

TOM'S MARKET

FRESH. LOCAL. EXCEPTIONAL.

NOT JUST A SLOGAN, BUT SOMETHING WE STRIVE TO ACHIEVE EVERY DAY.

Trout Unlimited (TU) is a national conservation organization with 300,000 members and supporters strong, with over 400 chapters and councils nationwide.

The Rhode Island Chapter of Trout Unlimited, formerly The Narragansett Chapter of Trout Unlimited, is a fully sanctioned chapter of Trout Unlimited, bound by the national organization's mission, vision, bylaws, and policies

In August of 1998, TU issued its *North American Salmonid Policy: Science-Based Guidance for 21st Century Coldwater Conservation*. [North American Salmonid Policy](#)

The most relevant part of that Salmonid Policy is found on page 31, section D. Hatcheries, Policy Recommendation D, which states: *"Oppose stocking (or supplementation) in waters where healthy, self-sustaining salmonid populations or stocks exist"*

At the 2011 annual meeting, TU issued *Guidance Document for (National Leadership Council) (NLC) Resolution on Stocking Non-Native Hatchery Trout Over Native Trout Populations* [Resolution on Stocking Over Native Trout](#)

The Rhode Island Chapter of Trout Unlimited (RITU225) has and will continue to work collaboratively with state agencies and NGO's, including RIDEM, WPWA, RIWRB, NFWF, and others, on habitat assessment and restoration efforts to conserve, protect, sustain, and enhance water quality for brook trout and their habitat.

In the early 1990's, RITU225 advocated for, and legislation was passed, for a non-stock, catch and release area from the Falls River bridge on Brook Trail to the bridge on Austin Farm Road.

RITU225, along with our project partners, have made considerable progress in conservation in Rhode Island. Working collaboratively over the course of the past two years, we have succeeded in making the Beaver River in Richmond a non-stock, catch and release, single barbless hook, artificial lure watershed. In effect, a wild native brook trout refuge.

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With data collected from our chapter working in conjunction with the RIDEM a regulation was passed on an 8” minimum length for all trout species in 2020, effectively conserving the states wild native *Salvelinus fontinalis*, more commonly known as brook trout.

RITU225 defines a ***native population*** is one that is indigenous and occurs naturally and within their historical range and may include a population that was eliminated from their historical range but has been reintroduced for conservation purposes.

RITU225 defines a ***wild population*** of individuals of a species, subspecies, or stock that persist through self-sustaining natural reproduction. The term "wild" is used when speaking at the individual fish level and the term "self-sustaining" when speaking at the population level

RITU225 defines a ***wild/native population***, with regards to fish, meaning an indigenous species born in nature. We combine the terms so as not be confused with self-sustaining non-natives

Through its habitat assessment work, angler surveys, and data collected from our collaborative, educational, and environmental activities with other organizations and agencies, RITU225 has confirmed the presence of a wild/native population of brook trout in the upper Wood River Watershed, specifically above the Barberville Dam in Hope Valley, RI.

The Rhode Island Chapter of Trout Unlimited agrees with, and in fact bound by, Trout Unlimited and their *North American Salmonid Policy: Science-Based Guidance for 21st Century Coldwater Conservation* policy.

Therefore, The Rhode Island Chapter of Trout Unlimited supports the cessation of stocking in streams with a self-sustaining wild brook trout population, including the upper Wood River Watershed.

With the continued collaborative efforts of RITU, RIDEM and other like-minded organizations and agencies, we hope to ensure that one day the upper Wood River Watershed will provide a pristine ecological habitat for wild native brook trout

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