout Unlimited as a whole, and the comment doesn’t seem malicious enough to completely block this person from our page. I always recommend hiding the comment vs. deleting a comment if you can. The user cannot see if their comment has been hidden but they can see if you’ve deleted it.

Action: Delete the comment but did not block the user

Reasoning: If you can’t hide a comment on Instagram, you can always delete it. This is because it meets the same qualifications as above (AKA a comment I don’t want our public audience to see). Please note that sometimes deleting a comment can further inflame a troll, so I usually use my discretion to either block the person or ignore the comment.

Action: Ignored the comment

Reasoning: This comment was negative and not constructive, but it also doesn’t contain bullying or inappropriate language. Someone expressing a negative opinion about TU is fine, as long as it’s not violating our community guidelines. I recommend not answering or engaging in a debate on this one.

Action Taken: Responded

Reasoning: Although there can be a negative tone in this comment, this is an opportunity for us to showcase our work to this person AND our greater social following. This person seems genuinely curious about learning more about our work, projects, policy, or statement on something. Only respond if the conversation appears constructive – make sure not to get dragged into any mudslinging.

What do I do if another account administrator has a different viewpoint on what is or is not appropriate content on our account?

Is your content falling within the parameters of our community guidelines outlined above? If not, talk with that person on what Trout Unlimited outlines as appropriate.