

**Rocky Mountain Restoration Initiative (RMRI)**  
**May 23, 2022, from 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM**  
**RMRI Social License Subcommittee**  
**Meeting Summary – FINAL**

| RMRI SOCIAL LICENSE SUBCOMMITTEE  |  |
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| ATTENDANCE: Rob Addington, Anthony Culpepper, Patt Dorsey, Cindy Dozier, Tim Kylo, Danny Margoles, Molly Pitts, Tara Umphries, and Kirk Will  |  |
| ACTION ITEMS  |  |
| <b>Nathan Van Schaik</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share the talking points the USFS developed about prescribed fire with the Social License Subcommittee.</li> <li>• Reach out to Nick Smith from Healthy Forests, Healthy Communities to identify opportunities to share stories about RMRI on that platform.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Patt Dorsey</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revise the strategy that says the Social License Subcommittee will “communicate lessons learned to demonstrate the adaptive management approach for forest management” to include how sharing lessons learned will increase transparency and connect RMRI landscapes and partners.</li> <li>• Revise the strategy that says the Social License Subcommittee will “develop messaging about how industry is implementing treatments that promote forest health” to emphasize that industry is a tool for implementing projects, but that industry itself does not drive the location and design of treatments; industry helps implement projects to achieve partner-identified desired conditions.</li> </ul> |
| MEETING SUMMARY   |  |
| DISCUSSION TOPIC: Prescribed Fire   |  |
| <p><b>Discussion Points:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The US Forest Service (USFS) announced a 90-day temporary halt of prescribed fire. The escaped prescribed fire in New Mexico has resulted in the loss of social license for prescribed fire. Additionally, the Simms Fire near Montrose, Colorado, has also decreased trust in using prescribed fire as a management tool.</li> <li>• The Division of Fire Prevention and Control (DFPC) is investigating the Simms Fire and will adjust its prescribed fire implementation protocols accordingly. These investigations often take one to two years to conclude.</li> <li>• There is support for prescribed fire among the collaborative stakeholder groups in Southwest Colorado, and there is a concern that the moratorium on prescribed fire and media representation will affect future use of prescribed fire. There is a need to discuss why and how prescribed fire is used as a forest management tool.</li> </ul> | <p><b>Action Items/Decisions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Nathan Van Schaik:</b> Share the talking points the USFS developed about prescribed fire with the Social License Subcommittee.</li> </ul>  |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mechanical treatments often help prepare stands for both prescribed fire and wildland fire. The Social License Subcommittee should promote the message that mechanical treatments help prepare the landscape for fire.</li> <li>• The USFS has been thinking about how they should talk about prescribed fire, given recent incidents.</li> <li>• People are upset and angry; any messaging needs to be empathetic to people and the community. Messaging should focus on how DFPC will improve prescribed fire protocols in Colorado after conducting an investigation and reevaluating their protocols. Although an investigation can take one to two years to complete, it can take two or more years to reevaluate and revise the state’s protocols on prescribed fire. The Social License Subcommittee should not promote messages on prescribed fire until the DFPC investigation is complete. Instead, the Social License Subcommittee should focus on other</li> </ul> |  |
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**DISCUSSION TOPIC:** Social License Subcommittee 2022 Goals

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| <p><b>Discussion Points:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The identified goals of the Social License Subcommittee are to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ (LANDSCAPES FOCUS) Coordinate with each of the three RMRI priority landscapes quarterly regarding subcommittee support that will help decrease barriers to and increase the pace and scale of forest restoration work. Coordinate with each of the three RMRI priority landscapes quarterly regarding subcommittee support that will help decrease barriers to and increase the pace and scale of forest restoration work.</li> <li>○ (PARTNERS FOCUS) Provide reliable, accurate information to RMRI partners, so they feel more prepared to facilitate better stakeholder involvement and ensure that local input is included in planning forest restoration activities.</li> <li>○ (EXTERNAL FOCUS) Gather and share success stories from priority landscapes and the West to provide nuanced information about forest restoration. Work with RMRI partners and the Communications Subcommittee to share success stories and align and amplify messages to support existing campaigns.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> | <p><b>Action Items/Decisions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meeting participants supported moving forward the RMRI Social License Subcommittee goals as written.</li> </ul> |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gathering and sharing success stories would help the RMRI Communications Subcommittee highlight partners.</li> </ul>   |   |
| <p><b>DISCUSSION TOPIC:</b> Social License Subcommittee 2022 Strategies</p>   |   |
| <p><b>Discussion Points on Landscape-Focused Strategies:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The RMRI Social License Subcommittee should promote messages about how forest management protects the water supply. The Colorado Forest and Water Alliance is developing messages and maps to support and promote this concept.</li> <li>Meeting participants supported the following strategies under the landscape-focused goal <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with priority landscapes to tailor broader messages to fit the local landscape</li> <li>Work with priority landscapes to assist local stakeholders in developing outreach material that acknowledges the local geography and partners</li> <li>Develop maps that clearly connect the impact of local treatments to the RMRI values (e.g., show the proximity of treatments to a reservoir to demonstrate how treatments support the water value)</li> <li>Promote success stories from the landscapes to create positive messaging around forest treatments and management.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Discussion Points on Partner-Focused Strategies:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The partner-focused strategy that says the Social License Subcommittee will “communicate lessons learned to demonstrate the adaptive management approach for forest management” is particularly important. This strategy should also mention that communicating lessons learned is about increasing transparency. Communicating lessons learned requires identifying what those lessons are. The RMRI Social License Subcommittee could have a role in identifying and promoting lessons learned among the collaborators and other partners.</li> <li>Another potential strategy under the partner-focused goal is to create a point of contact from each agency and organization that can provide success stories for the Social License and Communications Subcommittees.</li> <li>There is an effort to develop a cross-collaborative network. To avoid duplicating efforts, the Social License Subcommittee should focus on these two strategies:</li> </ul> | <p><b>Action Items/Decisions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Patt Dorsey:</b> Revise the strategy that says the Social License Subcommittee will “communicate lessons learned to demonstrate the adaptive management approach for forest management” to include how sharing lessons learned will increase transparency and connect RMRI landscapes and partners.</li> <li><b>Patt Dorsey:</b> Revise the strategy that says the Social License Subcommittee will “develop messaging about how industry is implementing treatments that promote forest health” to emphasize that industry is a tool for implementing projects, but that industry itself does not drive the location and design of treatments; industry helps implement projects to achieve partner-identified desired conditions.</li> <li><b>Nathan Van Schaik:</b> Reach out to Nick Smith from Healthy Forests, Healthy Communities to identify opportunities to share stories about RMRI on that platform.</li> </ul> |

- Providing technical expertise on broader topics, like prescribed fire and smoke, to support local landscape messaging
- Using the RMRI network to help connect RMRI members with specific expertise to attend community meetings and build relationships with communities.

**Discussion Points on External-Focused Strategies:**

- One of the external-focused strategies is to “organize a messaging campaign that can be modified at the local level.” Over the next two years, the Colorado State Forest Service (CSFS) is going to amplify its effort to promote Wildfire Awareness Month.
- The Social License Subcommittee has already completed some of the identified strategies, such as “creating regular check-ins/overlap with the Communications Subcommittee to advance goals of each subcommittee.”
- The strategy to “develop a messaging strategy and materials to reach the recreation community” is challenging. It is a high priority to reach out and engage the recreation community in forest management. The forest ambassadors program in Southwest Colorado has been successful at communicating with trail system users by placing ambassadors at trailheads.
- The strategy to “promote messages that resonate emotionally with the public” is more a best practice than a strategy. The Social License Subcommittee should focus its messaging on what resonates emotionally with an identified audience.
- Industry helps support and enact forest health restoration projects that often achieve multiple objectives and values. The strategy to “develop messaging about how industry is implementing treatments that promote forest health” should focus on how industry helps partners reach forest management objectives, but that industry itself is not the driver for treatments. An outline of the process for how forest management decisions are made could help demonstrate that industry is not driving the location and design of treatments.
- The strategy to “develop strategies to reach decision-makers with important information about increasing pace and scale” is important. Maps are a particularly effective tool for communicating with decision-makers at multiple scales.

#### NEXT STEPS

- Samuel Wallace and Patt Dorsey will send a Doodle to schedule the next Social License Subcommittee in July.