

Illinois Prescribed Burn Manager Certification Board
Minutes of the 15th Meeting
(Subject to approval at the 16th Meeting)

Illinois Department of Natural Resources
Mallard Room
One Natural Resources Way
Springfield, IL 62702

Tuesday, December 13, 2016

15-1) Call to Order, Roll Call, and Introduction of Attendees

The meeting was called to order by Mike Wefer at 10:05 a.m.

Members Present: Mike Wefer, Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR), Division of Wildlife; Bob Edgin, Illinois Nature Preserves Commission (INPC); John Wilker, IDNR, Division of Natural Heritage; Tom Wilson, IDNR, Division of Forestry; Jack Pizzo, Pizzo Group; Kent Tomblin, Illinois State Fire Marshall (SFM).

Others Present: Marni English, INPC

15-2) Adoption of Agenda

It was moved by Tom Wilson, seconded by Jack Pizzo, and carried that the agenda be adopted.

15-3) Approval of the Minutes of the 14th Meeting, June 14, 2016

It was moved by Tom Wilson, seconded by Bob Edgin, and carried that the Minutes of the 14th meeting, June 14, 2016, be approved.

15-4) Meetings Scheduled for FY 2018

December 12, 2017, IDNR Headquarters, 10:00 A.M.

15-5) Status of Certification of Prescribed Burn Manager Process (Wilson)

Tom Wilson reported \$1,800 in fees were collected for the calendar year and in FY16, \$1,200 has been collected with a total of 32 new applications processed and proposed that 35 would probably be processed by the end of 2016.

Tom has requested that the website be updated with the newest version of the burn manager application and that they would still accept the current one until the new application is posted.

Old Business

15-6) Introduction of Members

Attendees introduced themselves.

15-7) Yearly Meeting/Annual Report

Mike Wefer asked how the Board wanted to do the annual report to the Director. He indicated the ad rule was unclear how they needed to be done.

Tom commented that it would be a good summarize the year in terms of accomplishments, changes, etc.

Mike indicated the last report covered seven months, this one will cover a year and half and after that will be annually. He asked Tom what timing worked best for him in getting it done.

Tom indicated in January he would be able to get the numbers to report to the Director.

John Wilker asked how detailed is the report to the Director.

Tom answered that he gets the IDNR numbers.

It was moved by Bob Edgin, seconded by Jack Pizzo and carried that the report would be provided to Director Rosenthal by January 31, 2017.

New Business

15-8) Apprentice Task Book

Mike Wefer indicated he and Tom had sent out a rough draft of the task book and asked Bob Edgin if he had anything to add.

Bob commented that with interns he includes a table of the burns they have done which lists the date of the burn, the size, the fuel used and the role of the intern on the burn. He felt the task book was okay for two apprentice burns but it did not include history of other burns.

Mike asked if it was like a log so you would have the date, location, role.

Bob answered it includes the date, the site, acreage, fuel, filling drip torches, if they worked on the ignition crew or line patrols.

Tom explained to Kent the previous process for being certified as a burn manager was to have the last burn boss that they worked with write a letter recommending a person be certified as a burn manager which was a weak process.

Mike included that it did not provide any history of the burns they had been on.

Bob explained that is why he provides a table because it provides him with more protection as to who he is certifying.

Mike asked if we make the task book mandatory or voluntary.

Tom answered that he thought it should be included in the administrative rules so they know what to evaluate.

Bob commented that this is a way to get them thinking about the entire process.

Tom Wilson and Jack Pizzo indicated they liked the idea of a log showing who they worked for and what burns they did which shows a history.

Jack commented that he would get an example of the experience card that NWCG used.

Bob commented that his table simple with only four to five columns and takes little time to fill out.

Jack commented that once we get a spreadsheet approved, it can be put up on the website as an example of the format.

Tom indicated that he does that with the red cards, logging all the training and experience history.

Mike asked that since it appears we want to codify this, who would want to volunteer to draft it.

Bob volunteered to draft it.

Jack offered assistance.

Mike asked if we wanted to get the forms done and do the administrative rule at the next meeting or get them both done before the next meeting.

Tom answered he would prefer to see if pushed through as soon as possible.

Mike commented that we could put them on the website as supplemental documents until it is official. He asked if they wanted to take out the example form on the administrative rule on the application and say that when approved by the Board.

Tom answered yes.

A short discussion as to the whether to call it an apprentice log, history log or experience log

Mike asked for a motion.

It was moved by Tom Wilson, seconded by Jack Pizzo and carried to prepare a log form and administrative rule change for the prescribed fire apprentice task book.

Tom asked if there were any comments on the task book.

John Wilker asked about certifying the health of the applicant which was in the minutes from the last meeting, and suggested having a physician sign off.

Tom commented that on the PAC test people under forty are allowed to self-certify. Over forty, the Feds require a doctor's stamp stating they are physically capable of doing the PAC test.

Mike expressed concern due to the American's With Disabilities Act and HIPA, is putting a lot of responsibility on the certifier.

John asked if certifying the health was just for manager's certification or for anyone.

Tom and Mike agreed it applied to anyone.

Jack asked if it could be required for the applicant to provide an IDOT physical, or take that rule and apply it in this situation.

Mike expressed concern for potentially creating a bottleneck and asked if it has been an issue.

Tom answered not to his knowledge.

Bob commented that there is a physical fitness statement at the bottom of the day of the burn checklist that is to be gone over with the burn crew that states if you do not think you can handle it, should not participate in the burn.

Mike felt more comfortable with that statement since we are accepting a lot liability if we require a physician's statement.

Bob asked if we require this card, are we requiring that they provide proof of that every year and if we are going to want follow up on it every year.

Mike commented if they get certified in January who is to say they will be fine in March. He indicated crew members with health concerns or limitations can be identified and have them do easy tasks.

Tom commented that he has individuals let the burn crew leader know if they have an issue.

Jack commented that on the private side, when an individual is hired on it is listed in their job description what the physical requirements of the job are.

Tom indicated the Feds have a job hazard analysis that they go over pre-burn and everyone has to sign off on it that states they were informed.

Jack commented that is done at Argonne which is DOE and administered by the University of Chicago and the fire chief requires all the crew members to sign off on it. It is another way to point out the hazards of the job.

Mike commented that the IDNR Natural Resource Specialist positions require packing 60 lbs. across rugged terrain.

John commented that he didn't see any mention or acknowledgement of review of the burn prescription under Apprentice Tasks, Preparation. Under 4. Post Burn, Post Burn Operations, we have prepare post burn report should make acknowledgement of burn objectives and if they were met.

Mike asked if evaluate burn objectives should be its own dot point.

John answered yes because it is an important aspect of the post burn operations that it should be its own dot point.

15-9) Public Comment

No Public Comments.

15-10) Other Business

Bob Edgin asked what he is actually volunteering to do in putting together the task book.

Mike answered that we all need to help. If he could facilitate the movement of the draft task book, draft training log and draft administrative rule and get comments so we can get to the final version.

Bob answered that he could do that and asked that the advantage of referencing a training log is the administrative rule can be changed without having a meeting.

Mike answered yes because as it stands now we would have to change the administrative rule for every little change to the form. If we say the approved form from the committee in the rule, we can change the form without a rule change.

Tom commented that the Prescribed Fire Council with the help of IDNR and Shawnee are working to come out with a prescribed fire burn report app and will hopefully have a system to work with in the future.

Bob asked if the ArcGIS is just for Heritage and INPC staff.

John answered that is at this point in time. Heritage this year used ArcGIS online to create an app for mapping that is easy for reporting prescribed burns and make a polygon which can be exported to do acreage calculations. He still didn't feel everyone is using it. If it could be designed around something like this, everyone could have access to it.

Mike commented that IDNR Wildlife has the WHPTS system that is available that is web-based that Chad Bartman can give anyone access.

Tom commented that if you do it onsite with a phone the app will autofill the date and GPS location.

John agreed.

15-11) Adjournment

It was moved by Tom Wilson, seconded by Jack Pizzo, and carried that the meeting be adjourned at 10:48 a.m.