



# Russian River Watershed Association Policy for Use of Social Media Sites

## I. PURPOSE

Social Media holds great promise as a tool for the Russian River Watershed Association (“RRWA”) to engage in interactive dialogue and communicate directly with watershed residents regarding news, events, and outreach. This Policy for use of Social Media Sites (This “Policy”) establishes guidelines for the use of Social Media. This Policy establishes consistent standards for, and ensures appropriate use of, Social Media sites administered by RRWA.

## II. DEFINITIONS

“Social Media” – Internet-based (web and mobile) communication tools that allow users to collaborate and share information with a network of other users or the community as a whole through a variety of Social Media platforms, including but not limited to: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube and LinkedIn.

“Social Media site(s)” – Those pages, sections, or posting locations within social media websites established or maintained by RRWA staff or its authorized contractors that are used to communicate with the public and promote RRWA.

“Member agency” – The cities, counties, and special districts in the Russian River watershed that participate in RRWA.

“Social Media Subcommittee” – The group of volunteer member agency staff who will guide and oversee RRWA’s Social Media engagement.

## III. SCOPE

This Policy applies to all Social Media sites administered by RRWA. This Policy is created to ensure that all RRWA staff and contractors understand what is and what is not appropriate. This Policy is not intended to regulate the personal activities of RRWA staff and contractors with respect to the use of Social Media postings and user profiles on personal social media accounts (outside the workplace and using non-RRWA information systems).

## **IV. RESPONSIBILITIES**

A. RRWA staff and contractors are responsible for:

1. Managing RRWA site(s) in a manner consistent with this Policy and with each Social Media site's Terms of Service;
2. Monitoring content during regular business hours;
3. Granting authority to specific individuals to post content on RRWA's Social Media site(s) and ensuring that posts are not made by unauthorized representatives;
4. Ensuring that all authorized representatives read this Policy for Use of Social Media Sites and that they agree to follow the Policy and all related standards and guidelines;
5. Maintaining a list of Social Media sites hosted by RRWA, including active account logins and passwords;
6. Changing passwords, as soon as reasonably possible, when an individual is removed as an administrator;
7. Providing the RRWA information technology department with an updated and accurate list of login and password information for the Social Media sites;
8. Developing, implementing, updating and administering standards, guidelines and procedures for all approved Social Media tools; and
9. Signing an acknowledgement form indicating that the authorized representative agrees to follow all of the terms, standards and guidelines set forth in this Policy.

B. RRWA may amend this Policy on an as-needed basis. All such changes must be reviewed by the Social Media Subcommittee and approved by the Board of Directors.

## **V. POLICY**

A. The official website for RRWA ([www.rrwatershed.org](http://www.rrwatershed.org)) will remain RRWA's primary and predominant internet presence. Content on RRWA Social Media site(s) shall not be offered in lieu of official information on RRWA or member agency websites. Wherever possible, RRWA Social Media site(s) shall contain a link back to the official website of RRWA or the member agency where the announcement, press release, form(s), document(s), online services and/or other information relevant to the matter shall be posted.

B. Only authorized individuals shall have permission to create, publish, or comment on behalf of RRWA on RRWA Social Media sites.

C. Content of Posts

1. Staff and contractors using Social Media to communicate on behalf of RRWA and member agencies should be mindful that statements posted represent the member

agencies, including its elected officials. Therefore, staff and contractors must use discretion before posting.

2. Posts should be designed to increase the public's knowledge trust, and use of member agency services.
3. Posts should always relate to matters within the scope of the RRWA's function and must be consistent with RRWA's mission to promote clean water, fisheries restoration, and watershed enhancement.
4. When posting content to Social Media sites, it is helpful to consider the reasons for doing so. When using the RRWA Social Media sites, the goals should be:
  - a. Promote the RRWA mission;
  - b. Reach a wide, diverse audience;
  - c. Educate, inform and/or entertain;
  - d. Support research, initiatives, and organizations that are active in the watershed;
  - e. Promote public participation; or
  - f. Learn about the community and its needs.
5. To help distinguish Social Media sites from non-official (or personal) uses of these tools, RRWA sites must patently state that they are maintained by RRWA and that they are subject to the RRWA's Policy for Use of Social Media Sites.
6. Confidential or non-public information must not be shared. The posting or discussion of sensitive, proprietary, or classified information is strictly prohibited.
7. Postings must respect copyright laws and reference or cite sources appropriately.
8. Content that was originally published by a member agency, and is re-posted by RRWA, shall provide credit to that member agency, including contact information or a link to the member agency website, when appropriate.
9. Staff and contractors must not use RRWA Social Media sites for political purposes or to conduct private commercial products, services, entities or activities. Links to political or commercial websites are prohibited, unless the RRWA Executive Director, with direction from the Social Media Subcommittee determines the content is appropriate and supportive of an RRWA initiative.
  - a. Examples of prohibited use include promoting political parties, endorsing candidates seeking office, etc.
  - b. Examples of permissible use include promoting clean water initiatives and programs, providing links to proposed legislation directly related to clean water and fisheries, and other political content related to the mission of RRWA.

10. The following content and activities are unacceptable and are prohibited on RRWA Social Media sites and shall be removed as soon as possible:

- a. Any use of Social Media that does not comply with federal, state and local laws and regulations, or with this Policy;
- b. Profane language or content;
- c. Content that promotes, fosters, or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, age, religion, gender, marital status, pregnancy, status with regards to public assistance, national origin, ancestry physical or mental disability, gender identity or sexual orientation;
- d. Sexual content or links to sexual content;
- e. Content in support or in opposition to political candidates or campaigns;
- f. Religious content, including comments that endorse or oppose any type of religious opinions or activities;
- g. Solicitations of commerce;
- h. Conduct or encouragement of illegal activity;
- i. Content or posts that include vulgar, offensive, threatening or harassing language, personal attacks or unsupported accusations;
- j. Comments not typically related to the content being commented on;
- k. Information that may tend to compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems;
- l. Content that violates the terms of use governing the Social Media site;
- m. Content that violates a legal ownership interest of any other party; or
- n. Hyperlinks to content that falls under one of the categories above.

D. Notices. On each Social Media site, visitors shall be informed a Comment Policy, as discussed below, that RRWA disclaims any and all responsibility and liability for any materials that RRWA deems inappropriate for posting, which cannot be immediately removed. Furthermore, visitors shall be informed that comments posted by members of the public are the opinion of the commentator or poster only, and the posting of a comment does not imply RRWA's endorsement or agreement, nor do public comments necessarily reflect the opinions or policies of RRWA or member agencies. RRWA neither guarantees the authenticity, accuracy, appropriateness nor security of external links, websites, or content linked thereto. Any content generated by RRWA staff, contractors or the public

posted to an official RRWA Social Media site are public records and are subject to public disclosure.

#### E. Public Comments

1. RRWA reserves the right to restrict or remove any content that is deemed in violation of this Social Media Policy or any applicable law.
2. Staff and contractors maintaining RRWA Social Media sites that permit public comment shall inform visitors of the intended purpose of the site and provide a clear statement of the discussion topic introduced for public comment so that the public is aware of the limited nature of the discussion and notified that inappropriate posts are subject to removal, including but not limited to the types of postings listed in E.10 above, and comments not topically related.
3. Online discussions shall be moderated by a designated staff person. Postings that do not comply with the Comment Policy, as discussed below, shall be promptly removed from public view. This includes, but is not limited to, statements, links, video, images, and documents.
4. A link to the below Comment Policy shall be included on each online page that displays discussion content.
5. Comment Policy
  - a. RRWA welcomes your comments. The purpose of this discussion is to present information relevant to the stated purpose of this site, regarding matters of public interest. We encourage you to submit your comments, but please note this is an online discussion site and not a public forum.
  - b. Please note that the comments expressed on this site do not necessarily reflect the opinions or positions of RRWA, its staff, member agencies, or affiliates. If you have any questions concerning the operation of this online discussion site, please contact us at [info@rrwatershed.com](mailto:info@rrwatershed.com).
  - c. RRWA disclaims any and all responsibility and liability for any materials that RRWA deems inappropriate for posting, which cannot be immediately removed. RRWA neither guarantees the authenticity, accuracy, appropriateness nor security of external links, websites, or content linked thereto. Any content generated by RRWA staff, contractors or the public posted to an official RRWA Social Media site are public records and are subject to public disclosure.
  - d. By posting anything to this site, you agree to the following terms:
    - i. Users will treat others with respect.
    - ii. Users warrant that they own or have permission to post the information contained in their postings, including but not limited to video, photos, or digital reproductions and that no copyright or trademark infringement has taken place due to posting it on this site. Further, RRWA does not guarantee or warrant that any

information posted by users on this site is correct, and disclaims any liability whatsoever for any loss or damage resulting from reliance on any such information.

- iii. Users of this site do not retain any rights over their postings. Postings are intended for public view and any personal information posted constitutes a waiver of any rights to privacy or confidentiality.
  - iv. Once posted, RRWA reserves the right to delete submissions that contain vulgar language, personal attacks of any kind, or comments that promotes, fosters or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, age, religion, gender, marital status, pregnancy, status with regard to public assistance, national origin, ancestry, physical or mental disability, gender identity or sexual orientation. Further, RRWA also reserves the right to delete comments that are: (i) spam or include links to other sites; (ii) clearly off topic; (iii) advocate illegal activity; (iv) promote particular services, products, or political organizations; (v) tend to compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems; or (vi) infringe on copyrights or trademarks.
- B. RRWA shall take measures to prevent inappropriate or technically harmful information and links.
- C. Comments may also be invited via email to a designated official email address.
- F. RRWA staff and contractors will use proper grammar, and, where possible, avoid jargon. All RRWA Social Media sites shall represent RRWA and member agencies appropriately and professionally.