

TU 225 Chapter Presidential Platform of John Troiano

I would like to start this off by thanking John McCall for accepting the position of President of TU 225 during a very trying time and serving admirably for the last 3 ½ years. In that time, we have seen the Chapter grow both in members and activities. The resurrection of the annual Banquet has added to our financial stability and his introduction of the Lawson Cary Conservation Award has allowed us to fund some very important projects, the most recent being the purchase of a chiller for Coventry High school's Trout in the Classroom program. My main focus as the new President will be to continue many of the programs that were set up by the previous administration.

So, let me tell you a little about myself. I have been a member of Trout Unlimited for a little over 5 years and a Life Member for a little over 3 years. I saw the importance of the mission of this organization and wanted to become more involved. I have served on the Executive Board for the last 2 years. John McCall asked me to attend a MA/RI Council meeting and I now am involved with the Council as Vice Chairman of Public Relations. In that capacity, I have been instrumental in getting TU 225's participation at both the Marlboro and Worcester shows. As a member of TU 225 and someone who is concerned with the health of the waters where we fish, I lobbied RIDEM to adopt a felt sole wader ban in all RI waters effective with opening day 2012. I cannot claim to have done this alone. I was able to put together a group consisting of TU 225, TU 737 and the Federation of Sportsmen in RI to testify in favor of this ban. We all know that the Didymo has been found on the Farmington River and we are only one state away from being infected. In August 2011, I attended the Northeastern Regional TU Conference in CT and learned some of the problems and solutions that other TU Chapters have experienced.

At that Conference, I learned that the average age of a TU member is 61 years old. I'm 62 and I sometimes feel like a youngster at our meetings. I am convinced that we need to attract younger members and families to the Chapter. This can be done by continuing the work we are doing with youth programs as well as attracting college age anglers. We should help the local high schools and colleges establish fly fishing clubs. Eagle Scout candidates are required to do a community project. We should be contacting Scout leaders to recruit these young men to help with stream restoration projects.

We have a great relationship with RIDEM and they are grateful for the help we give them. We need to keep fostering this relationship. I believe that our Conservation Committee should spend the next few months coming up with some stream restoration projects for the Chapter.

As a member of the Executive Committee of the MA/RI TU Council, I have learned about the problems that other TU Chapters are faced with. At the present time, there is an ecological disaster going on in Hawley, MA on the Chickley River. We must all work together to help with this problem. We have a gem of a river in Arcadia. The Wood River is an angler's dream and we are fortunate to have the Wood Pawtucket Rivershed Association as a conservation partner. They have been instrumental in getting Congress to start the process of getting this watershed added into the Wild and Scenic River program. At the same time, I believe that we deserve a seat at the table for the planning and negotiations of this important project.

As anglers, we are not alone in using Arcadia and the Wood River. TU 225 should form strategic alliances with the other user groups. We should be reaching out to mountain bikers, kayakers and canoeists and off road motorcyclists. There is strength in numbers and many of the issues faced by TU 225 are faced by these other user groups.

TU 225 is not the only TU Chapter in Rhode Island. There are many passionate anglers in the Northern RI Chapter. We should be capitalizing on the relationship we have with these TU members. I have spoken with the President of the Northern Chapter about the possibility of appointing liaisons between the 2 Chapters. These liaisons would attend Executive Board and General Meetings to report on the activities of each Chapter.

I want to bring the fun back to TU 225. I would like to see more group events that include spouses as well as children and grandchildren. The MA/RI Council sponsors a camping weekend on the Westfield River every May. TU 225 should be represented. Perhaps we could do our own camping event. Instead of sponsoring fishing tournaments, I think we should have a Family Day on the Wood River. TU meetings should be informative as well as entertaining. I would challenge the Program Chairman to come up with innovative ideas. No member should feel excluded if all he wants to do is pay his dues, go to meetings and fish.

It may seem like I have chosen a very demanding path for TU 225. The growth of this Chapter is directly proportional to the hard work put in by its leaders. We have been fortunate to have had leaders that have laid a strong foundation. It is now our responsibility to take things to the next level. I am a tireless worker, a go-getter. Some may call me brash, loud, opinionated and a little over the top. To this I plead guilty. As President of TU 225, I promise that we will have fun, we will accomplish the stated goals of Trout Unlimited and we will have fun. All I ask of you are your votes.

John Troiano

“No man ever steps in the same river twice, for it's not the same river and he's not the same man.”

Heraclitus