

Trout Unlimited Watershed Access Fund - Funding and Withdrawal procedures

Purpose of Fund: The Trout Unlimited Watershed Access Fund will make money available to assist in the direct acquisition of lands adjacent to coldwater resources or to assist in the acquisition of conservation easements or leases that allow access to and future restoration of coldwater resources. The existence of the Fund will make it easier for chapters to enter into partnerships with land trusts, agencies, and other partners for the purpose of providing more public access to coldwater resources.

How Funds Are Raised: Initial funding for the Watershed Access program came from the \$5000 Wisconsin Trout Unlimited received as part of the Graul Farms legal settlement. In addition, net proceeds from the 2010 State Council Banquet were deposited into the Trout Unlimited Watershed Access Fund. Annual fund raising will then supplement the Fund. Each edition of the Wisconsin Trout Unlimited newspaper will include information about the purpose of the Fund and how members and friends may donate to the Fund.

Fund Withdrawals: Requests for funds to assist in land acquisition or access acquisition will originate from local Trout Unlimited chapters, or the Wisconsin State Council of Trout Unlimited. Chapters or the State Council will be eligible to apply for funds for projects that fit the purpose of the Fund. Projects that are undertaken jointly by a chapter or the State Council and a land trust or an agency like DNR will receive priority over projects undertaken solely by a chapter or the State Council. In the event that requested amounts are greater than funds available, geographic parity will become a major factor in making the decision about which projects will receive funding.

Requests for funding will be limited to \$7500 for a project by a single chapter or \$20,000 if the State Council is initiating a purchase. No more than 2 chapters will be allowed to request funds for the same project. Requesting chapters will attempt to match at least 50% of the requested amount with chapter funds. Match requirements will be waived for projects initiated by the State Council and may be waived in situations in which chapters do not have the match and may miss out on an important opportunity to gain access.

The Fund may also be used to make bridge loans to either an agency or a land trust if a loan will hold an acquisition until other funds available for the acquisition are finalized.

Requests by chapters or the State Council for funds will be submitted to the Watershed Access Fund Coordinator. The requests should include detailed explanations of the acquisition project as well as a listing of all of the partners involved in the project. Requests will also need to specify when the funds need to be available. The decision to grant requests will be made by the Regional Vice Chairs and the State Council Vice Chair as requests are received.

Fund Restriction: The Trout Unlimited Watershed Access Fund will be used solely for obtaining access to coldwater resources either through direct land purchase or through obtaining easements. It is preferred that any easement obtained with account funds should be a permanent easement.