Arkansas Prescribed Burn Association (PBA) Standard Operating Guideline's (SOG's)

Purpose: PBA SOG's are meant to facilitate and promote responsible use of prescribed fire, reduce liability, reduce the risk of accidents, provide training, technical assistance, and ensure safety among volunteer groups of widely varying experience and ability levels. Rx fire, working outdoors, and being in the elements can be dangerous. Each individual solely assumes the risk associated with such activity. We encourage and require compliance with industry standards, best practices, and Arkansas Act 695.

Prescribed Burn Association (PBA) is a group of volunteer members that form a partnership to share equipment, knowledge, and labor to conduct prescribed burns. It is a landowner led organization. It is landowners helping landowners like a co-op. It is not a contract service, regulatory agency, or for hire entity. It is designed to reduce barriers to burning like overcoming a lack of personnel, equipment, and experience.

Arkansas PBA is a 501 (c) 3 nonprofit organization designed to provide the oversight and support to local PBA's in the state. APBA provides support to local chapters in a variety of ways and is essentially the parent organization of the local PBA chapters. APBA's goal is to provide or help facilitate training, funding, equipment, communication, organizational structure, establish local PBA's, promote a healthy fire culture, have community outreach, provide representation, bring alignment to each PBA, legal compliance, and/or other assistance related to prescribed fire. This is a proven model that being replicated can result in creating excellent ecological improvements throughout the state pertaining to forestry, wildlife, habitat, and environmental quaility. It is primarily focused on private lands and is a low-cost high return opportunity. In short, APBA's goal is to promote, equip, train, sustain, and lead prescribed fire efforts in Arkansas.

1. The person or landowner where assistance is to be given must be a member of the PBA to receive privileges including but not limited to use of the trailer, equipment, and volunteers.

2. Membership dues and payment methods are to be determined by the local PBA membership. They should be reasonable (aligned with other similar organizations typically $25-$35 annually) and are not designed to make the local PBA profitable but rather help them cover basic expenses. APBA is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization and in part designed to fundraise and assist so that a financial burden is does not rest on the local PBA. It is encouraged to have landowner or landowner agent membership dues ($25-$35), student membership dues ($10-$15), and non-landowner membership dues ($10-15).

3. While this is not always possible, landowners are encouraged to assist other members prior to requesting assistance. In a case of multiple burn request for the same date, the person with more assists will get priority. This can be altered by the board where

necessary especially if a requestor has already completed a burn during the burn season the scheduling conflict arises.

4. Members must comply with Arkansas Act 695 and industry standard practices. The following link is to Act 695: https://arkleg.state.ar.us/Home/FTPDocument?path=%2FACTS%2F2023R%2FPublic%2FACT695.pdf

5. The burn plan used should comply with Act 695. The following is the recommended burn plan for use: https://form.jotform.com/242677804283060

6. Practitioners who are requesting technical assistance with writing Rx Burn Plans, having a site visit, need help conducting (leading) the burn, or who need any technical assistance should make such a request to the PBA Officers/Board, at least two weeks prior to scheduling a burn. Leadership will do their best to accommodate the request however more time may be needed to provide assistance depending on the complexity of needs and schedules.

7. The responsibility of the burn rest solely on the person in charge of the burn who is often referred to as the "Qualified Prescribed Burner or Burn Boss." It is acceptable If they do not need technical assistance and only need other benefits of membership.

8. To request use of and receive instructions on when and where the trailer and equipment can be picked up, a member can make the request using the preferred method of communication of the local PBA. (phone, text, email)

9. Individual items like a leaf blower can be checked out without using the trailer and all equipment. Available equipment may not be adequate to accommodate all request, and this may leave the trailer inoperable to facilitate Rx fire. The board reserves the right to prioritize burns for equipment checkout. Based on local needs, volunteer assistance for help preparing burn lines and similar activity can be requested. However, in most cases pre-burn prep is the responsibility of the landowner or their agent. Typically, volunteers support the greater need for helping conduct Rx burns but we have flexibility to promote and facilitate our mission to get fire on the landscape.

10. Below are links to weather related tools including current burn bans. We encourage using multiple forecast and local weather monitoring.

    a. Arkansas Forestry Burn Ban/ Fire Danger map
       www.arfireinfo.org
    b. Little Rock NWS Fire Weather Page (clickable county map)
       https://www.weather.gov/lzk/forest2.htm
    c. NWS Fire Weather Dashboard (Accurate daily and hourly fire weather)
       https://www.weather.gov/dlh/fwd

d. Fire Smart APP (Enter location and burn parameters to see smoke prediction and if you are within the Voluntary Smoke Guidelines for Arkansas) https://arkfiresmart.com
e. Kestrel info https://kestrelinstruments.com/mwdownloads/download/link/id/8/ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MduAlzd1vEE
f. Simple Smoke site (Simple site to make smoke maps) https://fireweather.fdacs.gov/Simple-Smoke/

11. Initial volunteer request will be sent through a communication method decided on by the local PBA (phone, text, email, social media). The local PBA can decide if this initial request is to be funneled through a PBA designee (pres./officer/other) or by the individual requestor. Request for volunteers will be sent as soon as possible. It is preferred volunteers have one week's notice for scheduling, but notices will be sent upon request. After the initial request for volunteer is sent and volunteers identified, leadership can send the volunteer contact info to the person requesting assistance and allow them to coordinate additional arrangements. The person conducting the burn will make the determination to proceed, cancel, delay, or otherwise alter the schedule but it is advisable to communicate to all volunteers ASAP and be considerate of their time and effort. Include the following basic details in the request for volunteers:
    a. How many volunteers are needed
    b. Date of burn
    c. Start and estimated end time
    d. Location preferably including a pin or specific details
    e. Size of burn(s)

12. A burn day checklist is a part of the recommended burn plan. A supplemental checklist is not required but can be used.

13. Please be mindful of personal needs when participating on a Rx fire. While some landowners thoughtfully provide things like water or snacks it is everyone's responsibility to be self-sufficient and bring items you need for yourself. Do not rely on someone to provide it for you. Here are some recommendations you have the day of the burn:
    a. PPE – cotton shirt, pants, leather boots
    b. A lighter (cigarette lighter or long stem lighter is very helpful)
    c. Water
    d. Snacks
    e. Food
    f. Medication
    g. Sunscreen

14. Volunteers who participated in the Rx burn should be noted and reported to the President or their designee.

15. The trailer and equipment should be returned ASAP. Whoever checked it out is responsible to return it in good working condition in a state of readiness to be deployed on the next Rx burn. If something is damaged, missing, broken, or any problems are identified the user shall report this to the President or their designee.
    a. Re-fuel all equipment, fuel cans, and drip torches
    b. Re-stock Stihl pre-mixed fuel cans for blowers
    c. Drain water from sprayers

16. The trailer can be returned to the storage area or transferred to the next person needing it. Communicate, be helpful, be kind, and courteous.

17. All prescribed burns shall be reported using this link: https://form.jotform.com/242614846349060

18. Any activity that is a threat, safety concern, or otherwise is a concerning issue should be reported to the Officers/Board ASAP and may be reviewed. A review and subsequent action, if any, should align with the law, By-laws, or other applicable standards and can involve APBA assistance or other authorities to help determine an appropriate course of action.