CHAPTER 1: GENERAL POLICY

INTRODUCTION

This Handbook has been prepared to inform you of the general policies related to prescribed burning on DNR-owned lands, address various aspects of prescribed fire behavior, and present guidelines for planning and conducting prescribed burns.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

District Forestry and District Fish, Wildlife, and Parks Leader – Responsible for oversight and direction to ensure that prescribed burn activities outlined in this Handbook are accomplished safely and effectively.

Area Forestry Leader (AFL) – Works with the Area Wildlife, Parks, and NHC Supervisors and staff for the overall prescribed burn program within the region. The Area Forestry Leader acts as the Technical Reviewer for all prescribed burn plans within organized Fire Protection Areas. The AFL also acts as the final approval on the day of burn based on forecasted fire weather, available staff, and fire indices within organized Fire Protection Areas. Forestry Area boundaries can be found at http://intranet.dnr.state.wi.us/int/land/forestry/Div_Overview/DNRregions.html.

Cooperative Fire Ranger – Works with the Area Wildlife, Parks, and NHC Supervisors and staff on prescribed burn program activities within the regions outside of the organized Fire Protection Areas. The Cooperative Fire Ranger acts as the Technical Reviewer for all prescribed burn plans outside of organized Fire Protection Areas. All prescribed burning on lands outside Protection areas will be subject to local fire regulations. Cooperative Fire Ranger boundaries can be found at http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/ForestPlanning/documents/LE_8x11.pdf.

Principle Roles in Burn Planning

Project Manager – If a prescribed burn is to be conducted by a private burn contractor, the Project Manager is the person responsible for moving a prescribed burn contract through the approval process. This includes writing the initial burn plan, fielding bids and selecting a burn contractor, and filling out the appropriate paperwork. Burn Planners, Coordinators, and Property Managers can all act as Project Managers. For more information, please see the “BURN CONTRACTING” section of this chapter.

Burn Plan Preparer – The Burn Plan Preparer (or “Burn Planner”) is the person preparing the DNR burn proposal (plan) in the Land Management System (LMS). This person may also be the Burn Boss, Burn Coordinator, or Property Manager.

Burn Coordinator – Burn Coordinators are responsible for ensuring that prescribed burns are conducted within all of the approved prescriptions outlined in the prescribed burn proposal. Coordinators verify that weather parameters, equipment and personnel resources are available and adequate for the planned burn, in addition to managing equipment and personnel logistics on the day of the burn. When necessary, they may confer with an employee’s supervisor to modify employee work schedules to effectively conduct and follow up on prescribed burns. Burn Coordinators are also responsible for the follow-up prescribed burn evaluation (see Chapter 4: PRESCRIBED BURN EVALUATIONS). The Burn Coordinator may also be the Burn Planner, Property Manager, or Burn Boss.

Property Manager (or County Forest Administrator) – This person is responsible for the approval of all DNR burn plans written for their property. Managers also examine the burn plan to ensure that the prescribed burn will meet the management objectives for the unit.

Technical Reviewer – All prescribed burn plans should have a review by a qualified Technical Reviewer. The Technical Reviewer is responsible for:

1. Reviewing each Prescribed Burn Proposal, evaluating the risk and complexity to ensure that the stated goals and objectives can be safely and successfully achieved when properly implemented with the given weather parameters and burn unit conditions.
2. Checking the prescription parameters against the fuel types to verify that the project as planned has a reasonable chance of meeting the burn objectives.

3. Verifying that the fire behavior calculations and/or prescription parameters are appropriate and desired flame length is acceptable, given listed equipment and personnel, firebreak type/width, and contingency planning.

4. Verifying that the ignition, holding and contingency plans are consistent with the predicted fire behavior.

Technical Reviewers must be qualified at the level of Incident Commander Type 4 (ICT4) or above, with the additional completion of NWCG course S-390 (Advanced Fire Calculations). Reviewers should also possess local knowledge of the area, experience burning in similar fuel types, and familiarity with the fire behavior and hazards associated with the burn plans they review. The Technical Reviewer should not be Burn Coordinator’s Supervisor. The Technical Reviewer cannot be the primary preparer of the plan.

It is acceptable for other specialists to review certain portions of the plan; however, a Technical Reviewer should be designated as the technical review signatory. For example, the Fire Suppression Specialist may review the fire behavior calculations and/or a natural resource specialist may review impacts to their resource interests.

**Burn Coordinator’s Supervisor** – The Burn Coordinator’s Supervisor officially approves the prescribed burn plan for the Wisconsin DNR. The Burn Coordinator’s Supervisor should not be the primary preparer of a burn plan. Supervisors are responsible for:

1. Verifying that the plan has been reviewed and recommended for approval by a Technical Reviewer.

2. Providing support to the Burn Coordinator to ensure that prescribed burns have adequate staff and equipment, to meet burn plan requirements, in order to safely conduct the prescribed burn. If additional staff and/or equipment are needed, the Burn Coordinator Supervisor should shift staff and equipment resources to meet the burn plan requirements.

3. Ensuring that all prescribed fires are conducted in accordance with the approved burn plan and established standards and guidelines.

4. Examining the alternatives and determining that there is no reasonable alternative to the prescribed burn, as required by Wisconsin Adm. Code NR 429.04.

5. Reporting all wildfires resulting from escaped prescribed fires to the Division of Forestry.

6. Verifying that escaped prescribed fires are reviewed according to established guidelines (See Chapter 4: Prescribed Fire Reviews).

Any conflicts in the approval of specific burn plans between the Technical Reviewer and the Burn Coordinator’s Supervisor shall be resolved by the District Forestry Leader and the appropriate Fish, Wildlife & Parks District Leader.

Further detail on the DNR Prescribed Burn Plan Review and Approval Process can be found in Chapter 2 of this Handbook.
Principle Roles on the Fireline

Please refer to the Wisconsin DNR Wildland and Prescribed Fire Qualification Guide for information on specific required training for each of the positions listed below.

**Wisconsin DNR Prescribed Fire Organization**

DNR Burn Boss (RXB3)

- Lookout

DNR Line Boss

DNR Ignition Specialist (RXI3)

DNR Holding Specialist

Firefighter Type II (FFT2)

NOTE: These are all the possible positions within the Wisconsin DNR Prescribed Fire Program. Remember to only fill those positions that are needed as determined by prescribed burn size and complexity.

**DNR Prescribed Burn Boss (RXB3)**

The Burn Boss is responsible for leading all aspects of the prescribed burn and accomplishing the stated burn objectives. It is also their responsibility to ensure that all operations are conducted in a safe manner and in accordance with the approved burn plan and established DNR standards and policy. Burn Bosses should supervise assigned personnel and direct the ignition, holding and monitoring operations. The Burn Boss is also responsible for mop-up operations and post-burn patrol, unless assigned to other qualified personnel. On large or complex burns, in order to maintain full situational awareness of fire behavior, crew coordination, and weather conditions throughout the burn, Burn Bosses should not be directly involved with ignition or holding operations.

Prescribed Burn Boss duties include:

1. Reviewing the prescribed burn plan prior to implementation and verify that all required elements and objectives are addressed.

2. Obtaining current fire weather forecasts, including a spot weather forecast, and special advisories from the National Weather Service.

3. Checking the daily air quality forecast the morning of the planned burn to determine if air quality conditions are suitable for prescribed burning.
4. Inspecting the burn unit the day of the burn to confirm prescribed fire plan elements, including:
   a. Areas of special concern
   b. Firebreaks are adequate for firing plan, adjacent fuels, and expected fire weather and behavior
   c. Holding/contingency plans adequately address expected fire behavior within the burn unit and downwind adjacent units.

5. Consulting with the Burn Coordinator to ensure that required personnel and equipment needs are met, and all necessary fireline positions are filled with qualified personnel.

6. Maintaining day-of communication and coordinate with local landowners, fire management organizations such as the county sheriff’s office and/or fire department regarding the implementation the prescribed burn.

7. Utilizing portions of the prescribed burn plan necessary for completing the pre-burn briefing and burn operation.

8. Conducting the pre-burn briefing to ensure crew members are informed of burn objectives, safety components, firing operations, and contingency plans. Verify that all personnel are qualified for the positions they are assigned to during the burn.

9. Directing an Ignition Specialist to conduct the test fire and document the results.

10. Determining, based on the test fire behavior, current and future forecasted weather conditions, capabilities and qualifications of personnel, whether the prescribed burn can be safely and successfully completed.

11. Verifying that all components of the Go/No-Go checklist are met, and sign the form prior to conducting the prescribed burn.

12. Determining when the prescribed fire is not within prescription parameters or is not meeting land management objectives during the burn.

13. Declaring an escaped prescribed fire a wildfire. Manage the incident and all contingency resources until responsibility can be transferred to a qualified Incident Commander from a fire management organization. For more information on recommended actions during escaped prescribed fires, see Chapter 3: TRANSITIONING TO WILDFIRE.

14. Declaring the prescribed fire is out after focused and diligent mop up of the entire burn area. The prescribed fire can be declared “extinguished” after such efforts find no additional visible smokes and no heat is detected especially in heavy fuels. Additionally, a visit the next early morning to ensure total extinguishment may be necessary especially in burn units with heavy fuels, peat soils, and/or drought conditions. For more information refer to the PRESCRIBED BURN CONTAINMENT, CONTROL AND EXTINGUISHMENT section in this chapter.

15. Holding the responsibility for declaring a prescribed fire out, unless it is formally passed to another Prescribed Fire Burn Boss, the local jurisdictional fire management organization, or partner agency involved in the prescribed fire.

16. Conducting an After Action Review (AAR) after the burn with crewmembers, to identify and sustain positive actions and decisions and identify areas needing improvement for future burns. For more information on conducting AARs, refer to the AFTER ACTION REVIEWS section in Chapter 3 of this Handbook.

**DNR Line Boss**

Line Boss is in charge of leading personnel on assigned fire line, implementing the burn plan and maintaining communication with Burn Boss.

Line Boss duties include:

1. Reviewing the prescribed burn plan, participate in the pre-burn briefing, and ensure they are familiar with the entire prescribed burn unit.
2. Verifying that all operations under their direction are conducted in a safe manner and in accordance with the Burn Boss’s direction and established Department standards and guidelines.

3. Supervising assigned personnel and direct the ignition, holding and/or monitoring (lookout) operations. The Line Boss should also be responsible for mop-up and patrol on their assigned line.

4. Maintaining direct communication with Burn Boss and other Line Bosses (if applicable) on activities, concerns, problems, etc.

5. Participating in an After Action Review of the burn, to identify and sustain positive actions and decisions and identify areas needing improvement for future burns.

DNR Ignition Specialist Type III (RX13)

The Ignitations Specialist supervises and directs firing operations on their assigned line according to the firing (ignitions) plan.

Ignitions Specialist duties include:

1. Reviewing the prescribed burn plan, participate in the pre-burn briefing, and ensure they are familiar with the line they are assigned to.

2. Briefing assigned personnel on ignitions plan.

3. Completing the test fire according to the ignitions plan at the direction of the Burn Boss.

4. Coordinating ignition operations with the Burn Boss, Line Boss (if applicable) or Holding Specialist (if applicable).

5. Conducting ignition operations in a safe manner according to the ignitions plan.

6. Identifying the fire effects on the vegetation and modify ignition techniques accordingly.

7. Participating in an After Action Review of the burn, to identify and sustain positive actions and decisions and identify areas needing improvement for future burns.

For small/less complex prescribed fires, the duties of the Ignitions Specialist can be assumed by the Line Boss.

Holding Specialist

In most cases, holding duties are assigned to Line Boss; however, on more complex and larger burns, the Line Boss may appoint a Holding Specialist to direct a small holding crew.

Holding Specialist duties include:

1. Reviewing the prescribed burn plan, participate in the pre-burn briefing, and ensure they are familiar with the line they are assigned to.

2. Briefing assigned personnel on holding operations.

3. Discussing firing plan with Ignition Specialist to coordinate holding operations.

4. Conducting holding operations in a safe manner according to the holding plan.

5. Confining the fire to a predetermined area, mop up, and patrol.

6. Maintaining communication with the Line Boss on holding progress and or problems.
7. Participating in an After Action Review of the burn, to identify and sustain positive actions and decisions and identify areas needing improvement for future burns.

For small/less complex prescribed fires, the duties of the Holding Specialist can be assumed by the Prescribed Burn Boss or Line Boss.

**Lookout**

- Maintains communication with Burn Boss to provide updates on fire behavior and/or smoke dispersion from a safe vantage point. Lookouts are especially useful for monitoring air quality near smoke-sensitive areas.
- Multiple lookouts can be used by the Burn Boss, if they are available. The Burn Boss can also choose to assign a lookout under the Line Boss.
- Can provide on-site weather readings and alert the Burn Boss to changes in weather conditions.
- Can be filled by a trained volunteer or FFT2.
- Lookouts should also be present and participate in the After Action Review.

**Firefighter Type II (FFT2)**

- Safely carries out duties as assigned by the Burn Boss, or Line Boss (if applicable) or Holding Specialist (if applicable) in accordance with the prescribed burn plan.
- Maintains communications with their immediate supervisor in the chain of command.
- May be directly involved in ignitions, if directly supervised by a qualified Ignition Specialist (RXI3).
- All FFT2s should be present and participate in the After Action Review.

**LTEs as Burn Boss**

Staff members employed in a Limited Term Employment (LTE) position may serve as Burn Bosses on DNR prescribed burns, provided the following requirements are met:

1. The LTE has met the DNR training course requirements for becoming a DNR Prescribed Burn Boss (RXB3).
2. The LTE is familiar with DNR prescribed burn policies/procedures.
3. The LTE’s level of experience is adequate for the complexity of the burns they will be leading.
4. The LTE’s supervisor makes the final determination, after taking into account all of the above.

**Prescribed Burn Qualification Management**

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources has adopted the Wisconsin DNR Wildland and Prescribed Fire Qualification Guide as official policy on prescribed burn position qualifications and training requirements. Employee qualifications and currency will be tracked in the Incident Qualification System (IQS).

One experience for each prescribed burn qualification needs to be reported through an IQS Experience Form (see below) every five years to maintain currency in the position(s) that the employee is qualified for. Reporting forms can be found on the Forestry Intranet site at [http://intranet.dnr.state.wi.us/int/land/forestry/Forms/index.htm](http://intranet.dnr.state.wi.us/int/land/forestry/Forms/index.htm). Further information on qualification management topics, such as how to handle lapses in qualification requirements, can be found in the Wisconsin DNR Wildland and Prescribed Fire Qualification Guide.

**IQS Experience Forms**

New employees will need to fill out an Initial Entry Form. Copies of all required training need to be submitted with the Initial Entry Form. Individuals can report their own experiences on the IQS Experience Form – Individual. Prescribed Burn Bosses can complete an IQS Experience Form – Incident for all DNR employees (by position filled) that worked on a single prescribed burn.
Experience Type

1. OJT (On the Job Training) – used when individual has not had the training for the role that they are filling on the prescribed burn.

2. TRN (Trainee) – used when an individual has had the training but are not fully qualified for the role that they are filling on the prescribed burn.

3. JOB (Job Qualified) – used when an individual is fully qualified for the role that they are filling on the prescribed burn.

Position Acronym

1. FFT2 – Basic firefighter

2. RXI3 – Ignition Specialist (conducts and/or supervises firing operations)

3. RXB3 – Prescribed Burn Boss (supervises the entire prescribed burn)

Incident Number

Incident numbers for prescribed burns should be in the following format:

1. The first two digits reflect the year the proposal is submitted for burning.

2. The next portion of the incident number is the property identifier (refer to the Public Forest Lands Handbook).

3. This is followed by the two-digit sequential number (for the property).

Example: 15-3423-01 is the first proposal for Peter’s Marsh Wildlife Area in 2015
Incident Name – Name of the prescribed burn (e.g. Pine Island Unit 3)

Forms need to be signed by the employee’s supervisor and routed to the employee’s local DNR dispatcher for entry into IQS. This process applies to all DNR employees, including LTEs. Volunteers used on prescribed burns do not have to be tracked in IQS, but do need to meet the qualifications for the position that they are filling on the prescribed burn.

Physical Fitness Requirement

The physical fitness requirement ensures that all personnel hired after July 1st, 2015 who engage in fire-related activities while on the job have the muscular and cardiovascular capabilities to safely handle any high-risk situation they may find themselves in. After the date mentioned above, new or newly-transferred Division of Fish, Wildlife and Parks employees will be subject to the annual Work Capacity Test requirement at the Field Test (moderate) level (completion of a 2 mile walk carrying a 25lb pack in under 30 minutes). Employees who pass the test will be able to participate in prescribed fire duties for one year past the date of the test. Employees hired before the effective date of July 1st of 2015 are expected to maintain a sufficient level of physical fitness for prescribed fire duties.

As Forestry Division staff also utilizes the Work Capacity Test, DNR staff who are required to take the annual Field Test may attend any Work Capacity Test (WCT) date held by Forestry or Fish, Wildlife & Parks Divisions. DNR staff may also meet the Field Test requirement by attending a WCT held by partnering agencies such as The Nature Conservancy or U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, provided that they meet the Department requirements for administering a Field Test (page 10-8).

For the Wisconsin DNR Prescribed Burn Program, the Field Test requirement applies to the following individuals and situations:

1. Department employees (LTE or FTE) hired after July 1st, 2015 that have prescribed burning duties identified in their position description.
2. Department Employees (who do not have prescribed burning duties currently) who transfer into positions after July 1st, 2015 that have prescribed burning duties in their position description, regardless of other details.

3. FTE or LTE staff who move into positions that are a promotion from their current positions. For example, a wildlife biologist (FTE) moving into a wildlife area supervisor (FTE) position, or any other LTE moving into an FTE position.

4. Seasonal employees that are initially hired before July 1st, 2015, but work off/on after that date will be required to take the WCT every year prior to burn season if they were taken off the payroll with a stop card and were hired again after July 1st, 2015.

5. At their discretion, supervisors may require existing staff, hired prior to the grandfather date of July 1st, 2015, to take part in the Field Test to ensure they can meet the physical demands of conducting prescribed burn.

Results of the Field Test will be recorded by WCT Administrators, entered in the Incident Qualification System, and distributed to employees for personal records on the Work Capacity Test Record Form (#9100-859). For additional information on Department physical fitness testing requirements, refer to Department Manual Code 9124.2 – Physical Fitness Testing Standards for Employees Assigned Hazardous Duty.

Exceptions

Staff that laterally transfer into the same position (but different location in the state) with no change in position description are still grandfathered in and not subject to the physical fitness requirement. This applies to both LTE and FTE staff. However, should an exempt employee decide to take the WCT, they will then be required to take the test annually.

Volunteers and staff who do not have prescribed fire in their PD are not required to take the Field Test, but will be required to review the physical demands of the work (Manual Code 9124.20 – Physical Fitness Testing Standards for Employees Assigned Hazardous Duty – Appendix B) and sign a Physical Requirement Acknowledgment Form (#9100-240). This form cannot be used as a means to circumvent the physical fitness requirement; use of this form by DNR staff is for unique circumstances (e.g. once a year type of event) only. Supervisors of DNR employees are responsible for collecting these forms, while Burn Bosses are responsible for the collection of forms from volunteers. Acknowledgement Forms must be re-signed each new calendar year. For more information, see “VOLUNTEERS ON PRESCRIBED BURNS” on page 10-15 of this chapter.

Requirements for Administering a Work Capacity Test

The Work Capacity Test must be conducted by a trained test administrator who will have obtained the training and annual training updates prior to administering the test. To become a WCT administrator, an employee must:

1. Already serve at a supervisory level. Test Administrators must make determinations such as pulling staff out of the test if they are significantly behind time or are experiencing difficulty during the test. Additionally, if an employee fails the WCT, it becomes a personnel issue in regards to their position duties.

2. Read the Work Capacity Test Administrator’s Guide (April 2003, PMS 307, NFES 1109)

3. View the Work Capacity Test PowerPoint

4. Ensure that every test location meets all the requirements for holding a WCT:

   a. During the actual conducting of the field test, medical personnel, either a paramedic or two EMTs, must be present at the test site.
   b. The testing site must be within 10 minutes of a primary care medical facility. The primary care facility must be either a hospital or trauma center with an emergency room. Typically, high school tracks are the ideal testing location in conjunction with a local primary care facility.

5. Act as a shadow to a current test administrator, to first observe how the test is conducted
Preparing for the Test

Inactive individuals should have made a gradual transition (4 or more weeks) to moderate activity (walking 30 – 60 minutes, 3 to 5 times a week) before more vigorous training (with the weighted vest, pack, or similar weighted device) for this test or the job duties. Both male and female-style weighted vests are available from the LeMay Forestry Center for purchase with local budgets. A personal backpack or fireline pack may be also used, as long as the weight within is consistent at the required weigh-ins before and immediately after the Field Test is conducted.

It is recommended to consult your physician to review your individual medical situation prior to taking the Field Test.

Failure to Pass

Failure to pass the Work Capacity Test will be addressed consistent with Manual Code 9124.2 – Physical Fitness Testing Standards. If staff fail the Field Test the first time, per Manual Code, they will be given a second chance to pass the field test. After a mandatory minimum two week wait, staff may retake the test up to eight weeks after the initial date of failure. If they fail the test a second time, prescribed fire activities will be removed from their position description and they will not be permitted to be involved in prescribed fire. Signing a Physical Requirement Acknowledgement form will also not enable employees who have failed the WCT to take part in prescribed burns.

LONG RANGE PLANNING

Master Plan

The master plan is the controlling authority for all activities and uses on a property. The plan identifies, authorizes and directs the property's resource management, the types of recreational use, and facilities and infrastructure development. Development of the master plan should consider provisions for the use of prescribed fire as a management tool. For information, visit the DNR Master Planning Share Point site.

The establishment of a property’s project boundaries should consider natural fire barriers and breaks. This can greatly affect the economic aspects of the prescribed fire program in the future. Properties should be 'squared up' as much as possible since irregular burn unit boundaries will increase the cost of burning and make control more difficult.

Areas which are to be burned should be laid out with the smallest possible perimeter to minimize the amount of edge and fire break. In order to reduce the per acre cost of applying prescribed burns, fire breaks should use existing roads, trails, and natural firebreaks and barriers whenever possible.

Before selecting prescribed burning as a practice, consider using other reasonable management techniques to meet the management objectives. The property manager is responsible for meeting management objectives and will be in the best position to ascertain the needs of the property and appropriate techniques to use.

Objectives

Prescribed burning as a management tool in Wisconsin has been used to meet, among others, the following objectives:

1. Wildlife habitat restoration and maintenance.
2. Natural area restoration and maintenance.
3. Hazard reductions, such as slash reduction.
4. Site preparation for artificial reforestation and natural forest regeneration.
5. Control of plant diseases and non-native invasive species.

Be sure to have clear, defensible objectives. Consider the impacts of prescribed fire on all aspects of the environment, both on the burn unit and the area surrounding the property. For further information, visit the Property Manager’s Guidance website.
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**Prescribed Burn Memo**

The DNR Prescribed Burn Team is tasked with developing the annual Prescribed Burn Memo to convey any new legal opinions, policy changes and safety topics related to prescribed burning. The team will work with division administrators to ensure all information is included and accurate. Policy changes included in the prescribed burn memo may impact private citizens as well as DNR employees; when this occurs, the memo must be submitted for a 21-day review period for both internal and external audiences (as opposed to a 7-day internal review). An announcement will be made through email regarding the review and comment period. All comments, questions, and recommendations from internal staff and the public must be compiled and addressed according to the public input process for program guidance.

As information in the memo may impact early season prescribed burn activities, the final draft must be released internally and externally by no later than February 28th of each year. The annual Prescribed Burn Memo is valid until a new memo is signed the following year.

**Prescribed Burn In-service Requirements**

Annual prescribed burn in-service training provides current, consistent statewide prescribed burn information and safety refreshers for prescribed burners. Statewide current issues deliver pertinent training to prescribed burners, ensuring the information is shared statewide. Other agenda items may be selected for individual in-services based on the local fire landscape. Interactive components and “hands on” aspects are strongly encouraged to help bring the classroom to the field. There are no time requirements for prescribed burn in-services. Attendance at this training is required for all staff members involved in prescribed burning.

**Objectives**

1. Current Statewide/Local Issues (required) – Review and discuss current topics set by the Prescribed Burn Team.
   
   Examples of statewide/local issues include:
   - The Prescribed Burn Memo and new policy, guidance or legal issues
   - New approaches to (or tools used for) prescribed burning
   - Weather impacts on upcoming burn season
   - Discussions/how-to on qualification management, training needs, LMS changes, etc.

2. Safety Topic (required)
   
   Examples of safety topics include:
   - Internal Escaped Prescribed Burn Review (presentation with speaker)
   - Lessons Learned from nation-wide incidents (taken from Wildfire Lessons.net)
   - Lessons Learned for in-state prescribed burn incidents not involving an escaped fire
   - Entrapment Avoidance (studying the “10’s and 18’s and how they guide decision-making on the fireline)
   - Proper fireline communication and common issues/mistakes

3. Training Topic (recommended, but not required) – Interactive or presentation/talk. Gets the participants working together to see the team aspect of fire organization. The activity should be developed so each team member can understand the critical role they play.
   
   Examples of interactive topics include:
   - Groups develop and present a firing plan for a large complicated burn
   - A mock escaped prescribed burn, understanding organizational structure, roles, and communication
   - A mock prescribed burn with flaws, when to speak-up
   - Team exercise developing a burn plan for a complicated burn
Recommended Resources

Wildland Fire Safety Training Annual Refresher website
http://www.nifc.gov/wfstar/

Experiential Training
http://www.fireleadership.gov/

Wildland Fire Lesson Learned Center web site
http://www.wildfirelessons.net/home

WISCONSIN ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT REQUIREMENTS

Public Notice

Because prescribed burning is considered a “minor action” under the 2015 NR 150.20(1m)(c) administrative code, public notice is not required. This “natural resource management, timber management or environmental restoration” minor action is defined in NR 150.03(16m) as follows (emphasis added):

NR 150.03 (16m) “Natural resource management, timber management or environmental restoration” includes all actions associated with the management, economic production, protection and restoration of native and non-native fish, game, plants, trees, and timber, habitat protection, habitat management, habitat restoration, silvicultural practices, forest inventory, chemical and mechanical site preparation, timber harvesting, timber sales, timber transporting, tree planting, direct seeding, forest type conversions, invasive species control, timber stand improvement activities, forest nursery operations, prescribed burning, fire prevention, fire detection, fire suppression, rehabilitation of fire burned areas, environmental remediation, fish hatchery operations, state game farm operations, pesticide or herbicide applications and field surveys for environmental protection.

Public Relations

Although public notice is no longer required, field staff are encouraged to continue to foster positive relations with the public by continuing to publish prescribed burn press releases. Refer to the Public Communication Tools for Land Management guidance to help determine the appropriate level of recommended public outreach. At a minimum, consider conducting a press release that lists the potential upcoming prescribed burns, by county, prior to the burn season. Property managers should also consider posting notices on-site at common entry points where burns may impact property users.

The Department strives to have public support and understanding of prescribed burning in order to gain greater acceptance of its application as a management tool. Because of this, staff should consider notifying the public about upcoming prescribed burns and why they are being conducted, as part of a larger outreach effort.

This public relations effort can best be carried out through local resource managers and DNR public contacts for prescribed burning, with emphasis placed on the following aspects:

1. The ecological benefits of prescribed burning in multiple ecosystems throughout the state, including benefits to listed, declining, and game species.

2. The prescribed fire is conducted by prescription under selected weather conditions which are conducive for more moderate fire behavior.

3. Department staff have the appropriate training, certifications, and specialized equipment for conducting these prescribed burns.

Acceptance by the public may be the key to the continued use of this valuable management tool; therefore, Wisconsin Adm. Code NR 429.04(2) should be considered during all phases of the prescribed burn process. It states: "All allowed open burning shall be conducted in a safe, pollution-free manner, when wind and weather conditions are such as to minimize adverse effects and in conformance with local and state fire protection regulations."
MEDIA COMMUNICATIONS

Prescribed burn staff are strongly encouraged to send out a press release before each prescribed burn season. Typically, press releases are done by county; however, if staff wish to send out a release covering a region (e.g., St. Croix area), they can do so provided that:

1. There is mutual agreement on who is listed as the single contact for the press release.
2. All properties that may be burned are listed in the release, organized by county.
3. The Fish, Wildlife & Parks Division Public Affairs Manager is provided with a list of those properties, to be included on a statewide list posted on the DNR public website.

Sample Press Release

The following is a sample press release that can be used for both spring and fall seasons. For regional press releases, the opening statement of the release should be changed to include the properties (organized by county). More information on press releases can be found at DNR Office of Communication website.

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NEWS RELEASE
Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
101 S Webster, P.O. Box 7921, Madison, WI 53707
Phone: 608-267-2773 TDD: 711
dnr.wi.gov www.wisconsin.gov
DATE: XX
CONTACT: NAME, DNR TITLE, PHONE NUMBER
SUBJECT: Prescribed Burns proposed for MONTH(S) in COUNTY/AREA

MADISON -- The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources is planning to conduct prescribed burns during the MONTH(S) of, on PROPERTY in COUNTY/AREA if appropriate weather conditions exist.

Prescribed burns are conducted by specially trained individuals to achieve a variety of objectives on the landscape. As flames spread across an area, fire consumes dead vegetation, invasive species and other undesirable plants, leaving a mineral rich coating of ash on the soil that is newly exposed to the sun’s energy. This will spur the growth of hardy fire-adapted native plants, creating wildlife habitat while making it more difficult for invasive species to gain ground. These burns also help to reduce fuel loads, thereby reducing the risk of wildfires.

The window for conducting prescribed burns is relatively small due to specific weather conditions required for successfully and safely obtaining the burn objectives. The moisture level of groundcover, wind speed and direction, atmospheric conditions, and relative humidity must be just right. Burns are postponed if weather conditions are unfavorable.

Questions or comments regarding the prescribed burn should be directed to NAME at PHONE NUMBER.

Prescribed Burn Talking Points

Below is a list of talking points approved for use by the Fish, Wildlife & Parks Division Public Affairs Manager. For policy on media interviews, refer to the DNR Office of Communication website.

- Many of Wisconsin’s natural communities were shaped by periodic fires and depend on fire disturbance to regenerate and remain vigorous.
Prescribed Burn Handbook

- Land managers work to mimic the benefits of naturally occurring fires by utilizing prescribed burns to reduce leaf litter and dead grass (thatch) buildup, redistribute nutrients, control invasive species and set back woody vegetation.

- In some cases, prescribed fire is the only method that can effectively achieve certain management objectives.

- Prescribed burns provide countless benefits to wildlife living in fire-adapted systems through the reinvigoration of the vegetation community.

- DNR staff receive significant training for both the planning and implementation of prescribed fire, and use specialized fire equipment, ignition techniques, and firebreaks to maintain control and keep the fire within the boundaries of the burn unit.

- A number of criteria must be met before a prescribed fire can be conducted, including appropriate weather conditions and adequate staffing and equipment.

**SMOKE MANAGEMENT**

Prescribed burning carries with it an obligation to minimize any adverse environmental effects. It should be done in a safe, controlled manner, when wind and weather conditions are such as to minimize adverse air pollution effects, and in conformance with local and state fire protection regulations.

In 2015, The Wisconsin DNR officially adopted the [Wisconsin Smoke Management Best Management Practices for Prescribed Burns (SMBMP)](https://www.dnr.wi.gov/lands/landsowners/burns/). As one of the signatories, the Wisconsin DNR agrees to abide by the provisions in the SMBMP on all prescribed burns on DNR-owned land.

**General Guidelines**

Following the guidelines listed below should minimize the adverse effects of smoke.

1. Whenever possible, burn during the day rather than at night. Atmospheric conditions for dispersion of smoke will usually be most favorable during the day. Conversely, stable conditions (not conducive to good smoke dispersion) frequently occur at night. In addition, smoke drift and visibility are very difficult to predict at night. Winds may lessen or die out completely, keeping smoke concentrations high in the vicinity of the burn. Additionally, nighttime inversions may cause smoke to stay near the ground and not disperse readily. Burn at night only when you have a definite forecast for optimum conditions. A nighttime smoke patrol may be necessary if residual smoke is present.

2. Use fire weather forecast information to predict smoke generation and movement, as well as fire behavior. Burn when conditions are good for rapid smoke dispersion. The atmosphere should be lightly unstable so that smoke will rise and dissipate, but not so unstable as to cause control problems. Again, your fire weather forecast can help determine if conditions are ideal for prescribed burning.

   a. Mixing height, transport winds, and smoke dispersal are all listed on fire weather forecasts.
   b. The Haines Index can also give insight into atmospheric stability. The Haines Index is a numerical value that indicates the potential for the development of extreme fire behavior, based on the instability and dryness of the air. The index ranges from 2 (very low) to 6 (high). Burning with a Haines Index of 4 (low) or 5 (moderate) is an ideal balance of safety, burn efficacy, and adequate smoke dissipation.

3. Have an idea of the amount and concentration of smoke the prescribed burn is expected to generate, especially near smoke-sensitive areas. Smoke-sensitive areas include:

   - Areas where people can gather in groups (cities, townships, outdoor sports arenas, fairgrounds)
   - Areas were inhabitants are vulnerable due to age or illness (hospitals, schools, daycare, or assisted living facilities)
   - Areas where decrease in visibility is a safety or security issue (airports, military bases, public roads and highways)
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- Class I Areas, designated by the Clean Air Act, which have the most stringent protection from air quality degradation. In Wisconsin, these include Rainbow Lake Wilderness (Bayfield County) and Forest County Potawatomi Community (Forest County Class I reservation lands).

Burn plans should have a list of actions to take if smoke intrusion does occur due to a wind switch on a smoke-sensitive area. Due to an increase in live fuel moisture, anticipate a greater amount of smoke during the growing season.

4. Where terrain is a consideration, use caution when smoke-sensitive areas are down-drainage. Stable atmospheric conditions and downslope winds generally prevail at night, causing smoke to flow down-drainage and concentrate in low areas. When relative humidity rises above 80% and smoke is present, the formation of fog becomes increasingly likely as moisture condenses on the smoke particles. There are seldom satisfactory solutions to these problems, so they should be avoided entirely whenever possible. Minimize the production of residual smoke, and use aggressive mop-up as necessary.

5. Notify your local DNR dispatch, county dispatch, fire management organizations, local law enforcement, nearby residents, adjacent landowners, and nearby tribal governments as appropriate. This is both common courtesy and good public service. People need to know that your burn is not a wildfire. In addition, you will get advance notice of any adverse public reaction, and be made aware of any special problems due to smoke (respiratory ailments, etc.).

6. Have an emergency plan. Burn Bosses should be prepared to extinguish a prescribed burn if it's not burning according to plan, or if weather conditions change. Property Managers should have warning signs available for alerting traffic on nearby public roads (see TRAFFIC CONTROL ON PRESCRIBED BURNS below for more information).

7. Use test fires to confirm smoke behavior.

8. Use backing fires whenever possible. Backing fires consume dead fuels more completely and produce less smoke. Even though slower and thus, seemingly more expensive, they produce fewer pollutants and can reduce the workload during post-burn mop up.

9. Avoid igniting organic soils as it is virtually impossible to put out an organic soil (peat) fire without extensively submerging it in water. Despite control efforts, peat fires can smoke for weeks or longer, creating the potential for severe smoke problems. Such fires can also travel underground and reignite surface fuels, resulting in a wildfire. For more information on burn planning and peat fires, please see CHAPTER 2: Considerations for Burning in Peat Soils.

10. Mop-up along roads. Burn out and start mop-up along roads as soon as possible to reduce impacts on visibility.

Air Quality

The DNR Air Program is responsible for issuing Air Quality Advisories throughout the state. Air Quality Advisories are issued when the Air Quality index exceeds, or is expected to reach unhealthy air quality levels. Air quality forecasts determine if conditions are favorable to reach unhealthy levels. In the event an Air Quality Advisory is declared by the Department, all DNR prescribed burning is canceled in the county the advisory is issued. Burn bosses are responsible for ensuring that no air quality advisories have been listed for their county prior to conducting a prescribed burn.

For the current status of air quality in each county, burn planners can visit: http://airquality.wi.gov/StateMapping.aspx.

For the current status as well as a 24-hour forecast, burn planners can visit: http://www.airnow.gov/.

To receive notifications on Air Quality Advisories via DNR govdelivery distribution list, burn planners can visit: http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/AirQuality/StatusCounty.asp.

TRAFFIC CONTROL ON PRESCRIBED BURNS

The only DNR staff that are allowed to direct traffic on public roadways during normal prescribed burn operations are certified law enforcement officers operating within their jurisdictions. All other DNR staff are not authorized to direct traffic and must defer that activity to appropriate law enforcement or traffic officers (e.g. county highway
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department). The restriction of DNR staff who have the authority to direct traffic can create a burden that can be overcome by cooperation and mitigation.

Smoke management issues should be addressed and mitigated while conducting prescribed burns, including:

1. Contacting local law enforcement to be on alert to assist in traffic direction if needed.
2. Contacting county or town highway department for appropriate signage, barriers, and personnel to direct traffic if needed.
3. Contacting local fire department to be alert to assist with traffic direction if needed.

Mitigation strategies should also be outlined in the Prescribed Burn Proposal to ensure smoke conflicts with roadways are minimized:

1. Burn with a specific wind direction to minimize smoke issues.
2. Burn with higher wind speeds to help carry smoke away from roadways.
3. Alter ignition patterns to minimize smoke exposure time.
4. Burn with more instability to ensure good smoke lift.

Even with the above mitigations in place, smoke over the road events do occur. During the interim period of time from when the smoke initially covers the road and when the local jurisdiction with the authority to control traffic arrives on the scene, the “Temporary Emergency Traffic Control for Prescribed Burns Delegation on Department Lands” will provide appropriately trained and equipped DNR staff the authority to control traffic on highways within and adjacent to DNR lands. According to the Delegation mentioned above, only DNR personnel with law enforcement credentials or staff that have completed the WDOT flagger training, and who have the required equipment identified in the training, may direct traffic during smoke over road events.

**RADIO COMMUNICATIONS**

Information on DNR radio communication policy can be found in Chapter 7: Radio Communications in the Fire Management Handbook. For guidance on radio operation and troubleshooting, refer to the Radio Communications Guidebook. A statewide map of radio towers can also be found on the DNR Forest Protection Intranet site.

**PARTNERING AGENCIES/ORGANIZATIONS**

Employees from partnering agencies/organizations who are “on the clock” as representatives of that agency/organization may hold any position, including fireline supervisory positions, with the exception of DNR Burn Boss (if the DNR is the leading agency on the prescribed burn), provided that:

1. The agency/organization has a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Department.
2. The employee meets the Department’s certification requirements for that fireline position.

As each MOU varies in policy specifics, the DNR Fire Operations Specialist should be contacted in order to confirm the specifics of the Department’s agreement with that agency/organization.

Partner employees who assist on a DNR prescribed burn while “off the clock” with their home agency/organization are considered “volunteers”, and subject to Department policy (below) regarding volunteers on prescribed burns.
VOLUNTEERS ON PRESCRIBED BURNS

Volunteer: An individual, other than an employee of the Department, who serves the Department without compensation.

According to Wisconsin Stat. s. 181.0670, a volunteer is not liable to any person for damages, settlements, fees, fines, penalties or other monetary liabilities arising from any act or omission as a volunteer, unless the person asserting liability proves that the act or omission constitutes any of the following: (a) violation of criminal law; (b) willful misconduct; (c) an act or omission for which the volunteer received compensation or anything of substantial value instead of compensation; (d) negligence in the practice of a profession, trade or occupation that requires a credential, or other license, registration, certification, permit or approval, if the volunteer did not have the required credential, license, registration, certificate, permit or approval at the time of the negligent act or omission.

Volunteers can fill a variety of roles on the fireline, as determined by their qualifications. Volunteers from outside the Department can participate in DNR prescribed burns if they meet the following criteria:

1. Have approval from the Burn Boss.
2. Have received the required level of training for the position they will hold on the prescribed burn. However, due to liability, volunteers cannot fill a supervisory position (RXB3, Line Boss, Holding Specialist) if they will be supervising DNR employees. Volunteers in supervisory positions are only permissible if they will only be supervising other volunteers.
3. Are equipped with the proper Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).
4. Have signed the Volunteer Agreement Form (DOA-3009). This acknowledgement form must be filled out by the prescribed burn volunteer each calendar year.
5. Have reviewed the physical demands of the work outlined in Manual Code 9124-20, Physical Fitness Standards for Employees Assigned Hazardous Duty, and complete a Physical Requirements Acknowledgement (PRA) (Form #9100-240), stating that they acknowledge the physical fitness requirements and activities associated with prescribed burning. This acknowledgement form must be filled out by the prescribed burn volunteer each calendar year.

Additionally, permission to drive state-owned vehicles can be authorized only if the volunteer meets the required criteria in the Volunteer Driver Vehicle Use Agreement, Form (DOA-3685). Burn bosses will be responsible for maintaining the above-mentioned records for all volunteers under their supervision on prescribed burns.

Burn Bosses must recognize the use of volunteers requires supervision and training as well as the provision of any equipment and the purchase of materials. Volunteers shall receive training and appropriate safety equipment before operating any machine or piece of equipment and be a minimum of 18 years old. Burn Bosses may supply equipment to help volunteers accomplish tasks.

All-volunteer Burn Crews on DNR Land

All-volunteer burn crews from partnering organizations may conduct prescribed burning on DNR land, provided that all crew members meet the required DNR prescribed burn qualifications for the positions they hold on the burn. A prescribed burn by an all-volunteer (non-DNR) crew must have the following in place, similar to the burn contracting process:

1. A Prescribed Burn Services Contract for DNR-owned Land must be signed by both the partnering organization and the Property Manager responsible for that burn unit.
2. A DNR burn plan must be prepared for that burn unit by DNR personnel, and approved by the appropriate staff. For information on preparing burn plans for volunteer crews/contractors, please see the BURN CONTRACTING section of this chapter.
3. All volunteers who will be present and involved in the prescribed burn must sign the Volunteer Agreement Form (DOA-3009) prior to conducting the prescribed burn. This acknowledgement form must be filled out each calendar year.
BURN CONTRACTING

Certain situations exist where it may be prudent to have a prescribed burn contractor conduct the prescribed burn. Higher complexity burns may lead to increased minimum requirements for personnel and resources, thereby making it difficult for DNR staff to conduct the burn. Burn contracting may also be a viable option in order to meet target acreage goals for a burn season.

It is recommended that the process for obtaining a burn contract begin six months prior to the desired burn season, due to the time necessary for obtaining a burn contract as well as guaranteeing burn contractor availability.

When deciding what burn units to include in the contract, note that it is possible to include multiple units, even from different properties. However, if the total cost for the units to be burned will be equal to or over $5,000, project managers shall not purposefully break up the contract in order to avoid the simplified bidding process for contracts $5,000 or greater.

For burn contracting documents, the person facilitating this process is known as the “Project Manager”. Ideally, this person will serve as the Burn Coordinator for the burn plan approval process.

Burn Contractor Requirements for Burning DNR-owned Land

Contracts will only be offered to contractors who meet the following Department requirements:

1. Contractors must be licensed (either in-state or out-of-state business license is acceptable) and insured $1,000,000 (minimum liability). Contractors are required to provide proof of business license and insurance (electronic or hard copy) when they submit a bid. Contractors who do not provide proof of license and insurance cannot be considered a “qualified bidder”.

2. The selected contractor is responsible for all personnel on the fireline. By signing the Prescribed Burn Services Contract for DNR-owned Land, they are certifying that all crew members (paid or volunteer) who will be involved in the prescribed burn have the required training qualifications for the position they hold on the fireline. These training requirements are specified below. If the selected contractor does not have the appropriate training for all crew members, the contractor cannot enter into a prescribed burn contract with the DNR.

   a. All staff (paid or unpaid) employed by the contractor and present on the burn must be certified, at minimum, as a DNR Fire Crew Member (FFT2): NWCG courses S-130/S-190/L-180, FEMA online courses I-100 & IS-700.
   b. All staff involved in directing ignition operations shall have successfully completed the training requirements of an Ignition Specialist (RXI3): NWCG courses S-130/S-190/L-180, plus S-219 (formerly S-234) S-290, and FEMA online courses I-100 & IS-700.
   c. The Burn Boss must meet the minimum training requirements of a DNR Prescribed Burn Boss (RXB3): NWCG courses S-130/S-190/L-180, S290, S-219 (formerly S-234), S-390, and FEMA online courses I-100 & IS-700.

In the event of an escaped prescribed fire, the contractor must be able to provide proof (upon request) of training certification for all crewmembers involved in the prescribed burn.

Obtaining a Burn Contract

To obtain a burn contract, the project manager must:

1. Fill out a burn proposal in LMS with all the specifications of the unit, along with the following special actions:
   a. Under the Burn Information section, click the box next to “Burn Contract”. This will create an additional “Burn Contracting” section, to be filled in later once a contractor has been selected.
   b. The firing, holding, communication, and contingency plan section should only include the phrase “BURN CONTRACTOR”.
   c. The personnel and equipment sections shall be filled in with the minimum staffing and equipment levels as determined by the project manager (and approved by the Technical Reviewer). Once they are approved by the
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Technical Reviewer, these levels simply serve as a guide to inform potential contractors of the minimum resource requirements necessary for conducting the burn.

2. The burn proposal will then be saved and sent to the technical reviewer for initial approval.
3. The project manager will also fill out a Prescribed Burn Services Contract for DNR-owned Land, with the information for the specified burn unit(s) filled in.

4. The project manager will then estimate the total contract cost. This can be obtained through an unofficial inquiry to a contractor in order to get a rough estimate. Per acre cost is determined by a number of factors such as burn complexity, current fuel costs, and travel time. This step is necessary to determine if the burn contract will go through the “Simplified Bidding for Services” process ($5,000 or greater), or if it falls under $5,000 and can be handled through an informal bid process.

For Burn Units Estimated Under $5,000

1. If the contract is estimated to be under $5,000, project managers can informally request a bid from several contractors of their choosing. Before they conduct a site visit, potential contractors must be provided with a copy of the burn proposal (reviewed and approved by the technical reviewer) as well as a copy of a Prescribed Burn Services Contract for DNR-owned Land with the necessary information filled in. This ensures that potential burn contractors are aware of their requirements for entering into a burn contract with the Department prior to submitting a bid.

2. Potential contractors should then submit:
   a. A burn proposal with their proposed firing, holding, communications and contingency plans, as well as personnel and equipment clearly stated for each burn unit.
   b. Proof (electronic or hardcopy) of business license and insurance. In order to be considered a “qualified bidder”, contractors must provide this information (see “Burn Contractor Requirements for Burning DNR-owned Land” above).

3. After receiving all bids, the project manager will select from the pool of qualified bidders based on their best judgment.

4. Once the project manager receives an email stating that the burn plan has been approved by the technical reviewer, they will then amend the DNR burn proposal by filling in the name and contact information of the selected burn contractor in the Burn Contractor Information section. All documents from the selected burn contractor (license, certification) must be uploaded in LMS at this time. The required documents must be received and uploaded by the project manager before the burn plan can be re-submitted and approved.

   In the boxes for firing, holding, communications and contingency plans, and personnel and equipment, the project manager will write “BURN CONTRACTOR”, followed by the appropriate specifications provided by that contractor. The project manager will then re-submit the burn plan in the LMS.

5. Once the burn plan is submitted a second time, all staff members in the chain of approval will receive an email; however, only the property manager, technical reviewer, and burn coordinator’s supervisor are required to approve the plan.

6. Once the amended burn plan is fully approved, the project manager will then review the burn plan with the selected burn contractor, confirm that the Selected Burn Contractor shall meet the DNR training requirements for prescribed burn crews, and obtain their signature on the Prescribed Burn Services Contract for DNR-owned Land. The project manager will then forward the signed contract and approved burn plan to their bureau director for final contract approval and signature.

7. Once the contract is fully approved, signed and uploaded to the Burn Contract Information section, the prescribed burn may take place.

For Burn Units Estimated $5,000 or Greater

If the Project Manager foresees the total burn unit acreage costing $5,000 or greater, they must go through a formal
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bid solicitation process:

1. The “Simplified Bidding for Services” process requires obtaining and documenting quotes from a minimum of three (3) separate contractors. Potential contractors must be provided the following information prior to conducting a site visit and placing a bid:
   a. A copy of the burn proposal, with unit description and minimum amounts for equipment and personnel, approved by the technical reviewer.
   b. A Request for Quotation Form, with the necessary information filled in (Front page as well as under “Special Conditions”).
   c. A copy of a Prescribed Burn Services Contract for DNR-owned Land, with the necessary information filled in.

2. Potential contractors should then submit
   a. The Request for Quotation form, with their quotes for services filled in.
   b. The DNR burn plan with their proposed firing, holding, communications, and contingency plans, as well as personnel, and equipment levels clearly stated for each burn unit.
   c. Proof (electronic or hardcopy) of business license and insurance. In order to be considered a “qualified bidder”, contractors must provide this information (see “Burn Contractor Requirements for Burning DNR-owned Land” above).

3. The project manager will document all contractor quotes on the Simplified Bidding Record Form (#DOA-3088). A Burn Contractor will then be selected from this list of quotes based on the lowest per-acre cost.

4. The project manager will then find a requisitioner for their Bureau. The requisitioner will require the name of the Selected Burn Contractor, as well as funding codes for the project. The requisitioner will then generate a Purchase Order for the contract.

5. Once the project manager receives an email stating that the burn plan has been approved by the technical reviewer, they will then amend the DNR burn proposal by filling in the name and contact information of the selected burn contractor in the Burn Contracting section. All documents from the selected burn contractor (business license, certification) must be uploaded in LMS at this time. The required documents must be received and uploaded by the project manager (and appropriate boxes checked in the Burn Contract Information section) before the burn plan can be re-submitted and approved.

In the boxes for firing, holding, communications, and contingency plans, as well as personnel and equipment, the project manager will write “BURN CONTRACTOR”, followed by the appropriate specifications provided by the selected contractor. The project manager will then re-submit the burn plan in the LMS.

6. Once the burn plan is submitted a second time, all staff members in the chain of approval will receive an email; however, only the property manager, technical reviewer, and burn coordinator’s supervisor are required to approve the plan.

7. Once the amended burn plan is fully approved, the project manager will then review the burn plan with the selected Burn Contractor, confirm that the Selected Burn Contractor meets the DNR training requirements for prescribed burn crews, and obtain their signature on the Prescribed Burn Services Contract for DNR-owned Land. The project manager will then forward the signed contract and approved burn plan to their bureau director for final contract approval and signature. The project manager will then forward the signed contract and Simplified Bidding Record Form to the requisitioner, who will route for purchase order creation. The P.O. will then be mailed to the contractor.

8. The prescribed burn may take place once the P.O. is created, and the following documents are uploaded to the to the Burn Contract Information section:
   a. Prescribed Burn Services contract, fully signed by all parties
   b. Request for Quotation form from the selected contractor
   c. Simplified Bidding Request Form showing all submitted bids
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**Prescribed Burn Containment, Control and Extinguishment**

**Containment** – When a fire is encircled by a fireline, whether it be natural barrier, dozer/scratch line, wet/retardant line, or road, in order to keep the fire from spreading.

**Control** – To complete a fireline around a fire, locate and cool down all hot spots, making the fire safe under the foreseeable weather conditions, and ensuring that the fire will not rekindle or escape from existing firebreaks. “Controlled” means that prescribed burners have made reasonable and consistent efforts to ensure the burn will not escape control and will remain safe overnight.

**Extinguish** – “To cause to cease burning.” Evidence of on-going burning, including flame, heat and smoke, would not permit a fire to be considered extinguished. This is the longstanding interpretation of DNR of “extinguish” in both the context of Wis. Stat. s. 26.14(5) and as understood for the purposes of fire suppression efforts.

The DNR continues to interpret the term “extinguish” found in Wis. Stat. s. 26.14(5) to mean “to cause to cease burning,” and applies this definition consistently across the state. To comply with this longstanding interpretation:

1. Prescribed burn practitioners must extinguish their burns in a timely and efficient manner or provide monitoring of the site until extinguishment is achieved.
2. The attempts should be good faith efforts to locate and suppress any materials that are holding heat and/or smoking.
3. The attempts should be with sufficient suppression resources to conduct mop up efforts on the entire burn or to provide sufficient monitoring of the site until extinguishment is achieved;
4. The attempts should be with sufficient suppression resources including patrolling for smokes after mop up has been completed.

The Wisconsin State Statute 26.14(5) clearly lays out the expectation that any person setting a fire must totally extinguish that fire before leaving it. The challenge for DNR prescribed burn practitioners is carrying out that expectation while conducting land management activities on state lands. This challenge is the same for any prescribed burn practitioner: private land owner, NGO, commercial operator, etc. The law is enforced equally across all prescribed burning circumstances. All prescribed burn practitioners must attempt to “extinguish” all burning materials before leaving a prescribed burn unattended.