

**Rocky Mountain Restoration Initiative (RMRI)**  
**June 15, 2020, 3:00 PM - 4:00 PM**  
**RMRI Social License Subcommittee**  
**Meeting Summary - FINAL**

**ATTENDANCE**

*Participants:* Rob Addington, Patt Dorsey, Cindy Dozier, Tim Kylo, Matt Lindler, Nathan Van Schaik, and Kirk Will

*Facilitation:* Heather Bergman and Samuel Wallace

**ACTION ITEMS**

<b>Matt Lindler</b>	Reach out to the Durango Herald and look at their social media accounts to determine if there are any opportunities to use or share their photos.
<b>Patt Dorsey and Cindy Dozier</b>	Add language to the key messages related to the idea that current efforts are not enough to reach the necessary pace and scale.
<b>Kirk Will</b>	Share the photos and time-lapse videos of prescribed fires in the Dolores area with the Social License Subcommittee.
<b>Samuel Wallace</b>	Incorporate the feedback from the Social License Subcommittee into the full RMRI update presentation.

**KEY MESSAGING FEEDBACK DISCUSSION**

Meeting participants discussed the feedback they received from priority landscape partners on the key messages. Their comments are summarized below.

- Partners from the Upper South Platte identified, "Wildland fire is a societal problem, and we need people to be part of the solution," and all prescribed fire messages to be the most relevant messages to them. They also identified newspaper articles, 30-45 second videos, social media, and handouts as the most helpful communication materials to them. They also suggested adding podcasts to the list of communication materials.
- Partners from the Upper Arkansas said that many of the messages resonated with them and their work. They suggested framing some of the key messaging language to be more action-oriented. Additionally, the message "Let's fight fire with fire" may not resonate with their communities because of the recent Decker Fire. They have discussed other messages like "Celebrate fire" instead.
- Partners from Southwest Colorado have not provided input on the key messages yet, but they likely will not make any dramatic changes to the key messages. The Southwest Colorado partners have realized they may need to put in more effort to build social license than previously thought, particularly for active forest management.
- "Wildfire-ready communities" may resonate with communities more than "fire-adapted communities" because it is more understandable and relatable to the layperson.
- It would take a lot of effort to manage and produce a podcast. An intern could potentially help manage a podcast if that is a direction the Subcommittee wants to take. Instead of producing a podcast, there are opportunities to appear as guests on already existing podcasts with large followings. Being a guest on a popular podcast is a huge opportunity to reach audiences. Matt Lindler and Nathan Van Schaik can coordinate interviews with popular podcasts with guidance from the Communications and Social License Subcommittee.

- Following a catastrophic wildfire, there may be more opportunities, not less, to promote forestry treatments. People often realize after a fire that they want more management to reduce the risk of another wildfire. There is a two- to three-year window following a fire in which outreach and education efforts can be impactful. After the two- to three-year window expires, there is a turnover in homeowners, and the new homeowners are not familiar and do not have experiences with wildfire and prescribed fire.
- The key messages should incorporate the idea that the current forest management efforts are not enough and are leading to catastrophic wildfires and frightening situations for communities. An increase in the pace and scale of forest management presents an opportunity to reduce the severity and intensity of wildfires and produce new outcomes. The choice is between a little smoke versus a lot of smoke and controlled fires versus uncontrolled fires. Some of the current key messages incorporate the idea that treatments will improve local forest conditions, but there needs to be a greater elaboration on the idea that current efforts are not enough to reach the necessary pace and scale. Patt Dorsey and Cindy Dozier will add language to the key messages related to the idea that current efforts are not enough to reach the necessary pace and scale.
- The key message bullets are helpful, but there needs to be a catchphrase to capture people's attention. The current key message bullets are supposed to introduce concepts and not serve as exactly worded slogans. The Communications Subcommittee and Social License Subcommittee can help tweak the exact wording for short catchphrases to then be paired with educational materials.
- Once catchphrases are developed, it is expected that priority landscape partners will tweak the wording to fit their local context. Local landscape partners can pick and choose which of the messages most resonate with them and their communities from the long list of key messages; they do not have to use every message.
- The next step for refining the key messages is for the Communications Subcommittee to take the language and begin to develop slogans, catchphrases, and potential images for the messages. RMRI partners can provide feedback on the key message concepts during the next full RMRI meeting but should not edit the document word-by-word.

## **ONGOING FIRE AND PHOTOS DISCUSSION**

Meeting participants discussed ongoing fires in Southwest Colorado and how to obtain photos of those fires. Their comments are summarized below.

- There is currently a fire burning near Dolores. There may be an opportunity to look at the origin of that fire, what is burning, and why it is burning so quickly and hotly. This information could help demonstrate how treatments and management could have altered the fire's behavior.
- The Durango Herald has pictures from the recent fires in the area. Their pictures may be able to demonstrate the difference in smoke production between prescribed fires and wildfires. There was another photo the Durango Herald published that depicts a sign that says "Fire prevention starts at home" with a fire in the background. These pictures are powerful tools to demonstrate the importance of forest management. It is not difficult to request photos from newspapers. Matt Lindler can reach out to the Durango Herald and look at their social media accounts to determine if there are any opportunities to use or share their photos.
- Kirk Will, Division of Fire Prevention and Control (DFPC), has access to photos and time-lapse videos of prescribed fires in the Dolores area. Kirk Will will share those photos with the Social License Subcommittee.

## **RMRI PARTNER UPDATE SLIDES DISCUSSION**

Meeting participants discussed presentation slides that will be used to update the full RMRI partnership on their activities. Their comments are summarized below.

- The slides outline the members of the Social License Subcommittee, their current efforts, and any requests they have for RMRI partners. One slide includes the list of potential communication materials for RMRI partners to consider. Another set of slides includes the primary themes of the key messages in order to introduce RMRI partners to the broad concepts of the key messages. The slides do not include the entire list of the key messages to avoid wordsmithing during the meeting.
- The slide with the list of potential communication materials should include options for public opinion leaders (e.g., government leaders, radio talk show hosts, etc.) and podcasts. The podcast bullet should be grouped with the radio and public service announcement tools. Samuel Wallace will add these bullets to the list of potential communication materials.
- There were multiple perspectives on whether RMRI partners should be polled on what communication materials are most valuable to them. Determining which communication materials are most appropriate for a certain situation may depend on the local area context as well as the message it is delivering. There may also need to be multiple communication methods to deliver messages in each area. It may not be helpful to poll RMRI partners if the communication materials are going to be developed based on specific factors. From another perspective, RMRI has been a user-driven process, and partners should provide input on what materials they want and need. Polling could add information and would not cause any harm. If RMRI partners have opinions on the communication materials, they should participate in the Social License Subcommittee because going back to the RMRI partner group for every decision will slow down the process. During the RMRI full meeting, the Social License Subcommittee can more broadly request feedback on the key messages and communication materials rather than poll the whole group.
- The Social License Subcommittees' request for RMRI partners is to provide any feedback on the concepts of the key messages (i.e., whether these are the right concepts, if any are troubling, or if any concepts are missing).
- There are benefits and drawbacks to sending the entire key messages list before the full RMRI meeting on June 24. Seeing the whole list before the meeting would give all RMRI partners a better understanding of the key messages, but it may also invite wordsmithing. The Social License Subcommittee will not send the full key messages list to RMRI partners prior to the meeting. Instead, they will offer to send the list of the key messages to any partners at their request. They will also ask RMRI partners to join the Social License Subcommittee if they want to discuss the key messages further.
- The plan is to get the full slide deck to RMRI partners by Monday, June 22, at the latest.

## **ACTION ITEM UPDATE**

Meeting participants provided updates on their action items from the 5/26 Social License Subcommittee meeting. Their comments are summarized below.

- Kelle Reynolds, US Forest Service (USFS), reached out to Frank McCormick, Rocky Mountain Research Station (RMRS), to see if they would be willing to host a graduate student to work on social license projects and research. Frank McCormick is considering whether RMRS could host a graduate student and has not provided an answer yet.
- Kirk Will and Heather Bergman have scheduled a call to explore the idea of having a student from the Masters in the Environment program at the University of Colorado-Boulder engage in a capstone project related to social licensing.

**NEXT STEPS**

The Communications Subcommittee will meet on Friday to discuss the social license key messages. Once the Communications Subcommittee has met, the Social License Subcommittee can determine when they would like to meet next.