

Wisconsin Prescribed Fire Council
2023 Winter Meeting
February 15, 2023
3:00 PM-5:30 PM Central

Via Zoom



Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84486860555?pwd=bHBNV3pnbFh2eFdsdzloTzZzREpkZz09>

Meeting ID: 844 8686 0555

Passcode: 702489

Minutes

Business Meeting of the Board of Directors (open to all, 3:00-3:45)
Overview of current Council initiatives

Attendees:

- | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Alexander Bouthilet | 21. Jan Ketelle |
| 2. Adam Gundlach | 22. Jeb Barzen |
| 3. Alison Duff | 23. John Schwingel |
| 4. Andrea Weissgerber | 24. Katie Hahn |
| 5. Andrew LaChance | 25. Lee Jensen |
| 6. Arik Duhr | 26. Mark Horn |
| 7. Clay Frazer | 27. Michael Tiller |
| 8. Cory Gritzmacher | 28. Michele Witecha |
| 9. Dan Carter | 29. Mike Marek |
| 10. Dan Laber | 30. Mitchell Groenhof |
| 11. Doug Terrell | 31. Nathan Holoubek |
| 12. Elizabeth Locke | 32. Paul Brewer |
| 13. Emilee Martell | 33. Rob Baller |
| 14. Emilie Burmeister | 34. Rob Nurre |
| 15. Emma Raasch | 35. Robert Simeone |
| 16. Evan Nelson | 36. Sarah Kehrli |
| 17. Gary Werner | 37. Ron Waukau |
| 18. Graham Steinhauer | 38. Selvio DeAngeles |
| 19. Jack McGowan-Stinski | 39. Steph Judge |
| 20. Jim Barnier | 40. Theran Stautz |

1. Welcoming Remarks – Jeb Barzen

2. 2023 Election of New Directors – Nathan Holoubek

- a. Jim Elleson, Incumbent Director and current Secretary and Standards Committee Chair
- b. John Schwingel, Incumbent Director
- c. Stephanie Judge, Incumbent Director
- d. Lee Jensen, Incumbent Director
- e. Sarah Kehrli, New Director
- f. Vern Northrup, New Director
- g. Michael Tiller, New Director
- h. Ronald Waukau, New Director
- i. No write ins
- j. Gary Werner (member and committee chair) passes motion to nominate all directors, Clay Frazer seconds, Cory Gritzmacher thirds. All in favor, none opposed. Motion passes.

3. Officer and Committee Summaries

- a. Secretary's report – Andrea Weissgerber for Jim Elleson
 - i. Andrea and Jim doing a great job of maintaining organizational records and meeting minutes. Need to meet to review cloud storage system.
 - ii. We are at an all time high for members and have officially hit 100! This is great news, and we thank everyone for your support. A good chunk of those new memberships did come in as student registrations from the January 28, 2023 meeting in Stevens Point. We had increases in all membership categories with:
 1. 25 individual
 2. 13 lifetime
 3. 23 student
 4. 4 supporting
 5. 15 organization
 - iii. When we enacted paid membership in 2020, we had a total of 59 members. 80 in 2021, 76 in 2022, and now 100 so far in 2023!
 - iv. Thanks to all members for your patience as we have been working through getting you your membership confirmation emails out. Except for one of them coming from me shortly! And a gentle reminder that all board members, committee chairs, and committee members are required to be WPFC members.
- b. Treasurer's report – Clay Frazer
 - i. Checking: \$9,011.24
 1. ~\$3,300 withdrawn to cover event costs
 2. Remaining balance = \$5,726.22
 - ii. CD: \$4,257.81
 - iii. Savings: \$5.00
 - iv. Total on hand: \$9,989.03
 - v. January 28 Event budget report:

1. After factoring in stickers, honorariums, catering, and mileage costs from our total net sales and sponsorships, WPFC net \$714.67 from the UWSP Event!
2. Thanks again to our sponsors at Quercus, Good Oak, Heartland Ecological, and Natural Resource Preservation!

c. Committee reports

i. Standards (Certification) – Jeb Barzen for Jim Elleson

1. The Standards Committee has been working for almost two years with the WNDR to develop a program for certifying and training prescribed fire leaders, particularly those who lead burns on multiple units at multiple locations each year (Contractors, NGO's, Prescribed Burn Associations and government agencies). The certification program would provide a defined path for individuals to achieve certified Burn Boss status, including the necessary training. The certification program is not intended for those leading only a few simple burns, primarily on their own land, each year. WPFC expects to provide training for private landowners through other means. The primary incentive to become certified will be the ability to obtain a recognized credential, which can be used to demonstrate an individual's qualifications to insurers, permit authorities, potential clients, and others. Purpose is to certify at a burn boss status including developing the necessary training to allow for a dual pathway in parallel with NWCG. Certification then provides better communication and access to training, insurance providers, etc.
2. Certification would not be a requirement to lead burns in Wisconsin. The current permit system would remain as-is for those who do not choose to become certified.
3. Working with the Training Committee to collaborate on training requirements.
4. A more detailed status report is available on the newly updated Implementation and Standards Committee page on the WPFC website - <https://prescribedfire.org/plan/implementation-standards/>
5. The Standards Committee has also developed a worksheet that can be used to assess the complexity of burn units. We are asking practitioners to use the worksheet to score their burn units, and to provide feedback on its usefulness and usability. The Worksheet, and its companion Introduction, are available on the WPFC website.
6. The committee is always looking for help to move our work forward. If you would like to be part of creating the future of prescribed burning in Wisconsin, contact Jim Elleson!

ii. Training – Rob Nurre and Alison Duff

1. Working on developing training materials for the WI standard of burn boss training that support certification efforts the Standards Committee is putting forth. Current focus is on leadership training for burn bosses and eventually line bosses.
2. The committee is also working with NRCS to provide training for NRCS staff that review and approve burn and management plans on lands owned by their clients. The goal is to provide training that enables a more well-rounded and robust understanding of prescribed fire management for those approving plans. Our hope is to expand upon this opportunity and apply that to other facets of training. Participation in this training provides an opportunity for the Council to generate revenue and expand the capacity for good fire.
3. Landowner training is on the horizon
4. Working on a survey to go out to all members on what the top priority training needs are – stay tuned!
5. The Training Committee could use more minds to come together in what they like to call their “working groups” to provide safe, effective, and readily available training opportunities.

iii. Liability – Mark Horn

1. Liability committee emerged from dormancy in January, 2022, with the main goal of finding or creating accessible prescribed burn insurance. Access to affordable prescribed burn insurance is one of the biggest barriers identified to getting more fire on the ground safely.
2. Two key members of the committee involved in the creation of this new insurance are Chris Rigdon and David Dybdahl, who represented the insurance underwriters. Both specialize in providing insurance coverage for environmental organizations. They helped design and build the coverage to meet prescribed burn contractor needs.
3. This insurance product is directed towards companies or organizations in the region that offer prescribed fire as no more than 50% of their base income.
4. Consider joining the liability committee to enact further change in access to coverage and insurance for your burns!
5. Check out our updated Liability Committee webpage for more information on this great new insurance product:
<https://prescribedfire.org/activities/liability/>

iv. Education and Outreach – Selvio DeAngelis and Emilee Martell

1. January 28 Event at UWSP! Thank you to all our presenters, panelists, sponsors, and cheerleaders!

2. Attendee report: 81 registered and 72 attended. Of the 72 in attendance, we had:
 - a. 30 members
 - b. 22 nonmembers
 - c. 20 students
 3. Stay tuned for an event follow up survey currently in development.
 4. Next year, we hope to merge this annual Council meeting with the winter event to create a more traditional conference environment. Please reach out with any ideas for speakers or topics! We will begin more in depth planning this fall.
 5. Committee meeting planned for early March to debrief UWSP meeting and work on redeveloping brochures, swag, informational topics.
 6. If you are interested in helping with our outreach, have background in product design, have ideas on what kind of informational products should be produced, or want to help plan our next event, consider joining the Education and Outreach Committee!
- v. External Relations – Gary Werner
1. Goal of this committee is to develop and examine partnerships with external groups and stakeholders and find and ways to collaborate, learn from each other, and ultimately expand capacity. 2022 highlights include...
 2. WPCF had the opportunity to review and comment on two regional plans from WDNR (Central Sands and Western Ridges and Coulee Regions) and were able to stress the importance of prescribed burning as a critical long-term management tool.
 3. Started collaboration with the Northeast Region Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy group (Northeast RSC) and a subset of that group, the Northeast-Midwest Regional Prescribed Fire Council Coordinating Group (NE-MW RPFCCG)
 - a. Working to plan webinars with NE-MW RPFCCG on topics that are suggested via surveys of practitioners, which largely include barriers to safe implementation.
 - i. Next networking forum info: Networking forum featuring an overview of the most recent EPA Air Quality proposal is scheduled for Friday, March 3, 2023, at 12:00 PM to 1:30 PM Eastern / 11:00 AM – 12:30 PM Central. Information on this recent EPA New Fine Particulate Matter NAAQS Proposal with regard to prescribed fire activities and a state regulatory viewpoint will be presented followed by an opportunity for questions and answers.

- ii. <https://osu.zoom.us/j/94738970595?pwd=VFRjTnZBdlRpZVl1b0RDZkVYOEgyZz09>
Meeting ID: 947 3897 0595
Password: 972712
- iii. Thank you Gary for being one of the only Council representatives
- 4. 5-year master cooperative agreement in progress with US Forest Service, focused on providing more opportunities for prescribed burn training throughout Wisconsin. WPFC is working directly with Lee Jensen, incumbent director.
- 5. Met with Evan Miller (Senator Rob Cowles assistant) about impediments to prescribed burning in state statutes. WPFC provided a briefing on prescribed fire and the work the Council is doing around the state. Evan wants to get on a burn!
- 6. Also working on several day prescribed burn workshop in August in either Wisconsin or Minnesota. More details being worked out soon! Gary is on the planning committee to ensure that WPFC is well represented. Thank you!
- 7. Working with WDNR to help improve reporting and tracking of statewide burns.
- 8. External relations is a very small committee that needs your support! We welcome anyone's help! You can choose to be involved in one, several, or all aspects that may interest you! Lots of great activities to be involved with that can enact real change on a landscape level.
- vi. Operations – Nathan Holoubek
 - 1. The WPFC BOD realized we needed a subgroup to ensure that all the amazing initiatives being enacted between and among committees are successful in staying streamlined and in meeting our objective of increasing capacity. Strategic Planning initiatives began in November 2022. We held two meetings led by Paul Ohlrogge to help us organize priorities and outline key steps in how to meet objectives. Developed three priorities areas between the two half day sessions:
 - a. Increase Education and Outreach (landowners, stakeholders, fire departments, students, practitioners, indigenous groups, funders, etc.)
 - b. Increase Training for Practitioners
 - c. Increase the capacity of the WPFC itself in order to provide our committees' the tools and resources required to meet objectives
 - 2. We are working through the implementation phase of Strategic Planning, and the Operations Committee is working to analyze

and gather resources required by committees to address three priorities

3. Currently looking into potential funding opportunities with the goal of hiring more paid staff.

4. **Business Meeting Conclusion**

Presentations (open to all, 3:45-5:30)

To view the presentations, please follow this link:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1QaxG8pIj2uVdLjRUFos3wbD5UP5MbWS/view?usp=share_link

Don't mind our photo shoot and quick break! 😊

1. **Ronald Waukau – Menominee Fire Management: Fire History and Present Use**
2. Quick Break
3. **Michael Tiller – Prescribed Burn Associations: Expanding Burn Capacity at the Regional and Local Level**
4. **Michele Witecha – WNDR Partner Update and Success Stories**
5. **Conclusions and Closing Remarks – Jeb Barzen**
6. **Commence – 5:40**

Recording...

Gary Werner - Ice Age Trail Alliance	Wisconsin Prescribed Fire Council	Jeb Barzen	Mark Horn	Tiller, Michae
DeAngeles, Selvio J.	Ron Woskau	corygritzmacher	Clay Frazier	Michele Witche Rx Fire Specialist
Rob Nutre	Rob Baller	Nathan Holoubek	Paul Brewer	John Schwinge (he, him)
Katie Hahn	ADAM M GUNDLACH	Sara Kehrl - WDNR	Mike Marek	Doug Terrell
Allison Duff (she/her)	Steph Judge - Driftless Area Land Conservancy	Emma Raasch	dan laber	Elizabeth Locke