

Rocky Mountain Restoration Initiative (RMRI)
May 4, 2021, 11 a.m. – 12 p.m.
Communications Subcommittee
Meeting Summary - FINAL

ATTENDANCE: Esther Godson, Teddy Parker-Renga, Catherine Schloegel, Jake Todd, Tara Umphries, Nathan Van Schaik

5/4 ACTION ITEMS

Nathan Van Schaik	Email the finalized RMRI Social Media Plan to the Communications Subcommittee (CS) members.
Nathan Van Schaik	In RMRI Monthly Update, separate state and federal legislation. Include RMRI speaking engagements in the EVENTS section. Also add a section where RMRI Partners can submit content for the monthly update.

UPDATES ON THE RMRI LOGO

The following represent the steps taken to select a logo:

1. National Wild Turkey Federation funded The Truth for RMRI branding and logo design.
2. The Truth interviewed RMRI leadership to develop strategy behind logo design (November 2020-January 2021).
3. The Truth designed logos. Recommended name change.
4. NWTF and USFS leadership—as well as communications leads Matt Lindler and Nathan Van Schaik—provided initial feedback.
5. The Truth revised logos based on feedback.
6. The Truth presented and discussed the three (3) logos Feb. 11 at 1 p.m. on Zoom.
7. The Truth logo presentation recorded and sent to RMRI partners.
8. RMRI partners had an opportunity to provide feedback to the Comms Subcommittee.
9. The Communications Subcommittee packaged those recommendations and shared with The Truth.
10. RMRI partners voted on the final logo options. The logo with the most votes will be announced at the May 11 RMRI Partnership meeting.

RMRI COMMUNICATIONS: AN OPERATIONAL APPROACH

Nathan delivered a [presentation](#) that segued into discussion on a solution. He defined the problem and offered an operational approach toward meeting objectives. According to the Leadership Team, in their own words, this is where we are now as a collaborative organization:

There is an overarching need for clearer and more transparent communications. There is also a need for RMRI to celebrate partner actions more frequently beyond accomplishment reporting. Communications also need to be improved internally and externally. — *Leadership Team, Dec. 14, 2020*

So if that's where we're at as a collaborative organization, where do we want to go? Here are comments made at the [Dec. 14 RMRI Leadership meeting](#) and the [Jan. 12 RMRI Partnership meeting](#):

- **Southwest Colorado:** "Communicate success and increase understanding."

- **Upper Arkansas:** “Tell the community story of Chaffee and Lake Counties”
- **Upper South Platte:** “Identify meaningful projects that shows the RMRI effect”
- **Subcommittees:** “More coordination and shared accomplishments across RMRI”
- **Ideaflip:** “Identify concrete solutions to increase the pace and scale of work and communicate the successes to move projects forward.”

Nathan explained that—in collaboration with Patt Dorsey, Matt Lindler and Tara Umphries—we would begin releasing a monthly email update to address the internal communications problem and continue a more focused and deliberate approach toward pushing out [The Source](#) to address the external communications problem.

INTERNAL COMMS STRATEGY

We have developed a rhythm to consistently and predictably publish RMRI monthly updates to improve internal communication. We lack situational awareness of RMRI activities and projects. During the RMRI leadership meeting in December 2020 and full RMRI Partnership meeting, internal and external transparency (or lack thereof) was referenced a minimum of 18 times. We lack a system to push information to RMRI Partners, as well as pull information from RMRI Partners. We operate in silos. What one Partner is doing in one RMRI landscape another Partner in another landscape has no idea. Are we making progress? Are we actually increasing pace and scale of stewardship work?

RMRI Communications Project Manager, Nathan Van Schaik, will manage the release of RMRI monthly updates to address the internal comms problem. Content for the monthly update will initially focus on available info to ease the burden on Partners.

Release every third Friday of the month. First issue will be released May 21, 2021.

Monthly newsletter will address:

- RMRI News & Updates
- Partner in Focus
- Subcommittee Updates
- Upcoming Events
- Legislative Affairs
- Links

The RMRI Monthly Update template available [here](#).

EXTERNAL COMMS STRATEGY

We have developed a rhythm to consistently and predictably publish ‘The Source’ newsletter. Currently, RMRI’s newsletter, The Source, is formatted and released as a multi-page PDF newsletter. The next four issues will focus on themes. Publish dates:

- Q1-(Oct-Nov-Dec): Subcommittees in Action; Release Date: Dec. 15, 2021
- Q2-(Jan-Feb-Mar): Accomplishments; Release Date: Feb. 28 ,2022
- **Q3-(April-May-Jun): Partners; Release Date: June 14, 2021**
- Q4-(July-Aug-Sept): Projects; Release Date: Sept. 15, 2021

With themes and publish dates, Partners can expect to provide information (for themes) and receive information (on release dates).

PARTNER PROFILES

To help build a database of RMRI Partner profiles, Nathan and Matt developed a [Partner form](#). This will be used to provide content for the June 14 issue of The Source. Profiles will also be used to feature partners in the monthly update and highlight on social media. Partners will also have the opportunity to request time with Nathan to address any communications needs or concerns.

RMRI SOCIAL MEDIA PLAN:

At the Nov. 4, 2020, Communications Subcommittee (CS), we worked on a social media plan. Since then, Matt Lindler and Nathan Van Schaik made edits and corrections based on CS feedback. At today's meeting, Nathan presented the finalized plan to the group. The group agreed that it was ready for use. Nathan will email the plan to the CS members.

STRUCTURE AND FREQUENCY OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Organization is possible without authority. Well-functioning collaboratives function without an authority figure or group issuing orders. But how do you exchange information in a system lacking of a command and control center? In a top-down organization, a boss gives orders to employees and employees report back to the boss. The exchange of information is baked into the system. But in a system such as RMRI, there is no boss giving orders and thus no apparent exchange of information.

To address this issue on the exchange of information, Nathan proposed offering a monthly meeting (formerly the Communications Subcommittee meeting). Meeting would be on the same day each month (e.g. last Thursday of month) and serve as an open forum. No commitments from anyone. No expectations of anyone. Nathan would provide RMRI updates, create Partner profiles, address questions and track Partner updates.

Should we continue hosting Communications Subcommittees? How often?

- **Catherine:** Not all RMRI members are getting information. People are unsure of guidelines and RMRI structure. Some are having trouble with our RMRI vision and if we're even achieving it. Likes the idea of combining the Communications Subcommittee with the Social License Subcommittee.
- **Esther:** Recommends only having meetings when necessary. There is value in having touch-points with partners (monthly check-in).
- **Teddy:** Likes idea of open forum. Nice to have an agenda and a regular rhythm.
- **Jake:** Likes idea of joint meeting with the Social License Subcommittee.