

PROGRAM



2022

ILLINOIS PRESCRIBED FIRE COUNCIL

Symposium

May 4 + 5, 2022

**Starved Rock Lodge & Conference Center
One Lodge Lane, Oglesby, IL 61348**



WELCOME

FROM THE COUNCIL

I am excited to invite you to the 2022 Illinois Prescribed Fire Symposium at Starved Rock State Park on Thursday, May 5th. Our last gathering in 2019 seems like decades ago, and I for one am really looking forward to seeing all of our friends in the fire community. While a lot has happened in the world since that last symposium, I am hopeful that our get-together will help get us back to some sense of normal. Please join us to see the many informative presentations and find out what the Council has been up to over the last few years. Come a day early on Wednesday, May 4th, and join us for the local field trip and some networking at our informal evening dinner at the Lodge.



Regards,

A handwritten signature in white ink that reads "John McCabe". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

John McCabe
President, Illinois Prescribed Fire Council

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Brittany Baumer, Secretary
Forest Preserves of Cook County

Paul Brewer, Treasurer
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Lake County Forest Preserves

Scott Crist
U.S. Forest Service

Tom Flader
Newport Township Fire
Department

Allison Frederick
Lake County Forest Preserve District

Bill Kleiman
The Nature Conservancy

Rob Littiken
The Nature Conservancy

John McCabe, President
Forest Preserves of Cook County

Jack Pizzo
Pizzo & Associates, Ltd.

Jesse Riechman
Southern Illinois Prescribed Burn
Association

Charles Ruffner
Southern Illinois University

Brad Woodson
McHenry County Conservation
District



DAY 1 – Weds. May 4, 2022

13:00 - 17:00

Field Trip to Starved Rock State Park

Departing from the Starved Rock Lodge guest parking lot (across from the Pioneer Club)

17:00 – ??

After-Hours Social @ Starved Rock Lodge Restaurant and Lounge

Now departing
from the
Overflow Lot!
(south of the Lodge
on E 875th Road)

DAY 2 – Thurs. May 5, 2022

7:30 - 8:30

Registration

8:30 – 9:00

Welcome and Award Ceremony

Location: Starved Rock Room

Illinois Prescribed Fire Council Board of Directors

9:00 - 9:50

[KEYNOTE]

Location: Starved Rock Room

Patterns of Anthropogenic Fire within the Midwestern Tallgrass Prairie 1673-1905

William McClain, Illinois State Museum

STARVED ROCK ROOM

LASALLE ROOM

10:00 – 10:50

SESSION 1

Growing Season Burning - Applying Fire Science to Open the Burn Window

Jack McGowan-Stinski, Lake States Fire Science Consortium

Utilizing GIS for Planning, Management and Analysis of Prescription Burns

John Peters, McHenry County Conservation District

10:50 – 11:00

Break

11:00 – 11:50

SESSION 2

Building Prescribed Burn Associations and the Culture to Support Them in Illinois

Jesse Riechman, Southern Illinois Prescribed Burn Association

Prescribed Burn Manager Certification and the Law

David Griffith, Illinois Department of Natural Resources

11:50 - 13:00

Lunch and networking (located in the Great Hall)

13:00 – 13:50

SESSION 3

Introduction to the Northeast-Midwest Area Wildfire Risk Assessment Portal

Brian Schaffler, U.S. Forest Service

Chris Gerecke, Timmons Group

Deployment Logistics

Lucas Henkel, Pizzo & Associates, Ltd.

13:50 – 14:00

Break

14:00 – 14:50

SESSION 4

The Western Wildfire Experience

Brad Semel, Illinois Department of Natural Resources

John Nelson, Illinois Nature Preserves Commission

The Illinois Prescribed Fires Accomplished Map

John McCabe, Illinois Prescribed Fire Council

14:50 – 15:00

Break

15:00 – 15:50

SESSION 5

History of Fires in Lithuania: A Dendrochronology Analysis of the Past 250 Years

Charles Ruffner, PhD, Southern Illinois University - Carbondale



SPEAKERS



Lucas Henkel

Pizzo & Associates, Ltd.

Lucas Henkel is the Contracting Division Manager for Pizzo & Associates, Ltd. where he oversees contracted land management and stewardship operations throughout Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Wisconsin, and Iowa. He received his bachelor's degree in biology from Northern Illinois University, and is a Certified Ecological Restoration Practitioner and Certified Prescribed Burn Manager. With over 15 years of experience, Lucas has over 250 burns under his belt, ranging from small residential retention ponds to large several hundred-acre burns. He currently lives in Sycamore, IL with his wife and two daughters.

Presenting:

SESSION 3B - 1:00 - 1:50 p.m. @ LaSalle Room | *Deployment Logistics*

John McCabe

Illinois Prescribed Fire Council



John McCabe is the Director of Resource Management at the Forest Preserves of Cook County, and serving President of the Illinois Prescribed Fire Council. John was an early pioneer for the introduction of organized prescribed burning in the Forest Preserves, the region's largest urban forest preserve district. He has managed the Forest Preserves' burn program since the mid-2000s. John is a lead instructor for the Chicago Wilderness Midwest Ecological Prescription Burn Crew Member training course, where over 2,500 participants have earned certification

since its inception in 2001. John enjoys the challenges of implementing this valuable management tool in the second-most populated county in the nation, and looks forward to working with fellow fire practitioners to further the acceptance and use of prescribed fire now and in the future.

Presenting:

SESSION 4B - 2:00 - 2:50 p.m. @ LaSalle Room | *The Illinois Prescribed Fires Accomplished Map*





William McClain

Illinois State Museum



William “Bill” McClain completed studies in botany at Eastern Illinois University and Miami University of Oxford, Ohio. He has worked as a research botanist with an environmental consulting firm, and as a biologist and Natural Areas Program Manager with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. He has been an Adjunct Research Associate in Botany at the Illinois State Museum since 2002. His research interests include rare plant species, plant ecology, plus fire and land use history. He was named a Fellow of the Illinois State Academy of Science in 2005.

Presenting:

Keynote – 9:00 – 9:50 a.m. @ Starved Rock Room | *Patterns of Anthropogenic Fire within the Midwestern Tallgrass Prairie 1673-1905*

Jack McGowan-Stinski

Lake States Fire Science Consortium



Jack McGowan-Stinski is the Program Manager for the Lake States Fire Science Consortium (LSFSC), funded by the Joint Fire Science Program, and administered through Ohio State University. His main duties include managing the activities of LSFSC, and liaising with researchers, land and fire managers, and policymakers across the Lake States Region. Jack received a B.S. in Wildlife Biology from the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, and a M.S. in Conservation Biology from Central Michigan University. Jack’s professional experiences include - Fire Manager and Land Steward for The Nature Conservancy, a Consultant/Contractor Burn Boss, multiple seasonal positions with US Forest Service and State Department of Natural Resources. Jack is one of the founders of the Michigan Prescribed Fire Council and has supported the start-up of other state Prescribed Fire Councils in Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin. When not sharing fire and natural resource management stories Jack will disappear for as long as possible into the wilds of Minnesota and Wisconsin to explore, hunt, fish, kayak, and snowshoe.

Presenting:

SESSION 1A – 10:00 – 10:50 a.m. @ Starved Rock Room | *Growing Season Burning - Applying Fire Science to Open the Burn Window*





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John Nelson

Illinois Nature Preserves Commission

John Nelson is a Natural Areas Protection Specialist with the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission. He assists private and public landowners in protecting high quality natural areas and habitats of endangered and threatened species; in perpetuity, through voluntary dedication or registration of such lands into the Illinois Nature Preserves System. John collaborates with a diversity of partners to promote the preservation of these significant lands and provides leadership in their stewardship, management and protection.

Presenting:

SESSION 4A – 2:00 – 2:50 p.m. @ Starved Rock Room | *The Western Wildfire Experience*

John Peters

McHenry County Conservation District



John Peters has been a Restoration Ecologist with the McHenry County Conservation District for 31 years. He is responsible for the management and restoration of the natural features of lands throughout McHenry County. He is a fire practitioner and Prescription Burn Manager, providing leadership and expertise for the McHenry County Conservation District's fire program. John Peters was the recipient of the Illinois Prescribed Fire Council's 2019 Leadership Award, recognizing his achievements and significant efforts to get fire on the ground and support of the prescribed fire community in Illinois.

Presenting:

SESSION 1B – 10:00 – 10:50 a.m. @ LaSalle Room | *Utilizing GIS for Planning, Management and Analysis of Prescription Burns*





Jesse Riechman

Southern Illinois Prescribed Burn Association



A southern Illinois native, Jesse Riechman earned a bachelor's degree in journalism from Miami University in Ohio before returning to the Carbondale area for a master's in Forestry from Southern Illinois University where he published his research on the challenges facing prescribed burn practitioners. Jesse became the coordinator for the Southern Illinois Prescribed Burn Association (SIPBA) in 2012, where as an Illinois certified prescribed burn manager he oversees burns in the 11 southern-most counties of Illinois. He served on the Makanda Township Fire Department for 13 years, earning the rank of Battalion Chief. Additionally, he is a wildland firefighter and engine boss with the US Fish and Wildlife Service. Most recently, Jesse has been committed to "Ignite Illinois," a collaboration of prescribed fire practitioners whose mission is to promote prescribed fire by providing a standard for training, organization and public involvement in Illinois. He is currently involved in supporting the new prescribed burn association, the "Great Rivers Prescribed Burn Association" as it serves nine additional counties in Central Illinois.

Presenting:

SESSION 2A – 11:00 – 11:50 p.m. @ Starved Rock Room | *Building Prescribed Burn Associations and the Culture to Support Them in Illinois*

Charles Ruffner, Ph.D.

Southern Illinois University - Carbondale

Charles M. Ruffner is Professor of Forestry at Southern Illinois University-Carbondale. He holds a B.S. in Forest Science, and an M.S. and Ph.D. in Forest Resources from Pennsylvania State University where he studied old-growth forest ecology and fire history. At SIUC he teaches several undergraduate courses including Intro to Forestry, Forest Measurements, Wildland Fire Management and Planning, as well as a few graduate courses like Historical and Disturbance Ecology. His SIUC Fire Dawg crew works closely with local agencies, landowners, and interest groups to reintroduce prescribed burning to forests and prairies of the Central Hardwoods region. He has served on the governing board of the Oak Woodlands and Forest Fire Consortium, and has served several terms as an Illinois Nature Preserves Commissioner. Over the years, Charles has led numerous study abroad groups to Ireland, Scotland, and Bavaria and has completed two overseas sabbaticals, including in Ireland and Afghanistan. Charles' involvement with





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farmers and foresters across the developing world dates from his duties with military and civilian personnel working across Venezuela, Panama, Afghanistan, Dominican Republic, Lithuania, and Morocco.

Presenting:

SESSION 5 – 3:00 – 3:50 p.m. @ Starved Rock Room | *History of Fires in Lithuania: A Dendrochronology Analysis of the Past 250 Years*



Brad Semel

Illinois Department of Natural Resources

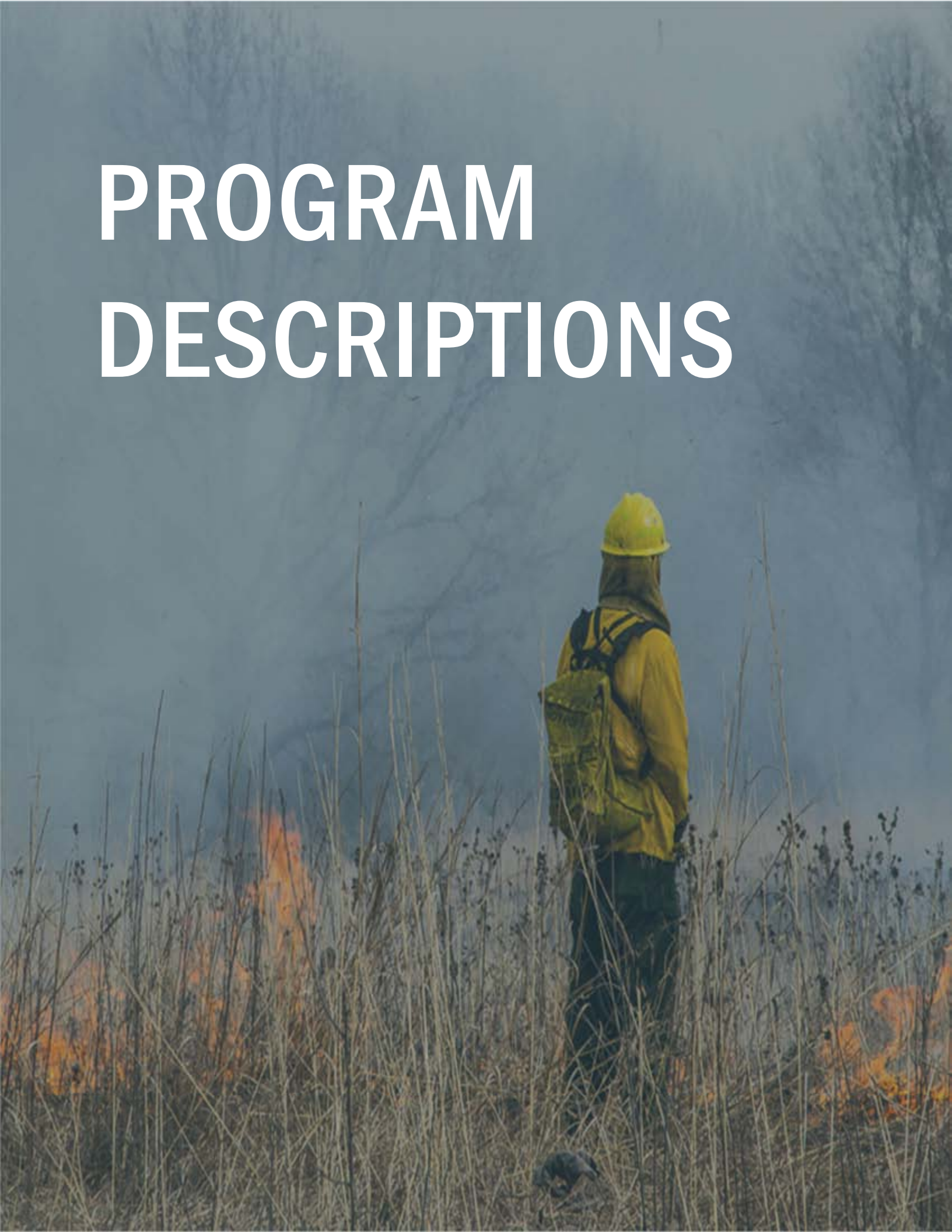
Brad Semel is an Endangered Species Recovery Specialist with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. He is responsible for coordinating the Division of Natural Heritage's endangered species recovery efforts throughout the state. He helps oversee a regional stewardship strategy to address priority needs for rare species. He also works on habitat restoration and management involving prescribed fire, mechanical and chemical treatment of exotic and aggressive invasive species, and the stewardship of high-quality natural areas. Brad has been serving on the Illinois Wildland Fire Crew since 2013.

Presenting:

SESSION 4A – 2:00 – 2:50 p.m. @ Starved Rock Room | *The Western Wildfire Experience*

Not shown: David Griffith – District Forester, Illinois Department of Natural Resources
Brian Schaffler – Regional Fuels Program Manager, U.S. Forest Service
Chris Gerecke – Director of Enterprise Solutions , Timmons Group

PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS





PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS

SESSION 1

A

Growing Season Burning - Applying Fire Science to Open the Burn Window

Jack McGowan-Stinski (Lake States Fire Science Consortium)
Starved Rock Room

In the Midwest the majority of prescribed fires are still implemented mostly during the (traditional) dormant season burn window, and burning opportunities are often missed during the larger seasonal burn window. In this talk we will explore the difference in fire effects and fire behavior (phenology and physiology, natural community responses, timing, intensity, severity, frequency, and smoke considerations) between growing season and dormant season burns conducted in fire-dependent systems 1994-2017. We will also compare and contrast some of the fire science and operational impediments (real and perceived) for implementing growing season burns, and offer some strategies to mitigate these impediments to increase your burn window and burn opportunities.

B

Utilizing GIS for Planning, Management and Analysis of Prescription Burns

John Peters (McHenry County Conservation District)
LaSalle Room

Utilizing ESRI Arc Map and Arc Pro software and Collector and Field Map Applications, the McHenry County Conservation District has developed a robust data collection and management database for its prescription burn program. John Peters, Restoration Ecologist, will present the process and data collection the McHenry County Conservation District utilizes for prescription burn tracking and decision making, highlighting the abilities the software provides to display and showcase the data through the dashboards and mapping capabilities.

SESSION 2

A

Building Prescribed Burn Associations and the Culture to Support Them in Illinois

Jesse Riechman (Southern Illinois Prescribed Burn Association)
Starved Rock Room

Increasingly, private landowners are interested in using prescribed fire as a tool for maintaining oak dominance and associated wildlife habitat and wildfire protection. The Southern Illinois Prescribed Burn Association (SIPBA) empowers landowners to apply prescribed burning as a management tool. As SIPBA enters its 15th year and surpasses 25,000 acres burned, they are replicating their Prescribed Burn Association (PBA) model for the first time. This presentation will discuss the process of building prescribed burn associations, their associated challenges and social obstacles, as well as broader implications of these types of organizations for land management.



B

Prescribed Burn Manager Certification and the Law

David Griffith (Illinois Department of Natural Resources)
LaSalle Room

This presentation will provide an overview of the laws and statutes surrounding prescribed burning in the State of Illinois and detail the ins and outs of Prescribed Burn Manager Certification. Participants will have the opportunity to ask any burning questions they may have.

A

Introduction to the Northeast-Midwest Area Wildfire Risk Assessment Portal

Brian Schaffler (U.S. Forest Service), Chris Gerecke (Timmons Group)
Starved Rock Room

The U.S. Forest Service recently introduced their new online wildfire risk assessment portal, which presents a treasure trove of data regarding fuels, hazards, risks, structures, valuation of property, jurisdictions, etc. for areas throughout the northeastern portion of the U.S. This session will demonstrate some of the portal's many applications for use by prescribed fire practitioners in terms of contingency planning, development of Community Wildfire Protection Plans, prescribed burn prioritization, and more.

B

Deployment Logistics

Lucas Henkel (Pizzo & Associates, Ltd.)
LaSalle Room

Pizzo & Associates, Ltd. a professional natural areas restoration & management company that has provided prescribed fire and invasive plant removal services since 1988. Operating in over 14 states throughout the Midwest, coordination and deployment of staff across large geographic areas to meet a wide array of client needs can be challenging. This presentation will provide an overview of how a private contractor obtains, plans, and implements prescribed fire, and all the little things that come up along the way.

A

The Western Wildfire Experience

Brad Semel, (Illinois Department of Natural Resources), John Nelson (Illinois Nature Preserves Commission)
Starved Rock Room

Most wildland fires encountered in the Midwest are prescribed, with careful planning well prior to the event. Preparations include firebreaks as well as careful consideration of fuel types, wind direction, smoke lift, wind speed, crew size, temperatures, humidity, and ultimately, anticipated fire behavior. All those factors come into play on a western wildfire as well—although they often occur concurrently or, more often than not, after the fact. Being involved in a prescribed fire program can be both challenging and very rewarding. Can the same be said of participating on a wildland fire crew working on the large western fires? Most often we experience those events through brief news clips and wild videos of rampaging flames. Starting with the Red Card and working through anticipation of the call for deployment, and onto ultimate engagement with fire, the experiences of participating on western wildfires will be shared. In this presentation, learn about the myth and magic of life as a wildland firefighter.



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B

The Illinois Prescribed Fires Accomplished Map

John McCabe (Forest Preserves of Cook County / Illinois Prescribed Fire Council)

LaSalle Room

Maps are powerful. Learn about the history of the Illinois Prescribed Fires Accomplished Map and how we've used it to better understand our landscape and fire communities statewide. We'll review some of the insights we've gleaned based on the past 6 years of data we've collected, and outline some exciting new plans for expansion!

A

History of Fires in Lithuania: A Dendrochronology Analysis of the Past 250 Years

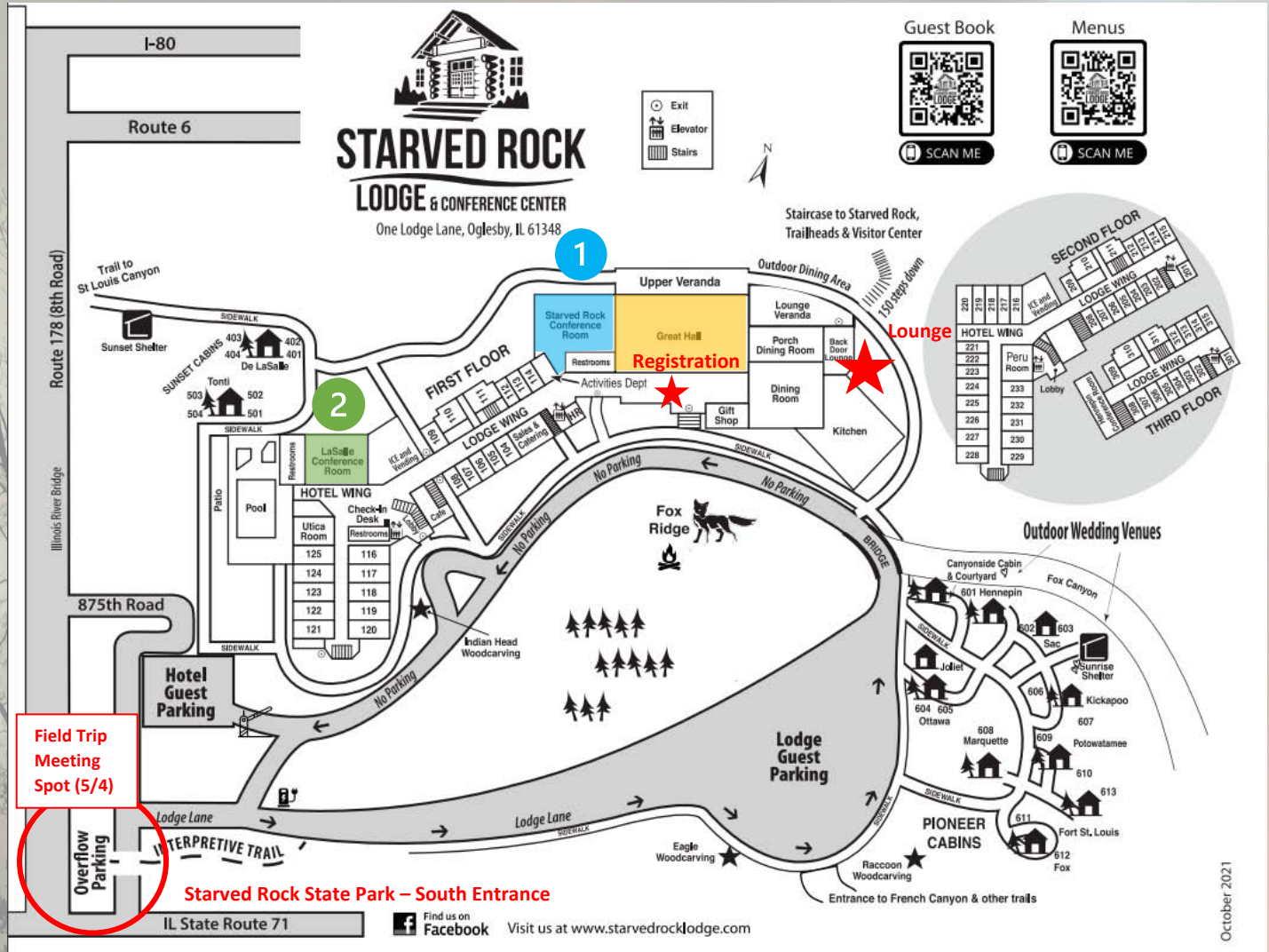
Charles Ruffner, Ph.D. (Southern Illinois University Carbondale), Michael Manton (Vytautas Magnus University)

Starved Rock Room

Understanding the historic fire regime is an important step towards sustainable forest management. This presentation highlights efforts to document the long history of fire in Dzūkija National Park and Čepkeliai Nature Reserve in the Baltic country of Lithuania in northeastern Europe. This session will provide a unique international example of scientific cooperation and outreach for research to map the potential natural fire regimes of Lithuania's hemi-boreal forests based on the relationship between site conditions, vegetation, and fire frequency.

SESSION 5

VENUE MAP



- 1 Starved Rock Room**
Keynote and “A” Sessions
- 2 LaSalle Room**
“B” Sessions

Parking is complimentary and located in the Lodge guest lot across from the Pioneer cabins.

Lunch will be served in the Great Hall at 11:50 a.m. Additional refreshments are available in the Lounge, on the east side of the facility.

FIELD TRIP

Join us for a field trip to Starved Rock State Park! Dinner and drinks afterwards in the hotel lounge.

May 4, 2022 | 1-5 p.m.
Meet in the Lodge Guest Parking Lot (across from Pioneer cabins)

Overflow Lot

Gravel lot south of the Lodge on E 875th Road ...or just north of the State Park south entrance on Rt. 71 (lot will be on your left)

UPDATE!

Due to a huge amount of interest, the field trip will now be departing from the Overflow Parking Lot!

Click link for directions using Google Maps:
[LINK](#)