

NH Prescribed Fire Council
December 12, 2018 Meeting Minutes
9AM NH Forest and Lands, Concord, NH

Attendees: Jim Oehler, Chair (NH Fish and Game), Zack Boyajian, vice chair (NH Adjutant General), Andy Fast (UNH Coop Ext), Jeff Lougee (TNC NH), Sabrina Stanwood (NH Natural Heritage Bureau), Bill Nichols (NH Natural Heritage Bureau), John Neely (USFS, White Mountain NF), Ralph Perron (USFS, White Mountain NF), Jarred Jones (NH Adjutant General) Tom Natale (NH Forest Management Bureau), Wendy Weisiger (SPNHF), Brad Simpkins (NH DIV Forest and Lands), Stephen Najjar (US Air Force).

AGENDA:

- **Minutes:** Minutes from the September 19th were approved.
- **By Laws:** The Council discussed the By Laws and re-appointed Jim Oehler as Chair and Zack Boyajian Vice-Chair to keep a rotation of members serving in the leadership positions. Other adjustments recommended included removing the NH Fish and Game Department (NHF&G) Karner Blue Butterfly program as a distinct entity from NHF&G. Recommendations to removal of NH Local Fire Departments, North Country Council, NH Licensed Forester and NH Timberland Owners Association. Zack requested the NH Army National Guard be identified as the NH Adjutant General's Department. There is a need to reach out to Natural Resource Conservation Services and US Fish and Wildlife Service and determine if they want to be a member. A vote to change By Laws membership will be held at the next meeting.
- **Cooperative Agreement:** The Council discussed the expiring Cooperative Fire Protection Agreement. John Neely stated that the Forest Service doesn't use these agreements for large groups any longer. Forest Service would need to use a Memorandum of Understanding. US Forest Service can also use participating agreements for State lands that include a financial plan for funding. The previous agreement didn't have funding arrangements and so this didn't seem correct either. Jim suggested generating an agreement without the Forest Service if necessary, but would need enabling legislation from each organization. Both John and Jim will work to establish a format that will work and try to have it in place by the spring.
- **Grant Programs:** Brad Simpkins present information about the Joint Chief Landscape Restoration Partnership (Forest Service and NRCS) grant program. Projects can cross jurisdictional boundaries. They are large scale and multi-year. They are competitive and we would need multiple partners. There would be a late summer request for proposals and application due in October. Lastly Jeff Lougee submitted a Cohesive Fire Protection Strategy Grant Proposal that included TNC properties, Town forests in Madison and Freedom and Pine River State Forest possible. Would be used to maintain wildland-urban interface buffers. Could White Lake State Park be incorporated into one of these grant proposals as eventually it will need fire to maintain its unique forest type.
- **State Wide Mapping of Fire Dependent/adapted Communities:** Bill Nichols talked about the effort to develop a state wide fire dependent/adapted natural community's map. Partially uses TNC mapped ecological system in Northeast. It uses broad modeling, research and landscape analysis. There is a cross walk to the NH System of natural communities classification. It may need some refinement. Also possible use of Northeast Habitat GIS Data on-line. Adele Fenwick's work on Red Pine Showed 5-15 year intervals and then the fires stopped.

- **Grant Program Action Team:** The Council decided to form an action team/subcommittee to investigate developing a Joint Chiefs or other large multi-agency grant proposals. Jim Oehler, Jeff Lougee, Sabrina Stanwood, Zack Boyajian, and John Neely agreed to meet and start working cooperatively to formulate a grant proposal for the future use.
- **Grant Programs revisited:** Brad Simpkins talked about the Divisions Municipal Grant Program for prescribed fire/fuels reduction. It is currently at the Attorney General's Office for review. Potentially Request for proposals will be issued in early 2019.
- **Prescribed Fire Use Survey:** Andy Fast state the data collection for prescribed fire use was ongoing for 2017-2018. The data would be added to what was collected for previous years.
- **Granite State Society of American Foresters:** Andy Fast stated the SAF was looking for workshop session for upcoming meeting. Possibly on Prescribed fire in NH. What are the basic legal requirements, what is the liability? Andy looking for a location that would facilitate this kind of workshop.
- **Annual Plans Round Table**
Nothing to discuss at this time

* Next meeting February 28th 9 AM White Mountain National Forest, Campton

Meeting adjourned 12:00PM