



Wisconsin Trout Unlimited Policy Priorities 2019-2021 Biennial State Budget

The Wisconsin Council of Trout Unlimited (WITU), a statewide nonpartisan, nonprofit conservation group with over 5,200 volunteer members, has highlighted two conservation policy objectives for the next state budget:

Re-authorize the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program at \$50 million / year

The Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program has protected and provided public access to hundreds of miles of trout streams, via the Stream Bank Protection Program. This vital program allows WITU to leverage hundreds of thousands of non-state dollars to restore and improve fishing on these streams, which draw out-of-state anglers from all over the country. It is about as good a return on investment as one can find.

Increase the Inland and Great Lakes Trout Stamps from \$10 to \$15

Every year, trout anglers pay an extra fee on their fishing license for a Trout Stamp, the funds from which go directly into habitat work that makes trout fishing better. Most anglers happily support paying the fee, because they see the benefits when they're out on the water. However, the Trout Stamp fee has not been raised since 2006, while project costs have steadily increased. WITU supports a moderate increase to the Trout Stamp fees, provided it continues to be managed in a segregated account that directly funds trout stream habitat improvements.

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The Wisconsin Council of Trout Unlimited is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization which consists of more than 5,200 volunteer members in 21 chapters, who restore streams, work to get kids outdoors, and serve United States Military Veterans. Last year, WITU created over \$1.1 million in non-state funds to accomplish its mission, in the form of volunteer labor, in-kind, and pure cash contributions.