

Rocky Mountain Restoration Initiative (RMRI)
June 21, 2022, 11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Communications Subcommittee Meeting Summary - FINAL

ATTENDANCE: Patt Dorsey, Tim Kylo, Jason Lawhon, Kate McIntire, Tara Umphries, Nathan Van Schaik, Cindy Williams

06/21 ACTION ITEMS:

Nathan Van Schaik	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send meeting summary notes for review.
Comms Subcommittee members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share an RMRI social media post • Submit RMRI partner/landscape update (5W's) • Bring campaign/project idea to next Comms Subcommittee (see Teddy example) • Use an RMRI comms product (https://restoringtherockies.org/brand) • Connect agency comms specialist with RMRI Comms Subcommittee • Submit an RMRI volunteer

AGENDA

- Partner Updates
- Recap of action items from last Subcommittee meeting
 1. Share an RMRI social media post
 2. Submit RMRI partner/landscape update (5W's)
 3. Bring campaign/project idea to next Comms Subcommittee (see Teddy example)
 4. Use an RMRI comms product (<https://restoringtherockies.org/brand>)
 5. Connect agency comms specialist with RMRI Comms Subcommittee
 6. Submit an RMRI volunteer
- Social Media Update
- RMRI Awards Program
- Upper Ark Discussion w/ Cindy Williams

RMRI PARTNER UPDATES

- **Montrose Forest Products.** Update provided by Tim Kylo, MFP resource forester and RMRI Communications Subcommittee member. The Montrose Forest products sawmill is undergoing a \$15 million project to retrofit the mill with a biomass-fired energy plant that can produce both the required heat and electricity for the sawmill manufacturing processes.
- **RMRI.** Update provided by Kate McIntire. The next RMRI virtual meeting is July 15. The next in-person meeting is at a date/time in October 2022 in Durango.
- **RMRI-Southwest.** Update provided by Jason Lawhon. The RMRI-SW Steering Committee is back online after taking a hiatus while Jason served as acting SJNF Forest Supervisor. Additionally, the CFLRP governance is in progress.
- **RMRI Communications.** Update provided by Nathan Van Schaik. Released the '[RMRI Monthly Update](#)' (June) last week. Currently working the next issue of *The Source*, which

focuses on RMRI partners. This is the [partnerships issue](#) we did last year. This year I'll include Fire Adapted Colorado, Upper South Platte Partnership, Mountain Studies Institute, Montrose Forest Products, Envision Forest Health Council, and an investment section on National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (RESTORE Colorado) and DNR (COSWAP).

SOCIAL MEDIA UPDATE

See attached slide presentation. In December 2021, Kate and Nathan briefed RMRI leaders on goals outlined in their 2022 Work Plan. Goal is to increase social media reach by 100% by Dec. 2022. As of June 2022, we are on pace to achieve our goal on Facebook. We are not on track to meet our goals on Twitter. RMRI Partners are encouraged to continue sharing RMRI content on respective agency social media platforms or providing content for RMRI social media outlets.

RETOOL COMMS SUBCOMMITTEE

Kate McIntire explained that RMRI is currently seeking new members for the Communications Subcommittee. She will send out an email to all RMRI Partners soliciting for members. Interested individuals should please submit a statement of intent and summary of qualifications to: RestoreTheRockies@gmail.com. We accept new members on a rolling basis, and will consider qualified inquiries throughout the year.

RMRI AWARDS PROGRAM

There's been discussions within RMRI circles about forming an RMRI awards program. RMRI Communications Subcommittee members believe there is value in having an awards program. Tim Kylo said that [American Tree Farm](#) provides a good example. One idea is to assign responsibility to the Communications Subcommittee. Kate is also exploring examples of award programs among agencies. Consensus is to gauge interest at the RMRI virtual meeting in July.

GUEST SPEAKER CINDY WILLIAMS: HOW RMRI CAN SUPPORT UPPER ARKANSAS

Intent. As part of the RMRI Comms Subcommittee guest speaker series, the subcommittee invited Cindy Williams to have a discussion on how the RMRI Communications Subcommittee can support the Upper Arkansas landscape. Cindy Williams is an RMRI Partner representing the RMRI-Upper Ark landscape. Cindy co-leads Envision Chaffee County in the Upper Arkansas landscape. Envision facilitates the RMRI Upper Ark Project, the Forest Health Council and the Chaffee Rec Council.

Cindy Williams: Our communication strategy has three pieces:

1. **Continuing to build exceptional community support:** We accomplish this with a steady "drip" of ongoing stories in the community.
2. **Continue to build funding:** We do this by engaging with our funding partners through field tours and press releases.
3. **Inspire other regions.** We satisfy many requests to explain the Envision story.

We have limited capacity, and this may be an area RMRI can help. We work with local contractors and Kim Marquis is our communications manager since 2017. So the question is how we tap RMRI for support without creating more work beyond our capacity.

Cindy Williams: Opportunities for RMRI to assist:

- Lake County. They do not have the capacity like Chaffee County. We just expanded the Community Wildfire Prioritization bang-for-your-buck model to include Lake County. Also, Lake County just received COSWAP funding. Telling that story and engaging the media is where RMRI can help.
- We've been working on materials for landowner engagement as part of Chaffee Treats program. Goal is to treat 10,000 acres on the private side by 2030. We're engaged with AFF to provide landowner communication graphics—but AFF has lost some funding and capacity. We could use help with 1-pagers/graphics for landowners.
- In general, we're working to do more prescribed burns in our landscape. But in light of recent events where USFS lost control of prescribed burns, we're looking for materials on how to discuss prescribed fires (i.e. safeguards, why we need it, etc.). Perhaps we explore a different strategy to communicating prescribe burns. How/when USFS announces planned prescribed burns in the area can also be improved, too (improve public engagement).
- We have a lot of recreation impacts to wildlife interface. We're looking for ways to better communicate the impacts recreators have on wildlife. We learned through our Wildlife & Wildfire survey that 97% of respondents said managing recreation to protect wildlife is the most important thing for them.
- Continue to keep potential funders informed of the restoration work in the RMRI-Upper Arkansas landscape.