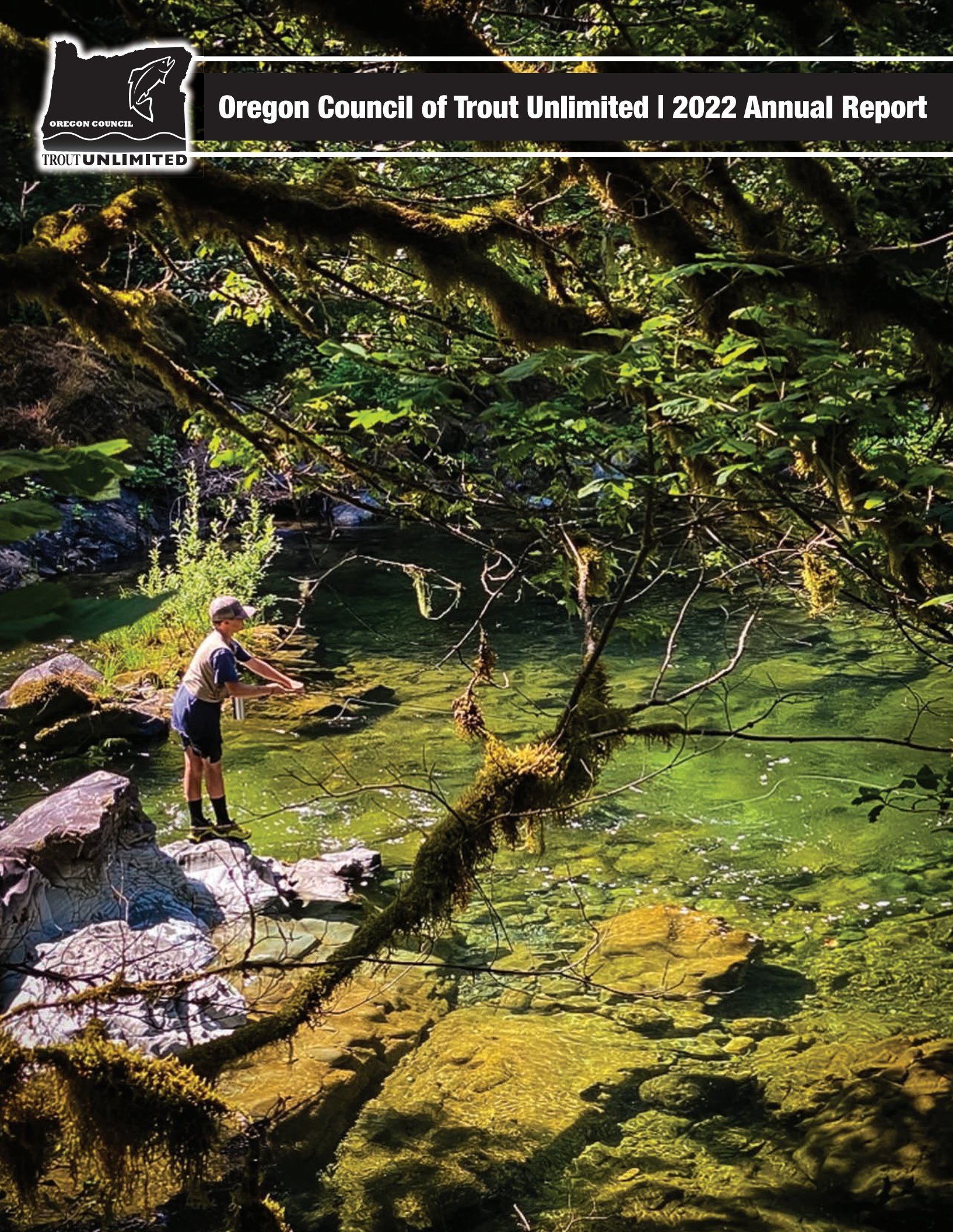




# Oregon Council of Trout Unlimited | 2022 Annual Report



## Update from Oregon Council of Trout Unlimited Chair Mark Rogers

Things are looking up.

Ocean conditions have improved and some fish runs are increasing. If we keep fixing streams and fixing policies in our home state, we have a good shot at maximizing Oregon's trout, salmon, and steelhead populations.

Our Trout Unlimited (TU) chapters and statewide council are beginning to return to in-person meetings, with many also sharing their presentations via video conferencing.

New federal and state funding opportunities have become available for restoration projects for TU chapters, staff, and our partner agencies.

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission released its final Environmental Impact Statement declaring the benefits of removing Klamath Rivers dams outweigh potential costs. Work may start as early as next year.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration released its Rebuilding Interior Columbia Basin Salmon and Steelhead assessment, concluding that breaching the lower Snake River dams is necessary to save salmon and steelhead.

It's not just about the big dams. We support projects on many streams with small dams and other manmade barriers. Watch for more of this to come.

Water quality remains a priority. We're working on many levels to maintain healthy flows and water conditions in Oregon. This is a long term effort by TU staff, council, local chapters, and allied conservation groups. We are making progress.

We've been closely involved in updating of forest management practices across state, regional, and local levels. There have been marked improvements in forest management plans in Oregon and we will see more in the future.

Thank you to staff and volunteers who do this work to protect and restore our water, fish, and habitats. We appreciate TU leadership for investing so much in Oregon.

Getting on the water with my TU friends is always a good time. Spending a morning placing Christmas trees in a side channel, introducing fly fishing to veterans and first responders, or waking up in the woods at a chapter campout reminds me why we volunteer.

Perhaps the best thing about this year was returning to youth camp. In July, our Clackamas River and Tualatin Valley chapters brought back this outstanding event for the first time since 2019. Teaching kids outdoor skills and taking them fly fishing is great fun.


In the creek or in the capitol, your support makes a difference. Please donate. Your tax deductible contribution will stay in Oregon to fund local chapter projects and statewide initiatives. This year we were able to budget \$10,000 for chapter conservation projects across the state, thanks to your generous donations.

Donate with the envelope provided in this report, or visit us at [tuoregon.org](http://tuoregon.org) to give online.

Please enjoy this annual report from the Oregon Council of Trout Unlimited.

Mark Rogers

Chair, Oregon Council of Trout Unlimited



**Please use the envelope to  
contribute to Oregon Trout  
Unlimited. Your donations support  
Oregon programs and chapters.  
Your donation is fully tax deductible.**



## Oregon Council of Trout Unlimited Statement of Finances

OCTU Statement of assets for the fiscal year ending  
March 31, 2022:

<b>Beginning Balance</b>	<b>\$36,217</b>
<b>Ending Balance</b>	<b>\$33,816</b>

OCTU Statement of assets for the fiscal year ending  
March 31, 2022:

<b>Current Balance</b>	<b>\$33,816</b>
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OCTU revenues were consistent with the previous year in donations, workplace giving and member dues contributions.

The OCTU board decided to offer conservation grants from the general fund to chapters this year. The Clackamas Chapter and Bluebacks Chapter applied for grants from the council. Clackamas Chapter needed some additional survey work prior to moving ahead with a small dam removal on the N. Fork Eagle Creek, and the Bluebacks Chapter partnered on a project with the Luckiamute Watershed Council for stream sampling equipment. We hope to extend more grant offers to chapters in 2023.

Thank you, Oregon TU members,  
for supporting our restoration mission!



## Women's Groups



### Southern Oregon Women On the Fly

#### Winter Morning Meetup

*Finally, they hear it.  
"FISH" with a mighty exclamation!  
Reeling in and managing the line.  
Running to grab the net.  
Cameras out.  
Major stoke.  
A beautiful wild steelhead.  
A quick and careful release.  
Celebratory hugs and high fives.*

It's a crisp December morning. The ladies of Southern Oregon Women on the Fly (SOWOTF) gather at their local breakfast burrito spot, Ruby's on Genessee, to fuel up on delicious grub and strong coffee. Catching up between bites and sips, these ladies bring some fierce energy for a fun day of fishing.

The group caravans out to a secret fishing spot. Donning waders and boots riverside, chatting about which flies are calling to them and what species they're honing in on. Ladies take turns fishing the run and hanging out by the fire pit, cheering each other on and hoping for a bite.

SOWOTF serves to create a community where women can experience the zesty art of fly fishing. Whether seasoned or new, there's room for all at the table. Hosting several events each month, SOWOTF is making a mark in fly fishing in the Rogue Valley and beyond. We're excited for event plans and partnerships in 2023 and continuing to grow this wonderful community of lady anglers.

### PDX Women On the Fly

#### Friendships, Fishing, and Fun

Trying new things is scary. Whether it's learning how to fly fish or making new friends, finding where to start can be a challenge—that is, until I found PDX Women on the Fly (PDXWOTF). I've met so many interesting and cool women from different backgrounds. We seem to connect so easily despite never having known each other. Fly fishing is such a strong unifying interest! It's not just a sport, it's a way to connect with each other in nature, and find solace from our normal day-to-day schedule.

One notable PDXWOTF event this year was our spey casting lesson with Simon Gawesworth. I want to give a huge shout out to Laura Andersen, who helped organize and plan this successful day. Events like this invite members to learn new skills and make new friends. I've noticed that our friendships stretch beyond organized activities, so that many women have found a community we can fish with forever. Events also connect old friends with each other, and we get to see growth in each other's fishing abilities.

Our members are really what make this group worth joining. Longtimers like guide Alysia Littleleaf frequently post on our social media pages, inspiring me to get out and try new techniques. She also shares the best fish pics that make me want to be on the water!

Jennifer La Follette kindly volunteers her time and expertise to help new members get started and get excited about fishing. She was the first person to show me how to correctly cast a spey rod. Learning from her at Spey Day was so much fun and I can't wait to see her at our next event.

Through PDXWOTF I also met fellow member Austen Bates, who invited me on a three-day trip fishing the John Day with guide Mia Sheppard. Though the weather conditions made casting and rowing rough, it was one of the best experiences I've had and I plan on going again next year. Meeting Mia and her family was such a privilege. She encouraged me to get out of my comfort zone and helped me become a better rower.

The past couple of years, Covid has made it hard to connect with others. Despite that difficulty, this group has given me friends who encourage me to take time for myself and support my fishing endeavors. Learning with the women in this group is such a blessing. I'm excited for future adventures, and all the memories we will make. Thank you PDXWOTF for giving me the opportunity to learn, grow, and make new friends!

Amber Toal  
Portland, OR

## Oregon Trout Unlimited Staff Report

*Trout Unlimited's nationwide organization employs staff in Oregon to work on its conservation initiatives and advocate for coldwater resources. This report highlights the team's work and accomplishments in 2022.*

As I write this retrospective, I'm hoping for rain. Some parts of our state received good precipitation in spring and, thankfully, we didn't see a repeat of last year's extreme heat dome. But late summer and fall have been very dry, especially in Central and Southern Oregon, where severe drought conditions persist.

Those of us who depend on our beautiful rivers see the impacts firsthand. Seasonal hydrological rhythms have always been a part of the state's ecology, but climate change is making these swings more severe. Add in existing habitat degradation and status quo policy, and you get increased urgency to restore watersheds, coldwater resources, and native fish. I know all Trout Unlimited (TU) staff and volunteers feel it, as I see demonstrated every day by the scale of our work and an inspiring commitment to conservation.

In 2022, Oregon TU staff once again spearheaded a wide range of policy efforts, stakeholder collaborations, and on-the-ground projects.

Staff and volunteers drove thoughtful comments and presence at Oregon's Fish Passage Task Force meetings, which guide much-needed agency rule change requirements for dams and other obstructions. Final vote is upcoming, but we're optimistic.



We worked with timber interests and conservation groups to reach the Private Forest Accord. This historic agreement reforming forest practices was passed into law in 2022.

- TU purchased a key water right for Little Butte Creek, a Rogue River tributary, to permanently protect in-stream flows while allowing non-consumptive use. This allowed a historic grist mill to rebuild and continue operating following a devastating fire.
- In the legislature, TU and conservation partners urged \$25 million in targeted spending to prepare Oregon waterways and wetlands for drought. Every item in that package was funded for the full amount requested.
- More than 1300 Central Oregon youth engaged in TU's after-school programs, outdoor lessons, and field trips. Girl Scouts participated in STREAM Girls activities. Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs elders worked with our staff to develop lessons for students across the region.
- Military veterans and young adults spent six weeks in the Umatilla and Wallowa-Whitman forests learning about aquatic restoration, meadow ecology, and headwater habitat enhancement as part of TU's Hand Crew Initiative.
- Wild Steelheaders United continued its strong work by strengthening relationships with ODFW leaders and successfully advocating for ending the summer steelhead hatchery program on the North Umpqua (a decision to be settled in the courts).
- Salmon SuperHwy completed four fish passage projects, reconnecting eight more miles of habitat for a total of 123 miles. It secured \$2.5 million in congressional funds and \$750 thousand from the National Fish Passage Program.
- In Northeastern Oregon, staff secured key water forbearance, leases, transfers, and conservation in Bear Creek, Catherine Creek, and the Lostine River. A \$530 thousand award will convert 130 acres of flood-irrigated land to a high-efficiency system.
- Habitat restoration projects across the state reconnected floodplains, planted riparian zones, restored side channels, placed large wood, and added beaver dam analogues. This work benefitted the John Day, Klamath, Wallowa, Deschutes, Metolius, and Tumalo Creek watersheds.
- We continued campaigning for dam removal on the Snake and Klamath rivers. An anticipated 2023 Federal Energy Regulatory Commission license surrender order will clear the last hurdle on the Klamath, ushering in the largest river restoration project ever attempted anywhere in the world.

I'm proud of the work we're doing together. I hope all of you have a restful holiday season.

Christen Rivard  
Director, Oregon Trout Unlimited

## Blueback Chapter, Corvallis

### Counting Redds and Granting Wishes

It's been a year of connection for the Bluebacks Chapter, bringing us closer to college students, likeminded coalitions, and one young boy with a dream of chasing wild salmon.

Out on the water, we conducted steelhead redd surveys on the Upper Luckiamute River and cleaned up our home stretch of the South Santiam River. A few Oregon State University (OSU) students joined us, and now they're attending our monthly meetings. To reach more students, we hosted fly casting practices and a fishing trip for the OSU Fisheries and Wildlife Club. With interest high, we are helping those young fly fishers set up a Costa 5 Rivers College Club. TU boasts more than 100 of these student fishing and conservation clubs around the country, and we think OSU is a great place to add one more.

We also connected with an 11-year-old fisherman in a life changing way. Make-A-Wish Foundation asked the Bluebacks if we'd fulfill a request from a boy named Judd. The pandemic had canceled his long-planned trip to Alaska, so board member Troy Rintz decided he'd bring Judd's adventure home to Oregon. Rintz asked Hammer Down Guide Service's Tyler Henscheid for help. The trip was all set, but then there were hospital stays. Then bad weather. Cancellation after cancellation. But the team was determined to get this kid out on the water. Finally, September 24 dawned sunny and warm, and Judd found himself floating the Siletz River with a salmon rod in hand. The team saw plenty of salmon rolling, and nearly connected with a few. There was no big catch, unless you count the memories, and those will be treasured forever.

The Bluebacks remain committed to our community, fostering continued partnerships with organizations like Linn-Benton Salmon Watch and Corvallis Sustainability Coalition.

We look forward to future opportunities to help people in our community preserve coldwater fisheries and enjoy time on the water.



## Tualatin Valley Chapter, West Side Portland Metro

### Expanding Diversity

On a national scale, Trout Unlimited has committed itself to promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion. But what does that look like on a local level? Our chapter leadership has been redefining our goals to create spaces that nurture both fish and humans. Here's how.

At Tualatin Valley Trout Unlimited (TVTU) our overarching goals are to sustain, enhance, and expand diversity, equity, and inclusion activities in the years ahead.

### Supporting Future BIPOC Fisheries Leaders

We're backing Native Fish Society's Wild Fish For All Scholarships. These two \$1,000 awards will go to students who are passionate about wild fish and identify as Black, Indigenous, or people of color. Women are strongly encouraged to apply. The top five applicants will receive a free one-year membership to TU. This program aims to break down barriers to racial and gender diversity in fisheries conservation.

### Reviving Wetlands in a Diverse Place

TVTU will help lead the restoration of Oleson Pond at the Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge, one of the few refuges located near large and diverse urban, suburban, exurban, and rural communities. The pond covers one acre and drains into a healthy wetland that in turn empties into the Tualatin River. In 2022 we participated in a feasibility study along with the refuge and Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. We will work together to develop the renewal plan along with a community engagement program focused on environmental education.



### Breaking Down Meeting Barriers

TVTU's monthly meeting venue has moved to a barrier-free location. We offer meetings on the second Wednesday of each month at Old Market Pub in Southwest Portland. We've also enhanced our IT capabilities to accommodate remote speakers, widening the diversity of our presenters and topics. We provide a live Zoom broadcast and recordings of all presentations to better serve and engage our 600 members, no matter where they live or what their schedule.

We will report on chapter activities at our meetings throughout the year. We hope you will join us.

### Repurposing Christmas Trees

Our yearly collection of Christmas trees occurred in early January with help from our friends at Clackamas River Trout Unlimited. This year our volunteers collected approximately 350 trees from families who drove to our two drop-off locations, eager to see their holiday decor "recycled" to benefit fish. Cornell Farm also donated trees from their nursery. TVTU volunteers then placed the collected trees in Chicken Creek, a Tualatin River tributary, to serve as habitat for wild fish.

## Clackamas River Chapter, East Side Portland Metro



### Hiring Helicopters to Save Salmon

Restoration projects are the cornerstone of all TU chapters. A culvert replaced for fish passage, trees planted to provide riparian shade, side channels restored to reconnect a flood plain—these are examples of classic restoration efforts. TU's paid staff, local chapter volunteers, and partner conservation organizations all work together to make it happen.

Our chapter stepped into an unusual, enormous, and eye-catching project in the Clackamas River Basin this year. We were given the unique opportunity to salvage logs left over from the 2020 wildfires and use them to create important habitat for fish.

We did that using helicopters.

By moving the logs from the burn areas into the streams, we enhanced a critical section of habitat for spawning and rearing juvenile chinook, coho, and steelhead. The target was the confluence of Cub and Berry Creeks, which had almost no large wood in the water despite being an important area for these fish.

Clackamas River Trout Unlimited (CRTU) worked with our partners at Mt. Hood National Forest, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, and the U.S. Forest Service. We applied for an Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board grant and were awarded \$228,000. This is the largest grant any Oregon TU chapter has ever received.

With money in hand, CRTU contacted Columbia Helicopters in Aurora to review our design and submit a bid for moving and staging fire-damaged logs in the two creeks. After a bit of negotiation, we agreed to a contract.

Over two days in June, our team of one chapter leader and five biologists coordinated with chopper pilots and their ground crews to lift, carry, and place 387 logs across more than 2.5 miles of stream. Columbia's team was so skilled and efficient, we were able to move more logs than originally planned!

We're proud to be involved with the largest helicopter log placement

project in the history of Mt. Hood National Forest. Adding large woody debris is a critical element of habitat restoration, and we're ready for more of this exciting aerial work in 2023. We're already planning additional log placements and channel improvements, both at this confluence and on the Clackamas River. Follow us on social media to watch it happen over the coming months, and read up about it right here next year.

## Redbands Chapter, Bend / Central Oregon

Trout Unlimited Annual Meeting Portland, Maine

My CX3 Experience

In late July I had the privilege of representing Oregon at Trout Unlimited's annual meeting in Portland, Maine. The conference celebrates CX3—the organization's priorities of Community x Coldwater x Conservation. Each year this event is held in a different location around the country. It features many learning opportunities for anyone who cares about coldwater conservation.

I serve as Oregon's National Leadership Council (NLC) Representative. NLC is a volunteer committee made up of one person from each state council. We are tasked with setting the direction of TU and we meet up at this conference to plan for the year ahead.

Dam removal was a top discussion point throughout the conference. Maine TU leaders talked about their success taking out dams on the Kennebec River, and plans to remove others to further aid Atlantic salmon recovery. Our western Klamath and Snake River dams remain a top priority for TU, too, on a national level as well as for the Oregon Council.

A variety of presentations and discussion groups were offered throughout the five-day conference.

In "TU and Land Trusts: Partnerships for Trout and Salmon Habitat" the presenters told of grants available for chapters that pair up with land trust organizations to do conservation projects.

North Idaho Field Coordinator Eric Crawford gave an exceptional presentation regarding the need to remove the four lower Snake River dams.

Two other sessions, one on using mapping to identify fish passage barriers and another about using drones to plan conservation projects, were a great overview of how cutting-edge technology is being used to benefit rivers and fish.

Saturday was President Chris Wood's popular annual "State of TU" address highlighting conservation successes across the nation. He applauded the draft report from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration calling for the immediate breach of Snake River dams.

Even closer to home, Wood mentioned Oregon's conservation successes a couple times. He praised the new Private Forest Accord, saying it "will dramatically improve the health of Oregon watersheds for both fish and people." He also highlighted Pacific Northwest Education Coordinator Darek Staab and his program that connects kids of the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs with their local rivers and fish.

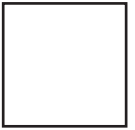
Make plans now to join the 2023 annual meeting in Spokane, Washington, September 27-October 1. I would highly encourage attendance as this event is a unique opportunity to get to know TU leadership, discover new technologies, and find opportunities to move local conservation projects forward. You'll also meet fellow conservationists who are passionate about protecting our native fish and coldwater rivers and streams.

Jodi Wilmoth  
Bend, OR





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Location: Bend

### PDX Casting Club

Web: [facebook.com/PDXCastingClub/](https://facebook.com/PDXCastingClub/)

### PDX Women on the Fly

Web: [facebook.com/PDXCastingClub/](https://facebook.com/PDXCastingClub/)

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