

Rocky Mountain Restoration Initiative (RMRI)
January 19, 2024, from 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM
RMRI Social License/Communications Subcommittee
Meeting Summary – FINAL

RMRI SOCIAL LICENSE/COMMUNICATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE	
ATTENDANCE: Kristy Burnett, Patt Dorsey, Liz Dowling, Cindy Dozier, Sheryl Gunn, Hannah McKinney, Sonja Merryman, David Nikonow, Todd Ruffner, Nathan Van Schaik, Lo Williams	
ACTION ITEMS	
All RMRI Partners	Reach out to Nathan Van Schaik if partners have a story they want to share via RMRI social media platforms.
Cindy Dozier	Send the video Hinsdale County used to communicate the importance of treating roadways to create evacuation routes to Liz Dowling.
MEETING SUMMARY	
DISCUSSION TOPIC: Colorado Water Congress Update	
Discussion Points:	Action Items/Decisions:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RMRI is hosting a workshop on January 31 as part of the Colorado Water Congress' Annual Convention. The workshop is entitled <i>Wildfire Crisis Strategy in Action!</i>, and it is split into four panels: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leading through crisis Success stories along the Colorado Front Range: From Forests to Faucets Partnership Getting it done at landscape scale (which will showcase partners from Southwest Colorado) Colorado Forest Health Council In-person attendance for the Convention is sold out, but there is still an opportunity to join virtually. Tom Spezze, National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTF), and Brian Ferebee, US Forest Service (USFS), will lead another session to discuss the Wildfire Crisis Strategy. 	None.
DISCUSSION TOPIC: Partner Updates	
Discussion Points:	Action Items/Decisions:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nathan Van Schaik has created a spreadsheet allowing subcommittee members to provide updates ahead of Social License/Communications Subcommittee meetings. Partners are encouraged to add updates for projects they want to publicize through RMRI channels. The US Forest Service (USFS) Region 2 Office recently hired a communications specialist for the Wildfire Crisis Strategy. Nathan and the new communications specialist are working with 	None.

<p>Denver Water and Aurora Water to tell the story of the Jerome/Miller Gulch project in the Upper South Platte landscape.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Colorado State Forest Service (CSFS) has launched a new grant program for wildfire mitigation outreach. They are soliciting applications through February 29. They have \$300,000 to allocate through the program. The grant is intended to provide resources to non-profit and local governments to reach out to residents, homeowners, and landowners, focusing on defensible space. • Club 20 is planning on hosting Patt Dorsey, NWTF, to give an update on RMRI during their summer policy meeting. Club 20 continues to work with counties to develop Community Wildfire Protection Plans to protect communities and water supply from catastrophic wildfires. • Jason Lawhon, USFS, has taken a six-week detail to serve as the Forest Supervisor for the Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre, and Gunnison National Forests. In the meantime, Lo Williams and Sheryl Gunn will be the primary RMRI contacts for the San Juan National Forest (SJNF). • The SJNF completed its annual Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program (CFLRP) annual report in December, which they are using as the foundation for the RMRI annual report. Nathan Van Schaik is helping prepare a presentation highlighting Southwest Colorado's 2023 accomplishments to present to RMRI. He is also working with the Upper Ark and Upper South Platte to produce a similar presentation slide deck. • Southwest Colorado partners are launching their CFLRP website at the end of February. They plan on hosting a calendar on the website that shares upcoming events and meetings. • In 2023, the RMRI Southwest Colorado partners focused on completing work in the Mancos-Chicken Creek watersheds and the Florida River Watershed in La Plata County. Partners in 2023 completed 25,000 acres on the landscape. 	
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DISCUSSION TOPIC: Social Media Update

Discussion Points:	Action Items/Decisions:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RMRI currently manages a Facebook and X (formerly known as Twitter) page. Nathan Van Schaik and Liz Dowling, NWTF, have recently launched an Instagram page to reach a younger 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All RMRI Partners: Reach out to Nathan Van Schaik if partners have a story they want to share via RMRI social media platforms.

<p>audience. They have connected the Facebook and Instagram pages to share posts across platforms. If partners have a story they want to share via RMRI social media platforms, they should reach out to Nathan Van Schaik.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • X is a useful social media platform to connect with governmental partners and legislative audiences. • An interesting question for this subcommittee is how to use social media interactions to measure whether engagement increases social license. It is important to measure whether communication efforts are being effective. Anecdotally, over time, those managing the RMRI social media have not seen any increasing or decreasing trends in the number of people pushing back against active forestry messaging. Partners running social media accounts in Southwest Colorado have anecdotally noticed a decrease in negative comments and an increase in positive ones. Other community members respond to defend forest management activities when negative comments are posted. • Before-and-after pictures are a helpful way to communicate the importance of forest management visually. • One message to communicate is the importance of treating forests to create evacuation routes. Many homeowners are surprised to hear that emergency services will not come to save their houses if the roads are unsafe for evacuation. Cindy Dozier has a video Hinsdale County used to communicate the importance of treating roadways to create evacuation routes. She will send that video to Liz Dowling. • It may be helpful to identify a metric by which to measure social license gained. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cindy Dozier: Send the video Hinsdale County used to communicate the importance of treating roadways to create evacuation routes to Liz Dowling.
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DISCUSSION TOPIC: Social License/Communications Subcommittee Work Plan

Discussion Points:	Action Items/Decisions:
<p>Discussion Points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RMRI Social License/Communications Subcommittee chairs Nathan Van Schaik, Patt Dorsey, and Liz Dowling updated the subcommittee work plan based on feedback at the last meeting. Their updates include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reduced the number of meetings from 8 to 6, ○ Kept the three lunch-and-learns, ○ Kept the social media workshop. • The priorities of the Social License/Communications Subcommittee remain unchanged. Those priorities include: 	<p>Action Items/Decisions:</p> <p>None.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Landscape Priorities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Share success stories ▪ Work with landscapes on specific issues ○ RMRI Partner Priorities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide technical expertise (i.e., three lunch-and-learns on topics of interest) ▪ Share lessons learned using adaptive forest management ○ External Priorities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Wildfire Awareness Month ▪ Industry ▪ Recreation Community ▪ Decision Makers ● The full calendar for the Social License/ Communications Subcommittee work plan in 2024 is available at this link. ● Subcommittee members rated their satisfaction with the work plan on a scale of 1-5. Five members gave the work plan a rating of four, and three members gave the work plan a rating of three. ● Subcommittee members indicated whether they supported moving the number of meetings from eight to six in 2024. Members indicated support for this schedule change. 	
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NEXT STEPS

- Samuel Wallace will distribute a Doodle to schedule the next subcommittee meeting in mid-March.
- At the next meeting, the subcommittee members will discuss how to coordinate for Wildfire Awareness Month and receive input from the RMRI landscapes on how to support their communications and engagement efforts.

Links Shared in Meeting:

- [Colorado State Forest Service Wildfire Mitigation Outreach Grant Program](#)
- [RMRI Social License/Communications Subcommittee 2024 Work Plan](#)