

NH Prescribed Fire Council Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, March 20, 2013
10:00 – 12:00
White Mountain National Forest Headquarters
Campton, NH

Present: Jim Oehler, Arin Mills (filling for Zack), Chase Marshall, Stephen Najjar, Andy Fast, Tom Natale, Ralph Perron, Bill Nichols, Wendy Weisner

- MOU (Cooperative Fire Protection Agreement) The council conducted a final review with the following remaining comments:
 - The following agencies have completed review and are ready for signature: NH Fish & Game, University of NH, University of NH Cooperative Extension, US Forest Service
 - Brian Nowell was not in attendance to comment on NH Attorney General review
 - Arin informed the group that the NH Army National Guard (Adjutant General's Department) will not be able to sign the agreement as it reads. Arin explained that when Zack took it for financial review he was told there are not funds to pay for personnel time on sites that are not supported by the Army unless the staff was in a training status. Zack recommended minor modifications to Section C2 that only allows the Adjutant General's Department personnel to participate when in a trainee status. Andy asked if training could also include participation to maintain currency.
 - Wendy received comments mainly relating to the use of volunteers as part of the agreement. They are ready to sign the agreement as well.
 - Jim will revise the document with minor changes made and send around to the Committee for one final review.
- Update on Fine Particle Pollution in NH- Lisa L. (NHDES)
 - Lisa was unable to attend. She will reschedule for next meeting.
- Planning for public Outreach sessions
 - Andy mentioned interest in planning two public outreach sessions, each in Concord and Ossipee area. He suggested the format be about 1 hour of presentation (intro, overview of Council, agency talks about Rx fire program) followed by Q&A session. He suggested the Ossipee one include the Division of Forests & Lands (DF&L) Rangers, TNC and Forest Service. The Concord would include DF&L Rangers, Fish & Game, Army National Guard. He said the County Foresters are willing to do the support work (location, prints, ect).

- Jim suggested the inclusion in the F&G Outdoor Adventure Talks- the one on May first will be given by Heidi and will include Karner discussion. Andy thought that was a good idea but should not take the place of a dedicated session. Also want to be sure the community in the area most affected by the burning activities on the airport get all the information the dedicated session will provide. Jim will discuss further with Heidi.
 - Wendy mentioned the inclusion of a session at the New England Society of American Foresters which will be hosted in NH next March.
 - Chase and Brian presented at the Northeast Forest Fire Protection Compact conference on the NH Council and it was very well received. Other states would like to follow NH's lead.
 - Steve suggested something about Rx fire be put into the local media outlets quarterly to help raise awareness.
 - Discussion on the possible development of a portable display that council members could use to bring to events. Who develop and pay?
 - Inclusion of media that has already been developed, such as the NPR program from 2012 (<http://nhpr.org/term/fire-training>) and PBS NH Wildlife Journal program, be posted on the Council's website.
 - Andy would like to conduct the talks in early May if possible. Tentatively the first one held at the State Military Reservation in Concord.
- Opportunities for Municipalities and Private Landowners
 - Andy mentioned he talked with NRCS and said they would support NRCS cost share contracts.
 - Discussion on how the Council could support the small private landowners who want to use fire as a management tool. Many issues to include requirements that would be required for federal and state personnel to participate on these burns.
 - Discussion on methods to get the information out to the public (through local FD, landtrust newsletters, Facebook, ect)
 - Suggestion to establish a working group to explore this further. Priorities and a working group will be formed at the next meeting.
- Upcoming Training
 - USFS: S231 (Engine Boss)- June 10th and S215 (Urban interface)- September 20th. Chase will provide additional dates to Zack for inclusion to calendar.
- Upcoming Burn Windows
 - Chase said the USFS has 10 units ready for the season
 - Steve has 2-3 units ready for April/May at the NGAFB
 - Bill said Pine River is expected in Aug/Sept

- Potential dates in Concord for April (pending weather)
- Kimball Wildlife forest is planned for this summer
- Wendy said Forest Society plans 70ac at Harmon Preserve in Freedom this summer

Next Meeting tentatively June 19th at the State Military Reservation in Concord.

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