Communication Director Round Table – October 23, 2026

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Photo: Hannah Ferguson, Program Support Specialist

Welcome

- The recording will be added to the Naturalist News page
- Our next round table will be in 2027 (time/date TBA)

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Today's Plan

- Website Updates
- New Chapter Templates and Resources
- Socials Survey Results
- Tutorials
- Guided Discussion

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One Important Note

- Approved designs that get changed after approval MUST be sent in for re-approval prior to production/posting.

Website Updates

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A New Direction for TMN Chapter Websites

Building a more accessible, consistent, and sustainable online presence

- The Texas Master Naturalist Program is preparing to transition chapter websites to a centralized website system supported by Texas A&M AgriLife Extension's Office of Data & Accountability (ODA).
- Upcoming federal Title II ADA web accessibility requirements create new compliance responsibilities and potential legal risks for publicly accessible websites.
- Our current chapter websites vary in design, accessibility, maintenance, and technical support.
- A centralized system will provide consistent branding, accessibility standards, security, and long-term technical support.
- **Our goal: Reduce the technical burden on volunteers while maintaining each chapter's unique identity and local content.**

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What is Title II ADA and how does it apply to us?

- Upcoming federal Title II ADA web accessibility requirements create new compliance responsibilities and potential legal risks for publicly accessible websites.
- Title II of the ADA requires state and local governments to make sure that their services, programs, and activities are accessible to people with disabilities. Title II applies to all services, programs, or activities of state and local governments, from adoption services to zoning regulation. This includes the services, programs, and activities that state and local governments offer online and through mobile apps.
- **Compliance deadline is April 26, 2027**
- Technical Standard: State and local government websites and mobile applications must conform to WCAG 2.1 Level AA standards.
- Scope: Covers public websites, mobile apps, online documents (PDFs, Word docs), forms, and third-party digital tools used to deliver government services.
- https://www.ada.gov/resources/2024-03-08-web-rule/

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From Webmasters to Content Creators

Chapters manage the WHAT. The centralized team manages the HOW.

- **Chapters will continue to control:**
- Local news, events, projects, resources, and chapter information.
- Content accuracy, relevance, and priorities.
- Requests for new content, updates, and removal of outdated information.
- **The centralized team will manage:**
- Website design, layout, hosting, security, and accessibility compliance.
- Publishing, technical maintenance, and standardized website functionality.

- Chapters will transition away from independently managed or externally hosted websites.
- This reduces reliance on individual volunteers with specialized website skills and provides continuity when chapter leadership changes.
- **The shift: Volunteers become chapter storytellers and content creators rather than technical website administrators.**

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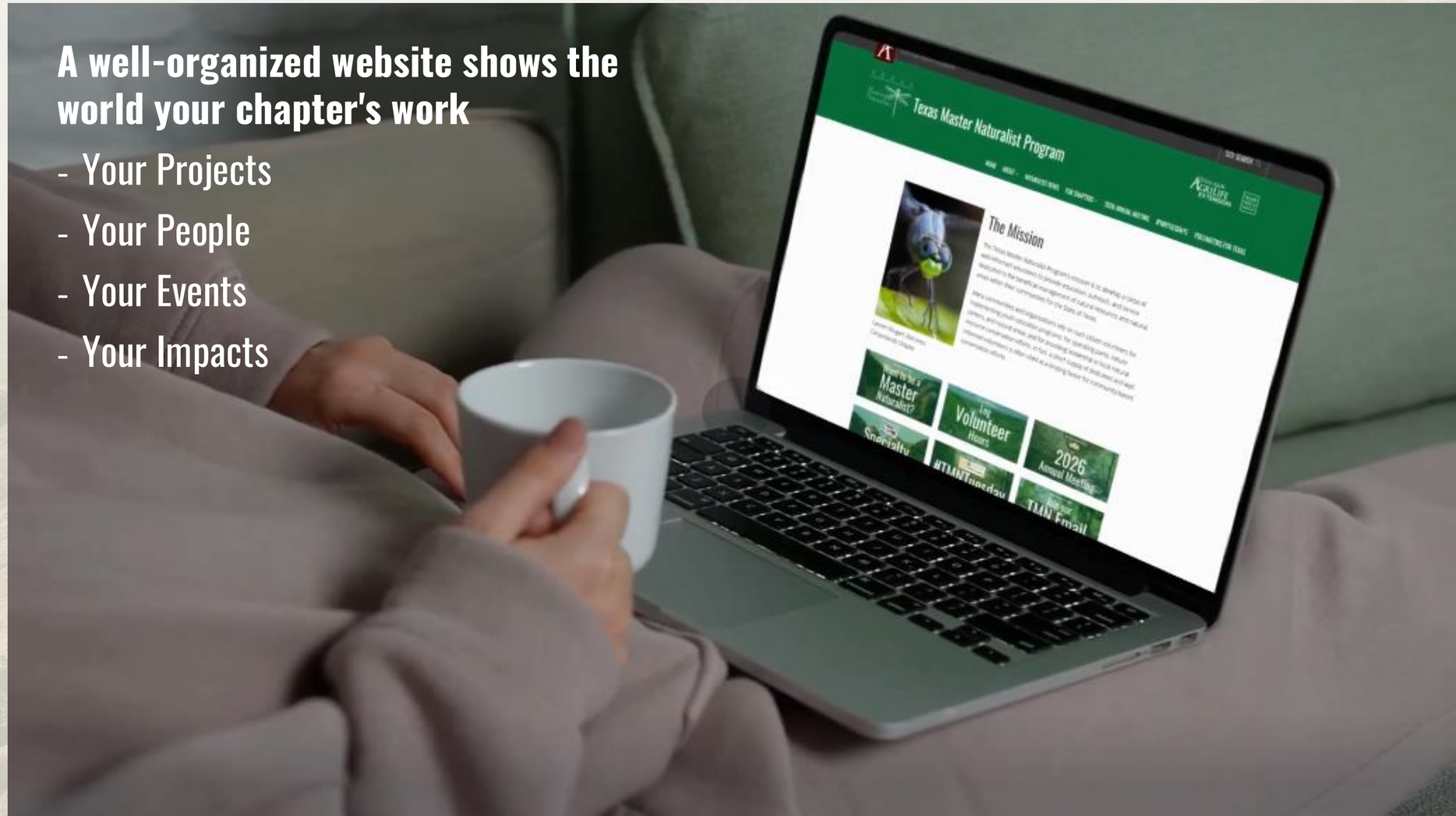
TMN Websites Transition – What you can do NOW!

Holiday To Do List:

- Review pages & posts
  - E- Eliminate
  - A- Assess/Archive
  - S – Substitute
  - Y – Yield Improvements
- Clean up content
- Delete, archive & combine
- Organize photos
- Add alt text
- Refresh events
- Highlight projects
- Earn Service Hours



TMN WordPress Websites Transition & Trainings

TechTuesdays (Monthly Support & Training)

November: Tuesday, November 3, 2026, 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM

https://tpwdevents.webex.com/weblink/register/r4bce35db1075414f32b27da37340e786

No December TechTuesday

Ashley Westerfeld, TMN & TMG Website Project Coordinator

Support & Requests
For any website-related needs, submitting a ticket through MN/MG First Call is the best way to ensure requests are tracked and supported efficiently: MGMNsupport@ag.tamu.edu

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New Chapter Templates and Resources

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Chapter Project Highlight Social Media Post

- Two photo orientation options (vertical and horizontal).
- Fillable text for project name, project info, and chapter contact info.
- Drag and drop frame for picture of project and chapter mark.
- Canva template. Access it here.

Chapter Project Workday Social Media Post

- Two photo orientation options (vertical and horizontal).
- Fillable text for project name, project info, and chapter contact info.
- Drag and drop frame for picture of project and chapter mark.
- Canva template. Access it here.

- Chapter Project Highlight and Project Workday social media post templates
- More templates coming soon!
- The password will be updated in 2027—be on the lookout for an email in January

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Things to Note

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Things to Note

Alt Text

- **Keep it short:** Aim for 1 to 2 sentences (around 125–150 characters).
- **Skip "image of" or "picture of":** Screen readers already announce that an element is an image. Writing "image of a dog" makes the screen reader say: "Image: Image of a dog."
- **Focus on purpose and context:** Describe what the image communicates in relation to the page, not every minor background detail.
- **End with a period:** A period forces the screen reader to pause before moving on to the next piece of content.
- **Handle decorative images:** If an image is purely for style, background borders, mark it as decorative so screen readers skip it.
- **For Graphics:** Say "See caption for details" or "Graphic showcasing the information found in the caption."

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Things to Note

Social Media Posts and Title II

5. Preexisting social media posts

- For many state and local governments, making all of their past social media posts accessible may be impossible. There also may be very little use to making these old posts accessible because they were usually intended to provide updates about things happening at the time they were posted in the past.
- For these reasons, social media posts made by a state or local government before the date the state or local government must comply with this rule do not need to meet WCAG 2.1, Level AA.
- Example: This exception would apply to a 2017 social media post by a city's sanitation department announcing that trash collection would be delayed due to a snowstorm.
- The ADA requires that state and local governments must provide individuals with disabilities with effective communication, reasonable modifications, and an equal opportunity to participate in or benefit from their services, programs, and activities.
- Example: If an individual who is blind requests access to a picture a city posted on social media in 2023, the city could provide effective communication by providing an alternative text description of the image to the individual.

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Things to Note

Copyright Image

- **When in doubt, don't:** If you do not know the owner/copyright of an image, do not use it
- **Use free resources:** Places such as Canva and Pexels have free-to-use images
- **Use what you have:** Use photos from your members (give credit in the photo/caption)

Things to Note

ADA PDFs

- **The why:** Making PDFs accessible (ADA-compliant) is important for legal compliance, equal access, and better usability.
- **Ashley's Training:** https://txmn.org/training/2026/09/01/tmn-techtuesday-september-1st-2026-remediating-pdfs-for-accessibility/

Things to Note

AI Generated Images/Flyers

- According to a recent bynder study, 52% of consumers disengage from content they suspect is AI-generated. 25% find it impersonal, 20% view it as untrustworthy, and 20% consider it lazy.
- I encourage you to refrain from using AI generated flyers/graphics/images to avoid these perceptions being placed on your chapter.

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Guided Conversation

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Social Experiments

Have you tried anything new on social media? If so, how did it go/what were the results?

Resource Needs

Are there any specific Canva templates/resources you would like to see added to the page?*

*I cannot guarantee they will get made, but I want to collect a list of needs/desires to help inform what I should focus on to best help you

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Planning Ahead

What topics/tips do you want to cover at the next round table?

Questions to ask other chapters? Tips and tricks I can share?

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Additional Questions?

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Thank You!

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