

March 8th, 2015—Post Root’s 3/7/2015 Board application (and 3/2 draft “Top Priority Agenda” document to four close friends who might run). It is immediately noticed (3/9) that there seems to be a planned low visibility for the election; hard to tell there’s an important DNF member election going on: only Root receives election packet by email on 3/2; one small sign on a box sitting above eye-sight past checkout stand; nothing in DNF weekly email blast; nothing on website. Root replies to concern expressed by one DNF member, pressing Board for more visibility.

Board responds to parts of the request for better visibility; but not all.

In time-chronological order (not reverse email reply order)

Date: 3/2/2015 9:50 AM

From: Root

To: 4 possible candidates (Chris, Cody, Colleen, Sage)

[Root attempting to build a team to run; good people, DNF involved, all friends for years]

Subject: Attached proposed agenda for our DNF Board Candidate team

Hi Folks,

Attached is an agenda for “the new DNF board” I’ve put together. How does it feel to you guys? Is this something you can support as a team of the five of us? Any comments?

Let’s just keep it among the five of us right now. After the election packets go out this Friday, it would be sent out to the 205 petition signers plus other DNF member addresses we have acquired through signup sheets, etc (not official DNF contact info); and *assuming we are all in agreement and on board with the agenda together as a team*. Keep in mind; being on the new board is not some make work project, because with the expertise we hold we are already engaged with many of these things, especially on the outreach end and DNF insights, where you guys are so experienced and connected. I would pick up most of the management effort identified in the agenda document; but we would sort out what work needs to happen and how we divide it up together. Right now I’m wanting to pull a team together—you guys—and have you know I’m already doing lots of work so we have some direction in mind.

I really hope you guys will enthusiastically take this up and run with me for the five open board positions. It’s an incredibly unique opportunity and timing for us to lead DNF to a flourishing future. I’ll be in touch by phone Wednesday to see where your thinking is; in the meantime please discuss it amongst yourselves if you can make the time to check in with each other—we all know each other quite well and we would be a great team on behalf of DNF!



Root Routledge, PhD

[Alpine Analytics](#), President

970-382-0711

Root@AlpineAnalytics.com

[Chris and Cody decline due to other commitments; Colleen and Sage still open to possibility]

Date: 3/9/2015 3:07 PM

From: Andrea [owner of Maria's Bookshop]

To: Root

Subject: RE: Root Routledge Application for DNF Board, April 25th, 2015 Election; plus attachment: "Top Priority Agenda for a New DNF Board of Directors", by Root

Hi Root-

I just wanted to make sure that the folks who need this application really got it....

Good for you for stepping up to run for the board- good luck!

Andrea Avantaggio

Owner

Maria's Bookshop

960 Main Avenue, Durango, CO 81301

970.247.1438 x13 (store)

andrea@mariasbookshop.com

www.mariasbookshop.com

What I'm Reading Now: Orhan's Inheritance by Aline Ohanesian – due out in early April....watch for it!!

Date: 3/9/2015 6:34 PM

From: Root

To: Andrea [owner of Maria's Bookshop]

Cc: Board, Brian, Pat, Guthrie, Geoff, Victoria

Subject: RE: Root Routledge Application for DNF Board, April 25th, 2015 Election; plus attachment: "Top Priority Agenda for a New DNF Board of Directors", by Root

Thanks for your comment Andrea.

There is a problem with this Board keeping things "low visibility" regarding this election... so far at least, which needs to change rather quickly. As of yet, they only sent an application directly to me because a couple of weeks before, I sent an email inquiring about the process. My understanding from them then is that the election candidate packets would be "sent out" to all the active members Friday, March 6th (I got mine earlier in the week; but have seen no general send out yet). But, in reality I think they meant "would be available" then. So, how is the membership to be aware that the application period is now open? (Hence your question about making sure that the folks who need it, get it!)

So, I challenge you Andrea, the next time you're in the store (I was just there, 6 pm, Monday), to see if you can find anything (as of yesterday, I had looked at the website) about the election or how to apply, either: 1) on www.DurangoNaturalFoods.coop (anywhere); or 2) in the store itself (*without asking anyone*; because in fact, you have to know to ask the checkout person for an application). Is it obvious; or something out of the way that does not jump to your attention and perhaps most members wouldn't even know about an upcoming election? – HEY DNF MEMBERS! WE'VE GOT AN ELECTION COMING UP AND WE WANT YOU ALL TO KNOW HOW TO APPLY TO BE ON THE BOARD, IF YOU WISH. There's something there in the store, but you'd have to stumble across it by a chance glance. If/when you do, ask why there isn't more visibility.

This Board has complained in the past about the member apathy in voting and running for Board positions; in fact, Board President Geoff Wolf said he had to volunteer to stay another term because no one wanted to be on the board. So, why are they not making all kinds of noise about the fact WE HAVE AN IMPORTANT ELECTION COMING UP; AND NOW IS THE TIME TO CONSIDER RUNNING. Why? [cc to Board]

Check out these items from 2014, regarding no interest; and compare that to NO EFFORT BY THE BOARD TO GIVE THE ELECTION AND CANDIDATES VISIBILITY. (Emphasis is so the cc'd Board sees it; and gets it.) From the DNF website <http://durangonaturalfoods.coop/about-food-coop/coop-board-of-directors/> is the link to this Timeline pdf: http://durangonaturalfoods.coop/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/DNF_CHRONOLGY-OF-EVENTS-11-05-14.pdf

Quote:

April [2014]

- BOD election postponed --- Despite reaching out personally to many members, all Board alternates had decided not to continue and no one from membership was interested in running for Board.
- Geoff (whose term ended in April of 2014) agrees to run for a one year term while we search for members to serve on the Board
- Mark and Paula from the NCGA bring up merger idea once again... only this time the Board listened more carefully. This was due to 1) our initial GM search results were unfavorable and 2) the Board was struggling to find DNF owners willing to serve on the Board

With at best extremely low visibility thus far regarding this election; one has to presume they really would like *not to see five candidates run*. Perhaps as a member, Andrea, you could do your own inquiry to the Board (address cc'd on this email as: board@durangonaturalfoods.coop). As you know from my application, I explicitly asked for visibility.

Thanks for your support,
Root

Cc: Guthrie Hardesty, DNF Front Lead — **Guthrie, please get some BIG signs up around the store about the election and that we want Board candidates to run for one of the FIVE open positions.**

Date: 3/10/2015 5:28 PM

From: Board

To: DNF Members

Subject: Become a DNF Board Member [within 24 hours, Board responds with this announcement]



Board of Directors

Hello DNF Co-op Member-Owners,

Now is your opportunity to become a DNF Co-op Board Member!

The Board guides the Co-op and there are five open seats this election. A complete Board (seven members) is essential to the success of your Co-op. PLEASE consider running for a Board seat. **Your Co-op NEEDS YOU to contribute your passion, vision and expertise to help create a thriving, successful Co-op in the coming year...and beyond!**

The deadline to submit the Board Application form is Friday April 3rd at 5pm.

To learn more about service on the Board of Directors:

- **attend the March 16th** Board meeting (5:30-7:30pm at the DNF Office)
- contact the Board directly at board@durangonaturalfoods.coop
- pick up an election packet in the store or find it on the DNF Co-op website here: [Board Election Packet](#)

The Board of Directors election is quickly approaching!

Elections will begin at the DNF Co-op Annual Meeting on April 25th at the Powerhouse Science Center from 4pm-8pm and continue until May 5th. An active owner of the Co-op (current on membership dues) can vote via a paper ballot submitted in the store (or at the annual meeting) or on-line via survey monkey.

If you have any questions, please email us at board@durangonaturalfoods.coop

Yours In Cooperation,

The DNF Co-op Board of Directors

www.durangonaturalfoods.coop



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big enough to meet your needs

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575 E. 8th Ave.
Durango CO 81301

Date: 3/11/2015 8:48 AM

From: Root

To: Sarah Buscaglia

Cc: Colleen Caver, Sage DeAngel Petersen

Subject: FW: Root Routledge Application for DNF Board, April 25th, 2015 Election; plus attachment: "Top Priority Agenda for a New DNF Board of Directors", by Root

Hi Sarah,

Always nice to run into you at DNF, since I don't see you guys much. This is a forward of what I sent out to the Board and all of our DNF petitioner contacts (bcc) this past Sunday; hoping it will get passed around to most DNF members. It's my application for one of the five open positions in the upcoming Board election. I've encouraged Colleen to run; and it would be absolutely great if both you and her were on a new DNF Board. Please read my attached application, which has my "Top Priority Agenda for a New DNF Board"; then if it interests you, please connect with Colleen (cc on this) and see if you two would like to be two of the remaining four seats (five total, with me). Our key objectives are to redesign the Board management structure to a more engaged Management Council, which I would take the major part of the work load; and to rewrite the Bylaws with member involvement. So, much of the new Board requirements would be coordinating efforts on that.

This a sort of “once-in-a-lifetime” opportunity for the DNF member-owners to take control of DNF, reform its Board management structure and rewrite the Bylaws to empower the members. I’ve spoken with Chis Ricci and Cody Reinheimer, but they are too busy to have that kind of involvement right now. Also spoke with Sage, but he’s been out of town so will catch up with him this weekend (also cc on this). If we miss this opportunity, and not even five run; the old remaining Board members or their allies could retain control and we will lose this incredible opportunity. It’s crucial we find five people to run in order to not miss this opportunity; so, let’s discuss it after you’ve had a chance to read it over. It’s all in my document.

Because of an encouraging supportive reply to me by a DNF member and local business owner, Andrea of Maria’s Bookshop, who noted there is no visibility of the election materials; and a subsequent forward and complaint from me to the Board, I see this morning that they finally sent out the Board election application package to all DNF members (I believe). Let me know if you got that, which will tell me that it did in fact go out to everyone. They’ve been trying to keep the election visibility minimal and quiet, rather than promoting it in the interest of DNF member democracy. If no one knows who or how many are running; by default they’ll keep control. This is what we’ve been up against.

Lots of One Love Blessings to you, Tom and your kids,
Root

Date: 3/11/2015 [10:24 AM](#)
From: Root
To: Board
Cc: Pat Blair
Subject: RE: Become a DNF Board Member

Thank you for sending this out to all DNF members (I presume, since I only see my address). I have not yet received the confirmation I requested in my Sunday application from you regarding my application. Please confirm you’ve received it and that I am now a valid candidate. Also, in a week or so I will be making a further inquiry on visibility of the election; who’s running; and how you plan to keep us current on the status; more on that later. We members demand visibility; otherwise, there is no credibility in an actual democratic election process for the new Board.

Thanks,
Root

Date: 3/13/2015 [3:33 PM](#)
From: Board
To: Root
Subject: Re: Root Routledge Application for DNF Board, April 25th, 2015 Election; plus attachment: "Top Priority Agenda for a New DNF Board of Directors", by Root

Root,

The DNF Coop Board of Directors has received your application to run for the Board this coming election.

In Cooperation,
Victoria Robinson
Board secretary

Date: 3/16/2015 [1:25 PM](#)
From: Root
To: Brian (GM)
Cc: Board, Pat, Guthrie
Bcc: Kim, 4 possible running mates
Subject: Board's Election credibility, validity and visibility

Hi Brian,

Thanks for meeting with me for a few minutes this morning to discuss the Board's plans for election visibility (I checked for Jules, but was told she is on vacation this week).

Waiting until April 3rd for visibility is unacceptable—need updated visibility now and on-going: To follow up before the Board meeting this evening; let's be very clear that the notion of bringing visibility to candidates for the Board election *after* the application periods ends April 3rd is entirely unacceptable. We need to know what's going on in a current fashion.

We need this election to be open, transparent and fair in terms of all members knowing who is running long before April 3rd, in order to be able to respond with support or to encourage others to run while there is still time; that is *while the application period is open, meaning now, this week*. Otherwise the election's integrity is damaged, which I don't think either you or the Board would want to see happen.

Notice content: That would include how many applicants there are, who is running by name, and what their statement of vision or goals for DNF as a Board-member are (as stated on their application), including in my case (others?) a posted link to my "Top Priority Agenda" campaign pledge, which you can park the pdf somewhere where you place other reports on the DNF site (then simply put the link in your email blasts and homepage Board Election Update section). I'm willing to help with that, if you are to claim you don't have the resources to get it done by Thursday's blast.

Routine and ad hoc email blasts: Since the timeframe is very tight, with only weekly updates, it is crucial that you start getting this information out *this week* at the top of your Thursday weekly blast (the 1800), as well as to the members only list (the 1200) and any others you spoke of; as well as at a minimum weekly updates, if not update right after you receive an application.

DNF Website homepage visibility and importance: Along with that, regarding the DNF home page, please give this election the visibility it deserves as the most important Board election in recent DNF history (5 open seats of the 7 total), by making a block for it right below the pictures; not just one of the four or five "what's going on" news items. And state in some sort of block heading what a big election it is and how important it is for member involvement. It's not a trivial news item; it's a major Board election, a transition of power for DNF members and its staff.

In that block also, please identify the same particulars of who has applied (and when); and the statement of their view (and link, like mine). This should be done in conjunction with Thursday's email group sends.

Priority—High: I do appreciate that you have a heavy load, Brian; however, beyond daily transaction details you need to deal with, this is a *time-dependent* and very important event for our co-op store. Let's not have it end up like Geoff's claim in his timeline a year ago, where he said he could not find anyone interested in being on the Board. The store needs to actively solicit and encourage that involvement and share openly the information you have about that. Without implementing my suggestions above, that cannot happen.

Thanks very much,



Root Routledge, PhD
[Alpine Analytics](#), President
970-382-0711
Root@AlpineAnalytics.com



Date: 3/16/2015 5:30 PM (actual start 6:00 PM due to late Board members)
Subject: Monthly Board Meeting

Root attended Board meeting to determine what they planned for visibility and to lobby for points in above email to Brian. Root was told by Geoff that (in his own words), "The Board has spoken with dozens of people about running for a Board position. So far, everyone has said they are too busy, but they found one who might run." Was told so far there are only two candidates: Root and Kim Randazzo. Geoff felt they could certainly post "how many have applied" on the website; but they checked with LMC and they don't post any names of Board applicants until after the application period closes either. It was argued, absurdly, that perhaps an applicant doesn't want their name to be public (then why run for a public position, if you don't want your name known or what you stand for?). And besides, someone may choose not to run if they don't like someone's name they see who is running. Or perhaps, I countered, others may wish to join someone whose views they like; and they wouldn't have a chance to do that if no one knows who is running or what their vision is.

It's an absurd form of "democracy" to have an election with candidates running, where no one knows who's running or what their vision is until after the ballots are printed. Geoff said they would check with other co-ops to see what they do; but he saw no problem with at least putting the candidates' names up on the Board's posting board in the store. They refused to post the information or give any visibility to anyone or their position on the website... at least until after the voting period starts, April 25th. It's still anyone's guess what they will "allow" or not at that time.

Date: 3/17/2015 8:10 AM
From: Root

To: Rachel Bennett
Cc: Colleen, Sage, Sarah
Subject: We need DNF Board Applicants

Hi Rachel,

Good to see you yesterday and hear that you are interested in running for one of the five open Board seats. I really encourage you to do that; with your experience in the store and your concern for DNF's future, you would be a great Board member. As I mentioned, I have encouraged Colleen and Sarah and Sage (cc'd here) to run as well; but they are still thinking about it, I hope, since I haven't heard a no from any of them. Attached you will find my application, the Board's Election information packet, as well as my campaign pledge "Top Priority Agenda for a New DNF Board of Directors."

I attended the Board meeting yesterday to lobby them to give more visibility, openness and transparency to the Board election—*now*, like well before the application closing date of April 3rd, which is past the time anyone can respond with an application after they see who else is running and what they stand for. My request, in person to Brian and email earlier in the day to him and the Board, and in person at the Board meeting, includes putting in their email blasts and on the DNF home page the status of the applications: How many have applied, who and when, and the applicant's statement about their vision for DNF (including posting a link to my campaign pledge, and others if they write something). How can anyone claim to have a valid democratic election when no one knows who is running until after it's too late for others to jump into the race?

They resisted strongly any visibility to the general membership on who is running or what they stand for, before the application period closes. They don't want the members to know that, while there is still an opportunity for additional members to apply. Hence it is really important, especially for anyone who would like to see a new safe and healthy future for DNF as I've outlined, to apply now.

They told me: "We've never done that before; and La Montañita doesn't do it that way. After it closes April 3rd, we'll put something together. Besides, maybe the applicant doesn't want their name put out there while the application period is still open." How absurd is that claim, when someone is running for an open publicly visible position on a Board? The best I could get is, maybe they'll put up how many candidates there are and possibly put their names on the Board's Board in the store; which of course is virtually no visibility to the general membership—how many people actually read the Board's notice board? They said at this point, there are only two applicants: Root and Kim Randazzo (who filled out some older form, so doesn't yet have a valid application).

More ominous and indicative of why they don't want the members to know that there is a different future vision for DNF put forward by Root, is their own efforts to get people sympathetic to their Board structure and purpose to run for the Board. Geoff Wolf said, in his own words, "We've spoken with dozens of people to try to find members who would be interested in running. Lots are thinking about it, but most are saying they don't have the time." But they didn't share any names of those they say they've contacted.

This is a fight for a healthy future for DNF. If four people like you folks on this email were to run, which we can get visibility out for the best we can, at least to the 205 petition signers for whom we have email addresses, we can reclaim DNF, protect it from future efforts to sell it, and focus on building a healthy organization and growing our membership.

By the way, Brian told me that they've had to contract with Kim Wiggins to help them sort out their financial statements to even know how they've done since Kim's firing by this Board last August. Brian's status report to the Board and his personal comments to me noted that the last half of the year turned sour and overall for 2014, instead of the projected year-end profit from last July's analysis, we will have lost several thousand dollars. They still don't have the 2014 financials completed, so we can't get actual figures yet.

Our co-op needs your help and new leadership. Let's do this you guys!



Root Routledge, PhD
[Alpine Analytics](#), President
970-382-0711
Root@AlpineAnalytics.com



Date: 3/19/2015 8:16 AM
From: Geoff/Board
To: Root
Cc: Brian (GM)
Subject: Re: Board's Election credibility, validity and visibility

Dear Root,

Thank you for taking the time to join us briefly at our recent Board meeting. We have checked with other coops around the country and found that none of them have released the name of owner/members who are running for election until the application period ends. Therefore, we will post the number of applicants each week and wait until April 3 to release the actual names. Thank you again for your ideas on the opportunity though.

On another matter, it has come to the attention of the Board of Directors that you are continuing to use the official DNF official stationery without consent from the General Manager or the Board. Your recent Priority Agenda communication was sent to some of our membership with the official DNF logo. We have asked you in the past to refrain from doing so and insist that you respect that the use of our logo must be approved. Any use must be controlled by the General Manager and the Board of Directors to protect the brand and community perceptions. Using it sets a dangerous precedent for all members to do so at their whim in addition to representing the management of our store in ways that may not be appropriate.

In the future, please use some other stationery.

Thank you for your attention to this matter,

Geoff Wolf
President
Board of Directors
Durango Natural Foods

Date: 3/19/2015 1:25 PM
From: Root
To: Geoff/Board
Cc: Brian (GM)
Subject: Re: Board's Election credibility, validity and visibility

Geoff, will you be posting the names of the current applicants on the Board's board as discussed, while the application process is still open, even though you won't give broad member visibility?
Root

Date: 3/19/2015 4:07 PM
From: Rachel Bennett
To: Root
Subject: Re: We need DNF Board Applicants

Dear Root,

A sincere thank you for your correspondence. I am planning to turn in an application for the board after taking this into deep consideration. I will do so early next week. It may only benefit the cooperative to have a collective of perspectives and backgrounds running for the board. Feel confident more applicants will come through before the deadline.

I want to make clear I stay neutral on all issues regarding the current board and situation of DNF, not wanting to project or nourish disunity. Thank you for your perspectives and initiatives from a desire to see change for the good of the cooperative and community. There is much to be explored in those realms.

I would come to the board in a space of neutrality, with employment and management experience from DNF, and desire to collaborate on the highest good for DNF's future. My focus would be community outreach development, membership activity increase, and some other components. I do agree with so many others that cooperation rather than capitalism is the modality most suitable for sustainable community, but it does require active participation to sustain such models. I look forward to experiencing an unfoldment of a new chapter in the DNF life cycle and the potential to be involved however I may best contribute to this process. We will keep in touch I am sure through this.

Blessings,
Rachel

Date: 3/20/2015 7:12 AM
From: Rachel Bennett

To: Root
Subject: Re: We need DNF Board Applicants

Rachel,

Thank you for your reply. I'm so glad you've decided to run for one of the five open board seats. I hope you can encourage others to run as well, especially those who I cc'd on my email to you. This is the time to bring new energy to DNF, and you would be a wonderful part of that.

Warm regards,
Root

Date: 3/21/2015 5:17 PM
From: Geoff/Board
To: Root
Cc: Brian (GM)
Subject: Re: Board's Election credibility, validity and visibility

Hi Root,

We checked with other coops around the country and found that no one posts the names of board applicants until the application period ends.

In addition, no one had heard of this idea over the years. The Board is more comfortable following this practice at the current time.

Therefore, we will not be making the applicant names available in a public manner until April 4th.

Geoff

Date: 3/25/2015 11:14 AM
From: DNF Outreach [in response to my phone request]
To: Root
Subject: Minutes from past DNF Board meetings

Hi Root,

I just spoke with Brian about the minutes for the board meetings that you have requested. The Board of Directors is responsible for distributing those minutes, so please contact Geoff or Victoria with your request. Sorry I cannot be of more assistance.

Jules Masterjohn
Marketing & Outreach Coordinator
Durango Natural Foods Co-op

Date: 3/25/2015 11:28 AM
From: Root
To: Victoria, Geoff
Cc: DNF Outreach
Subject: FW: Minutes from past DNF Board meetings

Hi Victoria and Geoff,

Per Jules' note, I have been referred to you to get .doc copies of the Board meeting minutes. I have minutes up through last July's meeting (7/14/2014); but nothing since. Could you please send me all meeting minutes from August 2014 to your most current?

Please send what you have now without waiting until everything to current is typed up, as particular meetings I'm looking at right now are the fall of 2014.

Please let me know when I can expect them. If it's quicker to get hardcopies by going to the store and asking for them, I'll do that as well; but I do want the .doc or pdf versions so I can share them with others.

Thanks very much,
Root

Date: 3/25/2015 [6:03 PM](#)
From: Geoff
To: Root
Cc: DNF Outreach, Victoria
Subject: Re: Minutes from past DNF Board meetings

Hi Root,
We can send you the meeting minutes you are requesting. However, Victoria has the file of the official minutes as approved in our meetings and is out on Spring break this week. So, we will send you over the 2014 minutes early next week upon her return to town.

I apologize for the delay and appreciate your patience.

Geoff
970-247-4300

Date: 3/26/2015 [10:03 AM](#)
From: Victoria
To: Geoff
Cc: Root, DNF Outreach
Subject: Re: Minutes from past DNF Board meetings

All of the minutes since last June are posted on the Board's bulletin board in the store. Please do not remove those copies from the bulletin board as they will be archived in a notebook.
Victoria

Date: 3/26/2015 [2:50 PM](#)
From: Root
To: Victoria, Geoff
Cc: DNF Outreach
Subject: Re: Minutes from past DNF Board meetings

Thanks, Victoria. I had already checked that board and had copies made. Would still like to get the electronic copies please.

Root

Date: 3/26/2015 5:03 PM

From: Root

To: Durango Herald Op-ed Editors (Megan and Bill) [slightly different version sent to Telegraph]

Bcc: Pat, Kim, Guthrie, 5 possible Board candidates Root has spoken with

Subject: Re: Minutes from past DNF Board meetings

Dear Megan and Bill,

Attached please find my 350 word letter regarding our Durango Natural Foods Co-op election for Board of Directors; 5 of 7 seats open.

I appreciate the letter load you folks are under with the City Council election. However, there is basically no visibility for the DNF Board election; so please give my letter a little extra priority for quick publication.

This letter is very time critical because the Board application period closes one week from Friday, at 5 pm April 3rd. In order for others to have an opportunity to apply, which is the reason for my letter, they would need to read it, read my referenced campaign promise document, and apply before Friday a week from now.

It would be great if it could get in Sunday; but, if not, for sure early in the week.

Thanks for your time-priority consideration.

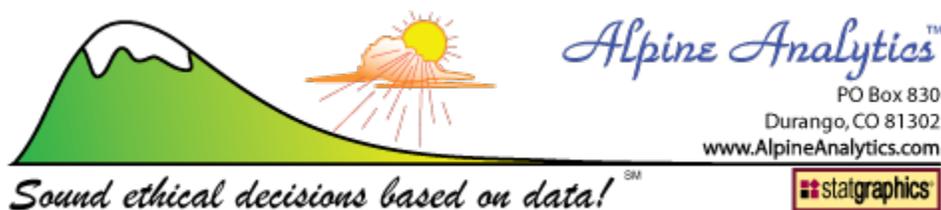


Root Routledge, PhD

[Alpine Analytics](#), President

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[Spoke with Bill on phone about 5:30 PM; reasonable chance to get it in Sunday]