

**NH Prescribed Fire Council**  
**Tuesday, August 9, 2022 9:00am-10:00am**  
**Via Zoom Video Conferencing**

Mike Crawford (The Nature Conservancy), John Neely (US Forest Service), Zack Boyajian (NH Military Affairs and Veteran Services), Tom Trask (NH Forest and Lands), Stephen Najjar (Space Force), Steve Junkin (Forest Society), Rebecca DiGirolomo (UNHCE), Kathleen Errington (DES), Kim Osorio (NH Military Affairs and Veteran Services), Peter Breigenzer (UMaine, landowner outreach project), Ted Kendziora (USFWS), Madeline Landrum (UMaine),

**Review and Approval of April 2022 Meeting Minutes**

Steve Junkin motioned, Zack Boyajian second.

**1. Updates From Sub-Committees**

**Mapping** – (Rebecca) Small change agencies with large land holdings we can add individual shapefiles instead of entering each site in survey. Dashboard is set up and ready for sub-committee review.

**Training subcommittee-** (Zack) Still working on comparing NWCG and state taskbooks, believes NWCG is working on a prescribed fire taskbook system. Missed last regional meeting will check on status.

**Maine Council** – (John) TREX is still on track for September. USFS burning pause suppose to be lifted in September. John will be a mentor/trainer if the USFS restrictions are lifted. Will look into whether or not restriction applies to equipment loaning. Restriction does not apply to Steve at Space Force. Could led people and non-USFS equipment. Zack, Kim, Peter and Madeline are participating in the TREX.

**2. Round Table: Agency Rx Burn Season Plans, Training Opportunities, Projects and Resource Needs**

Steve Junkin- Would like to host field trip after October 15<sup>th</sup> on a Forest Society site in Alton that was a former commercial blueberry barrens. Have done some bronto work, but fire is ideal management tool and would like to develop a plan to reintroduce fire to the site.

John Neely – Prepping units in Conway, a lot of spongy moth defoliation in understory red pine/pitch pine resulting in grass and forb response increased need for mowing and prep along breaks. Crew in CA doing suppression and only has a small crew plugging away on fuels projects on the forest. Cored two bogs and got one good core in a red pine stand with Madeline. Need to determine how to process. Did a tour with Peter and looked at wildfire sites to talk about impacts of fire in sites that don't typically see fire.

Kathleen – No regulatory updates. Air quality this year has been pretty good. PM has been pretty clean compared to last year from western fires, have not been seeing that coming down to the surface this year. Three ozone exceedances this year not expecting too many more.

Zack B – Hopeful to burn later this fall or next spring. Doesn't have a way to write plans right now, not enough time due to low staffing. Has a request for bids for burn plan writing and implementation. Sending to council and Startree in NJ to see if they get an economically feasible bid. He and Kim are planning to attend the TREX to work on taskbooks.

Ted – May have funding to contract burning. Can't transfer funding to an agency needs to be contracted. Needs to find a partner, maybe TNC or WMI, to hold funds to distribute. 15 projects on list so far up, hoping to pull together a couple of years of fire projects. Funds goes to FY26. Looking for a cost estimate information to justify costs for private lands. Could be less of cost if local resources commit to mop up. Concerns voiced about swapping burn bosses halfway, concern for liability. Suggests contracting whole process from start to finish. Ted looking for suggestions on how to do this most efficiently. Anyone with a project that they'd like to forward for consideration in FY23, please send it to Ted by COB Thursday, August 18th. With the following info:

1. Brief overview and purpose of the project, include:
  - Purpose (species impacted, habitat improvement.)
  - Duration of project (one time vs multi-year.)
  - Cooperators, partners, adjacent landowners.
2. Treatment type(s.)
  - Fuels management, thinning, prescribed fire, fuel breaks, or herbicide.
3. Primary Vegetation treated.
  - Forested, marshlands, shrubs, or grasses.
4. Approximate acres treated.
5. NEPA authority (CCP, HMP, EA, etc.)
6. Estimated cost per year.
7. Labor: contractors, tribal, youth, veterans.

Rebecca - Have work study to continue prescribed fire trends survey. Received Wildfire Risk Reduction grant will be looking to get burn plan done this winter.

Madeline – Processing cores from lake cores, finding charcoal in systems where you would not have expected including spruce forests along coast. Looks like there was a regime shift 2700 years ago that coincides with a cultural shift. Increasing curiosity about pyrophilic forests in the white mountains. Will be sharing data at TREX and will have more data to share with the Council soon.

Steve Najjar – Looking at burn unit on Joe English Hill this fall. Long-eared bat restrictions and small whorled pogonia impacting scheduling. Survey needs for pogonia is impacting burn schedule. Changes coming up in ESA status that is impacting burn windows. Ted could have endangered species staff come and talk about bats. Interest from group in talking about bats and fire and other species limiting restoration. Ted will schedule discussion to include in winter meeting.

Peter – Will be interviewing small woodland owners(10 – 1000 acres non-commercial forest land) and looking at their perspective of climate change and fire, including knowledge of fire history or interest in prescribed fire.

Steve Junkin – Interested in seeing more prescribed fire sites maybe including a second site for our field meeting.

Tom Trask - S130 class in September and a bunch of trainings at the end of September and October, including S131, S231 and S230. Currently full staff for ranger positions.

Mike – Planning 3 units in Ossipee and 45 acre unit at Pine River State Forest – highest priority. Also, working on Freedom Town Forest fire management plan and hope to burn in some pitch pine there.

UPDATE SENT VIA EMAIL: Zach Prusak - 1) Tall Timbers just recently acquired the use of a Learning Management System, or LMS (Moodle, same as the WFLP) in order to provide a location for a wide range of online courses, from the Fed fire courses to practically anything we can create to help the private landowners as well. This is the first step to what I would like to create for the private lands' burners, sort of a "Master Burner Program" similar to many states' Extension programs.

2) This same LMS will also be a website where I will be creating a training calendar and training academy/center map, where folks can look at a glance where fire training academies or fire sites are located.

3) The Coalition of Fire Councils will send out an email update shortly addressing the retirement of Mark Melvin, with some info and plans on what the future of the Coalition could be for all of the Councils, since there are so many now, which is a great development for Rx fire.

**Next meeting:** October – location and time TBD

Meeting adjourned 10:05 am.

Respectfully submitted, Rebecca DiGirolomo, Vice Chair