

# Prescribed Fire in Pennsylvania



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- Where we came from
- How we got to where we are
- Stumbling Blocks
- What we are doing to fix the problem



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# PA Ecoregions



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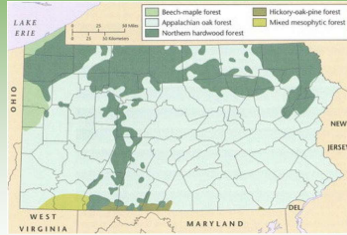
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# Forest Types

- Great Lakes Beech-Maple
- Oak-Hickory
- Northern Hardwood
- Mixed Mesophytic



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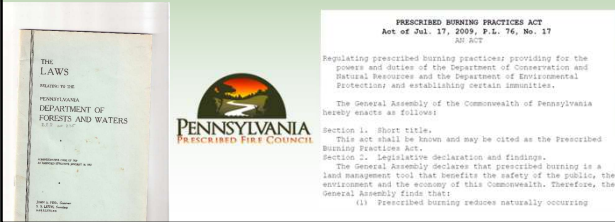
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# Prescribed Fire History

- Old Fire Laws
- PA Prescribed Fire Council Formed
- Prescribed Burning Practices Act



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- Provides liability protection when burns are conducted following the Pennsylvania Prescribed Fire Standards.
- The standards outline two primary requirements:
  - 1) implementers must have an **approved burn plan**, and
  - 2) prescribed fires are to be **conducted by qualified personnel**.
- While state agencies can train qualified personnel, it has been **challenging for private individuals to become qualified**.

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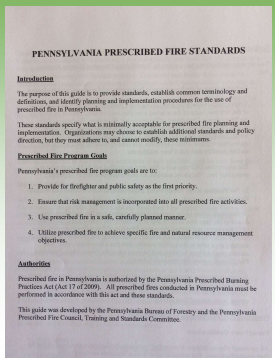
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- Mirror NWCG
- Updated annually
- Group effort



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### Certified Prescribed Burn Manager Programs

- Forest Guild Report outlines costs/benefits of CPBM programs.
- In 2020, fifteen states had CPBM programs.
- Three primary goals of CPBM programs:
  - (1) Ensure that burners have the knowledge and experience to safely conduct prescribed burns,
  - (2) Legitimize and standardize the practice of prescribed burning, and
  - (3) Alleviate concerns about liability that limit burning by private landowners, contractors, and local governments.



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### Certified Prescribed Burn Manager Programs



- The National Cohesive Strategy has recognized the need for CPBM programs.
- Call for an “All Hands, All Lands” approach.
- Propose establishing Prescribed Fire Practitioners Qualification Pathway.

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### Working to Fix the Problem



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### Conservation Innovation Grant

- **The Proposal:** Develop a Certified Prescribed Burn Manager (CPBM) Training Workshop that trains resource professionals to safely conduct prescribed fire.
- **The Concept:** A three day/24-hour course, with quizzes and an exam to evaluate students. A certificate will be issued at course completion.

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### Conservation Innovation Grant

- **The Contract:** Awarded to Tall Timbers Research Station to develop all Workshop classroom content, including:
  1. A complete set of PowerPoint slide decks for classroom content delivery.
  2. Written Instructors Guide and associated materials to administer workshop.
  3. Student Workbook and associated materials.

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### Prerequisites for the CPBM Class

- 5 NWCG/FEMA Classes
  - S-130
  - S-190
  - I-100
  - I-700
  - L-180
- Participate on 5 burns

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### Coursework

- Presentation Units Include:
- Burn Objectives
- Legal Considerations
- Public Relations
- Safety
- Weather
- Fire Behavior
- Smoke Management
- Ecological Effects
- Firing Techniques
- Holding and Contingencies
- Planning and Evaluation

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### Meanwhile, the Fire Council has been working on:

1. Hosting several Learn-and-Burn Workshops to begin to educate the public.
2. Developed Pre-requisites for CPBM course.
3. Created the CPBM Task-book
4. Fire Council – PA Standards subcommittee has drafted new language for CPBM.
5. Working to identify options for Insurance.
6. Fire Council Board voted in June 2023 to approve and take a lead in administering the CPBM program, while DCNR legal works out details.

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### Short Term Solution

- Partner with Prescribed Fire Council
- Certification Review Board
- Council will house the program

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## Benefits of CPBM Program

- Provide opportunities for private landowners to get fire on the ground.
- Get interested parties involved with burning.
- Trained Practitioners
- Expand the use of RX fire in the State.

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## What is working well?



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A collage of three images related to the Pennsylvania Prescribed Fire Council. The top left image shows a group of people in a grassy field. The bottom left image is a screenshot of the council's website with the title "PA Prescribed Fire Council" and a mission statement. The right image is a screenshot of the council's Facebook page, showing the profile picture, name "Pennsylvania Prescribed Fire Council", and a post about promoting public understanding of prescribed fire.

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## Building the Future



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## Barriers

- Lack of practitioners
- Lack of contractors
- Lack of equipment
- Capacity in general
- Burn windows
- Insurance

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