



National Leadership Council

New Initiatives Workgroup

January 16, 2026

Workgroup Chair: Noel Gollehon, ngollehon@comcast.net

Workgroup meeting dates: fourth Tuesday of the month at 8:00 pm

<https://troutunlimited.zoomus/my/nationalleadershipcouncil>

Workgroup Goals: For the year our main goal is to conduct a transparent, successful process to select a nominee for the opening Grassroots positions, because we serve as the nominating committee for the NLC. In addition, we will assist in the implementation of the new NCA process which started with the NIWG.

Workgroup Activity: Utilizing a documented process, we have started the effort for selecting the Grassroots Trustees and will complete our portion of the process in May 2026.

Workgroup Obstacles and Challenges: Like all Workgroups more NLC voting members are needed.

Workgroup Next Step: We will engage in the process for the Grassroots Trustee Nomination for the first half of the year. Then we will evaluate what is needed on the NCA implantation process.



National Leadership Council

Youth Education Workgroup

January 16, 2026

Workgroup Chair: Matt Misicka (mattmisicka@gmail.com)

Workgroup meeting dates: First Wednesdays, 8pm Eastern (No July or September Meetings)

Workgroup Goals:

- Promote youth education excellence, engagement, and innovation by facilitating volunteer-to-volunteer and staff-to-volunteer engagement.
- Support youth education philanthropy through workgroup outreach to councils and chapters.

Workgroup Activities:

- YEWG Call (Jun 4): Planned support for GRTU Tomorrow Fund.
- YEWG Call (Aug 6): Created priorities for NCA Biennial Update.
- YEWG Call (Oct 1): Hosted a panel discussion with the leaders of three TU Student Clubs from high schools in Pennsylvania (1) and Colorado (2).
- YEWG Call (Nov 5 & Dec 3): Created a list of fishing-adjacent activities for when fishing isn't practical or warranted, set expectations of lesson-plans, recruited participants.

Workgroup Accomplishments:

- Created lesson plans for fishing-adjacent activities. In progress are:
 - How to build a wooden wading stick (and safe wading techniques).
 - Replacing old landing nets with modern rubber netting. A step-by-step guide.
- Identified five future workgroup priorities, including:
 - Realizing an actual stream-of-engagement by moving beyond the simple individual, one-and-done event focus.
 - Promoting youth in chapter leadership, regional rendezvous, & annual meeting.

Workgroup Obstacles and Challenges:

- Increase participation: Number of active participants on monthly calls is roughly ten, including 1-3 TU staff, 3-5 "regulars", and 1-2 "visitors" per call. Workgroup community forum has 87 participants.
- GRTU Tomorrow Fund: Plans to conduct an email campaign to councils and chapters to explain GRTUTF and solicit donations was postponed due to the historic, catastrophic flooding that occurred in the region on July 4th, 2025.
- Succession planning: Need to secure a vice-chair.

Workgroup Next Step:

- Work with senior YEWG participants and staff to recruit a YEWG vice-chair.
- Add a SMART To-Do to the conclusion of every workgroup call for participants.



National Leadership Council

Grassroots Workgroup

January 16, 2026

Workgroup Co-Chairs: Paul D. McKay, pauldmckay13@gmail.com & Peter Tovar, pqtovar@gmail.com

Workgroup Meeting Dates: The Native Trout Workgroup meets the fourth Wednesday of the month at 8:00 PM (Eastern Time)

Grassroots WorkGroup Report January 2026

- **Workgroup reactivated:** The Grassroots Workgroup has begun a new cycle of work with updated leadership under Co-Chairs Peter Tovar (New Jersey NLC) and Paul D. McKay (West Virginia NLC).
- **Staff liaison:** Quentin Collins is serving as the Trout Unlimited staff contact/representative for GRWG.
- **Re-start strategy sessions underway:** Over the past few months, GRWG leadership has held strategy meetings with Quentin and NLC leadership/support (including Beverly Smith (Vice President for Engagement), Paul M. McKay (NLC Secretary), and Rich Thomas (NLC Chair)).
- **Review of prior work and inputs:** Early work has focused on reviewing previous GRWG surveys and the workgroup's historical focus areas to identify what should continue, what should be retired, and where we can deliver the most value now.
- **Primary focus areas moving forward:**
 - **Support TU National** with targeted, practical assistance aligned with current priorities.
 - **Help advance the National Conservation Agenda (NCA) process** with grassroots-relevant support and feedback loops.
 - **Strengthen succession planning** for Chapters and Councils through more strategic, repeatable guidance and practices.
- **First full meeting scheduled: January 22 at 7:00 PM EST** (first workgroup meeting under the renewed structure).
- **Planned January 22 agenda:** Initial discussion of processes and near-term support for both the NCA process and succession planning efforts.
- **Deliverables-driven approach:** GRWG will emphasize clear deliverables per meeting so members leave with measurable action items, improving follow-through and keeping the workgroup active and outcomes-focused.



National Leadership Council

Ripple Effect Workgroup

January 16, 2026

Workgroup Thought Leader: Greg Walz, gwalz@michigantu.org or gregorywalz@gmail.com

Workgroup Staff Liaison: Beverly Smith, Beverly.Smith@tu.org

Workgroup meeting dates: 3rd Thursday of the month at 8-9pm Eastern

<https://troutunlimited.zoom.us/my/nationalleadershipcouncil>

Workgroup Goals:

- Work to provide an experience of belonging, equity, and inclusion between and among TU volunteer leaders, members, and the communities they serve
- Work to cultivate diversity, equity, and foster inclusion in our Council & Chapters, and ultimately within the local communities within which our Chapters operate and engage with the public
- Encourage all TU volunteers to approach conservation with an equity lens

Workgroup Activity:

- Monthly Zoom meetings to share information, ideas, and strategies among group leaders, TU staff, Grassroots Trustees, NLC representatives, Council and Chapter leaders and all interested TU members
- Working toward creating and maintaining a welcoming environment for all individuals and communities interested in contributing to our conservation efforts and priorities

Workgroup Obstacles and Challenges:

- Lost Co-Thought Leaders Beth Peterson and Justin Adkins in 2025
- Current sociopolitical conditions are not supportive of efforts to foster and maintain diversity and equity

Workgroup Next Steps:

- Rebuild workgroup leadership
- Explore strategies to strengthen succession planning to better build the next generation of Chapter and Council leaders-
- Work with TU staff to develop advocacy and outreach efforts as needed to keep TU members informed and engaged



National Leadership Council

Communications Workgroup

January 16, 2026

Workgroup Chair: Mike Mihalas mike@mihalas.com

Workgroup Meeting Dates: First Tuesday of every month at 7 PM

Workgroup Goals:

1. Identify, categorize, and detail current TU communications vehicles.
2. Identify areas where TU communications can be enhanced or improved.
3. Support TU staff in their communications plans by engaging NLC representatives in those efforts.

Workgroup Activity: The Communications Workgroup has met monthly to discuss, establish, and pursue the above goals. Additionally, workgroup leadership has had additional discussions with TU Engagement and Communications staff to get their input and perspective on our goals and activities.

Workgroup Accomplishments: Please provide here a brief statement on the recent accomplishments of your workgroup, focused most heavily on the accomplishments since the last quarterly report.

1. Determined and submitted our workgroup priorities for the NLC National Conservation Agenda Survey.
2. Continued work on our list of current TU communications vehicles. The list has been submitted to TU staff for their input. Once that is complete we will refine the list and decide how to distribute and maintain the list.
3. Communications WG members helped with the TU brand rollout plan as it relates to grassroots and are supporting that rollout regionally at Council meetings and Regional Rendezvous.

Workgroup Obstacles and Challenges: We would benefit from greater participation in terms of membership to the workgroup.

Workgroup Next Steps: We plan to continue pursuit of the goals above, and to set new goals and plan new activities as we complete existing ones. We expect to complete goal 1 this quarter. Goals 2 and 3 are ongoing efforts that we will pursue the entire year.