



For more information contact:

Jennifer E. Jones
Executive Director, Cacapon and Lost Rivers Land Trust
304-856-1188

Cacapon and Lost Rivers Land Trust and Trout Unlimited Receive Grant for Land Protection and Brook Trout Restoration

Two-Year \$350,000 Grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation's Chesapeake Bay Stewardship Fund

[Wardensville, West Virginia] The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation has awarded the Cacapon and Lost Rivers Land Trust and Trout Unlimited a \$350,000 two-year grant to continue their long-standing partnership to permanently protect land through conservation easements and to restore native brook trout habitat in the Cacapon and Lost Rivers watershed.

The 680-square mile Cacapon watershed in portions of Hardy, Hampshire and Morgan counties of West Virginia has been identified as a priority in the Chesapeake Bay Stewardship Fund program and represents the easternmost stronghold for native brook trout in the state.

The grant will support activities to expand landowner outreach, restore and protect key riparian and stream habitat and permanently protect land adjacent to vital brook trout habitat. In addition, the funds will also support the launch of the *Cacapon Watershed Collaborative* to expand collaboration among partners working in the Cacapon watershed and will support a research project to learn directly from landowners their views on land protection.

“We are thrilled to receive this grant to continue our work with Trout Unlimited. They have been a real leader in stream improvement and brook trout restoration. We’re also very excited that the grant will support the *Cacapon Watershed Collaborative*. We’ve already heard from many organizations who are eager to work more closely together to achieve our shared goals,” said Jennifer Jones, Executive Director of the Cacapon and Lost Rivers Land Trust. “Through the research the grant supports, we will also learn more about what’s important to landowners in the watershed. Overall, this grant will contribute significantly to permanently protecting land and improving the natural resources in this unique watershed,” Jones added.

“The Cacapon Watershed is a vital stronghold for native brook trout in West Virginia. Our ongoing

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riparian and in-stream restoration efforts coupled with land protection are already proving fruitful, as water quality and brook trout populations have shown improvements across our project waters,” said Dustin Wichterman, Associate Director for Trout Unlimited’s Mid-Atlantic Coldwater Habitat Program. “This grant represents a key link in ongoing collaborative efforts to restore riparian areas of the Cacapon and its tributaries and will accelerate watershed-scale restoration efforts that the Cacapon and Lost Rivers Land Trust, and state, federal, and private landowner partners have been working to achieve. Our collective efforts will leave future generations of West Virginians with high quality waters and fisheries,” added Wichterman.

The \$350,000 two-year grant was awarded through the Small Watershed Grants program of the [Chesapeake Bay Stewardship Fund](#).

[The Cacapon and Lost Rivers Land Trust](#) for 30 years has worked with landowners to protect the forests, farms, rural heritage, and water quality of the Cacapon watershed. With more than 50 conservation easements and more than 14,000 acres protected, the Cacapon and Lost Rivers Land Trust is the largest local land trust in West Virginia and accredited through the Land Trust Alliance.

[Trout Unlimited](#) is the nation’s oldest and largest coldwater fisheries conservation organization dedicated to conserving, protecting, and restoring North America’s trout and salmon and their watersheds. Follow Trout Unlimited on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#) and on our [blog](#) for all the latest information on trout and salmon conservation.

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