



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA | EXTENSION

REGIONAL SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIPS

# RSDP Communications Plan FY 2014-FY 2015 & Related Materials

Developed with **ROBERTS & more**

Presented by Dan Gilchrist to RSDP Statewide Coordinating Committee, November 6, 2013



## **Goal**

To be recognized among targeted audiences as a highly effective and innovative resource for seeding sustainability in agriculture and local foods, tourism and resilient communities, natural resources, and clean energy, across Greater Minnesota.

## **Strategy Statement**

Through precisely targeted and highly personal communications, RSDP will strengthen its internal and external reputation for being able to bring together local leaders and community members with U of M expertise to help solve problems, create opportunities to build stronger local economies and enhanced social capacity, and to protect and improve the environment. Visibility through the media (both U of M and public) and social media to showcase successes will complement the more personal, relationship-based strategies.

The statewide RSDP team will have primary responsibility for communications with University of Minnesota and Extension leaders as well as opinion leaders in statewide associations. The statewide team will leverage Extension communications capabilities and channels wherever possible.

The regional teams will develop manageable communications action plans and will have primary responsibility for communicating with their local stakeholders (boards, community and University partners, funders), prospective funders and partners, opinion leaders, reporters, policy makers and others in their areas. Where there is overlap, the statewide and regional teams will work together to design the most effective strategy to reach a target.

CERTs communications will continue as they are now, but will coordinate more closely with RSDP communications. CERTs is defined in statute as a partnership, but, where appropriate, effort should be made to credit CERTs to RSDP and Extension.

## **Key Audiences**

### ***For the RSDP statewide office...***

Statewide office staff, both administrative and content program staff, as well as the executive committee are responsible for communicating with various constituencies on behalf of the entire RSDP organization. The statewide administrative staff are responsible for communications with all RSDP staff, the SCC, the Council of Deans, leaders in statewide organizations within RSDP focus areas of work, statewide funders, University of Minnesota leadership, and Extension leadership.

### ***In each region...***

Regional executive directors are responsible for maintaining and expanding communications with board members, work group members, University of Minnesota leaders in their region and associated coordinate campus, Extension regional directors, Extension Educators, University faculty and staff for ongoing and potential community partnerships (both coordinate and TC campuses), local funders (ex. Initiative Foundations), opinion leaders in organizations working in focus areas, local policy members, and community partners. See Appendix B for list.

## Messages

- We contribute to a vibrant and sustainable Minnesota, now and in the future.
- We give people in Greater Minnesota access to the capabilities of the University of Minnesota in order to create solutions and solve problems.
- We create opportunities to build stronger local economies, enhance social capacity and protect and improve the environment (or Minnesota's natural resources).
- We bring together local talent and resources with University of Minnesota knowledge and seed funding to drive sustainability in agriculture and food systems, tourism and resilient communities, natural resources and clean energy.
- Our innovative initiatives are community identified and valued, citizen led, University engaged and highly collaborative.
- These initiatives leverage and support University of Minnesota research, education and outreach.
- We spur innovations across the state, so we are local in many places in Minnesota.
- We are an integral part of University of Minnesota Extension.

## **Objectives and Priorities**

### **1. To sustain and increase the interest and support of the statewide coordinating committee, board members, work groups, partners, funders and prospects through assertive, regular communications**

- 1.1 Develop and distribute a quarterly statewide e-newsletter to internal audiences. Distribute real-time news when appropriate.
- 1.2 Schedule the statewide director and others for presentations in each region annually.
- 1.3 Continue having the SCC meeting rotate among all the regions for one meeting per year. In addition, explore the potential for having one major meeting annually in each region to bring together all regional stakeholders for a time of recognition and celebration; implement findings.
- 1.4 Publicly announce (through the local media and through U of M and Extension channels) all appointments, new projects and project completion.
- 1.5 Build a broader online community and communications through social media.
- 1.6 Use email and handwritten notes to show appreciation to long-term and retiring volunteers and in recognition of the contributions of other volunteers; identify other recognition opportunities.

#### ***We will have succeeded when...***

- Regional Partnerships have completed and implemented manageable communication action plans.
- RSDP stakeholders in all regions are kept up-to-date on the activities in their regions through monthly communications of various kinds (e.g., e-newsletter, social media, email, phone calls, meetings)
- Meetings and gatherings of RSDP stakeholders increase enthusiasm for and understanding of RSDP work.
- News stories about RSDP projects are seen/heard regularly in media across Minnesota.
- Volunteers are routinely recognized for their service.

### **2. To build understanding of RSDP's value and contributions among targeted University of Minnesota leaders, faculty and staff**

- 2.1 Identify university leaders (including coordinate campuses) and schedule twice-per-year meetings for statewide director to update them about the work of the partnerships; communicate by email at least monthly about new projects and other news.
- 2.2 Meet with Extension leaders (both on campus and in the regions) to identify ways to work more collaboratively; find ways to leverage resources in support of research, education and outreach.

- 2.3 Engage departments and on-campus groups with similar interests more effectively through presentations, meetings, relationship development and other strategies.
- 2.4 Customize the e-newsletter in 1.1 for this audience and distribute frequently. Distribute real-time news when appropriate.
- 2.5 Build relationships (with approval) with regents who live in RSDP areas.

***We will have succeeded when...***

- University leaders, including regents, understand and appreciate RSDP's contributions.
- Departments and on-campus groups understand and appreciate RSDP's programs; at least two new collaborations result from the increased interactions.
- At least five new collaborations with Extension leaders occur during the fiscal year.
- University and Extension leaders hear about RSDP at least monthly.

**3. To strengthen RSDP reputation and relevance among a broader group of opinion leaders, prospective funders and prospective partners in communities across greater Minnesota**

- 3.1 Place stories and guest articles in statewide and regional media (newspapers, TV, radio); meet with editorial boards in key newspapers across Minnesota at least annually.
- 3.2 Pitch stories to online media outlets (e.g., MinnPost); post on related social media sites.
- 3.3 Provide media training for regional staff.
- 3.4 Identify most important external influencers of RSDP success; including corporations. Meet with them; communicate with them regularly through email; engage as appropriate.
- 3.5 Customize the e-newsletter in 1.1 and send to these audiences frequently.
- 3.6 Identify one statewide opportunity annually (e.g., 2013 sustainable and small town tourism project); assign budget accordingly.
- 3.7 Explore opportunities to increase RSDP visibility through Minnesota State Fair collaborations - with Extension, with related groups, with industry.
- 3.8 Explore the potential for a longer-term statewide promotional strategy (e.g. a 10% buy local campaign).
- 3.9 Work with government relations staff to build and sustain positive relationships with elected and appointed policy makers.

***We will have succeeded when...***

- Relationships have been built with key statewide organizations and their leaders.
- Regional teams have built relationships with key local leaders.
- RSDP news stories appear in traditional media, through social media and in online media.
- RSDP identifies and implements one statewide strategy per year.
- Opportunities (e.g., State Fair, statewide promotion) are explored; decisions are made.

- Policy makers understand and appreciate the work of the Partnerships.

#### 4. To build a communications infrastructure to support achieving the objectives.

NOTE: This infrastructure is designed to provide the needed staffing to accomplish consistent and high quality communications. The statewide office, under the assistant program director's leadership, will hire the needed staff and students to support RSDP communications.

- 4.1 The assistant program director will work with each regional executive director to complete manageable regional communication plans that align with the communications for the Partnerships as a whole; work with CERTs to align all communication strategies. Brand CERTs more closely with Regional Partnerships and Extension.
- 4.2 The statewide RSDP office will work with and meet regularly with Extension Communications to align interests and capabilities.
- 4.3 RSDP support staff will coordinate existing lists and develop Google Groups or other list formats for each audience segment.
- 4.4 Assistant program director will develop a budget necessary to deliver this plan.
- 4.5 Work with a dedicated web production assistant to review our website effectiveness and then update and upgrade the website; transition to an all-RSDP view and format, focusing on focus areas, projects and impact rather than geography.
- 4.6 Organize a communications leadership group comprising statewide director, assistant program director, the executive directors, and RSDP board representatives; meet by phone monthly for the first six months and quarterly thereafter.
- 4.7 Identify and produce the collateral material (e.g., brochures, posters) necessary to promote the partnerships as a whole; collateral materials will meet Extension brand requirements.
- 4.8 Develop and distribute a report of accomplishments annually.
- 4.9 Enhance the persuasiveness of PowerPoint presentations and all content.
- 4.10 Publish a style guide.
- 4.11 Explore the possibility of a shorter name; implement recommendations.
- 4.12 Develop a budget and provide resources to EDs to support regional communications.

#### ***We will have succeeded when...***

- RSDP's website is current, compelling and engaging.
- RSDP has the collateral material (e.g. brochures, displays, annual reports) necessary to support its programs and initiatives.
- RSDP's communications strategy is supported by up-to-date Google Groups, budget, style guide and other tools.
- PowerPoint presentations are polished and persuasive.
- Communications are shaped by a RSDP leadership group and aligned with Extension Communications.
- RSDP's name has been reviewed and a decision made.



## **APPENDIX A: Statewide Audiences**

This is the responsibility of the RSDP statewide staff and executive committee, in collaboration with regional staff and boards as encountered:

- Statewide Coordinating Committee
- RSDP Council of Deans
  - Bev Durgan, dean, Extension
    - Deb Zak, Dean's Representative
  - Brian Buhr, interim dean, College of Food, Agriculture and Natural Resource Sciences (CFANS)
    - Greg Cuomo, associate dean, CFANS
  - Tom Fisher, dean, College of Design (CDes)
    - Brad Hokanson, associate dean, CDes
- Leaders in statewide organizations working in the five priority areas
  - David Fredrickson, commissioner, Minnesota Department of Agriculture
  - John Linc Stine, commissioner, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
  - Colleen Landkamer, state director, USDA Rural Development
  - Janet Streff, Dept. of Commerce, Division of Energy Resources
  - Doug Peterson, president, Minnesota Farmers Union
  - Chris Radatz, executive director, Minnesota Farm Bureau
  - Mike Harley, executive director, Environmental Initiative
  - Steve Morse, executive director, Minnesota Environmental Partnership
  - John Edman, director, Explore Minnesota
  - David Flink, state chair, Ducks Unlimited
  - Don A. Baloun, Minnesota state conservationist, Natural Resource Conservation Service
  - Michael Noble, executive director, Fresh Energy
  - J. Drake Hamilton, science policy director, Fresh Energy
  - Rolf Nordstrom, executive director, Great Plains Institute
  - George Boody, Land Stewardship Project
  - Legislative Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources- staff and commission members
  - Glenn Hill, executive director, Minnesota Food Association
  - John Mesko, executive director, MN Sustainable Farming Association
  - Paul Hugunin, Minnesota Grown Program
  - Brad Finstad, president and CEO, Center for Rural Policy and Development
- Foundations and grant makers
  - Bush Foundation
  - McKnight Foundation
  - Blandin Foundation
  - Initiative Foundations
  - Bremer Foundation
- Corporations
  - William J. Nelson, VP Corporate Citizenship and President, CHS Foundation
  - Land O'Lakes
  - General Mills

- Great River Energy
- Target Corporation - corporate giving
- University of Minnesota leaders, as appropriate and approved by Extension Dean
  - Eric Kaler, president, UMN
  - Amy Phenix, chief of staff to the president, UMN
  - Karen Hanson, provost, UMN
  - Chancellors of UMC, UMD, UMM, UMR
  - Diana Harvey, chief communications officer, UMN
  - Jon Foley, director, Institute on the Environment
  - Todd Iverson, assistant director, Government and Community Relations
  - Jason Rohloff, director, Government and Community Relations
  - Department heads of key partnering departments - Applied Economics; Horticulture; Bioproducts and Biosystems Engineering; Agronomy and Plant Genetics; Soil, Climate and Water; Food Science and Nutrition; School of Public Health and Divisions; Fisheries, Wildlife and Conservation Biology; Forest Resources; and others on an in-reach needed basis
  - MnDrive Food Initiative- Shaun Kennedy
  - University of Minnesota Extension leaders statewide
    - Bev Durgan, dean
    - Dick Senese, senior associate dean
    - Sarah Greening, COS/Govt. Relations
    - Aimee Viniard-Weideman, assistant dean, Communications
    - Mike Schmitt, associate dean, EFANS
    - Dorothy Freeman, associate dean, Youth Development
    - Brent Hales, associate dean, Community Vitality
    - Karen Shirer, associate dean, Family Development
    - David Werner, COO
    - Bob Byrnes, director, Field Operations
    - Ingrid Schneider, director, UMN Tourism Center
    - Water Resources Center
  - Policy makers (in coordination with U of M government relations staff) state and federal legislators and their staff (broader Extension and University messaging)

## **APPENDIX B: Regional Audiences**

- Board members
- Work group members
- University of Minnesota leaders in the regions (including at Duluth, Crookston, Morris and Rochester)
- University of Minnesota Extension leaders in the regions
  - Regional directors (13)
- Partners and prospective partners
- Funders and prospective funders
- Opinion leaders in organizations working in the first priority areas
- Local policy makers



## APPENDIX C: Branding Work

Brand development discussion notes from meeting August 8, 2013.

### **Promise**

- Connections
- Entrepreneurial
- Think global/act local
- Value risk-taking
- Community-based knowledge
- Community led
- Protective of environment
- Support innovativeness
- Convener – synergy, brokering, facilitate, hatching
- Leveraging resources and talent
- Relevant
- Flexibility
- Provide a need that they can't get elsewhere
- Nimble
- Reputation/credibility
- Access – to U, leadership, opportunities
- Leveraging other resources
- Healthier landscapes
- Sustainable = an ideal to strive for
- Resilient?
- Partnerships/collaboration
- Neighbors working with neighbors
- Stronger community bonds
- Less dependence on outside
- Leveraging
- Bring U to community with knowledge, resources, help
- Vitality
- Place-based
- Results
- Durable
- Environmentally
- Improved quality of life
- Seed the future
- Provide resources
- Community empowerment
- Bring community together, connect with the U to improve quality of life
- Citizen driven

- People driven
- Project driven
- Big ideas
- Local in a lot of places
- Momentum
- Place based
- Reality driven
- Community driven – University fueled/assisted
- Vitality
- Healthy, vibrant, growth
- Long lasting, renewing
- Robust, resilient
- Experiment with local innovative ideas
- Build and strengthen relationships
- Practical steps to a hopeful future
- Create partnerships of people and resources
- Support a process – create portal, create space
- University Community Connect
- Empowering people
- Build capacity
- Strengthen Minnesota
- Creative
- Courage
- Making things happen
- Research, credibility
- Create innovation around community development
- Make U of M relevant to Greater Minnesota and make community relevant to U of M
- Embody the land-grant heritage/legacy
- Guard future
- Enliven, renew
- We are the bridge/connector...to whom? To what end?
- We are like the Peace Corp – share the presence of the U to Greater Minnesota
- We represent the community to the U of M
- Sets direction for future generations
- Be a good ancestor, now!
- Change the trajectory
- Explore new paths, new directions
- Thinking beyond ourselves – greater good
- We want to lose “spending my grandchildren’s heritage”
- Exp. And horizons
- Protective culture
- Lay foundation

## Position

### What makes RSDP distinctive?

- Open, inclusive (reaching beyond the inner circle), transparent
- Depth of research, knowledge
- Systemic thinkers
- Stable portal to provide value driven, high minded...towards the common good
- Access to U of M
- Community-identified needs
- Focus on Greater Minnesota
- Leadership opportunities
- Focus areas (see website)
- Risk-taking on front line (Extension does research; we don't require it.)


### What makes RSDP different?

- Funding
- Participatory co-leadership + engagement with whole U of M based on local need + funding YEA!!
- Four focus areas – sustainable ag, local tourism, clean energy, natural resources...we work within and across...note: communities often think of these as one holistic issue or project
- Do we have four or five focus areas?
- Build capacity for participatory planning and co-leadership (multiple scales – projects, boards, SCC etc.)
- Engagement to whole U of M based/driven by local need
- Resources of the U
- Focus on sustainability
- Focus on healthy systems
- Projects before or as research
- Locally responsive? Timely?
- “Invest”
- We have funds with strings
- Commitment to community networks
- Finding matching community resources
- We need to be clear about what we're looking for so people aren't disappointed

## Personality

- Open
- Dynamic
- Professional
  - Informal
  - Rabble-rouser – not afraid to rock the boat
  - Exciting
  - Nimble
  - Flexible
  - Distributed
  - Broad-minded, open
  - Rural
  - Curious
  - Holistic
  - Risk-taking
  - Innovative
  - Generous
  - Caring
  - Forward-thinking
  - Risky
  - Mostly Anglo
  - Relatively healthy
  - Touchy, feely
  - Processy
  - Too humble (We stay behind the curtain.)
  - Process oriented
  - Energetic
  - Thoughtful
  - Paranoid – apocalyptic
  - Optimistic
  - Hopeful
  - Mindful
  - Aware
  - Quirky
  - Engaging
  - Appreciative of new ideas
  - Forward-thinking
  - Respectful
  - Experimental
  - Persistent, tenacious





**Creating a Powerful Brand:  
The Four “Ps”**

**ROBERTS & more**


- Public Relations
- Reputation Management
- Marketing Communications

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**What is a “brand”?**

A brand is what makes a company/product instantly recognizable....and always memorable.

It is real, and it is authentic.



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## Why is a brand important?

A brand differentiates a company/organization from its competitors.

Instant recognition of this difference translates into action.



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## Famous brands...

- Coke
- Mayo Clinic
- Target
- 3M
- BMW
- IBM
- Apple
- Cheerios



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## Famous taglines...

- The ultimate driving machine
- Just do it
- We try harder
- Melt in your mouth, not in your hands
- The breakfast of champions
- Don't leave home without it
- Always low prices, always (Save money. Live better.)
- Driven to discover



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## Successful higher education brands...



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## Successful brands...

- articulate a clear **promise** that is delivered every day.
- build a market **position** to emphasize their difference.
- establish a **personality** that describes how they do business.
- deliver effective **promotional strategies**.



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## What is a “promise”?

**A “promise” articulates what we value, what we can offer and what may be expected from us every day. It is often translated into vision, mission and values.**

### A “promise”...

- establishes expectations (e.g.- students, employees, donors, community).
- creates a framework for employee behavior.
- guides actions and interactions.
- is based on a set of values and guiding principles.
- sets standards for quality and reliability.



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## What is a “position”?

**A “position” represents relative strength in the market vis-à-vis collaborators and competitors.**

### A “position”...

- is what makes an organization distinctive, different from its competitors.
- creates competitive advantages.
- is based on past and present performance.
- represents the collective value of an organization’s people and programs.
- may be lost in an instant, but takes decades to establish.



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## What is a “personality”?

**A “personality” describes how a company/organization looks, acts, sounds and feels.**

### “Personality”...

- results in a specific, emotional response.
- reflects a company’s behavior.
- includes the personal traits of its executives and employees.
- is represented visually, verbally and online.
- is visible in a company’s facilities and physical locations.



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# What is “promotion”?

**“Promotion” includes those strategies and initiatives to present the company to its publics—employees, investors, customers and opinion/community leaders.**

**“Promotion” ...**

- reinforces messages about achievements and quality.
- is the collective reputation of executives and employees.
- is delivered through marketing and communications initiatives.
- is best represented through high quality customer service.
- must be regular and reinforcing.



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## Brand Statement Draft

### University of Minnesota Extension Regional Sustainable Development Partnerships Brand Statement (Draft 10-24-13)

#### PROMISE

We contribute to a vibrant future for Minnesota by bringing together local talent and resources with University of Minnesota expertise and seed funding to drive sustainability in agriculture and local foods, tourism and resilient communities, natural resources, and clean energy.

#### POSITION

Through our Regional Partnerships, we give people in Greater Minnesota direct access to University of Minnesota capabilities to help solve problems, create opportunities to build stronger local economies and enhanced social capacity, and to protect and improve the environment. Our innovative initiatives are University and community identified and valued, citizen led and highly collaborative. They both leverage and support University of Minnesota research, education and outreach. Many are replicated across the state, so we truly are local in many places.

#### PERSONALITY

- Engaging and engaged
- Dynamic
- Creative
- Broad-minded
- Tenacious
- Entrepreneurial and early adopting

#### PROMOTION

We build awareness of and appreciation for our mission by communicating with our key audiences – statewide and/or in each region -- assertively and regularly through a variety of channels. We are highly engaged with our stakeholders, welcoming discussion and acting on ideas and insights. We actively seek new partners, new opportunities and new funding. We make news, resources and information available broadly through online capabilities and through social media.

## Communications Planning Discovery Report Summary November 6, 2013



### Discovery Goals

- To assess current RSDP communications
- To collect great ideas
- To surface concerns
- To make recommendations about how to proceed



## Discovery Process

- Review online, electronic and print collateral.
- Review existing plans and strategies.
- Interview 22 stakeholders.



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## Discovery Priorities

- Brand Development
- Communications Strategies and Priorities
- Optimizing the Extension Relationship
- Communications Infrastructure and Tools



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## Key Findings

- There is minimal University/Extension understanding of RSDP.
- Statewide RSDP should be more involved in building reputation statewide and in the regions.
- Regional Partnerships reach limited audiences based on projects. The broader community knows little about them.
- Communications with boards are good; communications beyond that are intermittent and vary significantly by region.
- Messages are more about process than results.
- Great opportunity exists to showcase outstanding RSDP work .



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## Recommendations

- Build statewide visibility as an understood brand and regional visibility as a local resource and contributor.
- Focus the statewide communications plan on University of Minnesota audiences and leaders in statewide organizations.
- Develop manageable regional communications action plans that tie to the statewide goals.

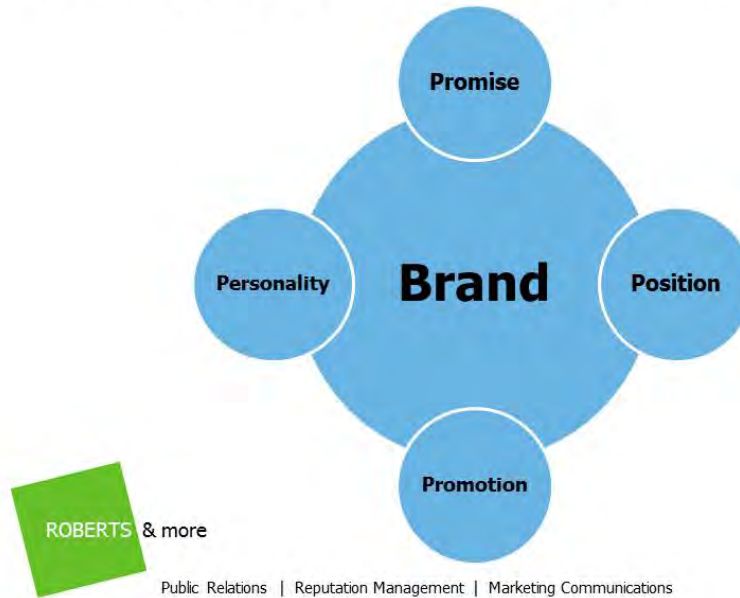


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## Brand Graphic - November 6, 2013

**A brand makes you...  
instantly recognizable & always memorable.**



## Marketing Continuum - November 6, 2013

### ***R&m Marketing Continuum***



**APPENDIX E: Other Documents**

**RSDP Communications Leadership Team Meeting Schedule**

Team Members: Dan G, Kathy, David, Erin, Linda, Molly, Okey, Dan T, Betsey, Susanne Hinrichs and Ann Delgehausen

Meetings will be monthly for 30 minutes for the first six months and then quarterly for an hour.

Phone Number: 1- 712-432-1212 Meeting ID: 216-415-639

<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>
April 18, 2014	10:30 - 11:00 a.m.
May 16, 2014	10:30 - 11:00 a.m.
June 18, 2014	10:00 - 10:30 a.m.
July 16, 2014	10:00 - 10:30 a.m.
August 15, 2014	10:30 - 11:00 a.m.
September 17, 2014	10:00 - 10:30 a.m.
December 19, 2014	10:30 - 11:30 a.m.
March 20, 2015	10:30 - 11:30 a.m.
June 19, 2015	10:30 - 11:30 a.m.

**RSDP Social Media Strategy – Draft September 16, 2014**

Platforms: Facebook and Twitter

Our constituency is:

- People interested in RSDP’s work and community-based model
- Funders, potential funders, Extension and UMN Administrators (and communicators)
- People interested in our four focus areas and UMN work in those areas
- People interested in greater Minnesota sustainability
- People interested in rural sustainability and vitality work
- Project partners and potential partners

What are our goals:

- Increase awareness of our work-specifically our projects-which will lead to support and partnering with other people/orgs
- Engage younger people in our work, including students at UMN and other campuses
- Increase awareness of our key messages (UMN connection, partnership, Greater MN, focus areas)
- Ensure our visibility with opinion leaders in MN sustainability  
Highlight work of our partners, Extension and the University in sustainability-related areas
- Share “big ideas” related to sustainability, especially climate change, will help inform our work
- Use social media best practices to ensure best reach

How to measure:

- Lots of numbers but hard to measure impact (e.g., [Facebook reality](#)-hard to predict what they will show, anywhere from 3 to ~45 viewers).
- More followers on Twitter, more likes (follows on Facebook?)??
- Retweets? Shares?

What are our strengths:

- Lots of relevant University and Extension content to share in our focus areas
- New resources for communications (APD, student)
- *Some* very engaged staff and RSDP board members on social media
- Most significant change project in NW→many stories

What are some of our challenges:

- Limited staff time to spend on social media
- Need photos
- Limited resources to create own content
- Many priorities/dispersed projects
- ROI on social media is hard to gauge
- Many RSDP leaders not engaged in social media as much as they are in local communities
- Metro-orientation for many MN sustainability organizations
- CERTs/RSDP

Next steps/Other ideas:

- Statewide blog to link back to?
- Ask EDs and support staff to supply more project pictures, reports of what they are doing and how it ties back to how we connect UMN-community.
- Better mechanism to highlight regional events?
- Link to local food page
- New project pages become more narrative? (On hold-may be able to use the evaluation database to help fill in)

## **RSDP Newsletter Plan – Draft September 17, 2014**

### **Lists**

In coordination with the regions' support staff, Diane Seefeldt will coordinate the statewide and regions' opinion leaders list and add them to Constant Contact.

EDs and support staff are responsible for keeping lists updated (June 30 reminder)  
(September 17 communications leadership group call reminder)

Regions have been encouraged to create lists of at least 20-30 important opinion leaders in their areas, but are also encouraged to grow their lists.

Any new lists or tags on lists should start with an indication of region; i.e., "SEopinionleaders," "Central Ag list," "StatewideUMNlist"

### **Regional newsletter**

To build visibility and make connections according to the RSDP communications plan, the regions will send out a newsletter to opinion leaders 8X per year, according to the schedule below.

The regional Executive Director will have a space to write a note about regional happenings at the top of the newsletter.

Statewide RSDP will provide a monthly (8X/year template) with a story that will underscore RSDP messages. That monthly story will feature a regional or statewide story.

The regional Executive Director will also be able to change the suggested links or story briefs on the side of the template with their own info.

Regional newsletters should go to the relevant regional list(s), lists, the RSDP StaffExCo email list in Constant Contact, and the Extension Regional Directors list.

### **Statewide Newsletter**

The statewide newsletter will be published quarterly according to the schedule below. the newsletter will go to all regional opinion leader lists, the statewide opinion leader list and the RSDP statewide list.

Statewide content will attempt to highlight work across regions, similar work, aggregate work across the regions when possible.

### **Production Schedule**

Content will be ready in Constant Contact templates several days before the start of the month

Tuesday	April 8, 2014	Regional	
Monday	April 28, 2014	Statewide	
Wednesday	May 28, 2014	Regional	
Thursday	June 26, 2014	Regional	Rural Grocery story Sidebars: Food Hubs, what went wrong, Rural design
Tuesday	July 29, 2014	Regional	Red River Watch Sidebars: What went wrong, maybe interim rural design?, CERTs Royalton tour
Thursday	August 28, 2014	Statewide	Rural design conference and regional roundups

Friday	September 26, 2014	Regional	Wolf Ridge Farm; FEAST; commercial kitchen; design documentary
Wednesday	October 29, 2014	Regional	Toasty Turkeys; sidebars on SCC meeting (time dependent); CERTs conference <a href="http://www.cleanenergyresourceteams.org/events/certs2015">http://www.cleanenergyresourceteams.org/events/certs2015</a> ; and --
Monday	November 24, 2014	Regional	DWG update sidebar 1; sidebar 2; sidebar 3
Monday	Changed to January 5, 2014 (from December 22)	Statewide	Tourism from towns under 1,500 and Hazelnuts/Mary Page
Thursday	January 29, 2015	Regional	SE: Growing Home
Thursday	February 26, 2015	Regional	Local Foods College
Friday	March 27, 2015	Regional	CERTs conference
Tuesday	April 28, 2014	Regional	David Benson Award
Thursday	May 28, 2015	Statewide	UMD wind turbine
Tuesday	June 30, 2015	Regional	Mary Page/Millennials Rising

### Archiving

Stories from the regional and statewide newsletters will be linked to and archived at RSDP website.

### Budget

Betsey's time

Dan's time

ED's and other time

Constant Contact subscription

### How will we know success

Click rates. Open rates.