



**Trout Unlimited  
Gold Chapter Award Nomination for  
Maryland Chapter (#167)**

I am nominating the **Maryland Chapter (#167)** for the Trout Unlimited Gold Chapter Award.

The Maryland Chapter of Trout Unlimited (MDTU) was formed in 1971. It was one of the first local chapters organized out of what was the National Capitol Chapter (#011). It currently has approximately 600 members spread over the area around Baltimore City including Baltimore County, Harford County, Cecil County, the Maryland counties of the upper Eastern Shore, and parts of Howard, Anne Arundel, and Carroll Counties. The bulk of its membership lives in Baltimore City and Baltimore County.

An expanded version of this nomination is available for download.

**Conservation Projects (recent)**

**Jones Falls Restoration**, In 2013 MDTU began a project to restore approximately 600 yards of the Jones Falls River above Robert E. Lee Park. MDTU successfully secured \$425,000 in funding to complete the project. Funding came from the Chesapeake and Coastal Bays Trust Fund. MDTU contracted with Brightwater, Inc. a local firm with over 26 years experience in natural channel stream restoration. Brightwater successfully completed the design phase that was approved by all parties. MDTU and Brightwater obtained all necessary permits to begin work. The actual restoration work was completed by Environmental Quality Resources and BlueWater Baltimore.

**Upper Gunpowder Brook Trout Project:** The Upper Gunpowder Brook Trout Conservation Partnership is a unique program. Rather than focus on specific improvements in a stream, it takes a watershed wide approach to preservation. The project encompasses some 60 miles of stream across 48 square miles. MDTU has partnered with **Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Inland Fisheries Management Division, Baltimore County, Carroll County. Pretty boy Watershed Association, Gunpowder Valley Conservancy, National Aquarium, Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture, and the National Fish and Wildlife Service – Chesapeake Bay Workgroup.**

To date, the workgroup's accomplishments are considerable. In addition to connecting with allied partner organizations or agencies who have overlapping interests such Maryland Biological Stream Survey, US Fish and Wildlife, Baltimore and Carroll Counties, the group has:

- Secured a \$4,600 grant from TU Embrace-a-Stream to purchase temperature monitors and to develop and distribute a brochure about the project.
- Developed a preliminary 20 Year work plan outline.
- Secured commitment of Director of MD Fisheries for the project
- Compiled existing data sets from various agencies in one location.
- Designed an informational brochure and distributed it to each landowner in the watershed.
- Purchased and deployed 35 temperature loggers in Spring 2016, redeployed in 2017
- Electroshocked several tributaries for brook trout population counts and tagged 15 brook trout for 1-year movement monitoring. Tagging was repeated in 2017.
- Working with the North Atlantic Aquatic Community Collaborative, 50 culverts in the watershed were assessed in 2016 under a USFWS Culvert Assessment grant. Team members were certified to follow USFWS assessment protocols

**Upper Jones Falls Clean-up:** The cleanup effort was designed to proceed in three phases. Phase 1 focuses on a half mile stretch of stream beginning at Stevenson, MD. After contacting and gaining approval from seven (7) property owners along the stretch, MDTU removed over 2,000 pounds of trash, litter, tires and debris. This year, 2017, we conducted Phase II. It was necessary to get approval from five (5) property owners. We also developed partnerships with The Park School, and Hillside Farm, both large property owners along the stream. Volunteers started over Phase I property again, and we covered in total 1.5 miles and collected 1000 pounds of the same type of debris. Several property owners joined our TU members with the cleanup.

**Small Watershed Action Plans.** In 2015-2016, the Maryland Chapter of Trout Unlimited was invited by Baltimore County Department of Environmental Protection and Sustainability to represent MDTU on two Small Watershed Action Plans (SWAP) within the County. SWAPs were completed for both the Lower Jones Falls and Northeastern Jones Falls watershed.

### **Outreach/ Community Building**

**City Catch:** The Maryland Chapter of Trout Unlimited (MDTU), in partnership with Baltimore City Recreation and Parks, sponsors “City Catch,” an annual fishing and environmental education event for Baltimore City children, at Baltimore’s Leakin Park on a Saturday in April. One hundred twenty children, selected from local Recreation Centers in Baltimore have the opportunity to fish for trout in Dead Run at the Park. This program provides each child with a fishing outfit, complete with rod, reel, line, and tackle which he or she can keep at the end of the event. I

**Trout In the Classroom...** MDTU currently assists 20 schools in the Baltimore Area. We also assist schools with their fingerling releases by transporting the fish in aerated coolers, providing fishing demonstrations and organizing insect collections. Five more schools have asked to be part of the program and we plan to add them in 2018.

**Huck Finn Day:** Each Fall, MDTU stocks Stony Run near Wyman Park with 400 rainbow trout. Over forty children showed up with their parents to learn to fish and learn about stream ecology. An on-going stream monitoring effort is growing out of this program.

**MDTU Fly Fishing School.** MDTU collaborated with Community College of Baltimore County to offer a 15-hour Introduction to Fly Fishing through CCBC’s Continuing education program. Classes were taught by MDTU members, and covered equipment, lines, knots, fly selection, reading the water, and trout biology. MDTU recruited an IFFF Master fly caster to teach fly-casting. BassPro donated six fly rod/reel combinations for student use during the class.

MDTU partnered with **Chesapeake Women Anglers** to offer a women’s only **Introduction to Fly Fishing**. Fifteen women attended. Three joined Trout Unlimited. Classes covered gear basics, fly casting, and time spent on the water. Board members Brenda Foster (ex-officio President), Norma Haynes, and Louise Peltier provided instruction.

**MDTU co-Sponsored Tenkara Jam.** On July 11 and 12th, 2015 Maryland Trout Unlimited co-hosted “Tenkara Jam on the Gunpowder” with Appalachian Tenkara Anglers and Great Feathers Fly Shop in Sparks, Maryland. Nearly 100 people attended on one or both days of the Jam.

**MDTU Outreach:** MDTU reaches out to the Public by providing information tables and fly casting demonstrations at:

- National Hunting and Fishing Day
- Ecotone Family Day (Ecotone is a stream restoration firm)
- Baltimore Fly Fishing and Collectible Tackle Show
- Fly Fishing Film Tour
- Baltimore Bluegrass Festival

### **Fundraising**

**Restoration Run;** Our primary fundraiser is the Annual Restoration Run, a 5k road race along the Jones Falls River. The race attracts between 90-100 runners. Over the past few years we have built a large network of corporate and individual donors to the race. The racecourse was designed to run along the Jones Falls River valley alongside the Jones Falls, a trout fishery on which we focus. We had 100 runners show up that year and our race sponsors brought in \$5,130. The first year race gave our chapter a net profit of \$4,084. We recently held our race for the seventh year. Our sponsors have now grown to 34 in number and brought in \$12,350. We have been able to fine-tune our expenses and last year in 2016 we were able to bring in a net profit of \$12,370. Over the last seven years, this 5K Run has brought in \$59,500 for our chapter to use towards many local restoration projects and youth activities.

**Advocacy.** Much of chapter advocacy is directed toward local land use. Advocacy is a group effort though most advocacy letters go out over the signature of the President Norma Haynes. In the recent past we have written to county administrators and others about:

- A large, mega church development along Shawan Road in Hunt Valley that would have impacted Beaver Run, a natural trout stream

- Another large mega church proposal at Falls Road and Seminary Avenue in Lutherville, MD that would have seriously impacted Bull Run, a natural trout habitat
- Redevelopment of the area adjacent to the lower Jones Falls in Bare Hills that would have placed a large residential development in an environmentally sensitive area.
- Supported BlueWater Baltimore's stormwater management efforts
- Supported the Prettyboy Resource coalition in a grant application to Healthy Watersheds Consortium.
- Supported Gunpowder Conservancy in a proposal to Gunpowder Watershed's Priority Land Project.
- Signed on to TU's Bristol Bay advocacy letter.

## Communications

**Newsletter:** MDTU publishes a Biennial newsletter. The newsletter is compiled, designed and edited by Sean Beattie, Communication Chair. A copy of the newsletter is submitted with this application.

**Email Communication.** MDTU maintains an up-to-date database of members, lapsed members, and interested local supporters on Constant Contact. We routinely notify all in the database about upcoming events and membership meetings.

**Facebook:** MDTU maintains Facebook pages for the Chapter and for the Upper Gunpowder Brook Trout Partnership. Don Haynes, Sean Beattie, and Scott Scarfone act as page administrators. The chapter Facebook page has over 750 followers. The chapter Facebook pages is available to view at: <https://www.facebook.com/marylandtu>. The Upper Gunpowder Project Page can be seen at: <https://www.facebook.com/uppergunpowderbrooktrout/>.

**Webpage** MDTU was of the first chapters to take advantage of TU's chapter webpage template. The URL of the webpage is <http://maryland.tu.org/>

**Council and TU Leadership.** MDTU actively participates in the Mid-Atlantic Council and in Trout Unlimited National organizations.

- Don Haynes, Chapter V.P for Administration is Council Chair;
- Sean Beattie, Communications Chair is Council Treasurer, and
- Brian Bernstein, Chapter V.P for Conservation serves on the Board as does Adam Nabors, another Board member.
- Brian Bernstein is also Mid-Atlantic Regional Representative to the TU Embrace a Stream Committee.
- Don Haynes serves on the NLC Grassroots Workgroup. In that role, Don has given presentations on the CEI and Strategic Planning at the National meeting in Santa Fe as well as regional meetings in Frederick, MD, Roanoke, VA, and Clinton, NJ.
- Norma Haynes, Chapter President, is an active participant in the NLC Diversity Workgroup.
- Scott Scarfone presented the Upper Gunpowder Brook Trout Conservation Project at the Southeast Regional meeting in May 2016.
- Jay Boynton gave a talk of fundraising at the Mid-Atlantic Regional Meeting Frederick, MD in June 2015.

## Chapter Development, Membership Growth and Retention

**Strategic Plan:** In 2014, MDTU engaged in a long process of revising our strategic plan to cover the 2014-2017 period. After several half-day meetings, the chapter finalized the plan with a daylong session with a professional moderator and Strategic Planning expert. The final plan went through several drafts, prepared by Scott Scarfone, before final acceptance by the full board. In Spring 2017, MDTU began the process of revising the plan to more fully account for changes in programs we are currently pursuing and for changes in Board composition. One goal of the new plan is to bring it more inline with TU's Protect, Restore, Reconnect, Sustain guidelines.

Developed a series of policy statements to cover the budgeting process to make it more formal, to establish an executive committee to facilitate the work on MDTU between board meetings, to establish guidelines for leadership election, and to govern the content of the annual business meeting. The Board adopted each of the policy statements. This has helped make the work of the board far less ad hoc and less confusing

The chapter is constantly recruiting new members to the board of directors. MDTU has amended its bylaws to allow for expanding the size of our board from 9 to 15 members exclusive of elected officers. This has allowed us to bring on new blood to play future leadership roles.

Leader Training. New leaders are provided with two presentations. TU leadership manuals are available on chapter website. The V.P reports on contents of lines to leaders.

Conducted workshops on using TU web resources (forum, Leaders Only tools, Tacklebox) for Board members.

MDTU developed a New Members Welcome Packet that provides new members with information TU mission and goals, meetings, chapter leadership, and chapter programs. A copy of the welcome pack is attached.

We actively promote participation in TU online leadership training series.

As mentioned above, MDTU actively courts new members at local events. We recently purchased membership brochures through TU that include chapter meeting and contact information. We make these available in local fly shops, sporting goods stores, and other relevant venues as well as passing them out at events.

Membership chair contacts non-members after each monthly TU members meeting. Each person signs in and provides either a contact email or phone number. Member chair then contacts each person to urge him or her to join TU.

In summary, MDTU's record of conservation, outreach, and development is exemplary. MDTU certainly deserves serious consideration for a "Gold Chapter Award".

Submitted by:

Don Haynes  
Chair, Mid-Atlantic Council Trout Unlimited