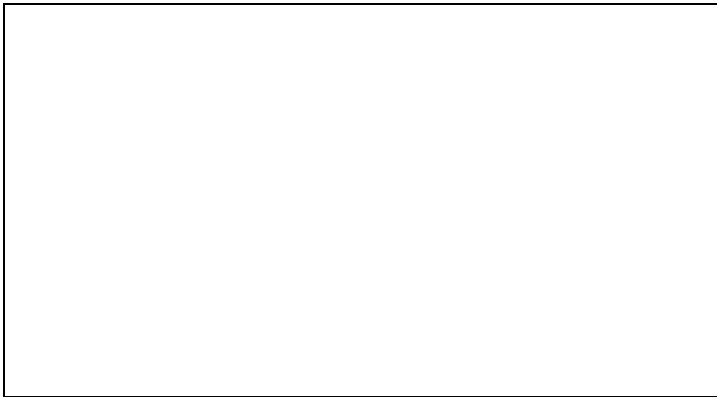


**BACK THE BROOKIE
STATE PLAN FOR WEST VIRGINIA**



WV TROUT UNLIMITED BACK THE BROOKIE PLAN

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EDUCATION PLAN

GOAL: Inform as many as possible about the Back The Brookie program, in West Virginia, in order to raise awareness about native Brook Trout and stimulate people to conserve and protect this resource.

OBJECTIVES:

I. Spread goals, objectives, and rationale of the BTB program to TU Chapters within WV. Hopefully, this will encourage other TU members to become actively involved in future aspects of the program.

A) Personnel Needed - 2 persons per presentation at various TU Chapter meetings within the state

B) Materials - Power Point presentation
 - Flyers, brochures, business cards
 - Laptop computer, projector, screen

C) Cost - \$1500

II. Educate school-age children about the natural history of the Brook Trout. Inform them why conserving and protecting this species is valuable. Build a sense of wonder of and caring for the native Brook Trout.

A) Personnel Needed - 2 to 3 persons to train teachers throughout the state

B) Materials - "Back The Brookie Box" with various items to be used by classroom teachers to include the following:

- 1) Video presentation
- 2) Interactive CD
- 3) Lesson plans / activities
- 4) BTB give-away items - pencils, rulers, etc.
- 5) BTB posters
- 6) General fishing info.
- 7) Brochures

C) Cost - \$100 per box

COMMUNICATIONS/FUNDRAISING PLAN - WV ADVANCEMENT COMMITTEE:

Objective:

To raise awareness of Trout Unlimited's new "Back the Brookie" campaign with the citizens of West Virginia. The brook trout is the state fish and, as such, is a symbol of the state's mountain and natural resource heritage. This campaign helps focus attention on the unique ecosystem that must be maintained for our state fish to survive and thrive. This program will work to bring corporations, governmental entities, and non-profit organizations together with the common goal of conserving, protecting and restoring the habitat of our symbol of mountain purity, the brook trout.

Goals:

1. Communicate the campaign's goals to targeted audiences.
2. Find the cash and/or in kind contributions.
3. Gather the troops for the campaign's projects.
4. Celebrate our successes with good public relations and media coverage.

Volunteers Needed:

People who love to talk about brook trout, their beautiful colors and the clear West Virginia mountain streams they have flourished in for the last 10,000 years. It will also be helpful if some of the committee's "trout zealots" have a background in journalism, public relations, marketing, grantsmanship, and fundraising skills. Also a good graphic designer or artist would be a plus.

Goal 1 – Communication:

- "Back the Brookie" is a regional Trout Unlimited project involving the southeastern states of WV, VA, NC, TN, SC, and GA. Coordinating success in our neighboring states allows this grassroots program to learn collectively about efforts to conserve, protect and restore our region's only native trout.
- TU volunteers are committed to educating the public about the plight of brook trout, which are disappearing from our mountain streams as their habitat is degraded by acid mine drainage, development, timbering, acid rain and other environmental threats.
- TU volunteers are working with other private and public agencies to undertake stream restoration efforts and to raise funds to support future projects..

- TU volunteers are working with local, state and federal government officials to advocate for policies supporting clean air and clean water, which in turn will protect and expand brook trout habitat for future generations.

Strategies:

1. Launch

- a. Use the launch of the campaign as basis for press releases, newsletter copy, and listserv postings.
- b. Pitch campaign as feature story possibility for outdoor writers, environmental reporters, TV producers, general interest columnists at newspapers and regional magazines.(John McCoy & Rick Steelhammer in Charleston)
- c. Pitch TV stations on a conservation story based on saving the brook trout (discuss with Ed Hayne).

2. Special Events:

- a. At the next new stream targeted for receiving limestone fines treatment, let's showcase the success stories WV has already made with in-stream liming dating back to the 1960's on Otter Creek.
- b. Schedule a Brookie Day at the legislature celebrating our state's leadership role in finding solutions for habitat restoration and focus on efforts to strengthen our efforts to protect our mountain streams. Do this in conjunction with watershed groups of brook trout streams.
- c. Coordinate an event promoting brook trout habitat and fisheries at the new Cabela's in Wheeling.
- d. Coordinate with BTB Education Chairs and Chapter Youth Coordinator on developing an educational tool for use at elementary schools, scouts, and other youth activities.
- e. Publicize the "Back the Brookie" Website in chapter newsletters, council websites and other associated websites.

3. Direct Mail:

Develop mailing list for the new brochure to be mailed with formal letter asking for either 1) volunteer support; 2) monetary support; 3) opportunities to speak at civic groups or school groups; 4) other ?.

4. PSA's:

Develop and place a 30 second PSA on statewide TV including overview of project goals and plea for monetary/volunteer support.

5. Web Banner Ads:

Develop small banner ads to be placed on commercial websites of flyshops, outfitters, sporting goods shops, lodges, chamber of commerce sites, other non-profit agency sites etc. Ads would be hotlinked to www.brookie.org. (This would drive traffic to the brookie Website.)

6. Chapter Newsletters:

Chapter newsletters - - circulate BTB news column to all chapter newsletters every month with timely updates of projects, opportunities for speaking, education.

Goal 2 – Fundraising

1. Goal of \$10,000
2. Grants from corporations who have contributed in the past, such as Dominion Resources, Westvaco and other large natural resources corporations, seen as being good public relations.
3. Foundation support - - Submit proposals or inquiries to select regional foundations to underwrite BTB expenses or projects
 - a. Letters of inquiry to all foundations in WV and Southeast that indicate interest in environmental project
 - b. Submit specific requests for support of small part of BTB efforts, (i.e. support for communications including website development, etc.)
 - c. Submit larger proposals for funding for major restoration efforts on specific streams
4. 5 percent day - - Seek merchants who will agree to donate 5 percent of a day's receipts to BTB at various locations across the state (large retailers or outfitters like Cabela's or Dicks.). BTB would set up displays during these promo days on site increasing campaign visibility.
5. BTB merchandise program
6. One Fly Contest
7. Back the Brookie wine (Dale Battles)
8. Ask members to pledge dollars for days/streams fishing for brook trout.

Goal 3 – Volunteer Support

1. Inspire and strengthen volunteer support within TU
2. Schedule regular BTB update articles in all chapter newsletters.
3. Book periodic programs at chapter meetings to showcase results.

4. Implement a “Brookie Backer of the Year” award for volunteer giving the most to the campaign in each chapter.
5. Take members fishing

Goal 4 – Celebrate Success

1. Publish report (and web-based version) outlining success of project/ ROI; distribute to corporate, foundation sponsors, chapters, legislators, agency chiefs - - including appropriate thanks to donors and volunteers.
2. Implement an award for the statewide lawmaker/local leader who most consistently supported air and water quality issues. Publicize the award in media.
3. Acknowledge watershed organizations that embrace the BTB mantra.
4. Program leaders making the rounds at regional, state and chapter functions championing the results of the campaign.

Legislative Review Committee Plan

I. Mission of LRC Chairman

- Monitor legislative activity to determine how it may affect brook trout and their habitat
- Receive Action Alerts from TU-National, State Council, Local Chapters and external sources
- Shepherd decision to activate grassroots network
- Coordinate Chapter Contact Activities by:
 - Maintaining communication with chapter contacts
 - Providing chapter contacts with talking points in the event of an “alert”
- Coordinate Key Contact Activities
- Maintain communication with other BTB leaders

II. Administrative Tasks

- Establish and maintain an e-mail network with individual state chapters and other advocacy groups.
- Encourage chapters to create their own inter-membership e-mail network.
- Encourage and aid chapters in development of a membership legislative district database, both House and Senate.
- Based upon state Council approval, allegiance with other grassroots organizations, to share information, scrub legislation, throw our combined weights against issues and warn each other about impending legislation. Also to potentially share costs associated with list enhancement, phone messaging, etc.

III. Needs

- Business Cards
- Name Badge/Tag stating name and “WV Legislative Review Committee Chairman” along with BTB logo for identification.
- Each chapter president to identify an advocacy contact/chair and preferably a key contact assistant.
- Consider idea from Tenn. LRC in creation of Advocacy Database Questionnaire to be sent to participating states’ membership. (With postage paid return card.)

IV. Budget

- Long distance phone costs
- Postage and stationary for mailings including ‘Advocacy Database Questionnaire’ if utilized
- Costs associated with list enhancement
- Costs associated with phone messaging via services such as My Team OneCall Phone Tree Services.

*(Costs should be absorbed by TU-National, Back The Brookie or WVTU, not by individual chapters)

CONSERVATION PLAN

“Back the Brookie” is a regional, comprehensive, proactive campaign to promote the conservation, protection, and restoration of our native trout streams and their habitat. The projects undertaken by the TU chapters and West Virginia Council of TU will be one of the components of this campaign. Projects may include providing volunteers in support of activities involving the continued conservation of any brook trout waters within the state or region.

Chair of the Conservation committee will contact each TU chapter to assess each chapter’s commitment to working on projects. Assist chapters with the management of projects which would include agency partnerships, design, execution, staffing, funding, etc. Assist in obtaining necessary information on grants and grant writing seminars. Coordinate combined projects with local TU chapters, state council and multi state projects. Keeps records of brook trout projects within the state (miles restored, volunteer hours, funding sources, etc.).

Mission:

- 1) Coordinate with West Virginia Department of Natural Resources (WVDNR), Monongahela National Forest (MNF), and U. S. Forest Service (USFS) to identify streams for possible conservation projects. Projects would include habitat improvement, restocking (transplanting), and limestone addition for water quality improvement.
- 2) Work with the WVDNR on producing a fact sheet about liming (and other mineral addition) as a tool for improving water quality to preserve brook trout populations and streams.
- 3) Support WVDNR, MNF, and USFS brook trout conservation programs by providing volunteers to assist with population and creel surveys and other types of sampling or testing.
- 4) Prepare database of previous brook trout projects in West Virginia, including those with and without TU involvement. This would be used as resource in planning future projects.
- 5) Continue working with West Virginia Department Environmental Protection (WVDEP) on getting more TU chapters involved with Save Our Stream Program and undertaking water quality studies on identified brook trout streams.
- 6) Work with West Virginia Watershed Associations on stream quality issues and possible future projects.

- 7) Work to re-activate the Allegheny Highlands Chapter, which is geographically located nearest to the majority of West Virginia's brook trout streams, especially those located in the MNF. Assist AHCTU in becoming centrally involved in WVBTB campaign.

Dave Fulton, WVBTB Conservation Chair

