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CONTACT: Brian Larson, 608-725-5570
Duke Welter, 715-579-7538

Harry & Laura Nohr Chapter Receives Trout Unlimited's Highest Award

Chapter Recognized for Conservation and Educational Efforts in Driftless Area

MINNEAPOLIS – Trout Unlimited (TU) has awarded its top chapter honor to the Harry & Laura Nohr Chapter, based in southwestern Wisconsin. TU Vice President Steve Moyer presented the award at the organization's 2006 annual meeting last Friday.

The Gold Trout chapter award is granted annually to the chapter that has made the most noteworthy contribution to the cause of coldwater conservation during the previous year.

The Harry & Laura Nohr chapter is a leader in conservation efforts in the Midwest's Driftless Area, which is considered by many to be a national treasure with its unique limestone formations, springs and small streams. Bypassed by the last glacier, the region lies within the states of Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa and Illinois. Land use practices in the mid 1800s and early 1900s led to wide-scale erosion, flooding and the altering of its streams and valleys. Though conditions have improved, impact from past damage continues in many forms.

Over the past three years, the Harry & Laura Nohr chapter has spearheaded three restoration projects on Wisconsin's Blue River, a Class I trout stream. These projects have restored over 11,000 feet of stream at a total cost of well over \$100,000. The chapter has brought together a wide array of public and private partners including Wisconsin DNR, Iowa County Land Conservation Department, Grant County Land Conservation Department, Patagonia, Lands End Corporation and six other TU chapters in Wisconsin and Illinois. The Nohr chapter has been particularly successful in its efforts to connect urban Chicago TU chapters with these rural restoration projects.

"The Harry & Laura Nohr chapter is a model for coldwater activism," said Duke Welter, member of the TU Board of Trustees. "The chapter's successful efforts in the Driftless Area encouraged our region's TU volunteers and our national organization to develop a program focused on the large-scale restoration of the region. I can't think of another chapter whose work inspired such a significant commitment at the national level."

Education also is a high priority for the Nohr chapter. It provides grants and internships to local students, as well as opportunities for citizens to participate in a stream monitoring program. Members also have worked closely with area teachers to develop a coldwater conservation curriculum for use in local schools.

“Our Membership has been steadfast in its commitment to the preservation, protection and restoration of the coldwater resource,” said Brian Larson, President of the Harry & Laura Nohr chapter. “We are committed to working with landowners, educators and other community leaders to ensure that trout streams can thrive along with productive farms, forests and recreational lands.”

The Nohr chapter is based in the Dodgeville, Fennimore and Platteville areas in southwestern Wisconsin.

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Trout Unlimited is North America's leading coldwater fisheries conservation organization, with more than 160,000 members dedicated to the protection and restoration of trout and salmon fisheries and their watersheds.