

New Mexico Prescribed Fire Council Meeting

9 am to 12 pm Thursday, December 11, 2014

Socorro County Annex, 198 Neel St., Socorro, NM

Attendance: Doug Boykin, Don Kearney, Lino Baca, Glenn, Krista Bonfantine, Jason Cress, Nate Nozie, Josh Hohnsen, Monte Topmiller, Rick Merrick, Jake Nuttall, Claudia Standish, Brent Wachter, Andy Lopez, Manuel Martinez, Leroy Holguin, Eytan Krasilovsky, Red Hollis, Brenda Simpson, Mark Meyers, Doug Cram

Minutes

9:00 Welcome, facility briefing, introductions

9:15 By-laws and history – quick summary and review

9:20 NM Rx Fire Council business

- Treasurer report – Council does not have any funds at this time but discussions were held on should the council become a 501c3. Jake Nuttall mentioned how the Sierra Blanca Wildfire Academy was working on this status, Don Kearney said he knows a lawyer that may be able to help. Jake said he would send Boykin and Don the contact info for SBWA work (Tiffany Fralie, Alamogordo Interagency Dispatch Center Assistant Center Manager 575-439-6003)
- Elections – by laws state that the board of directors will have a Chairman, Vice-Chair, Secretary and Treasurer. At this time, all we have is a chairman (Kearney) and Secretary (Boykin). Rick Merrick offered to be the vice-chair and Boykin suggested that since at this time, there is no bank account or operating funds, combining the secretary/treasurers responsibility would not add any work and we could revisit this when and if we ever have any actual cash funds. All agreed so it was approved by acclamation.
- Other business as needed – In order to get 501c3 status, a mailing address will be needed for the Rx Council. Kearney offered to pay for mail box at the Socorro Post Office (PO Box 836) for the first year.

9:30 Report on 2013 activities/accomplishments

- Kearney talked about the possibility of assisting the East Mountain Fire Protection Association with a prescribed burn (McBride) that didn't happen due to outside issues; he also talked about how he is helping the Hobo Ranch east of Las Vegas with a burn plan as well as the Express UU Bar near Cimarron.
- Eytan Krasilovsky made an outstanding presentation about the Black Lake TREX - barriers facing burning on non-federal lands at the end of the meeting.
- Jake Nuttall discussed the Festival of the Cranes, San Antonio Elementary School along with festival attendees where present, Jake explained how they go thru the objectives, how, why, what etc. of the exercise and then actually do the exercise. Very well received by participants. He suggested that more local people could get involved, the NM Rx Fire Council could assist and be a participant. Matt Rowe, the Sandia District-Cibola NF FMO talking about trying to do the same thing in that area. Jeremy Bailey mentioned how we need examples like this to build the Rx Fire Council (Members at events like this to give recognition/substance). California has four Rx Fire Councils where they integrate a day of field tours with the meeting (over 200 in attendance). Also, the Cali Rx Fire Councils act as a collaboration mechanism to get multi-jurisdictional projects implemented.

9:45 Group Discussion Items

- Establishing a web-site for the NM Prescribed fire Council – Discussion about accepting an offer from Santa Fe County about building a website (would cost) vs. accepting an officer from NMSU (Doug Cram) to build and house the site using NMSU assistance. Kearney talked with Santa Fe County contact and found out it would cost about \$400, NMSU is free, Kearney and Boykin will plan a trip to Las Cruces in January to meet with Cram and others to start the process of building the site. Discussions were held that the purpose is to help landowners apply Rx practices more often and more efficiently. Keep the website simple. All agreed that once it is up and running, it will be every member's responsibility to provide data, documents, pictures, and content to the webmaster.

- Suggested web links & topics include:

Vision, Mission and Purpose
Reference Materials and forms
Burn Plan Examples
State Laws
Risk Analysis Forms
Potential Resources

Cost Share Opportunities
Smoke Requirements
Weather Links
Publications
Liability Information/Issues

Reports of Completed Rx Burns
Before & After Photos
Membership Listings
Training Opportunities
F&WS/ Partners for Wildlife

- CFRP Grant (cooperative burning training exchange)
- RX fire trailer – trailer is currently parked at the NMSF-Socorro District office; schedule usage thru Mark Meyers
- NWS assistance – see attached hand out from Brent Wachter
- NRCS – Brenda Simpson suggested that if there are landowners/producers who may be interested in RX, partners could work together to get that practice as part of the landowners/producers EQIP Contract, and it should be scheduled in the later years of the contract to add time for implementation.
- Outreach and education, what can we provide? – Fire Adapted Community/Learning Network is working primarily north of I-40. Krasilovsky can advertise RX Council at these events. Kearney has a Power Point presentation that he used at the SWFC meeting in ABQ in early November that can be used also. General agreement that the development of a brochure/post card product would be beneficial, SLO offered to work with NM State Printing to get it printed.
- Common goals and coordinated projects – solid discussion on how we could utilize NRCS/BLM /State Forestry/State Land Office/Wyman amendment funds to set up a multi- jurisdictional RX. Jake Nuttal also mentioned F&WS/Share with wildlife program funds as a possible funding source.
- NMICG – Rx committee chairman is a member (Jake, can you help me out here with your report?)
- Contact list of interested personnel for private land burning - try to post on website
- Smoke management and public perceptions – Claudia Standish gave a short recap of smoke management issues and concerns as well as procedures and invited everyone to always check out the ED Smoke website for any issues. Annual smoke meetings are scheduled for 2015 and are on the NM ED Website. Smoke issues apply to all landowners (outside of Bernalillo County) with the regulations in place. All burns must be registered and it can be done fairly easy on the NM ED website – 2 weeks on larger burns, day before on smaller ones,
- TNC – Jeremy Bailey, TNC and F&WS have a national MOU that recognizes qualifications (Burn bosses can work both ways). TNC-Arizona is working with the FS Regional Office to get the same kind of agreement in the SWA. Jeremy said he would pass on the link to the group.
- What funding opportunities exist for private land burning – See NRCS discussion above.
- Wyden act interpretation – discussion but no real action
- Establish a burn association – discussion that NE NM is prime for creating a burn association, the question is- how can the Rx Council assist?
- Group direction and organization
- Task Books for RX Qualifications - Rick Merrick brought up the issue of Task Books for RX burn qualifications? How do we get task books singed off for RX Burn for contractors/non-agency resources? This would really help build capacity on the private side. How can the RX Council provide the private sector with a way to get RX training followed by qualifications? NWCG does not work for landowners. Some states have Certified burners (in the south) and some states have rules that are more stringent than NWCG. A suggestion was to get a copy of the North Carolina process for certified burners. Also, limited liability is an issue and must be addressed.

Bin items

1. Goal: how do we increase the use of and decrease the risk aversion of multi-jurisdictional projects.
2. Make a standing offer to agencies/entities that the RX Council can help with collaboration/partnership building on multi-agency RX burns.
3. TNC-Bailey, wants to work with NMSU to try to offer a S-130/190 during spring break, will contact Doug Cram on this. Don suggested that this could be a great way to build organizational capacity for landowners to tap into. (The Hobo Ranch RX would be a good opportunity to try to apply this).
4. South Central Mountain RC&D CFRP report from Rick
5. Jeremy Bailey – This link below will take you to a TNC page with historical write-ups and reports from previous TREX events and our current TREX events with the announcements and application forms:

6. Prescribed burning CFRP proposal. South Central Mountain RC&D and various partners are working on a CFRP proposal that would develop training exchanges and multi-jurisdictional burns. It will assist the Council in obtaining 501c3 status as well as purchasing and equipping a Rx burn trailer. Also, there is a request, that if funded, the council would take the lead on an Rx Fire outreach event (to be determined if the proposal is accepted). The Rx Council will write a support letter after specifics are identified. CFRP Grant could purchase and outfit a burn trailer?
7. Boykin suggested that for the Rx Council to really start getting active, we need to meet more than once a year. All agreed to try to meet at least 3 times a year. Tentative next meeting date is April 8th at 0900- Socorro County Annex conference room (FYI – the 2015 NM WUI Conference date has been changed to April 7th to April 9th (still in Silver City) , we may need to change the April 8th date). Suggest that we move the next meeting date of the Council to 4/15/15- still in Socorro.

12:30 Dismissal