

Rocky Mountain Restoration Initiative (RMRI)
August 9, 2021, 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM
RMRI Workforce Capacity Subcommittee
Meeting Summary – FINAL

RMRI WORKFORCE CAPACITY SUBCOMMITTEE	
ATTENDANCE: Samantha Albert, Kim Hunter, Molly Pitts, Tim Reader, Ellen Roberts, Scott Segerstrom, Nathan Van Schaik, Matt Williams,	
ACTION ITEMS	
Scott Segerstrom	Develop a brief white paper outlining high-level details of a potential private industry apprenticeship/internship through the corps program for the October meeting.
Ellen Roberts	Connect Kevin Heiner at the Southwest Conservation Corps with a private foundation in Southwest Colorado to explore opportunities to increase funding for wildfire mitigation and forest restoration work.
Molly Pitts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reach out to the Colorado Workforce Development Council to determine if there is still an opportunity to provide input on statewide initiatives. • Reach out to the Clarke Becker, Colorado Rural Workforce Consortium, to continue the discussion about incorporating the forest restoration industry into the <i>Colorado Talent Pipeline Report</i>.
Molly Pitts, Tim Reader, and Samantha Albert	Schedule a call with Trent Thompson to explore opportunities to apply for EDA funding to build a pipeline for college students into the forestry workforce.
MEETING SUMMARY	
DISCUSSION TOPIC: Action item updates	
<p>Discussion Points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scott Segerstrom researched whether it would be possible for the corps program to host a private industry apprenticeship/internship program. The corps programs were interested in the idea, but there are some limitations. The majority of corps members are enrolled in AmeriCorps, and for-profit organizations cannot benefit from AmeriCorps service. So long as a corps member is not enrolled in AmeriCorps, there is an opportunity to launch a private industry apprenticeship/internship program. • The highest cost to the corps in managing an internship program would be the capacity to oversee interns. • There may be an opportunity to include veterans in an apprenticeship/internship workforce program through the corps. • It may be helpful to connect corps to local foundations to help increase funding for wildfire mitigation and forest restoration work. 	<p>Decisions/Action Items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scott Segerstrom: Develop a brief white paper that outlines the high-level details of a potential private industry apprenticeship/internship through the corps program. • Ellen Roberts: Connect Kevin Heiner at the Southwest Conservation Corps with a private foundation in Southwest Colorado to explore opportunities to increase funding for wildfire mitigation and forest restoration work.

DISCUSSION TOPIC: Partner Updates

Discussion Points:

- The Colorado Workforce Development Council recently released a survey to provide input on statewide workforce development initiatives. The survey is closed.
- Fort Lewis College continues to explore opportunities to develop the pipeline for students to enter into the forest restoration workforce, including developing curriculum and local internship opportunities.
- The Colorado Workforce Development Council gave Molly Pitts and Tim Reader feedback that it may be challenging to include the forest restoration economy in the *Colorado Talent Pipeline Report* because the sector is not large. Even though the sector is small compared to other sectors, the current governor’s administration is looking to identify rural workforce opportunities. Given this broader priority, there may be an opportunity to promote the forest restoration economy in the Colorado Talent Pipeline Report.
- Fort Lewis College has been in touch with Pueblo Community College – Bayfield to discuss opportunities to develop a curriculum around forest restoration at Pueblo Community College – Bayfield. Pueblo Community College – Bayfield has been in touch with Tim Reader to schedule a visit to a logging mill to learn about the positions and skillsets needed. Pueblo Community College – Bayfield is now offering S-130 and S-190 training.
- It would be beneficial to track metrics around internships and jobs from the priority landscapes.
- Matt Williams, US Forest Service, continues to reach out to contracting companies to recruit veterans into the forestry workforce.

Decisions/Action Items:

- **Molly Pitts:** Reach out to the Colorado Workforce Development Council to determine if there is still an opportunity to provide input on statewide initiatives.
- **Molly Pitts:** Reach out to the Clarke Becker, Colorado Rural Workforce Consortium, to continue the discussion about incorporating the forest restoration industry into the *Colorado Talent Pipeline Report*.

DISCUSSION TOPIC: Federal and State Legislative Updates

Discussion Points:

- The federal infrastructure bill is still in the legislative process.
- The Colorado legislature passed a state stimulus package, which included \$3 million for the corps. The Colorado Department of Natural Resource, Department of Public Safety, and the Colorado State Forest Service are developing an interagency memorandum of understanding (MOU) to determine how to allocate funding, including selecting projects.

Discussion Points:

- **Molly Pitts, Tim Reader, and Samantha Albert:** Schedule a call with Trent Thompson to explore opportunities to apply for EDA funding to build a pipeline for college students into the forestry workforce.

- A federal National Incident Management Assistance (NIMA) team will be creating a statewide priority map for Colorado. It is unclear what criteria are being used for the statewide priority map at this time.
- The American Rescue Plan provided funding to the US Economic Development Administration (EDA). Trent Thompson is a good resource for EDA funding. Most grant deadlines will likely be in March, so there will be time to explore funding opportunities. The EDA is currently looking to fund projects in the following three phases:
 - **System Development:** Help establish and develop a regional workforce training system comprised of multiple sector partnerships.
 - **Program Design:** Develop the skills training curriculum and materials and secure technical expertise needed to train workers.
 - **Program Implementation:** Implement non-construction projects needed to provide workforce training and connect workers with quality jobs, including wrap-around services.
- The Office of Just Transition finalized an action plan. One of the recommendations is for the state to offset decreases in salary and benefits for coal workers transitioning to a new career. Communities transitioning away from coal are in a good position to apply for EDA grants.
- Various organizations can apply to EDA grants for different focuses. Workforce centers could apply for funding to recruit people into the workforce. Colleges like Fort Lewis College and Pueblo Community College could apply for funding to build a workforce training program. Fort Lewis College may be open to applying for an EDA grant. A potential EDA grant program could help build a pipeline for college students into the forestry workforce.
- Skill Advance Colorado has programs that may be able to help build the forestry workforce. The plan is to have a representative from Skill Advance Colorado present at the next Workforce Capacity Subcommittee meeting.

Next Steps

Samuel Wallace will send out a Doodle to schedule the next Workforce Capacity Subcommittee meeting in September.

