

NH Prescribe Fire Council Meeting Minutes
February 16th, 2017 9:00 – 12pm
National Guard Regional Training Center Pembroke, NH

Attendees: Arin Mills, Lisa Landry, Meredith Lund, Wendy Weisiger, Jim Oehler, Bryan Nowell, Zach Boyajian, John Neely

Minutes: Wendy did a vocal overview of minutes from 12/7 meeting & will send around written copy

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

1. Council had a brief discussion regarding the potential for a Rx Fire Council newsletter. What would this look like and how would it get distributed? Good discussion item for the next meeting.
2. Brief discussion of the Thompson School students needs for certification. **Nowell** and **Lund** have both been in touch with Quigley and think they can help close that gap.
3. **Cooperative Project Opportunities/ Add Rx Fire to NHFG Small Grant Program**
 - **NH Pilot Project for Rx Fire Grants to Communities** through the Northeast RSC Cohesive Strategy Funding Proposal. **Oehler** brought a grant description from DRED with him for \$20K to perform Rx Fire work on town and locally owned land. In the grant, Brad Simpkins has slated the Rx Council to review and rank proposals from towns.
 - This exciting opportunity was met with much discussion amongst the group about how to assist towns in applying for this money and carrying out the work. We hope that with success, this grant will expand in the future.
 - How will this grant announcement get out to municipalities? Can the Rx Council help communities apply? **Neely** thinks it's worthwhile for the Council to help towns/counties apply for work. (i.e.: fuel reduction after the heavy cutting in Success)
 - **NHFG Small Grant Program:** **Oehler** has announced that NHFG has rolled this program back out with updates for practices and an increase in spending. The program doesn't yet include Rx Fire but **Oehler** will work toward developing some guidelines and working with other biologists to hopefully get approvals to include fire work in the future.
 - Tin Mountain Conservation Center – **Neely (& Fast?)** is working with this group to teach students about Rx Fire and work with their volunteers to collect data for future burns. They have some blueberries that they would like to burn.
 - The WMNF through an agreement between the USFS and Team Rubicon is working with Veterans (Team Rubicon) to do volunteer fire work.
4. **GIS Layer for Rx Council Burns**
 - Discussion about the usefulness of GRANIT having a burn layer. GRANIT has some stringent requirements for metadata. Ultimately the group didn't think that NH GRANIT was the best place for this information. (not a big public need for it and not easy to update).
 - **Neely** had the largest need for the information and it was decided that we would get spatial information to him annually (early winter). **Neely** can send out a request and ask for the metadata he needs.
 - More discussion about how to get this information from Wardens. **Nowell** is brought up a new state form N-Form that allows users to input location data via Google Earth.
<https://forms.nh.gov/onlineforms>
 - Can we lean a little harder on Wardens to get this information back to us?

5. Review of Rx Council Priority Issues Document

- Increase Public Awareness
 - Created outreach panels which have been used by partners for displays
 - Developed BMPS
 - Discussion around giving presentations or setting up display at NHACC (NH Assn, of Conservation Commission) and Saving Special Places annual meetings. **Boyajian** can look into NHACC and **Weisiger** can look into SSP (April 8th in Alton).
- Increasing Interagency Cooperation to Plan and Implement Burns
 - We're great at communicating with each other
 - Would be nice to see if we are doing more now cooperatively than we did in the past as individual agencies
 - **Nowell** suggests that rather than goal acres we should consider ourselves successful in that we now have more representation and participation on all fires
- Providing Additional Training and Qualifications Opportunities
 - We're doing well with partnering and sharing training needs
 - **Boyajian** brought in a copy of a survey he has shared with the ARNG and suggests we modify and share it amongst our agencies
 - **Neely** is putting on a full S-130-190 training in the spring (will share)
- Increasing Opportunities for Private Landowners and Municipalities to us Rx Fire
 - See discussion about DRED Grant
 - Kaufold's research project was also a start for this
- Developing Rx Fire BMPs for Rare Species
 - Has **Lougee** developed anything specific here? (absent)
 - **Mills** – they have informal BMPs which are mostly avoidance of species
 - **Weisiger** – there isn't a mechanism in the fire permitting process that kicks a landowner to NHB for a landowner check. Perhaps part of our template should include a suggestion that landowners perform an inquiry during the planning process. We decided that when we update the burn template, we should include this action.
- Implement Rx Fire Research
 - Kauffold project
 - We've provided several letters of support to researchers
- Monitor Efficacy of Rx Burns
 - **Oehler** – Joel Carlson is coordinating a Massachusetts Fire Effects Monitoring Workshop on March 1st. This will discuss 1st and 2nd order fire effects
 - **Neely** – will share a fire monitoring workshop happening in June
- Obtaining Funding to Support Rx Fire Programs
 - We have some irons in the fire to improve funding
 - Still need to convince NRCS to fund Fire
 - We are increasing project collaboration

6. Training

- **Nowell**: Would it be worthwhile to get someone trained in IQS?
 - **Neely** – if NH funds an NECC person, that would be the right person to train
- Discussion about getting Incidents into both systems
- **Nowell** suggests we have Jen Little or Patty (?) come talk to the group
- **Nowell** would like to set up an Rx Council safety/pack test training at the Pembroke Guard Training Facility (full track and classrooms there)
- **Najjar (absent)** has offered to take folks at trainings in New Boston, but they need to get set up several days in advance for a background check

7. **Next Chair?** – It seems we have gone around the group for chairs and are starting round 2. **Nowell** will take the vice-chair position next meeting and **Najjar** will step in as Chair.

Minutes respectfully submitted by **Wendy Weisiger, SPNHF**

Next meeting date 6/22/2017 @ 9am – 12pm

**New Hampshire Army National Guard Regional Training Center
Pembroke, NH**

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