

Wisconsin DNR: Wisconsin prescribed fire training starts April 14

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MADISON, WI - From April 14 to May 1, The Nature Conservancy, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and The Aldo Leopold Foundation will host hands-on planned burn (prescribed fire) training.

The Wisconsin Prescribed Fire Training Exchange (WI-TREX) engages men and women from across the country in a 16-day training throughout Wisconsin. Participants share and learn about planned burning, fire management and how to maintain healthy native habitats. Everyone will go home with new skills and experience while helping create fire-safe communities and restore and improve grasslands, wetlands and forests for native plants and wildlife.

Eight qualified firefighters from across the country will attend the training. Depending upon weather conditions, qualified leaders from the host agency or organization will supervise trainees while conducting burn planning and daily burning operations on U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Nature Conservancy and Aldo Leopold Foundation lands.

Training will take place at the following locations:

- The Aldo Leopold Foundation, Baraboo;
- Baxter's Hollow and Hemlock Draw preserves, Baraboo and Sauk City;
- Horicon Marsh (state and federal lands), Mayville-Waupun;
- Leopold Wetland Management District, based in Portage; several burn operations planned on Waterfowl Production Areas in 12 surrounding counties;
- Military Ridge Prairie Heritage Area, Barneveld;
- Mukwonago River watershed, East Troy;
- Necedah National Wildlife Refuge, Necedah; and
- St. Croix Wetland Management District, based in New Richmond. There are 43 Waterfowl Production Areas in eight counties; burns are planned for several of them.

About 4.5 million acres of Wisconsin's grasslands, wetlands and forests are considered fire-dependent, meaning the plants and animals that use the habitat need periodic fire to survive and thrive. Planned burning reduces the risk of unnaturally severe or large fires; creates healthy forests, wetlands and grasslands; improves wildlife habitat and protects communities.

The TREX concept was developed by the Fire Learning Network, which has worked with partners to host 64 TREX events since 2008. These events meet a variety of essential needs:

- Train seasoned wildland fire professionals in need of specific experience, as well as students and new firefighters who are beginning to shape their careers.
- Provide opportunities for agencies to work together and learn efficient ways to coordinate their resources and burn windows.
- Give local fire departments training that helps them better respond to wildland fires.
- Support tribes working to renew traditional burning practices.
- Help rural communities working to make themselves safer from wildfire.

Information and updates about the WI-TREX will be posted on https://www.facebook.com/-TREX-Prescribed-Fire-Training-Exchange-1665687823757153/?hc_ref=SEARCH.