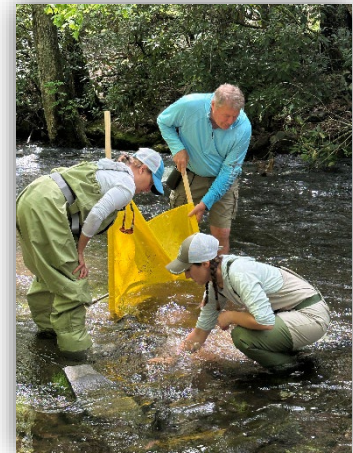




# BRODHEAD CHAPTER

Established 1977



## *Strategic Action Plan* 2026-2031

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## Trout Unlimited History

In 1959, 16 fishermen gathered at the home of George Griffith. They were united by their love of trout fishing and by their growing discontent with Michigan's practice of stocking its waters with "cookie cutter trout"-catchable, but undersized hatchery fish. Strong of spirit and of one mind, they marshaled their energies to convince the Michigan Department of Natural Resources that their trout streams, if left to their own devices, could turn out a far superior fish. Thus, a new organization arose: Trout Unlimited, dedicated to ensuring that wild and native trout populations would thrive, as nature intended.

From the beginning, TU was guided by the principle that if we "take care of the fish, then the fishing will take care of itself." And that principle was grounded in science. "One of our most important objectives is to develop programs and recommendations based on the very best information and thinking available," said TU's first president, Dr. Casey E. Westell Jr. "In all matters of trout management, we want to know that we are substantially correct, both morally and biologically." In 1962-63, TU prepared its first policy statement on wild trout, and persuaded the Michigan Department of Natural Resources to curtail "put-and-take" trout stocking and start managing for wild trout and healthy habitat. On the heels of that success, anglers quickly founded TU chapters in Illinois, Wisconsin, New York, and Pennsylvania, with our Brodhead Chapter being among the first local chapters ever created!

From its hundreds of local stream restoration projects, to helping lead the way to remove the Edwards Dam on the Kennebec River in Maine, to compelling Congress to strengthen the Clean Water Act, TU has a strong 50-year track record of conservation achievements. Perhaps TU's greatest strength is that it works at multiple levels of society and government to achieve its mission. From the landowner on the stream bank, to the state fisheries agency, to the Halls of Congress, TU is working to achieve its vision.

## Trout Unlimited Today

Today, Trout Unlimited is a national organization with more than 150,000 volunteers organized into about 400 chapters, such as our Brodhead Chapter in Monroe County, PA.

We are a dedicated grassroots group of conservation-minded members who share a love of fishing and a desire to protect, sustain, and restore our local stream habitats. When assessing the health of cold-water fish species throughout our home range, we do so by collecting accurate information and applying best practices in our conservation work.

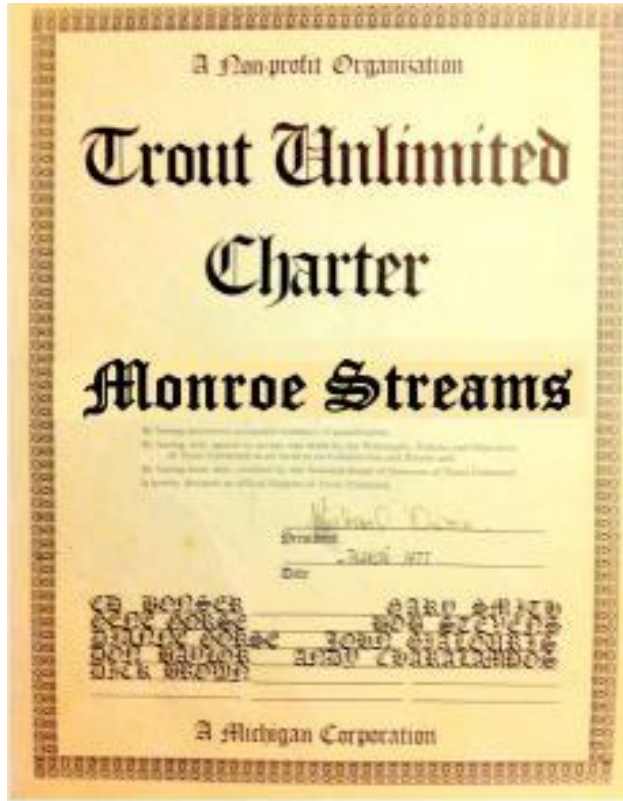
These goals require us to work collaboratively with other local and regional conservation partners such as the Monroe County Conservation District, the Brodhead Watershed Association, the

Pocono Heritage Land Trust, Penn Future, and the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection.

Additionally, this collaboration extends to the many local towns and boroughs in our area. Such efforts are crucial if our trout are to survive climate change and the host of threats facing them through continued development in our area, changes in environmental protections and the projected population growth. Each of these threats brings with it opportunities for increased loss of habitat, increased pollution, an increase in permitting violations, and decreased enforcement of extant regulations. As such, our local streams are in dire need of our conservation efforts.

## **Brodhead Chapter- History**

At the time of our chartering in 1977, the Brodhead Chapter was called **Monroe Streams**, and sometime later officially changed to the Brodhead Chapter. The Charter members were: Ed Bonser, Gene Gorse, Diane Gorse, Don Baylor, Dick Brown, Gary Smith, Bob Stevens, John Gialouris and Andy Charalampos. The first officers were Ed Bonser, President, Henry Fremont, Vice President, Diane Grose, Secretary and John Gialouris, Treasurer. The early meetings were held in the Windsor Fly Shop on North 9<sup>th</sup> Street in Stroudsburg. Henry Fremont followed Ed Bonser as President, and the meetings moved to East Stroudsburg University. Today, our meetings are held primarily at the Brodhead Creek Heritage Center, 1539 Cherry Lane Rd, East Stroudsburg, PA.



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## Mission-Vision-Goals

Brodhead TU is a non-profit conservation organization of approximately 230 members located in Monroe County, Pennsylvania, in the heart of the Pocono Mountains. Our motivated adult and youth volunteers share a common goal: to conserve and enhance the various cold-water fisheries found within our Pocono watersheds. The chapter focuses its conservation efforts on several fronts as outlined below and Brodhead TU is committed to using science as a tool in its efforts to conserve, protect, restore and sustain Pocono cold-water fisheries and watersheds. Education is a vital part of these efforts and focuses on adults as well as our youth. Information on the chapter and its activities can be found online at: [www.brodheadtu.org](http://www.brodheadtu.org).

**Mission:** To bring together diverse interests to care for and recover Pocono rivers and streams so our children can experience the joy of wild and native trout.

**Vision:** BTU will ensure that populations of native and wild trout continue to thrive and increase within their watersheds so that our residents, visitors, and our children can enjoy healthy cold-water fisheries for years to come.

**Goals:** The Brodhead Chapter Trout Unlimited has identified the following goals:

- Actively engage in habitat improvement and stream-based conservation projects that support our mission on public access waters
- Increase membership in the chapter and increase active engagement and involvement in chapter activities and functions
- Communicate to the membership, the community and other local organizations the vital role of the BTU chapter and its projects and activities
- Raise funds through grant-writing and fund-raising activities to support BTU projects, activities and functions

## Plan Overview

This plan is intended to be a living document that will guide the actions of Brodhead TU over the next five years. Actions and activities of the Chapter may be compared to this plan to evaluate the progress toward BTU goals. The Strategic Action Plan will be evaluated periodically to reflect progress, new initiatives, challenges, and opportunities for achieving BTU's mission, vision, and goals. BTU welcomes partners in achieving its conservation mission.

The Brodhead TU Strategic Action Plan framework builds on more than 55 years of TU experience and success in working to protect and restore wild and native trout and the habitats on which they depend. The framework defines the biological imperatives of our work as protecting the highest quality habitat for wild and native fish and restoring less than optimal habitat. The framework's social imperative is to ensure that our efforts endure and are sustained over time.

## Strategic Plan Core Areas

### CONSERVATION

- Protect and enhance the various cold-water fisheries and their watersheds within the greater Pocono area
- Enhance and restore native brook trout and wild brown trout habitats within the watersheds of the greater Pocono area
- Support efforts to sustain cold-water watersheds in the greater Pocono area

### ENGAGEMENT

- Build organizational capacity to support the Strategic Plan and achieve BTU's Mission
- Increase membership participation in Chapter activities
- Invest resources in youth-centered activities to promote the next generation of cold-water conservationists
- Provide educational and social events to promote interest and involvement in Chapter programs and activities

### COMMUNICATION

- Develop and utilize multiple methods of communication to engage members and friends in Chapter activities focused upon conservation goals.
- Develop and strengthen the BTU “Brand” in the greater Pocono region
- Effectively communicate with media outlets to help strengthen and promote the BTU Brand in the greater Pocono region
- Effectively utilize and promote the internet and a variety of social media platforms to promote the Chapter’s mission and goals

### FUNDING

- Secure adequate funding to support the Strategic Action Plan and bring it to fruition
- Establish specific long-term investment accounts to fund the various Strategic Action Plan components
- Sponsor and liaise with non-TU cold-water conservation organizations to support conservation projects

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## Core Principles and Values

### **Brodhead Trout Unlimited:**

- Works to protect habitat on Pocono area rivers and streams. We are committed to working to improve/increase the quality and quantity of cold, clean water necessary to sustain healthy trout populations.
- Values healthy, wild and native trout populations. Because populations of native and wild trout are the best indicators of watershed health, we are committed to the protection and restoration of these fisheries in our Pocono watersheds.
- Operates based on sound science. As stewards for current and future generations, we employ sound science and work cooperatively with a broad spectrum of interests in defending and advocating for our natural resource legacy.
- Functions as a grassroots organization. We owe our uniqueness to a passionately committed, diverse, volunteer network of members who pursue our mission through our Chapter. We will sustain our member network through representative governance and an ongoing commitment to grassroots growth, support, education, and development.
- Cooperates with like-minded organizations, such as the Brodhead Watershed Association, Pocono Heritage Land Trust, Tobyhanna Conservation Association, Friends of Cherry Valley, Project Healing Waters, and PennFuture.. To further our mission, we work in cooperation with public, private, and other non-profit and volunteer organizations that share our common goals. We also strive to work with organizations and individuals who are not necessarily like-minded, to achieve our mission and foster a culture of cooperation and balanced conservation action. We seek reasonable and thoughtful dialogue between all stakeholders, to achieve fair and achievable results using a methodical and logical approach.
- Operates in a fiscally responsible manner. As an organization we depend on the financial support of our members, friends, businesses and charitable foundations. As such, we have the responsibility to be a financially efficient and effective organization.

### **We strive to fulfill our Mission by:**

**Leading and Fostering** our membership as they work to achieve our goals through our vision.

**Advocating** for adequate legislative protections of cold-water resources; sound fisheries management practices; education and protection from invasive species; environmentally responsible energy, water storage and land-use practices; and widespread implementation of water conservation strategies.

**Educating** our members, the public, and especially youth about the value of science-based conservation and the value of BTU's work on behalf of Pocono fisheries and watersheds. Participating in our community by initiating projects and by playing a visible role regarding cold-water resource issues.

**Collaborating** with our TU colleagues at the state and national levels, and through partnerships with private landowners and with conservation, civic, and governmental organizations to advance our mission.

**Communicating** with both internal and external audiences the importance of preserving and restoring cold-water fisheries and their watersheds as well as communicating the contributions and achievements of Brodhead Trout Unlimited and its members in the Pocono Region and beyond.

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**Motivating**, through encouragement and recognition, the volunteer and financial contributions that help BTU sustain and expand its efforts to achieve the TU mission.

**Initiating** a reliable SWOT analysis to assess Chapter Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats.

## **Statement of Intent**

To conserve important lands and waters so that we realize our vision of healthy, sustainable populations of wild and native trout.

We will accomplish this by:

- ❖ Reviewing and analyzing existing Chapter programs.
- ❖ Identifying important issues that impact or potentially impact the cold-water resources of the greater Pocono area.
- ❖ Planning and executing additional local Chapter programs and projects that fit within the framework of Protect, Restore, Reconnect, or Sustain.
- ❖ Building and maintaining effective, collaborative, working relationships with key partners within our community. Such partners currently include: Brodhead Watershed Association, Pocono Heritage Land Trust, Stroud Township, Pocono Township, Polk Township, Monroe County Commissioners, Monroe County Conservation District, Brodhead Creek Regional Authority, Tobyhanna Conservation Association, Project Healing Waters, Knights of Columbus, Friends of Cherry Valley, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (Cherry Valley National Wildlife Refuge), PennFuture, PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, PA Fish & Boat Commission, PA Council Trout Unlimited and National Trout Unlimited.

We operate through an active outreach program that includes, but is not limited to:

- ❖ Collaborating and partnering with local agencies and educational institutions to develop offsite venues for Chapter meetings, public outreach programs, and public educational programs. Examples recently utilized include the Brodhead Creek Heritage Center, Kettle Creek Environmental Education Center, Pocono Environmental Education Center, Eastern Monroe Public Library, Scouting America, Clymer Library, and the Cherry Valley National Wildlife Refuge.
- ❖ Using and applying sound science to drive decision-making and evaluate results.
- ❖ Leveraging resources to achieve stated goals.
- ❖ Actively advocating on issues impacting cold-water resources locally, state-wide, and nationally.
- ❖ Planning and completing projects that focus upon habitat improvement, stream and riparian clean-up, and assessments of stream health.
- ❖ Engaging and informing the public on the Chapter's projects utilizing social media, emails, newsletters, and local newspaper and television resources.

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## **ELEMENTS OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN**

- 1) Conservation
- 2) Engagement
- 3) Communication
- 4) Funding

### CONSERVATION –

#### Conservation Goals

- To protect and restore high quality habitat for native and wild cold-water fishes in waterways and watersheds that include, but is not limited to: Cherry Creek, McMichaels Creek, Pocono Creek, Paradise Creek, and Brodhead Creek.
- Reconnect fragmented fish populations and habitats by increasing insufficient river flows, maintaining free flowing rivers and eliminating barriers to fish passage.
- Address the impacts of climate change through projects that increase the resistance and resilience of stream systems.
  - Plant invasive insect/disease resistant shade trees within riparian buffers
  - Deepen stream channels through habitat improvement projects
  - Protect stream banks from erosion through planting of native, invasive-resistant species
  - Improve aquatic organism passage to headwaters through repair and replacement of deficient culverts and passages
- Minimize cold-water fish loss by advocating for best management practices, driven by sound science, throughout Monroe County and the Pocono Region.
  - Protect and improve water quality and in-stream flows through advocacy and on-the-ground, project efforts.
  - Protect our cold-water resources from the threats of aquatic invasive species (AIS)
  - Monitor stream impacts of data and distribution centers, new water parks, and related development.
  - Identify future stream improvement project sites.
  - Encourage local landowners to provide additional stream access for stream improvement projects and future fishing access.
  - Actively partner with land trusts to encourage public access on posted waters.
  - Provide salient comments, as necessary, to proposed PAFBC regulations impacting our region.
  - Provide salient comments, as necessary, on proposed Pennsylvania state legislation that impacts or may impact the cold-water resources of the Pocono Region.
  - Advocate for municipal land development policies that protect the cold-water resources of the greater Pocono region.

## Our Strategy

BTU will follow the Protect, Reconnect, Restore, and Sustain model of National TU as it achieves our goals. It is understood that such strategies may change over time and may evolve throughout the course of this Strategic Plan. Specific strategies currently in use are:

### Protect:

- ❖ Educating the public about the value of local cold-water resources and chapter projects and activities through targeted educational outreach via community days, social media, the Internet and other related outlets.
- ❖ Supporting other local and regional agencies that share common goals and visions by working with them to protect and enhance public access, improve water quality, improve habitat, and advocate against policies or practices that are detrimental to the above.
- ❖ Providing at least one speaker/year on the topic of climate change and actions including those of reducing carbon footprint.
- ❖ Engaging in project work to minimize the effects of our changing climate. This includes but is not limited to deepening channels, increasing shading within the riparian buffer, stabilizing streambanks to minimize erosion and improving aquatic organism passage.

### Reconnect:

- ❖ Assessing Pocono watersheds to identify areas of concern regarding fish passage and habitat depletion.
- ❖ Assisting with or managing projects designed to correct or overcome issues with fish passage and habitat depletion.

### Restore:

- ❖ Gathering critical data and science that will empower the Chapter to plan, fund-raise and implement successful projects and works.
- ❖ Implementing planned improvements and activities such as habitat improvement, trash clean-ups, riparian zone restoration, etc.
- ❖ Restore 5000 linear feet of in-stream habitat within the Brodhead Watershed and the greater Pocono area.
- ❖ Restore and maintain riparian buffers by planting and providing upkeep for 1250 bare root seedlings or 500 container plantings along cold-water streams within the Brodhead Watershed and the greater Pocono area.
- ❖ Restore more than 1 acre of riparian buffers by removing invasive plant species
- ❖ Plan, implement, and complete a minimum of one trash clean-up per calendar year.

### Sustain:

- ❖ Assessing the level of completion of planned projects
- ❖ Assessing the effectiveness of completed projects through data collection and observation
- ❖ Maintaining existing habitat projects

## ENGAGEMENT

To be successful in its conservation mission, our membership must be engaged in our efforts and the populace must be aware of and support our vision.

### Engagement Goals

- Build volunteer capacity to execute projects that support the conservation plan
- Increase member participation and fundraising to help achieve BTU's goals
- Invest in youth to create a sustaining constituency to ensure the sustainability of TU's mission and work through future generations
- Increase annual chapter adult membership by 3% in each of the five years of this Plan
- Increase annual chapter youth membership by 3% in each of the five years of this Plan

### Our Strategy

- ❖ Advertise weekly, via social media platforms, Chapter workdays and activities
- ❖ Maintain a record of volunteers and their hours and publicly recognize these efforts
- ❖ Research and apply for grants to finance future chapter projects
- ❖ Partner with PA Council of Trout Unlimited and the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission and/or other local agencies to establish additional Trout In The Classroom (TIC) program sites in our local schools.
- ❖ Recruit local youth of all ages to get involved in the Chapter's work and projects.
- ❖ Build upon the Knights of Columbus/Stroud Township Fishing Derby, youth fly-fishing and fly-tying programs with a focus on increasing participation and exposure.
- ❖ Recruit new Chapter members through invitation and exposure to all the Chapter's activities.
- ❖ Create an ongoing Chapter Leadership development Program.

## COMMUNICATION

To effectively carry out activities to meet our stated goals, the Chapter must effectively and efficiently communicate our mission, vision and progress to the membership and the public.

### Communication Goals

- Regularly inform the membership and public of upcoming activities and projects
- Regularly inform the membership and public of activity and project progress
- Educate members and the community on TU's Policy Statement on Climate Change and supporting Action Alerts and calls to action
- Educate members and the community on PATU's position on Data Centers and Road Salt Management practices.
- Educate members and the community on BTU's position on Distribution Center development.
- Educate the community on proposed legislative initiatives that could impact cold-water resources in the Poconos.
- Relay TU's mission to the public via varied modalities

### Our Strategy

- ❖ Continue to refine and improve the Chapter website, newsletter, social media platforms and internal communications system. Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram platforms will be utilized. Membership-only email blasts will be utilized on a regular basis.
- ❖ Reach the public through announcements of our mission and activities through local media outlets and regular use of social media platforms (See above.)
- ❖ Participate in public forums and expos whenever the opportunities arise to share the Chapter's mission, vision and goals. These include community days, outdoor days, youth field days, etc.
- ❖ Provide presentations on topics that support TU's National Conservation Agenda (NCA)
- ❖ Provide PATU's Policy Statement on Data centers and Road Salt Management during at least one General Public Meeting and at least one communication per year.
- ❖ Include the mission statement on all publications and platforms.
- ❖ Conduct regular and timely scheduled board and membership meetings
- ❖ Encourage local TV stations and press to cover ongoing BTU Chapter events
- ❖ Develop a "community presence" and "community awareness" of BTU's mission and activities.

### FUNDING

It is necessary to acquire the funds needed to carry out Chapter projects and activities.

#### Funding Goals

- Analyze current Chapter fund raising results
- Raise funds sufficient to support BTU's activities
- Raise funds sufficient to maintain Chapter operations
- Research and develop new sources of funding

#### Our Strategy

- ❖ Hold one annual, primary, fundraising event for the Chapter. This currently is a Spring Banquet usually attended by approximately 85 persons.
- ❖ Continue the Chapter's minor fund-raising activities during regular membership meetings and the annual picnic. These include the sale of BTU or National TU merchandise.
- ❖ Continue the Chapter's annual Fly-Fishing Yard Sale at Brodhead Creek Heritage Center and the annual On-Line Auction.
- ❖ Solicit personal and corporate contributions in the local area.
- ❖ Explore working with professional fundraisers/consultants/grant writers.
- ❖ Apply for Embrace-A-Stream, Forever Wild and other grant opportunities as they arise to meet long-term goals.
- ❖ Seek partnership opportunities.

## **PROCESS FOR PLAN REVIEW AND UPDATING**

### **Annual Review and Updating of the Strategic Plan**

The BTU will recruit a team to annually review the Strategic Plan and recommend proposed changes. The team will consist of those responsible for BTU's four major goals and others as designated by the Chapter President. The Team will draft recommendations for changes to the Strategic Plan: circulate them in a timely fashion to Board Members and members and lead a discussion of the proposed changes at an advertised, general membership meeting. Following this discussion, the team will prepare a final document of the Strategic Plan for BTU Board approval. Notice shall be given to all members of the Plan's approval and it shall be posted on-line for member and public review and reference.

### **Annual Evaluation of the Strategic Plan and Planning Process Effectiveness**

Concurrently with the review and updating of the strategic plan, the team shall prepare a report evaluating the effectiveness of the planning process and recommend changes, as appropriate. The purpose of this evaluation is to improve the process and create a record of recommended changes.

### **Five-Year Strategic Planning Cycle**

At the beginning of the fifth year (2031) of this Strategic Plan, the Chapter President and Executive Committee will propose an approach for developing the next five-year Strategic Plan and having it reviewed, edited, and approved in a timely fashion by the BTU membership.

## **CONCLUSION**

This five-year plan identifies and prioritizes the mission, vision, and goals of the Brodhead Chapter of Trout Unlimited. It focuses upon actions that will support conservation of cold-water resources in the Pocono Region, engagement of Chapter members and interactions with like-minded groups/individuals, effective communication within and beyond the Chapter membership, and sufficient funding to reach the stated goals in support of the Chapter's mission. By utilizing this Plan as a guide, the efforts of the Brodhead Chapter #289 Trout Unlimited will be focused on stated priorities; thereby ensuring resources are expended in an efficient and productive manner as the Chapter works to achieve its goals.

*Compiled by Todd G. Burns  
Brodhead Chapter #289 Trout Unlimited  
January 2026*