

## **Notes from Landowner Fire Association Meeting**

**June 30, 2015**

**6:30-8 p.m. Stone State Park Lodge**

I would like to thank everybody for their time, energy, and the candid discussion. We identified many issues throughout the evening and created a list of solutions that we can begin to address. I think most of the barriers that we listed fall within one of three categories: ecological questions, policy/provider information, and operational concerns. At the end of the brief meeting notes, please look over the solutions and please add, edit, criticize, etc. Let's keep the dialogue and energy moving forward.

### **Barriers**

#### **Ecological**

How does mowing compare?

What about mowing and burning?

Burn at different times of the year i.e. burn in the summer for easier control of the fire

Woodland burning - burn after leaf drop in the fall

Leafy spurge and crown vetch both respond well to fire

#### **Policy/Provider Information**

Cost share and lack of knowledge of cost share programs

Lack of contractors or knowledge of potential contractors

Is there an incentive for fire departments to assist in burn operations? - Policy

Knowing which fire departments are "friendly"

Liability

Sioux City Fire Department dislikes burning close to city limits and within city limits

Are Nebraska's burn associations effective? They have helped with wildfires

What about SCIOSA? Chad Graeve's burn folks

Wildfire and media create a bad image/expectation - need to create a culture of burning

NGO burning - needs to allow participation and viewing at a minimum to help train folks - NGO policy is limiting if you need S130/190 to participate

## **Operational**

Pool of volunteers

Equipment - short term loan

Small weather window

Experience beyond training in books

Private landowner work schedule

A detailed safe plan in numerous and adverse weather conditions

Topography in the Loess Hills can be challenging

Topography can also work to your advantage

Planning is the best asset - can use sand table exercises in the winter

Notifications in advance of burning

## **Solutions**

Landowner Prescribed Fire Workshops - these workshops are a crash course to begin to understand ecology, fire effects, and fire behavior. If live fire is not an option because of weather, etc., we have looked at maps of private lands and developed a burn unit plan with the landowner, using the site as a teaching tool for the class. This is a one day class that we have taught several times, most recently in the southern Loess Hills. We need to do one at the northern end of the Loess Hills.

Allow observation/participation on prescribed fires (depending on agency/organization etc.)

We can look for opportunities with the county, state, and The Nature Conservancy to allow observation at a minimum level.

Have a representative from NE Prescribed Fire Association visit with us about their organization

Liability insurance is offered through a couple of different insurance companies - distribute options

Kathy is going to assemble and distribute private contracting businesses that do "fire for hire"

Distribute a pre-burn checklist or go/no go checklist to help coordinate prescribed fire

We will develop a landowner friendly version.

We need to find options to hay fire breaks and understand the purpose

Work with some local contacts to hay fire breaks or create a network of options for private landowners.

Create options for people to learn/sign up at different Loess Hills events i.e. Bison Day

Create a phone tree/message system to notify people of upcoming fires and the need for help

Equipment list, check out options, etc. from CCB's etc.