

Nachusa Grasslands Prescribed Fire Program

Summary Report and Lessons Learned Fall 2022 through Spring 2023

By Bill Kleiman | The Nature Conservancy | Project Director | May 5, 2023

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Photos by Charles Larry, Dee Hudson and BK

The bottom line:

We set a record number of Nachusa acres burned, and a record in assisting partners.

As always we had some units we prepared that we could not find the fire weather to do.

Preparing fire breaks takes time but gets fires done safer and faster.

We tend to follow the same procedures on fires: We give everyone a map and a roster. We do a safety briefing for about 15 minutes. Each crew drives the lines they are responsible for. We do a test ignition and then proceed. We assess how things went with an After-Action Review.

A tender to fill up your pumper units and carry all those tools is great. An article on ours is here:

<https://grasslandrestorationnetwork.org/2020/05/21/tender-truck-for-rx-fire/>

Brush clearing at scale is as important as doing fire at scale. We need to meet these challenges with determined innovation. Here is a slide show of a brush clearing project we did this winter: [MRCP brush clearing](#)

Help others get their fires done.



Shane Tripp is with IL TNC and has been burning at Nachusa for years. Shane is about to be a Burn Boss (RxB2).



American beak grass has greatly increased in a woodland unit we have burned frequently for two decades. The brush layer is diminished, and the oak and hickory have space.



Booker Moritz and a bison bull minding their business.



John Nelson of INPC and Brad Semel of DNR were on a fall fire crew at Lowden Miller State Forest.



Another big unit at Lowden Miller State Forest was burned late spring with Paul Bane as burn boss. Paul is a Nachusa alumnus.



Molly Duncan on snag patrol at Lowden Miller State Forest. We add some foam to our tank to make this soapy water. We don't want dead trees on fire that are near the fire break.



Lowden Miller State Forest a day after the fire. In a few weeks it was green again, but with less brush.



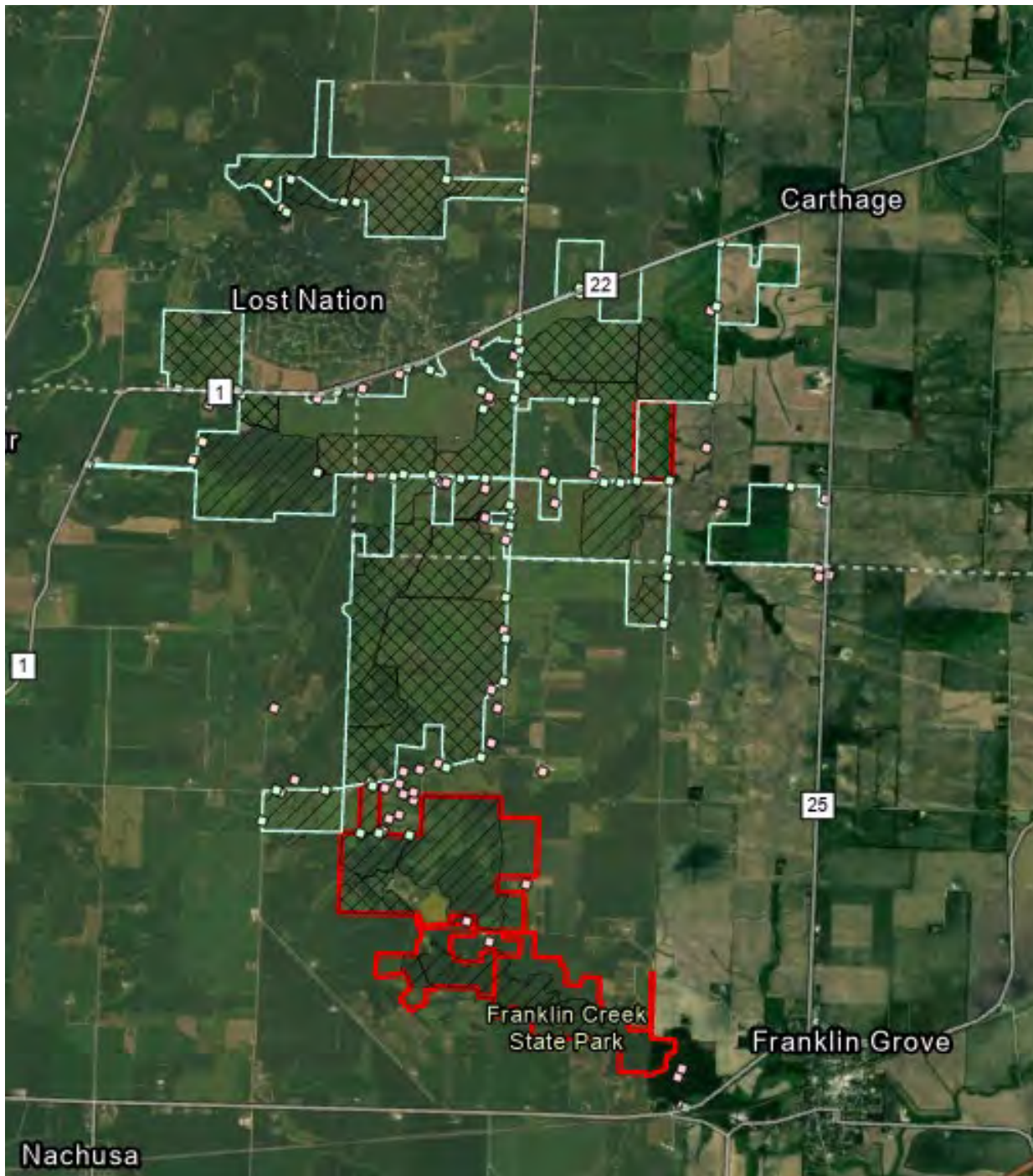
Molly Duncan was line boss directing Elizabeth Bach.



Fire in the woods of Big Jump Prairie.



UTVs were the vehicles of choice this wet spring. They spray water at high pressure but low volume. The truck has our 330-gallon water tender and many other handy tools and supplies.



Fires accomplished are cross hatched. Red is DNR's Franklin Creek State Natural Area.



Mark Herman was on a dozen fires with our crew. Our crews are staff and volunteers getting the job done together. This year, our crews were about 40% volunteers. Four of the volunteers had over ten fires.



Phil Nagorny is a burn boss RxB3. Working his way to RxB2.



Eight oak savanna.



We often rake our prairie fire breaks and blow the windrows off the break with a tractor mounted leaf blower.



Good and wide fire breaks make for easier fire work.



Getting ready to start a fire.



Stonebarn Savanna with its nice prairie planting at sunset.



A few weeks after a fire, this bloomed bright with these ephemerals at Franklin Creek State Natural Area. On the slope behind you can see some brush was thinned.



Austin Webb helped Stronghold Camp do fire in their nice oak woods.



Volunteer Dave Brewer was on 11 fires.



Cody Considine with leaf litter burning. Even these mild fires have good ecological effect.



Tim Smith, Shel Wilks, Molly Duncan, Kevin Kaltenbach, and Eric Bugvilionis are ready.



We burn our ornate box turtle units while these critters are in hibernation underground.



In one day we burned 5 units at Franklin Creek State Natural Area with this crew of 22. Four of them are from the Forest Preserves of Cook County, 1 from Indian Boundary Prairie, 3 from Byron Forest Preserve, 7 are volunteers. We ran 5 crews this day. Russ Blogg was burn boss.

A LIST OF ALL NACHUSA FIRES AND FIRE CREW FOLLOWS

Fires done by Nachusa Grasslands crew from Fall 2022 to Spring 2023

Date	Day of week	Ownership	Unit Name	Burn boss	Acres TNC	Acres other Nachusa TNC lead & assist	Acres others Assist	Temp high	Humidity low	Wind direction	Wind speed	Crew size	Crew: BB first, then first two are line bosses
11/1/2022	Tu	TNC	TCP	BK	41			64	50	W	8	12	BK, BK Phil: Eric Bugvillionis, Booker Moritz, Naoh Resynolds, Mark Herman, Paul Mellen, Molly Dunca, Dave Brewer, Shel Wilks, Kevin Kaltenbach
11/1/2022	Tu	TNC	W Heinkel Headwaters N of 38	BK	73			68	37	SW	7	13	BK, Phil Eric Bugvillionis, Booker Moritz, Naoh Resynolds, Mark Herman, Paul Mellen, Molly Dunca, Dave Brewer, Shel Wilks, Kevin Kaltenbach, Susan K
11/6/2022	Sn	FCCA		KB			7	55	62	W	10	5	Kaleb
11/7/2022	M	TNC	Senger	BK	27			50	46	N	5	11	BK, Phil, Susan: Mark Herman, Booker M, Noah R, Paul Say, Molly Duncan, Dave Br, Derek Hof, Stew P
11/8/2022	Tu	TNC	CCK 100 acres	BK	100			55	53	SE	12	9	BK: Elizabeth Phil: Mark Herman, Booker Moriz, Noah Reynolds, Kevin Kalt, Derek Hof
11/9/2022	W	TNC	CCK Gobbler	BK	161			71	60	S	16	9	BK: Phil, Susan: Mark H, Booker M, Molly D, Noah R, Derek H
11/22/2022	Tu	TNC	CCK whitouse	BK	43			50	42	SW	8	9	BK: Booker as LB. Kevin Kaltenbach, Teresa Smith, Molly Duncan, Noah Reynolds, Derek Hoffand, Dave Brewer, Tim Smith
11/23/2022	W	DNR	FCNA Grist Mill	BK	0	57		57	60	S	13	11	BK: Noah Reynolds, Bryon Walters: Molly Dun, Derek Hof, Shel Wilks, Leah Kleiman, Booker Moritz, Emilie Pfeiffer, Shane Tripp, Mark Herman
3/7/2023	Tu	DNR	FCNA Naylor Plantings	Blogg			20	45	50	NE	15	9	Russ Blogg, Bryon Walters, Matt Hoogerwerf, John Gelwicks, Susan Kleiman, Paul Mellen, Nick Foster, Dave Brewer
3/8/2023	W	DNR	GRCA	Blogg			1170	45	37	E	15	15	Russ Blogg, Bryon Walters, Cody C, Phil N, Damian C, Tim Smith, Brad Semel, ...
3/19/2023	Sn	TNC	HLP	BK	114			37	45	W	17	8	BK: SK: Bernie B, Drew F, Paul S, Jacob B, Paul Soderholm, Oren Wilder
3/20/2023	M	TNC	Big Jump Prairie	BK	160			47	41	S	20	15	BK: Phil, Cody: David E, Eric B, Andrew Maynard, Shane T, Shel W, Martha LS, Drew F, Yoshi F, Emelie P, Britany B, Jacob B, Melissa G

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3/20/2023	M	IAS	Amboy Marsh	BK			100	47	41	S	20	7	Paul Mellen w UTV
3/20/2023	M	tnc	Main Unit North	BK	160			51	41	SW	20	15	BK: Phil N, Cody; Molly D, Eric B, Susan K, Shane T, Shel W, Martha LS, Drw F, Yoshi Fredisdorf, Emelie Pf, Brittany Brock, Jacob Brock, Melissa G
3/21/2023	Tu	TNC	Main South	BK	550			54	47	S	16	15	BK: Emelie Pfeiffer, Shane Trip, Eric Bugvilionis, Shel Wilks. Molly D, Paul Say, Phil Nag, Martha Lopez-Salazar, Drew Frasz, Paul Mel, Cody C., Susan K, Mark Herman, Dave Brewer
3/21/2023	Tu	TNC	Sand Farm	BK	151			52	47	S	20	13	BK: Eric Bugvilionis, Shel Wilks. Molly D, Paul Say, Phil Nag, Shane Tr, Martha Lopez-Salazar, Drew Frasz, Paul Mel, Emelie Pf, Cody C.
3/28/2023	Tu	TNC	Juanitas	BK	134			48	53	W	16	8	Bill K: Bill K, Susan K; Molly D, Elizabeth B, Mark H, Dan Kokes, Paul Say, Kevin Kal

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3/28/2023	Tu	IAS	Amboy Marsh	Baker			20	48	53	W	16	7	Phil w Silver Ram, Tim Smith, Dave Brewer
3/29/2023	Wd	TNC	Meiners	BK	85			38	41	NW	14	10	Bill K: Phil N, Shane T; Molly D, Hannah Walchek, Dave Br, Drew F, Kevin K, Paul Say, Joe Sabath
3/29/2023	Wd	DNR	FCNA W Twist N Creek	BK		61		38	41	NW	14	7	Bill K: Phil N, Shane T, Molly D, Dave Br, Drew F, Paul Say
3/29/2023	Wd	FCCA	Headwaters N of 38	Susan K			5	38	41	NW	14	6	Susan K was bb, Mark Herman
3/30/2023	Th	TNC	Williams N	BK	147			51	49	SE	18	9	Bill K: Phil N, Shane T; Molly D, Stew P, Dave B, Kevin K, Elizabeth, Mark H

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3/30/2023	Th	TNC	HP East	BK	97			55	53	SE	20	6	Bill K: Molly Duncan LB for one crew. Phil N, Susan K, Kevin K, Elizabeth
4/2/2023	Sn	TNC	Soderholm	BK	123			48	82	S	20	7	Bill K: BK, Eric Bugvilionis lb, mark H, Drew F, Kevin K, Susan K, Jacob B
4/6/2023	Th	TNC	Big Woods Kittentail	BK	186			46	50	W	14	13	Bill K: Cody, Phil: Molly D, susan K, Dave B, Drew F, Tim S, Kevin K, Paul M, Mark H, Bernie B, Damian C
4/7/2023	F	TNC	Stonebarn Sav	BK	300			51	51	SE	8	13	Bill K: Shel Wilks, Shane Tripp: Molly D, Eric B, Cody C, Kevin K, Tim Sm, Kaleb B, Elizabeth B, Phil N, Bernie B, Paul Say
4/7/2023	F	TNC	Big Jump Center and West	BK	134			56	45	SE	12	11	Bill K: Phil Nagorny, Shane Tripp: Molly D, Cody C, Kevin K, Tim Sm, Kaleb B, Elizabeth B, Paul Say, Susan K
4/8/2023	Sa	TNC	201	Tripp as trainee w BK	52			65	24	S	13	10	ShaneTripp w BK: Kaleb B, Susan K: Jacob Brock, Paul Say, Stew Peg, Kevin K, Paul M, Molly D
4/8/2023	Sa	TNC	Dot Doug	Tripp as trainee w BK	34	19		65	24	S	13	10	ShaneTripp w BK: Kaleb B, Susan K: Jacob Brock, Paul Say, Stew Peg, Kevin K, Paul M, Molly D

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4/8/2023	Sa	TNC	Big Jump E and Orland	Tripp as trainee w BK	28	19		65	24	S	13	10	ShaneTripp w BK: Kaleb B, Susan K: Jacob Brock, Paul Say, Stew Peg, Kevin K, Paul M, Molly D
4/10/2023	M	DNR	E Twist N Cr, NP S, NP Island, HP1	Blogg			392	71	35	SW	10	22	Here are crew bosses at least: Bill K, Kaleb B, Susan K, Phil N, Bryon W. See roster.
4/11/2023	Tu	TNC	VC	BK	1			77	41	SW	23	7	Bill K: Elizabeth, Cody Molly Paul Say, Paul M, Russ McKay sp
4/14/2023	F	DNR	LMSF	Bane			600	81	34	S	13	15	Paul Bane: Crewbosses Bill Kleiman & Dave
4/26/2023	W	DNR	Pine Rock	Nelson			50			NE		8	John Nelson bb: Phil, Molly, Noah assist
4/27/2023	Th	DNR	CRSP	Grycan M			94					8	Melissa Grycan bb: Molly & Noah assist

Nachusa Grasslands			
Crew who participated in Fall 2022 to Spring 2023 prescribed fires			
(Let me know if I missed you.)			
First name	Last Name	# of fires	Comments
Elizabeth	Bach	7	
Kaleb	Baker	6	line boss
Russell	Blogg	2	DNR
Dave	Brewer	11	More than 10 fires!
Jacob	Brock	6	
Britany	Brock	1	
Russell	Brunner	1	Byron FP
Bernie	Buchholz	3	
Eric	Bugvilionis	7	
Cody	Considine	8	line boss
Damian	Considine	2	
Brannon	Curtis Wittenberg	1	FPDCC
Molly	Duncan	23	More than 10 fires!
David	Edelbach	1	
Drew	Frasz	7	
Yoshi	Fredisdorf	2	
Melissa	Grycan	1	DNR
Mark	Herman	12	More than 10 fires!
Derek	Hoffman	5	
Greg	Hunter	1	Byron FP
Kevin	Kaltenbach	16	More than 10 fires!
Leah	Kleiman	1	
Bill	Kleiman	25	474 times burn boss
Susan	Kleiman	16	line boss
Dan	Kokes	1	
Lauren	Laurant	1	Byron FP
Martha	Lopez-Salazar	3	
Andrew	Maynard	1	
Russ	McCay	1	
Paul	Mellen	11	More than 10 fires!
Booker	Moritz	7	
Phil	Nagorny	19	line boss
Stew	Pegenstecher	5	
Emily	Pfeiffer	5	
Noah	Reynolds	9	
Joe	Sabath	1	Friends of Illinois Nature Preserves
Paul	Say	13	More than 10 fires!
Matt	Skoflanc	1	FPDCC

Tim	Smith	7	
Teresa	Smith	1	
Paul	Swanson	1	
Shane	Tripp	12	More than 10 fires!
Hannah	Walchek	1	Friends of Illinois Nature Preserves
Bryon	Walters	2	
Shel	Wilks	7	
Aaron	Winn	1	FPDCC
John	Yapelli	1	FPDCC
TOTAL CREW		47	

Thank you for reading our report. Our past reports can be found on the Friends website:
<https://www.nachusagrasslands.org/controlled-burns.html>

Reports from other agencies are on the IL Rx Fire Council site: <https://www.illinoisprescribedfirecouncil.org/prescribed-burn-reports.html>

The End