

NOR'EAST CHAPTER, TROUT UNLIMITED - MEETING MINUTES

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 13, 2026
6:00 PM – 9:30 PM
MEETING TO BE HELD IN PERSON AT IRWA'S RIVERBEND HEADQUARTERS, IPSWICH MA

ZOOM MEETING LINK:
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82812810907?pwd=ggfaiOaEtZ4ckJjXc22JiTV8QIwVLx.1

6:00 Pizza and Chicken Ziti from Ipswich House of Pizza

7:00: Meeting called to order. A quorum was present. 17 members, including 9 Board members.
Ben Meade, Bill MacDavitt, AJ Strub, Nancy LaBello, Herb Stillman, Jim MacDougall, Fred Jennings, Chet Walsh, Randy Williams, Floyd Maker, Miles Cobb, Josh Rownd, Laurie Hagar, Neil Shea, Art Howe (by Zoom), Sarah Milton and her guests: John Marshall, Sr., John Marshall and Dodie Marshall.

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM SEPTEMBER 8, 2026:
Randy moved to approve, Laurie seconded. No discussion. The motion passed.

2. APPROVAL OF TREASURER'S REPORT:
Peter sent a summary; there is approximately $34,000 in the account. Recent expenditures were for the website and banquet deposit. No action required.

3. FUNDING/REIMBURSEMENT REQUESTS/UPCOMING ANTICIPATED EXPENDITURES:
a. River Alliance membership: $1,000. Josh made a motion to approve the expense. Chet seconded the motion. No further discussion. The motion passed.
b. Ben Meade expenses: Annual Zoom membership: $180.52. Meal on 9/8/26" $152.73. Meal on 10/13/26: approx. $149 less jar donations.
c. IRWA 2027 Riverfest is an upcoming expense.
d. Three Rivers donation: $500. Josh made a motion to approve the expense. Chet seconded the motion. No further discussion. The motion passed.

4. WEBSITE REVAMP UPDATE
Laurie and Miles now have access to the website. They have been making corrections and editing content, adding events, etc. Discussion continued regarding restructuring and who our vendor should be moving forward.

5. DISCUSSION – PAST/UPCOMING CHAPTER MEETINGS
The speaker's honorarium is $250. Suggestions for speakers for October onward are welcome!

Meeting Date	Speaker
Monday, September 9, 2024	No speaker – Free Chapter BBQ
Tuesday, October 8, 2024	Fred Jennings, Fishing the Great Lakes Tributaries
Tuesday, November 12, 2024	Kalil Boghdan, Fly Fishing the East and West Outlet on the Kennebec River
Tuesday, December 10, 2024	Fly Tying with Peter Simonson; The Black Ghost & The Gray Ghost
Tuesday, January 14, 2025	Craig Andree, Stillwater Fly Fishing from a Float Tube
Tuesday, February 11, 2025	David Rimmer, Striped Bass Flies and Striped Bass
Tuesday, March 11, 2025	Joe Gray, Environmental Police Officer
Tuesday, April 8, 2025	Eric Roach, Shad Fishing
Tuesday May 13, 2025	No speaker anticipated – Free Chapter BBQ at the Gould Barn
Tuesday, September 9, 2025	No speaker anticipated– Free Chapter BBQ
Tuesday, October 14, 2025	Adam Kautza, MA Coldwater Fisheries Project Leader
Tuesday, November 11, 2025	Joe Holbeche, Diadromous Fish Biologist, MA DMF
Tuesday, December 9, 2025	Dwayne Shaw, Executive Director, Downeast Salmon Federation
Tuesday, January 13, 2026	Craig Andree, Fly Fishing in Northern NH – Seven Rivers in Four Days
Tuesday, February 10, 2026	Nick Nelson, Fluvial Geomorphologist at Inter-Fluve
Tuesday, March 10, 2026	Miles Cobb, eDNA project and Staff (Tim O'Donnell) from the Gloucester Marine Genomics Institute
Tuesday, April 14, 2026	Zach Adams, TU's Massachusetts Project Manager
Tuesday, May 12, 2026	No speaker anticipated – Free Chapter BBQ at IRWA
Tuesday, September 8, 2026	No speaker – Free pizza at IRWA
Tuesday, October 13, 2026	Sarah Milton – Cape Ann's Waters from the Angler's Perspective
Tuesday. November 10, 2026	Graham Healey, Guide on the East Branch of the Kennebec
Tuesday, December 8, 2026	Peter Abdu, Brook Trout Underwater Photographer
Tuesday, January 12, 2027	
Tuesday, February 9, 2027	
Tuesday, March 9, 2027	
Tuesday, April 13, 2027	
Tuesday, May 11, 2027	

7. PAST PROJECTS:

Bill asked about past projects. He was brought up to speed on some of recent work on a couple of culvert replacements and other projects.

8. CHAPTER ORGANIZATION (information only, no report)

NETU BOARD MEMBERS: Ben Meade (President), Ben Shea (Vice President), Josh Rownd (Secretary), Peter Vandermeulen (Treasurer), Art Howe, Floyd Maker, Fred Jennings, Neil Shea, Carl Soderland, Chett Walsh, Miles Cobb, Randy Williams, Laurie Hager.

Banquet Committee – Josh Rownd, Chair. Fred Jennings, Ben Meade, Kalil Boghdan, Peter Vandermeulen, Carl Soderland, Ben Shea.
Conservation Committee – Carl Soderland, Chair. Ben Meade, Neil Shea, Fred Jennings, Jim MacDougall, Kalil Boghdan, Chett Walsh, Miles Cobb, Laurie Hagar.
Nominating/Awards Committee – Josh Rownd, Ben Meade, Fred Jennings, Ben Shea.
Activities and Events Committee – Kalil Boghdan, Chair. Fred Jennings, Carl Soderland, Floyd Maker.

9. DISCUSSION ABOUT 2027 BANQUET :
Josh Rownd gave an update. The banquet will again be held at the Black Swan in Georgetown. The date will be March 13th. It was agreed to charge $50/seat and $350/table. No tickets will be sold at the door. The venue requires all meals to be accounted for prior to the event. The nominating committee needs to identify award recipients. Early discussion of possible recipients: Beth Lambert or one of the engineering companies working on the projects. Not too early to begin asking for donations. Josh will prepare information to distribute at the November 8th meeting.

10. ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS – Kalil Boghdan, Craig Andree, Ben Meade, Neil Shea, Josh Rownd. Info only, no report.

Upcoming Events:

Past Events: Kalil Boghdan and Craig Andree – What a List!!!

- PIE Rivers Pie Potluck: Thursday, March 12th at True North Brewing Co. in Ipswich – 4:30-6:30 PM
- NETU Annual Fundraising Banquet: Saturday, March 14th , 2026 in Georgetown
- Riverbank Revival: Tuesday, March 17th at Larkin Dam Removal site in Newbury - 10AM-3PM
- Fly Casting at Patton Park Pond in Hamilton: Saturday, April 11th, 2026 – 9AM-12 PM
- Fly Fishing on Fish Brook in Boxford: Saturday, April 25th, 2026 - 8 AM
- Fly Fishing at Obear Park in Beverly: Saturday, May 23rd, 2026 - timing TBD
- IRWA's Riverfest at Ipswich River Park in North Reading: Sunday, June 14, 2026, 11 AM-2 PM
- Recap: Fly fishing on the Cocheco and Lamprey Rivers, October/November/December 2025
- Recap: Intro to Fly Tying, Malden Anglers in October 2025
- Recap: Fly fishing on the Exeter River on 5/30/2025
- Recap: Fly fishing on the Exeter River on 4/4/2025
- Recap: Fly casting practice at Patton Park on 4/13/24
- Recap: Pint Night at True North Brewery with Backcountry Hunters and Anglers on 4/25/24
- Recap: Fly fishing at Fish Brook on 4/28/24
- Recap: Joint meeting/social event with GBTU at Malden Anglers on 5/16/24
- Recap: Striped Bass fishing in the Danvers River on 5/18/24
- Recap: Deerfield River fishing trip, spring 2024
- Recap: Brook trout fishing in NH, summer 2024
- Recap: Local fishing and fly tying with Craig Andree
- Recap: Fishing the Three Rivers in southern NH

11. CONSERVATION COMMITTEE REPORT Information only, no report.

- **Conservation Committee:** Carl will be hosting a meeting on November 18.

- **eDNA project:** Miles brought kit for distribution. He previously reported that last year 25 spots were studied. This year it will be more focused. Saw Mill, Cobbler, Ox Paster to be included. Need to submit for the MATU grant again. Jim commented on the project as well.
- **Larkin Dam removal:** Neil Shea reported. The dam was removed last November. Water quality monitoring, planting started in the fall, witnessed fish in the Spring, beaver activity.
- **Parker River:** Neil Shea reported. The DMF is conducting a feasibility study at the dam at Wooten Mills (Central Street).
- **Ipswich Mills Dam:** Neil Shea reported. A noticing error sent the process back to the Conservation Committee. It is being appealed again which will bog down the process in District Court. Meantime, other permits are being applied for.
- **Willowdale Dam Natural Fish Bypass are in permitting:** Neil Shea reported. The budget estimate was $1.6M, the low bid was $3.2M. The project is paused for fundraising.
- **Mill River Herring Count:** Ben Meade reported. The herring run was very heavy this year. He will be sending the findings to Joe at the DMF. The counting board as removed, cleaned and stored for next Spring.
- **Willowdale Dam Fishway board adjustment/cleanout/herring count.** No update.
- **Project Voldemort:** Sawmill Creek and Cat Brook in Manchester. Carl updated trying to get 3 areas tested. The housing project is still moving forward.
- **Other project updates or potential projects:** Neil Shea reported. IRWA is conducting additional fish surveys. Electro fishing occurring on the Ipswich and its tributaries.

12. MISC – OTHER TOPICS/OPEN DISCUSSION No discussion.

13. ADJOURNMENT. 9:30. NEXT CHAPTER MEETING: Tuesday, November 10, 2026, 2026 AT RIVERBEND.

14. List of Chapter Activities/Involvement/Contributions, As Recently Assembled by Ben Meade

- **NETU members funded and completed an eDNA study of streams and rivers throughout Essex County in spring, 2025.**
- **NETU members contributed financial support and pro-bono professional expertise for three major culvert replacement projects to aid migratory fish in Ipswich River tributaries over the last 10 years.**
- **NETU members organize a herring count at the Willowdale Dam location on the Ipswich River every spring.**
- **NETU members help to keep a fishway operating properly and free of debris during the spring herring migration season at the Willowdale Dam on the Ipswich River.**
- **NETU members participate in the Ipswich River Watershed Association herring count at the Ipswich Mills Dam on the Ipswich River every spring.**
- **NETU members participate in the Shawsheen River herring count every spring in Andover.**
- **NETU members organize a herring count on the Mill River in Rowley every spring, and provide our data to the state's Division of Ecological Restoration and Division of Marine Fisheries. This is the only herring count on the Mill River, an important tributary of the Parker River.**

- **NETU members conduct periodic stream cleanups on the banks of the Mill River in Rowley and Newbury.**

- **NETU members conducted a multi-year study on water quality and invertebrate insects on the Mill River in Rowley, and involved Governor's Academy students in the process.**

- **NETU members help to keep a fishway operating properly and free of debris during the spring herring migration season at the Larkin Dam on the Parker River in Newbury.**

- **NETU members are involved with a watershed-wide water sampling effort being organized by the Merrimack River Watershed Council on the Shawsheen River.**

- **NETU members are working with several other non-profits to monitor small streams on the North Shore for the presence/absence of sea run brook trout, river herring, and American eel.**

- **NETU members participate in stream and/or beach cleanups throughout the region when asked, and help publicize these events for the other organizations that run them.**

- **NETU members also provide volunteer time/expertise, funding or letters of support for specific projects when needed or asked.**