

Rocky Mountain Restoration Initiative (RMRI)
June 15, 2021, 12:00 PM - 1:30 PM
RMRI Governance Subcommittee
Meeting Summary - FINAL

ATTENDANCE

Participants: Samantha Albert, Angela Boag, Jason Lawhon, Emily Olsen, Travis Smith, Tara Umphries, Nathan Van Schaik, and Scott Woods

Facilitation: Samuel Wallace

ACTION ITEMS

Tara Umphries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask Cindy Williams and Brian Banks how they would like to approach providing RMRI support for projects in a way that aligns with their current governance structures. • Ask Cindy Williams and Brian Banks if and how they can track direct solicitations for letters of support from RMRI.
Nathan Van Schaik	Create a letter of support template.
Samuel Wallace	Send a Doodle for the next Governance Subcommittee meeting

RMRI GOVERNANCE SUBCOMMITTEE RECAP

Samuel Wallace, Peak Facilitation Group, gave a brief recap of the past RMRI Governance Subcommittee meeting on April 15. The recap is summarized below.

- The Governance Subcommittee outlined a process for requesting support from RMRI. The steps to the process are:
 1. Interested party contacts Patt Dorsey or Tara Umphries with interest in receiving RMRI support for a policy.
 2. Interested party fills out form to trigger a larger discussion with the RMRI Stakeholder Group and Leadership Team.
 3. The Governance Subcommittee reviews the request based on the scale of request and how it relates to RMRI.
 4. Governance Subcommittee approves the request, **or** Governance Subcommittee sends request to the Stakeholder Group for approval.
- The form to request support from RMRI would include the following questions:
 - Please describe your project/policy.
 - What type of support are you looking for from RMRI (e.g., letter of support, use of RMRI logo, etc.)?
 - What is the scale of your application? (local landscape, state, national)
 - How does your project relate to RMRI’s core values, cross-cutting issues, and/or landscapes?
- Remaining questions for the Governance subcommittee include:
 - What should the criteria be for evaluating requests for support?
 - Should there be any more questions added to the Support Request Form?
 - Under what criteria should requests for RMRI support go to the Stakeholder Group for further conversation?
 - When can RMRI speak as “we,” and when can RMRI partners speak individually as “me?”

- Should there be a different process if an interested party requests support from a specific RMRI landscape or subcommittee versus requests support from the whole RMRI Stakeholder Group?

RMRI LANDSCAPE AND SUBCOMMITTEE SUPPORT DISCUSSION

Meeting participants discussed the process for how RMRI landscapes and subcommittees can provide support for projects and programs. Their comments are summarized below.

- The Governance Subcommittee should consider why partners would want a letter of support from RMRI and the goals for creating a process to request support from RMRI. The purpose of having a process is not to screen out requests but to better track who is requesting support from RMRI.
- The process for requesting support from RMRI should not be laborious for smaller projects. The process should be inviting for partners and stakeholders. There should be some cut-off or threshold that triggers a longer process for requesting support from RMRI (e.g., a grant request above a certain funding threshold or requests of support for state and federal legislation). The RMRI Stakeholder Group could develop the criteria for when projects/policies should go to the full partner group or Leadership Team for support.
- Partners are interested in receiving support from RMRI, but there should be clear expectations that support from RMRI does not guarantee funding.
- RMRI should have a support letter template that outlines RMRI's values and goals. Landscapes could modify the template when they receive requests. Having a template available would make it easier to provide letters of support in a shorter timeframe.
- RMRI-Southwest Colorado (RMRI-SW) has provided letters of support to projects on the RMRI-SW landscape. The letter helps validate that the projects are part of the bigger RMRI-SW picture. Nathan Van Schaik will create a letter of support template.
- Each landscape has its process for providing letters of support. The process for requesting support from landscapes should be adapted to their governance structure. This process could involve giving landscapes the authority to share the RMRI logo with supported projects. Tara Umphries will ask Cindy Williams and Brian Banks how they would like to approach providing RMRI support for projects in a way that aligns with their current governance structures.
- Using the RMRI logo on a project application indicates that the project aligns with the four values of RMRI. Projects that RMRI support should align with RMRI's values and goals.
- The Governance Subcommittee should not be concerned about whether support requests come from non-traditional partners or non-RMRI partners. The landscapes are ultimately in the best position to determine whether a project aligns with their priorities.
- There are remaining questions on when RMRI can provide support as one organization ("we") and when they should provide support as individual organizations ("me"). The question on when RMRI can speak as "we" and "me" is better left for the larger RMRI Stakeholder Group.
- Subcommittees should have the authority to support specific projects without taking them to the larger Stakeholder Group.

REQUESTS FOR SUPPORT TRACKING DISCUSSION

Meeting participants discussed how and if they want to track requests for support from RMRI. Their comments are summarized below.

- Tracking requests for support from the landscapes and subcommittees would help identify who is interested in receiving RMRI support. Any request for information should not be

burdensome for the landscapes. They could provide a list of projects they supported quarterly.

- Landscapes should only track the projects for which they provide explicit support (e.g., a letter). Project applications that mention RMRI do not have to be included. For example, RMRI-SW would only need to provide information on the projects that the Steering Committee approved.
- A tracking spreadsheet could request basic information: who is the group/applicant requesting support, what program/project are they requesting support for, and were they successful. This type of information would help the state make a case for additional funding.
- There may be some privacy concerns among partners in sharing this information. For example, there should not be a request for specific locations as partners cannot disclose treatment location information on private lands. Privacy concerns may be mitigated if RMRI agrees not to share details of the proposals and only requests high-level information.
- The Subcommittee could put a form on the RMRI website for partners to submit data when supporting a project.
- Tracking support for projects would help provide information on the annual dollar need and the number of projects occurring on the landscape. Knowing the annual dollar need could help reinforce requests for funding from the state.
- As of now, most grant programs award a marginal amount of points for partnerships when evaluating applications. A letter of support is helpful but will not guarantee funding for applicants.
- Part of tracking letters of support is to help identify what projects are unfunded. There may be an opportunity to tie in tracking letters of support with overall accomplishment reporting. One challenge is creating the lines of communications to receive information on accomplishments.
- Tara Umphries will ask Cindy Williams and Brian Banks if and how they can track direct solicitations for letters of support from RMRI.

RMRI POLICY SUPPORT DISCUSSION

Meeting participants discussed the process for supporting policies and legislation. Their comments are summarized below.

- The RMRI Stakeholder Group and/or Leadership Team should review requests for support for policy and legislation. Providing support for policy and legislation should require consultation from the Stakeholder Group and/or Leadership Team.
- The RMRI Stakeholder Group and/or Leadership Team should consider how and when RMRI can speak as “me” versus “we” when supporting policy and legislation. Agencies may have to sit out of the conversations when discussing whether to support legislation to avoid violating the Hatch Act. A letter of support may have to specify that federal and state partners recuse themselves from the document.
- One of the benefits of RMRI is having partners that can support policy and legislation, like the National Wild Turkey Federation.
- The Governance Subcommittee should review any support requests for policy and legislation before sending them to the larger Stakeholder Group and/or Leadership Team.
- The Governance Subcommittee should play out a straw dog scenario in which someone requests support for a policy from RMRI. Senator Bennet’s staff requested support from individual RMRI partners but not from RMRI as a whole.
- The RMRI Stakeholder Group should discuss the finer details about support policy and legislation. The Governance Subcommittee could bring it to the Leadership Team, but most Leadership Team members are federal or state agency staff members who cannot support

policy and legislation. The Governance Subcommittee should develop a framework and questions to ask the Stakeholder Group and Leadership Team. Some questions could include 1) who speaks for RMRI and 2) when and how do we speak as RMRI?

NEXT STEPS

- Samuel Wallace will send out a Doodle to schedule the next Governance Subcommittee meeting.
- The agenda items for the next meeting include developing a framework for a discussion around support policy with the RMRI Stakeholder Group.