

**Rocky Mountain Restoration Initiative (RMRI)**  
**January 12, 2023, 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM**  
**RMRI Workforce Capacity Subcommittee**  
**Meeting Summary – FINAL**

RMRI WORKFORCE CAPACITY SUBCOMMITTEE	
ATTENDANCE: Samantha Albert, Liz Dowling, Audrey Miles-Cherney, Molly Pitts, Scott Segerstrom, Tim Reader, Nathan Van Schaik, Kyle Weber	
ACTION ITEMS	
<b>Molly Pitts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Send Samuel Wallace a list of forestry workforce-related bills to send to the Subcommittee.</li> <li>• Send out information on the <i>From Our Lands to Your Hands</i> event on February 22 and 23.</li> <li>• Reach out to Miller Timber Services to see if they would be willing to offset the cost of a bus for a PTEC field trip.</li> <li>• Continue to reach out to the USFS Regional Office to see if someone can come to a Workforce Capacity Subcommittee meeting to discuss recreation workforce challenges.</li> </ul>
<b>Tim Reader</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reach out to the University of Montana's BBER to check in on the status of the 2020 Colorado timber industry data.</li> <li>• Reach out to the company in Buena Vista focused on modular housing to explore opportunities for affordable housing for seasonal workers.</li> <li>• Send the meeting details on the USFS Industry Roundtable to the Subcommittee.</li> </ul>
<b>Audrey Miles-Cherney</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Send information on the <i>From Our Lands to Your Hands</i> event to the CSFS Boulder Field Office staff who may be interested in attending.</li> <li>• Reach out to CSFS staff to check the status of the forestry project occurring near the Broadmoor as a potential location for a PTEC field trip.</li> </ul>
<b>Scott Segerstrom</b>	Keep the Subcommittee up-to-date on the CYCA's effort to revise their job-seeker guide to explore opportunities to include information on industry jobs.
<b>All Subcommittee Members</b>	Review and provide feedback on the language of <a href="#">Bill A</a> (one of the bills the Wildfire Matters Review Committee moved to the legislature)
MEETING SUMMARY	
DISCUSSION TOPIC: December 2022 Action Item Update	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Molly Pitts is working with LeErica Warren from Power Technical Early Collect (PTEC) to host a field trip for students to visit a forestry field operations site.</li> <li>• The legislative session will begin on Monday, January 16. Molly Pitts will send the forestry workforce-related bills to the Subcommittee.</li> <li>• Molly Pitts continues to try to reach out to someone to present on US Forest Service (USFS) recreation workforce challenges to the Subcommittee.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Decision/Action Items:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Molly Pitts:</b> Send Samuel Wallace a list of forestry workforce-related bills to send to the Subcommittee.</li> <li>• <b>Tim Reader:</b> Reach out to the University of Montana's BBER to check in on the status of the 2020 Colorado timber industry data.</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Molly Pitts and Tim Reader are planning on sharing the University of Montana's Bureau of Business and Economic Research (BBER) 2020 Colorado timber industry data once finalized. The BBER is still working on the final report. It will be helpful to have that data for legislation.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>DISCUSSION TOPIC: SWIFT Crew Opportunities</b></p>	
<p><b>Discussion Points:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At the last Workforce Capacity Subcommittee meeting, a team from the Colorado Department of Corrections gave a presentation on State Wildland Inmate Fire Team (SWIFT) crews. Subcommittee members discussed opportunities related to the SWIFT program.</li> <li>The Department of Corrections has programs for inmates beyond the SWIFT crews. There may be an opportunity to create new programs to integrate inmate workers into timber facilities and sawmills.</li> <li>The SWIFT program is relatively small (two crews of approximately 15 people each). There is room to grow the program.</li> <li>The SWIFT program administrators are interested in helping inmates find permanent positions once released. There are barriers to helping inmates find jobs, including debt and parole conditions. However, the SWIFT program administrators continue to look for ways to address those barriers.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Decision/Action Items:</b></p> <p>None.</p>
<p><b>DISCUSSION TOPIC: PTEC Opportunities</b></p>	
<p><b>Discussion Points:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At the last Workforce Capacity Subcommittee meeting, the PTEC principal presented their middle and high school level programs. Subcommittee members discussed opportunities related to PTEC.</li> <li>Pueblo Community College – Bayfield and Colorado Mountain College are exploring opportunities to develop a forestry operations program. The PTEC presentation made clear that the Workforce Capacity Subcommittee can also be looking for opportunities to engage with middle and high school programs to expose students to careers in forestry and the forest industry.</li> <li>There may be an opportunity to develop a forest operations program with PTEC. A program would require a curriculum and funding to stand it up. At a minimum, the Subcommittee could take students</li> </ul>	<p><b>Decision/Action Items:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Molly Pitts:</b> Send information on the <i>From Our Lands to Your Hands</i> event on February 22 and 23.</li> <li><b>Audrey Miles-Cherney:</b> Send information on the <i>From Our Lands to Your Hands</i> event to the Colorado State Forest Service (CSFS) Boulder Field Office staff who may be interested in attending.</li> <li><b>Audrey Miles-Cherney:</b> Reach out to CSFS staff to check the status of the forestry project occurring near the Broadmoor as a potential location for a PTEC field trip.</li> <li><b>Molly Pitts:</b> Reach out to Miller Timber Services to see if they would be willing to offset the cost of a bus for a PTEC field trip.</li> </ul>

<p>on a field trip to learn about logging equipment and forestry operations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a Colorado Springs Utilities forestry project occurring near the Broadmoor. This location is near PTEC and may be an opportunity for a field demonstration. Colorado Springs is also implementing a forestry project on open space property, and this could be another opportunity for a field trip.</li> <li>• PTEC normally pays for the cost of a bus for a field trip by having students pay a small fee (\$5 to \$10) to attend the field trip. Some industry partners may be able to offset the cost, too.</li> <li>• Another opportunity to engage with middle and high school students is the Boulder and Longmont Conservation District's event, <i>From Our Lands to Your Hands</i>. Students are invited to the event to learn about agriculture. This year the organizers invited Molly to talk about forestry. The event will occur on February 22 and 23 at the Boulder County Fairgrounds. Anyone on the Subcommittee is welcome to join.</li> </ul>	
--	--

**DISCUSSION TOPIC:** Legislative Policy Updates

<p><b>Discussion Points:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Wildfire Matters Review Committee worked on ten bills, which are available at <a href="#">this link</a>. Of the ten bills, the Committee referred five to Legislative Council.</li> <li>• Bill A is the most relevant bill to the Subcommittee. The bill establishes a forestry internship program, directs the Department of Education to explore new forestry programs, and provides funding to recruit wildland fire prevention and mitigation educators.</li> <li>• If any subcommittee members were willing to testify in support of the bill, that would help increase the likelihood of the bill being passed. Colorado Forest Health Council (CFHC) members have been asked to testify on behalf of the bills they supported.</li> <li>• Bill C and Bill A, proposed by the Wildfire Matters Review Committee, are similar in their content, as Bill C also directs the establishment of an internship program. Bill A is more comprehensive than Bill C</li> </ul>	<p><b>Decisions/Action Items:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Subcommittee Members:</b> Review and provide feedback on the language of Bill A (one of the bills the Wildfire Matters Review Committee moved to the legislature)</li> </ul>
---	--

**DISCUSSION TOPIC: 2023 Work Plan**

**Discussion Points:**

- The 2023 Workforce Capacity Subcommittee work plan is available at [this link](#). The Subcommittee, in the past, has identified three priorities in the work plan: grow industry, target education, and support recreation. The work plan identifies action for each of the priorities.

***Grow Industry Feedback***

- The work plan does not need to focus exclusively on growing Southwest Colorado's industry. The Front Range lacks industry, and it would be helpful to focus efforts on growing industry along the Front Range. The USFS is hosting an industry roundtable to discuss industry needs along the Front Range on January 26. This topic may be more relevant to the Biomass Utilization Subcommittee.
- One bottleneck for hiring new foresters is the cost of housing. Creating housing opportunities (e.g., shared housing, bunk housing, or modular) would be a large incentive for seasonal workers. A company in Buena Vista is working on modular housing; they are primarily selling modular housing to mountain communities for emergency responders.
- The Subcommittee should focus on small businesses that are interested in growing. One desired outcome of the group is to identify and grow businesses focused on mitigation work.

***Target Education Feedback***

- Bill A, proposed by the Wildlife Matters Review Committee, will help drive this strategy. If the bill passes, the Workforce Capacity Subcommittee can help support new programs at community colleges.
- CSFS staff is looking to stand up a natural resources education and outreach program at the Colorado State University (CSU) Spur campus. The program will help expose students to careers in forestry. The hope is to have a simulator as part of that program.
- Work to create an RMRI workforce webpage, develop a trifold on forest industry careers, and engage K-12 students is ongoing.
- There is renewed energy in the corps world to develop stronger pipelines between the corps and

**Decisions/Action Items:**

- **Tim Reader:** Reach out to the company in Buena Vista focused on modular housing to explore opportunities for affordable housing for seasonal workers.
- **Tim Reader:** Send the meeting details on the USFS Industry Roundtable to the Subcommittee.
- **Molly Pitts:** Continue to reach out to the USFS Regional Office to see if someone can come to a Workforce Capacity Subcommittee meeting to discuss recreation workforce challenges.
- **Scott Segerstrom:** Keep the Subcommittee up-to-date on the CYCA's effort to revise their job-seeker guide to explore opportunities to include information on industry jobs.

careers. The Colorado Youth Corps Association (CYCA) is revising its job-seeker manual. There may be an opportunity to include industry-related information in the manual.

- The Colorado State Legislature passed a bill in 2022 to create the [Colorado Opportunity Now grant program](#), which focuses on workforce development. This program is designed to create connections between education systems and employers.

***Support Recreation Feedback***

- This priority is the vaguest among the three.
- The recreation industry has many components (e.g., manufacturing, apparel, land management, etc.). There are certain manufacturing sectors where the workforce is retiring. There is also a need for a new generation of land managers focused on recreation. Molly Pitts is reaching out to the USFS Regional Office to see if someone can come to a Workforce Capacity Subcommittee to discuss recreation workforce challenges.
- Some land managers are developing signs with QR codes to install at active project sites. There could be an opportunity to add a QR code to those signs for anyone interested in learning more about forestry careers.

**NEXT STEPS**

Samuel Wallace will send a Doodle to schedule the next Workforce Capacity Subcommittee meeting in early to mid-March.