

PANHANDLE CHAPTER OF TROUT UNLIMITED BOARD MEETING MINUTES

May 14, 2025

East Bonner County Library

Attendance:

Chip Corsi, Bill Love, Dave Gillmor, Eric Berntsen, Francine Meija, Walt Grows, Tom Whalen, Michael Cain, Laura Forsberg, Ron Forsberg

Chip called the meeting to order at 5:30.

Chip reported that he participated in an online National Trout Unlimited Teams meeting at which the status of federal budgets was discussed. There was a strong public response which apparently has led to funding being restored for many projects.

Chip gave a report from Amy Anderson concerning this year's Bull Trout Education Program. She requests more volunteers for the May 29 event from 7-9 a.m. to help with setup. Bill volunteered to send out an email to chapters members asking for volunteers.

TU Staff Update: Cathy's report was also given by Chip.

-She states that there are projects in the works at Red Ives, Pritchard, Hudlow Meadows, Gold Creek, and Harvey Creek (in Pend Oreille County).

-She reports that Erin had attended the recent State Council of TU meeting. She reviewed our chapter's new website with them, which was apparently well received, resulting in them expressing a desire to hire the same firm to update the Council's website.

-In one last item, the Corps of Engineers has reached out to determine our chapter's willingness and ability to help out with a possible Youth Fly Fishing class.

Chip reported that Kaniksu Land Trust has requested assistance in developing a fishing pond at Pine Street Woods. The apparently have grant funding in place to develop the necessary improvements, to include a boardwalk, trail, and parking area. The pond is approximately one acre in size. Chip stated that this would be consistent with IDFG's concept of creating "Bicycle Ponds" close enough to communities that young people would have ready access to fishing opportunities. This would be a put-and-take fishery.

Committee Reports:

Fundraising:

Laura reported that she has signed, on behalf of the chapter, a 3-year contract with Flyfishing Film Tour (F3T). This allows us to receive additional items for our raffles, some of which has already arrived and has been moved to our storage unit.

-The date for next year's F3T has been confirmed with the Panida for February 27, 2026.

-She brought in a sample coffee mug and requested feedback from other board members as to whether we should have something similar made up in which to sell larger amounts of raffle tickets. The response was favorable but no further action was taken at this time.

-Chip, in a follow-up from last month's meeting, reported that the chapter apparently had 13 new members who signed up at this year's F3T, taking advantage of the free membership offer.

Education/Outreach:

Bill gave a recap of the Fly Fishing Instruction Program held at the J.E. Russell Center. The four planned sessions have been completed, including the last one at the fish pond at Silverwood. That went well with almost every student catching at least one

fish. Chip said that he would contact Bob Holman to ask that he send a thank you note to Silverwood.

Bill stated that some thought has been given to having a fifth session, possibly to include a barbecue at IDFG's Waterlife Discovery Center.

Laura reported on the upcoming Youth Fly Fishing Event scheduled for Saturday, June 7, at the WDC, from 8:30-12. This event is co-sponsored by our chapter and the local chapter of Idaho Master Naturalists. Fourteen have signed up with six spaces remaining. (Note: as of 5/27, all spaces have been filled.) North 40 will once again be donating a fly rod and reel set. Bill stated that he will apply for the required educational permit from IDFG which will allow the registered students to fish the pond even if they do not have a fishing license.

Conservation:

Chip reported on ongoing discussions involving the Idaho Department of Water Resources concerning the summer pool level for Priest Lake. At this time, the level is managed to be at 3' during normal to wet years, but 3-1/2' in dry years. The purpose of the higher level in dry years is to hold back some water which can be released into the Priest River when needed to help maintain adequate flow levels. Eric reported that the Kalispel tribe is very involved in this process.

Chip provided information concerning his interactions with the Idaho Trails Association which has announced their summer trail maintenance schedule. He had sent out an email on May 13, 2025 detailing the list of planned projects for this year. He identified several that are in our region that people might be interested in attending. These include Upper Priest River (Sept 13-14), Coeur d'Alene River (July 25-27), and Trapper Creek (Sept 20-21).

Chip adjourned the meeting at 7:00.

Respectfully submitted,
Ron Forsberg, secretary