

# Prescribed Fire Training Center 2010-2011 Annual Report

**... EXCELLENCE IN PRESCRIBED FIRE...**



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### ***Mission Statement***

***To Maintain a National Interagency Center of Excellence for Prescribed Fire, with an Emphasis on Actual Field Experience, in Order to Increase Skills and Knowledge and to Build Confidence in the Application of Prescribed Fire***

## ***Executive Summary***

The Prescribed Fire Training Center (PFTC) continued its award-winning program of work in 2010-2011, holding seven 21-day experience-based sessions as well as two Administrators Workshops and two Resource Specialist Workshops. Through these workshops and sessions the Center hosted 292 participants from six federal agencies, local governments, universities, private organizations and international entities. Participants came from Alabama, Alaska, Arkansas, Arizona, California, Colorado, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Mexico, North Carolina, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin, Wyoming, Canada, France, and Portugal.

These participants interacted with 12 different cooperators on 61 different units of which 22 were federal in 5 different states. The successful track record of the Center continued as we were able to strengthen ties with agencies and units where we have worked in the past while adding new sites for training opportunities. Strong working relationships have been fostered and are a benchmark for the Center.

PFTC, with the cooperative host units, applied prescribed fire to:

- ◆ 104,507 acres (79% federal),
- ◆ 36,736 acres of wildland-urban interface (35% of the total treated acreage, 71% federal).
- ◆ The most common task books addressed during the sessions included RXB2, RXB3, FIRB, ENGB, and FEMO, with a total of 851 assignments. Participants came to PFTC with an average of 27% of their task book completed in the previously mentioned task books and left with 87% of those same task books complete. This aligns well with succession planning and the mentoring efforts all federal agencies are focusing on.
- ◆ There were 5,466 tasks accomplished with 71 individuals recommended for certification back to their home units.

For the second and third years in a row the Center cooperated with the University of Florida to offer 3 upper-division college credits through the College of Forest Resources and Conservation. Twenty-three (23) participants took advantage of this opportunity and received these credits by completing the work required. In addition one module, in 2010, participated in a day of class at the university and taught a section on fire behavior before interacting with students in the field.

Eleven individuals attended the first PFTC sponsored Resource Specialists Workshop held November 15-19, 2009 and twenty-one attended the second workshop held November 14-19, 2010. The overarching goals of this workshop are to promote the attendee's knowledge and acceptance of fire as a management tool and to engage the resource specialist's active participation in a prescribed fire program. Resource Specialists which may include but are not limited to: Wildlife Biologists, Hydrologists, Range Managers, Forestry and Silviculture Specialists and Techs, Land Managers, Botanists, Archeologists, and any discipline that may benefit or be affected by the presence/absence of fire.

Two Agency Administrators Workshops were held: May 3-8, 2010, in central Florida and April 3-9, 2011, in the Florida Panhandle. The workshops were a huge success, with fifty-four (54) attendees representing the four federal land management agencies (BIA, NPS, USFS, and USFWS) as well as the Department of Defense. These were the largest attendance ever for this workshop and is an indication of the need for this training within the agency administrator realm.



Mark Clements, USFWS - San Luis National Wildlife Refuge Complex, igniting during the February 2011 session.

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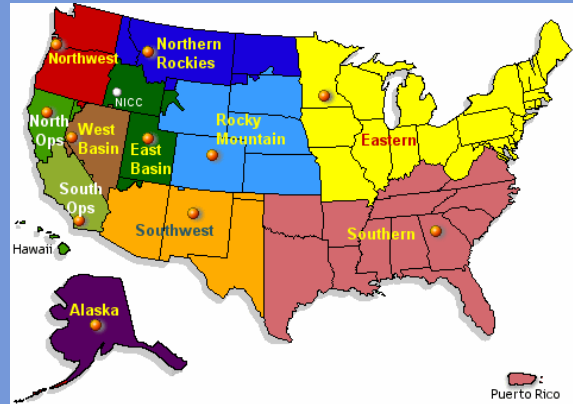
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<b>Summary of Participants</b>		
<b>1998 Thru 2011</b>		
GACC Region	Participants	Percent
Western GACCs	1,201	77%
Eastern	169	11%
Southern	158	10%
International	39	2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,567</b>	<b>100%</b>

### ***Note from Director, Mike Dueitt***

Let me first say how thankful and happy I am to be in this position. I have the unusual privilege of following in the footsteps of one of my mentors, Jim Durrwachter, in this chapter of the PFTC. I am reminded of my childhood times when my dad would take off his work boots and while he wasn't looking (or so I thought) I would get in them and try to walk around. He told me later on many occasions of how much difficulty I had in trying to manage the burden but he also bragged of my persistence. I fully intend on investing that same level of effort in leading the Center and helping to prepare our next wave of prescribed fire practitioners.

As the tables and narratives inside this report will indicate we have been busy. In 2010 we became a part of the National Advanced Fire and Resource Institute (NAFRI) which solidified our credentials. This process has taken a long time to achieve but aligns us to better meet the training needs of our audience. I have continued the effective model of visiting with the crews and cooperators during my tenure. This allows for time to mentor the students and ensure that healthy relationships are maintained with our hosts. This program has a vast reach with some of our students coming from as far away as Portugal and we are only effective if our cooperators provide us the opportunity to conduct burns when our crews arrive. Ensuring that the hosts fully understand the program and that the needs of both them and the students are being achieved requires continual attention due to changes in host personnel. The 21 day sessions attain the highest number of students but equally as important to the success of our programs are the Resource Specialist and Agency Administrators Workshops. Both Workshops saw their highest attendance levels in 2010. These sessions continue to receive very good feedback and a positive atmosphere for learning with these groups getting a hands-on opportunity to apply prescribed fire during the week. You will see some of the comments later in this report.

I firmly believe that prescribed fire, and the skills necessary to be effective at this art form, enhances our suppression skills. With the 2009 and 2010 fire suppression seasons being below average the need to develop, practice, and perfect these skills is paramount. I know that each Agency has its own challenges and priorities when it comes to how training dollars are spent but with the track record of PFTC and my commitment to provide the best opportunity I don't know of a better value on the market. I have a wonderful staff and a great group of friends that we call cooperators to assist in the endeavor to apply prescribed fire to our landscape. Our hosts demonstrate the commitment to quality resource management, the desire to pass on their lessons learned, and a belief that the foundational principles of the Center are worthy of their efforts. I hope that the information in this report proves to be useful and I encourage anyone who reads this to contact the Center if you have any questions or concerns. Thanks to all the units that have sent their most valuable resources to our facility to expand their skills and I trust that you will continue your support.

## ***Narrative Summary***

The 2010 season saw a changing of the guard at PFTC. Jim Durrwachter retired from the USFWS in January but stayed on as interim Director at the Center through March when Mike Dueitt took the reins as the Center's fifth Director. Mike was well-acquainted with the Center and its activities from his time as the Zone FMO for the Apalachicola National Forest and then the Forest FMO for the National Forests of Mississippi. Mike was on the road immediately visiting the crews and cooperators across the southeast during March and April. Miranda Stuart and Greg Seamon were also busy in the field during the January through April sessions spending time with crews and cooperators. January 2010 also saw a change with the transfer of the Center's Administrative Assistant, Lyl Dick, to the Daniel Boone National Forest as the Support Services Supervisor for the Sterns Ranger District. In an effort to apply as much of our funding as possible to the students we do not plan to fill Lil's position at this time.

After each year's sessions, PFTC makes the fleet vehicles available to our federal cooperating units. This has been successful in meeting the needs of some of our units transportation needs for summer work programs, fire assignment support, and helps the Center by keeping the fleet in good working order.

On Friday, January 7, 2011 PFTC received a visit from the noted author Dr. Stephen Pyne. Dr. Pyne was touring the southeastern US gathering information for a series of online articles about fire use. Mike Dueitt, Greg Seamon, Miranda Stuart, and a couple of former PFTC Directors Joe Ferguson and Jim Durrwachter spent the morning with Dr. Pyne discussing the formation of PFTC and the accomplishments of the Center. Dr. Pyne's article may be viewed at: <http://firehistory.asu.edu/into-the-open-air-the-prescribed-fire-training-center/>

### ***Practitioner Sessions***

Four sessions were held in 2010 throughout January, February, March and April. There were eighteen modules that were comprised of a total of 109 participants and 18 field coordinators. Weather made it challenging to acquire burns but Staff, Cooperators and Coordinators persevered to obtain a minimum of seven burns per crew with some crews obtaining as many as twelve burns during the session. Burns were conducted in Florida, Georgia, Alabama and South Carolina with a variety of Cooperators and fuel types. Despite the inclement weather, modules were able to complete 59,206 acres of prescribed burning during 162 burns.

Three sessions were held in 2011 from January through March. Sessions were planned for April and June but had to be cancelled due to the possible lapse in government funding in April and the high fire danger in June. The 2011 students averaged 9 burns per module with burns conducted in Mississippi, Alabama, Florida, Georgia, and South Carolina in a plethora of fire environments. Even though the sessions saw a decrease in numbers of students, the crews accomplished 176 burns for 45,301 acres.

Participants utilized non-burn days for increasing their knowledge of unit planning, program development, fire effects, invasive species control, resource management, monitoring, and NEPA compliance.

During burns students had the opportunity to increase their leadership abilities and hone their skills in applying prescribed fire to the wildland urban interface landscape to meet different management objectives. Students focused on Type 2 Burn Boss (RXB2), Firing Boss (FIRB), and Fire Effects Monitor (FEMO) positions but some were able to accomplish tasks in Plastic Sphere Dispenser Operator (PLDO), Engine Boss (ENGB), and Firefighter Type 1 (FFT1) positions throughout the sessions.

### ***University Credit***

For the second and third year of the cooperative relationship, PFTC offered three (3) upper division credits through the University of Florida's Department of Forest Resources and Conservation for participants attending a 21-day session. The cost for these credits remained at \$210/credit hour for in-state and out-of-state students. Students

## ***Narrative Summary Continued***

were required to finish some pre-session work, contribute fully with their modules during the session, and write a paper following the session. Twelve participants in 2010 and eleven participants in 2011 took advantage of this program and completed the work to receive the credits.

### ***Resource Specialists Workshop***

The Prescribed Fire Training Center offered its inaugural Resource Specialist Workshop November 15-19, 2009. This workshop is designed to introduce prescribed fire to non-fire personnel that have fire programs on their home units. The focus is on interdisciplinary cooperation to promote fire planning and implementation. Field trip sites included Apalachicola National Forest, Pebble Hill Plantation, Apalachicola Bluffs and Ravines Preserve and Wakulla Springs State Park. Activities involved discussions, exercises and presentations on prescribed fire and endangered species, exotic species, wildlife, timber, restoration, wetlands, and planning.

The success of the initial Resource Specialist Workshop led to a larger workshop held November 14-19, 2010 in northeast Florida. Twenty-one (21) participants attended, representing five federal land-management agencies (BIA, BLM, NPS, USFS, and USFWS), one state agency (St. Johns River Water Management District, FL), one county agency (Collier County, FL) and one tribe (Miccosukee Tribe of Indians, Everglades). There were field trips to Julington-Durbin Preserve (SJRWMD), Osceola National Forest (USFS), and Ordway-Swisher Biological Station (University of Florida). Presentations, formal and informal discussions, a planning exercise and a prescribed burn focusing on different ignition patterns and techniques for meeting ecological objectives were some of the activities included during the workshop.

### ***Agency Administrators Workshop***

PFTC held its seventh Agency Administrators Workshop during the week of May 3-8, 2010, in central Florida. The workshop was a huge success, with thirty (30) attendees representing the four federal land management agencies (BIA, NPS, USFS, and USFWS) as well as the Department of Defense. This was the largest attendance ever for this workshop and there were twenty-one (21) applicants on the waiting list. This workshop is intended for line officers working with or developing a prescribed fire program. This year there was a mix of new and seasoned District Rangers, Refuge Managers, Forest Supervisors, Agency Superintendants and Park Superintendants. The curriculum for the workshop is based heavily on the attendees' expectations. Topics resulting from those expectations included prescribed fire plans, the Go/No Go decision, risk and liability, building a landscape-level fire program, cooperation and coalitions, and fire implementation. Attendees participated on three prescribed burns, a Go/No Go exercise, and an involved sand table exercise. Field trip sites included Ocala National Forest, Wekiwa Springs State Park and Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge. In addition there were numerous side discussions as well as formal presentations and a final group exercise detailing the three most important take-home lessons from the week. This workshop satisfies USDA-USFS FSM 5140 requirements to approve Prescribed Fire Burn Plans.

Following the success of the 2010 workshop, PFTC held its second largest workshop April 3-9, 2011. Twenty-four (24) attendees participated from the National Park Service, US Forest Service and US Fish and Wildlife Service. This year's workshop was held in the western Florida panhandle with field trips to Blackwater State Forest (FL), Conecuh National Forest (AL) and Eglin Air Force Base (FL). As in the past, the agenda was based primarily on the attendees' expectations. The addition of Gary Jarvis from the USFS Washington Office and Lisa Lewis, District Ranger on the Kisatchie National Forest, as workshop cadre, as well as Vicki Christiansen, USFS Deputy Director of Fire and Aviation, who gave a talk on the Cohesive Strategy, brought new perceptions to the workshop. This year the workshop fulfilled the requirements for USFWS employees to approve Prescribed Fire Burn Plans under the Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations as

## ***Narrative Summary Continued***

well as USFS FSM 5140 mentioned above. Attendees participated on two prescribed burns at Blackwater State Forest and served as trainee burn boss and firing boss on two burns at Eglin Air Force Base. These activities along with the presentations, discussions, and a sandtable exercise were viewed as extremely valuable in allowing participants to gain the knowledge and experience they sought by attending the workshop.

As directed by the PFTC Steering Committee, a follow-up questionnaire was sent to the 2009 and 2010 workshop participants. The following are a few of the responses received:

**Kate Klein, Operations Staff Officer, Umatilla National Forest wrote** - "The workshop definitely energized me to continue moving forward with a large landscape prescribed fire analysis on the district. The district hosted a field tour to the project area with a local collaborative group, other agencies, local government representatives and fire dept reps from the area, and had developed a proposed action before I left the district.

I was encouraged by the public support and acceptance for prescribed fire in the south and shared that message with everyone I could in the collaborative group and we had actually developed a plan for public outreach and information for the landscape prescribed fire proposal, because it is located in an interface area (the same landscape burned by the Rodeo-Chediski Fire in 2002). We all felt that building trust and support for landscape scale prescribed fire would be critical to the success of the project, especially given people's latent fear and anxiety after the R-C Fire.

The training and lessons learned at the workshop also encouraged me to take an active role in managing fire for "resource benefit" in the summer of 2009, after the revised Wildland Fire Policy was issued. I know we aren't using the term "resource benefit" fire anymore, but in R3 in the summer of 2009, we were. We took an integrated approach on the district, involving the FMO, timber staff, silviculturist, wildlife staff, rec staff and range staff to develop strategy and complete WFDSS for 3 lightning fires which burned over 11,000 acres under low to moderate conditions. We had a lot of dialogue during the fires, and after-action reviews to learn from this experience."

**Ottawa National Forest, Bessemer District Ranger Melanie Fullman stated** - "Your class gave me several tools which I have used to promote, encourage, and coerce other Rangers in other locations to consider more Rx fire. I thought your training was excellent – an ideal introduction to line officers not familiar with Fire and a great new perspective for those with field experience. Easily, one of the best, most thorough, most engaging classes I've had.

I hope you continue (begin?) to receive the necessary support to further this important work. Failure to prioritize this program would haunt us. "

**District Ranger, Lori Bell on Pawnee National Grassland replied** - "I attended the AA Workshop in 2009 when our local County opposed Rx burning on Federal lands. The workshop provided me more expertise in Rx burning, and made me more proficient in the Agency Administrator's leadership role. These skills allowed me to be a more effective advocate for prescribed fire and improve communication with elected officials. As a result, we have gained the support of local officials for our Rx fire program. "

**Brian Dykstra Mogollon Rim District Ranger wrote** - "I have reviewed and signed several burn plans over the past year. The training I received at PFTC has given me the basis for asking the right questions and knowing which references and policies to check as I approve these plans. My District prescribed burned approximately 9,000 acres of ponderosa pine forest and managed wildfires for resource objectives on another 6,000 acres last summer and fall. The PFTC training was very helpful to me as an agency administrator during these activities.



## ***Narrative Summary Continued***

I just want you all to know that the PFTC cadre does an excellent job exposing agency administrators to the scenarios and issues we need to recognize. It's one of the best training courses I've attended in my Forest Service career."

### ***Courses***

The Center did not sponsor any NWCG courses this year but a number of courses were held at PFTC, sponsored by other agencies and NGOs. These courses included: S-390 (Introduction to Wildland Fire and Fire Behavior Calculations) and S-490 (Advanced Fire Behavior Calculations) held in October 2009 and sponsored by The Nature Conservancy; L-381 (Incident Leadership) in December 2009 sponsored by the US Fish and Wildlife Service; D-110 (Dispatch Recorder) sponsored by the US Forest Service; and Resource Advisor workshop in April 2010 sponsored by the National Park Service.

In addition the 2010 calendar reflects the US Forest Service held an Equipment meeting in February, the US Fish and Wildlife Service held a retirement informational meeting in March, the US Forest Service, in conjunction with Florida A&M University, held a series of classroom presentations in June, and The Nature Conservancy held a national fire team meeting in June.

There were no NWCG courses held at PFTC during 2011. The US Forest Service, in conjunction with Florida A&M University, held some classroom presentations in May and expanded dispatch from the Florida Inter-agency Coordination Center occupied the classroom area beginning on June 7 through July 15, 2011.

### ***Staff***

As noted above, Mike Dueitt has taken over as the fifth Director of the Prescribed Fire Training Center. Prior to joining the US Fish and Wildlife Service, Mike has worked in fire management for 23+ years. He started with the USDA Forest Service in 1986 on the Desoto NF in southern Mississippi. He worked for the Forest Service for 23 years in MS, SC, GA, and FL in the positions of Equipment Operator, Dispatcher, Aircraft Coordinator, District FMO, Zone FMO, and Forest FMO. Mike is qualified as a type 1 burn boss, type 1 prescribed fire manager, type 1 operations section chief, and type 1 and 2 IC for the southern region. He has conducted over 700,000 acres of prescribed burning, functioning in all prescribed fire positions.

PFTC continues to be extremely efficient with a staff of four. Miranda Stuart manages all of the operation aspects for the Center. The Fire Training Specialist for PFTC is Greg Seamon. Carolyn Detwiler oversees all of the administration which includes budget, grants/agreements and logistics for the session modules and workshops.

### ***Field Coordinators***

In 2010 we initiated a Field Coordinator Trainee program to help the Center bring in new leaders and allow them to work with some of the successful longer tenured Field Coordinators to help hone their skills. This succession planning is vital to the Center's longevity. Candidates were selected based on their interest, skills, and desire to lead but they lacked the depth of knowledge as a burn boss and the experience as required by the Center. One candidate was selected for 2010, Deb Flowers from Grand Tetons National Park who came in February. Deb provided valuable feedback for further developing the concept of Field Coordinator Trainee and in 2011 we successfully implemented the full program with two candidates. The 2011 season added John Cataldo (USFS) and Sean Daugherty (BLM) to our cadre. Deb returned in 2011 as a fully qualified Field Coordinator and exhibited great leadership skills in her role. All Field Coordinator Trainees that have gone through the program are RXB2 qualified and are required to return the following year to serve as a Field Coordinator.

## Narrative Summary Continued

Their costs are covered under the same guidelines as any Field Coordinator based on what Agency employs them.

The selected FY 2010 Field Coordinators joined the PFTC staff in Tucson for a two-day leadership training led by the PFTC Staff in November, 2009. The training was developed to emphasize the mission of the Center, teach quality leadership skills to former and new Field Coordinators and help develop ownership in the program with the Coordinators. Field Coordinators were given the book *Building Successful Teams* by Bill Butterworth as part of the training in order to help them develop highly functioning motivated teams out of their crews. Sessions during the two-day training focused on the theme of this book and a document developed by the Lessons Learned Center called *Prescribed Fire Escapes and Near Miss Lessons Learned; Using the High Reliability Organizing Concept of Mindfulness to Better Anticipate and Contain Unexpected Events on Prescribed Fires*. Emphasis was placed on working with session teams, building the competence of the students and building in the concepts of mindfulness in terms of the common factors identified on escaped burns. The two-day session proved valuable and received positive feedback from the attendees. The training allowed for a flow of ideas, exchanges of methods for handling situations, and encouraged each Coordinator to think outside the box thus elevating the quality of the Center's programs. New Field Coordinators found this to be extremely beneficial as they were able to learn from former colleagues their techniques for training crews, overcoming difficult team members, and how to be successful in their role. Returning Field Coordinators got the chance to address how the program has changed and provide input and suggestions to leading the program into the future. We closed the event with a retirement party for Jim Durrwachter. We hoped to continue this tradition on a bi-annual schedule but the budgets for Agencies has prevented the planning of one for 2011, it is our hope that it will be resumed in fall of 2012.

Seven new fleet vehicles were added in May 2009 thanks to the USFS, FWS and NPS. The vehicles were outfitted with locking camper shells and slideout beds that allowed for storage of crew equipment and personal gear. Thanks to the National Park Service all of these vehicles were outfitted at the end of 2010 with new mobile King radios. These radios helped tremendously on the fireline by allowing for a mobile command vehicle to be used by our Burn Modules and increase the safety of crews by improving communications.

PFTC saw another Field Coordinator retire in 2011, Jeff "Rowdy" Welsh had served for seven years as a Field Coordinator and provided a great service to the Center on behalf of the USFS.



Pre-burn briefing during the 2011 February 21-day session.

## ***Narrative Summary Continued***

The Following were the 2010 Field Coordinators:

### **Session One**

- ◇ Greg Borgen – FS – Sumter NF, Andrew Pickens RD
- ◇ James Courtright – NPS – Zion National Park
- ◇ Keith Halloran – FS – Coconino NF, Mogollon Rim RD
- ◇ Aaron Roper – FWS – Wichita Mountains NWR
- ◇ Terry Tilford – BLM – Moab Field Office
- ◇ Greg Zoppetti – FWS – Klamath Basin NWR

### **Session Two**

- ◇ Brooks Baker – FS – Kaibab NF, North Kaibab RD
- ◇ Peter Kelly – FWS – San Luis NWR
- ◇ Victor Morfin – FS – Coconino NF, Williams RD
- ◇ Lindy McNeilus – FWS – Detroit Lakes Wetland Management District
- ◇ Jennifer Rabuck – FS – Chequamegon-Nicolet NF, Great Divide RD
- ◇ Deb Flowers – NPS – Grand Tetons National Park
- ◇ Terry Severson – FWS – Wisconsin Private Lands Office

### **Session Three**

- ◇ Chuck Harden – FS – Apalachicola NF, Apalachicola RD
- ◇ Paul Klasner – FS – Payette NF, Krassel RD
- ◇ Daron Reynolds – FS – Manti-La Sal NF, Price RD
- ◇ Jeff Welsh – FS – San Juan NF
- ◇ Tim Woody – NPS – Everglades National Park

### **Session Four**

- ◇ Shawn Nagle – NPS – Natchez Trace Parkway

## ***Narrative Summary Continued***

The Following were the 2011 Field Coordinators:

### **Session One**

- ◇ Forest Behm - FS - Payette National Forest, McCall Smoker Jumpers
- ◇ Sean Daugherty - BLM - Albuquerque District
- ◇ Keith Halloran – FS – Coconino NF, Mogollon Rim RD
- ◇ Terry Severson - FWS - Wisconsin Private Lands Office
- ◇ Terry Tilford – BLM – Moab Field Office
- ◇ Robert Trincado - NPS - Everglades National Park
- ◇ Greg Zoppetti – FWS – Klamath Basin NWR

### **Session Two**

- ◇ Brooks Baker – FS – Kaibab NF, North Kaibab RD
- ◇ John Cataldo - FS - Six Rivers National Forest
- ◇ Deb Flowers - NPS - Grand Teton National Park
- ◇ Scott Linn - FS - Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest
- ◇ Victor Morfin – FS – Coconino NF, Williams RD
- ◇ Jennifer Rabuck – FS – Chequamegon-Nicolet NF, Great Divide RD
- ◇ Tim Woody - NPS - Everglades National Park

### **Session Three**

- ◇ Kevin Beck - FWS - Benton Lake NWR
- ◇ Dustin Doane - FS - Payette National Forest
- ◇ Keith Hackbarth - FS - Bitterroot National Forest
- ◇ Clint Kolarich - FS - Lewis and Clark National Forest
- ◇ Daron Reynolds – FS – Manti-La Sal NF, Price RD

### **Session Four**

- ◇ Cancelled - Potential Government Shutdown

### **Session Five**

- ◇ Cancelled - Extreme Fire Conditions in the Southeast

## ***Narrative Summary Continued***

### ***Cooperators***

The 2010 season brought several new sites into the program with willing and enthusiastic Cooperators. Savannah River Forest Station provided unique opportunities to crews in March where they learned the complexities of burning in a high profile program with challenges in urban interface, politics, and working within a high security Department of Energy facility. We are pleased with the chance to promote this program and provide our students with another location where complex burns can be successfully accomplished. The addition of Savannah River Forest Station to our list of valued Cooperators is a win win for both programs.

Kings Mountain National Park was another new site added in South Carolina and the Center is pleased to see the program opportunities with the National Park Service expand. Crews enjoyed the burning and learning opportunities that Chris Revels and his staff provided.

Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge brought their first crews to the Refuge in April and provided experiences in burning in marsh habitat and utilizing several pieces of equipment new to all the crew members. Crews worked off airboats and used Green Dragons and Pyroshots which was an exciting experience for them.

Several new State Parks and State Forests throughout Florida participated for the first time with PFTC crews. These great hosts provided quality experiences and gave the students insight to their various programs and their management techniques. We are greatly appreciative of the extensive efforts put forth by our Cooperators. We thank them for them for providing burning opportunities and non-burn day training experiences to our crews.

In 2011 PFTC continued to expand their list of Cooperators as we added additional new sites with the Georgia Forestry Commission and the Florida State Parks. Both of these Agencies provided more locations for the Center's students to gain experience and the relationship proved affective with higher accomplishments for the Agencies as a whole.

We gained two new TNC sites. One in Alabama working with Keith Tassin where PFTC crews helped burn over 900 acres in a two-month period. The second TNC site found our modules burning with Bob Wilken in the Florida Panhandle for the first time in 2011.

### ***Steering Committee***

During the past two years the leadership of the PFTC Steering Committee saw some changes. Ralph Crawford, Florida Division of Forestry representative served on the Committee from 2002 thru 2009. Forest Service Washington Office representative, Tim Sexton, was on the Committee from 2003 thru 2009. Pete Kubiak, FWS Southeast Region representative, served more than two terms as Chair of the Committee from 2003 thru 2010. NPS national representative Dick Bahr served one term as Chair from 2005 thru 2009. PFTC thanks you for your outstanding contribution and never ending support. Each of you tackled many difficult issues during your terms. PFTC has now become a "Center of Excellence" and each of you is a part that success. John Saddler is the Florida Division of Forestry representative, Gary Jarvis represents the Forest Service Washington Office, FWS Southeast Region will be represented by Glen Stratton, and Jim Hutton will fill the NPS national position. The vacant Forest Service western representative has been filled by Pete Gordon, Fire Staff Officer on the Prescott National Forest. One additional change includes Blain Heumann replacing Mary Huffman as The Nature Conservancy representative. Dave Mueller BLM national representative and Clint Cross Forest Service southern region rep continue their commitment to the PFTC as Steering Committee members.

## ***Narrative Summary Continued***

### ***Special Thanks***

The Prescribed Fire Training Center would like to acknowledge and thank the National Park Service for their generous donations in FY2010. This year the NPS purchased fifteen new driptorches for the Center, twenty handheld King Digital Radios and seven mobile King radios. The radios had become a safety issue with outdated radios and no mobile communication for crews on burns. The mobile radios were installed in the fleet vehicles and will provide long range communication for command positions during prescribed burn assignments. The handhelds will be issued, as needed, to students in sessions and workshops to ensure communication during burn operations.

Driptorches will be issued to crews to help alleviate any strain on host units to provide enough equipment. Co-operators and students alike had requested that PFTC burn crews come equipped with torches.

The donations were a significant boost to the Center and are much appreciated. They will help to enhance the students experiences during their assignment.

The US Fish and Wildlife Service purchased a Smartboard for our training room. This will enhance our presentation ability and helps keep the Center current with technology.



Operational planning prior to beginning the burn during the January, 2010 21-day sessions

### 2010-2011 Burn Accomplishment Summary

Agency	RX Burns	Total Acres	WUI Acres	% of Total Acreage
Dept. of Defense	57	22,212	2,755	21%
US Forest Service	55	42,784	14,948	41%
US Fish & Wildlife Service	20	15,982	7,660	16%
US National Park Service	5	1,371	550	1%
FL State Parks	54	4,031	2,555	4%
FL Division of Forestry	43	7,825	5,020	7%
Georgia Forestry Commission	50	5,041	1,416	5%
Water Management District	15	822	88	1%
Other Non-Federal Agencies	39	4,439	1,744	4%
<b>Total All Agencies</b>	<b>338</b>	<b>104,507</b>	<b>36,736</b>	<b>100%</b>

#### A Participants' Perspective...

“This is the most valuable class/workshop for line officers that I have taken. The experience on the ground combined with the classroom sessions and sandtable exercises has been invaluable. I am looking forward to utilizing the skills and confidence I have learned this week. Thank you for taking the time to organize and put on such an adaptive and applicable workshop. The adjustment of the cadre to present on what we, as a group, were interested in was great.”

2010 Agency Administrators Workshop  
 Lori Wood, District Ranger  
 Dixie National Forest, Powell Ranger District



### 2010-2011 Burn Accomplishments - Federal Agencies

Agency	Cooperator	RX Burns	Total Acres	WUI Acres	% of Total Acreage
DOD	Avon Park Air Force Range	8	1,552	0	
DOD	Eglin Air Force Base	45	19,472	2,755	
DOD	Fort Stewart	4	1,188	0	
<b>Total DOD</b>		<b>57</b>	<b>22,212</b>	<b>2,755</b>	<b>27%</b>
USFS	Apalachicola National Forest	7	2,283	2,283	
USFS	Conecuh National Forest	1	350	150	
USFS	DeSoto National Forest	1	40	40	
USFS	Escambia Research Station	2	140	140	
USFS	Ocala National Forest	6	5,130	2,650	
USFS	Osceola National Forest	5	8,780	2,611	
USFS	Savannah River (DOE)	19	15,667	3,070	
USFS	Sumter National Forest	14	10,394	4,004	
<b>Total USFS</b>		<b>55</b>	<b>42,784</b>	<b>14,948</b>	<b>52%</b>
USFWS	Carolina Sandhills NWR	4	735	100	
USFWS	Lake Woodruff NWR	1	1,900	1,900	
USFWS	Lower Suwannee NWR	6	4,124	3,944	
USFWS	Loxahatchee NWR	3	7,790	1,300	
USFWS	Merritt Island NWR	1	5	5	
USFWS	Florida Panther NWR	1	343	0	
USFWS	St. Marks NWR	2	361	361	
USFWS	St. Vincent Island NWR	2	724	50	
<b>Total USFWS</b>		<b>20</b>	<b>15,982</b>	<b>7,660</b>	<b>19%</b>
USNPS	Big Cypress National Preserve	3	950	550	
USNPS	King's Mountain	1	300	0	
USNPS	Natchez Trace Parkway	1	121	0	
<b>Total USNPS</b>		<b>5</b>	<b>1,371</b>	<b>550</b>	<b>2%</b>
	<b>Total Federal Agencies</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>82,349</b>	<b>25,913</b>	<b>100%</b>



**2010-2011 Burn Accomplishments - Non-Federal Agencies**

Agency	Cooperator	RX Burns	Total Acres	WUI Acres	% of Total Acreage
FL State Parks	Dudley Farm SP	1	68	68	
FL State Parks	Dunn's Creek SP	1	74	0	
FL State Parks	Fakahatchee SP	2	830	0	
FL State Parks	Goldhead Branch SP	1	34	34	
FL State Parks	Lake Louisa SP	11	698	372	
FL State Parks	Myakka River SP	1	26	0	
FL State Parks	O'Leno SP	6	440	370	
FL State Parks	Payne's Prairie SP	1	120	120	
FL State Parks	Rookery Bay NERR	14	670	642	
FL State Parks	San Felasco SP	3	80	30	
FL State Parks	St. Sebastien SP	1	30	30	
FL State Parks	Suwannee River SP	2	88	88	
FL State Parks	Three Rivers SP	2	222	222	
FL State Parks	Wakulla Springs SP	1	10	10	
FL State Parks	Wekiwa Springs SP	7	641	569	
<b>Total FL State Parks</b>		<b>54</b>	<b>4,031</b>	<b>2,555</b>	<b>18%</b>
FL Division of Forestry	Blackwater SF	16	1,089	277	
FL Division of Forestry	Etoniah SF	4	427	0	
FL Division of Forestry	Lake Talquin SF	13	916	849	
FL Division of Forestry	Picayune SF	1	2,750	2,750	
FL Division of Forestry	Tate's Hell SF	5	2,245	880	
FL Division of Forestry	Wakulla SF	4	398	264	
<b>Total FL Division of Forestry</b>		<b>43</b>	<b>7,825</b>	<b>5,020</b>	<b>35%</b>
Georgia Forestry Commission	Southern Georgia Counties	50	5,041	1,416	
<b>Total GA Forestry Comm.</b>		<b>50</b>	<b>5,041</b>	<b>1,416</b>	<b>23%</b>
Water Mgmt. District	Northwest Florida WMD	15	822	88	
<b>Total Water Mgmt. District</b>		<b>15</b>	<b>822</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>4%</b>
Other	Miccosukee Reservation	5	1,360	1,360	
Other	Ordway-Swisher Biological Research Station	20	1,443	329	
Other	Seminole (Brighton Ranch)	3	108	55	
Other	The Nature Conservancy	11	1,528	0	
<b>Total Other</b>		<b>39</b>	<b>4,439</b>	<b>1,744</b>	<b>20%</b>
<b>Total Non-Federal Agencies</b>		<b>201</b>	<b>22,158</b>	<b>10,823</b>	<b>100%</b>

## 2010 - 2011 Program of Work Overview

<b>21-Day Fire Practitioner Sessions/Workshops</b>		
<b>Session 1 - 2010</b>	January 5 - 24	6 Modules 6 Field Coordinators 36 Participants
<b>Session 1 - 2011</b>	January 9 - 28	6 Modules 7 Field Coordinators 35 Participants
<b>Session 2 - 2010</b>	February 2 - 21	6 Modules 7 Field Coordinators 35 Participants
<b>Session 2 - 2011</b>	February 6 - 25	6 Modules 7 Field Coordinators 33 Participants
<b>Session 3 - 2010</b>	March 3 - 22	5 Modules 5 Field Coordinators 33 Participants
<b>Session 3 - 2011</b>	March 6 - 25	5 Modules 5 Field Coordinators 29 Participants
<b>Session 4 - 2010</b>	March 30 - April 18	1 Module 1 Field Coordinator 5 Participants
<b>Session 4 - 2011</b>	April 17 - May 6	Cancelled Potential Lapse in Government Funding
<b>Session 5 - 2011</b>	June 5 - 24	Cancelled Extreme Fire Conditions in Southeast
<b>Agency Administrators Workshop</b>	May - 2010 April - 2011	30 Participants 24 Participants
<b>Resource Specialists Workshop</b>	November - 2010 November - 2011	11 Participants 21 Participants

### 2010 - 2011 Program of Work Overview Continued

Acres Treated		
Wildland Urban Interface	2010 Sessions	18,933
	2011 Sessions	17,803
	<b>Total</b>	<b>36,736 (35%)</b>
Wildland	2010 Sessions	40,273
	2011 Sessions	27,498
	<b>Total</b>	<b>67,771 (65%)</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>Treated Acres</b>	<b>104,507</b>

Federal/Non-Federal Acres Treated					
		Total	% of Total	WUI	% of Total
Federal	2010 Sessions	48,679	82%	11,896	63%
	2011 Sessions	33,670	74%	14,017	79%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>82,349</b>	<b>79%</b>	<b>25,913</b>	<b>71%</b>
Non-Federal	2010 Sessions	10,527	18%	7,037	37%
	2011 Sessions	11,631	26%	3,786	21%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>22,158</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>10,823</b>	<b>29%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>Treated Acres</b>	<b>104,507</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>36,736</b>	<b>100%</b>



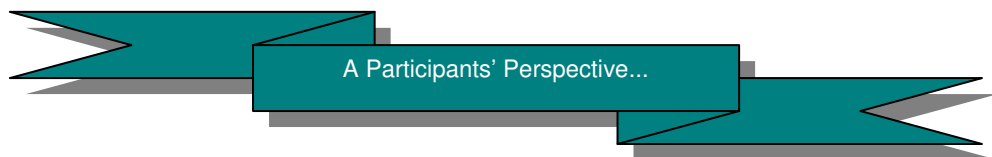
January 2011 test fire in WUI in Alabama during the 21-day session.

### 2010 - 2011 Program of Work Overview Continued

<b>Participants by Agency</b>				
<b>Agency</b>	<b>21-Day Sessions</b>	<b>Agency Adm. Workshop</b>	<b>Resource Spec. Workshop</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Forest Service</b>	2010 - 66	2010 - 22	2010 - 5	2010 - 93
	2011 - 68	2011 - 18	2011 - 8	2011 - 94
<b>Bureau of Land Management</b>	2010 - 9	2010 - 0	2010 - 0	2010 - 9
	2011 - 1	2011 - 0	2011 - 1	2011 - 2
<b>Fish &amp; Wildlife Service</b>	2010 - 10	2010 - 2	2010 - 2	2010 - 14
	2011 - 6	2011 - 4	2011 - 2	2011 - 12
<b>National Park Service</b>	2010 - 15	2010 - 2	2010 - 1	2010 - 18
	2011 - 10	2011 - 2	2011 - 4	2011 - 16
<b>Bureau of Indian Affairs</b>	2010 - 2	2010 - 2	2010 - 0	2010 - 4
	2011 - 0	2011 - 0	2011 - 3	2011 - 3
<b>State/County/City</b>	2010 - 6	2010 - 0	2010 - 3	2010 - 9
	2011 - 2	2011 - 0	2011 - 3	2011 - 5
<b>NGO</b>	2010 - 1	2010 - 0	2010 - 0	2010 - 1
	2011 - 2	2011 - 0	2011 - 0	2011 - 2
<b>International</b>	2010 - 0	2010 - 0	2010 - 0	2010 - 0
	2011 - 5	2011 - 0	2011 - 0	2011 - 5
<b>DOD</b>	2010 - 0	2010 - 2	2010 - 0	2010 - 2
	2011 - 3	2011 - 0	2011 - 0	2011 - 3
<b>Total</b>	2010 - 109	2010 - 30	2010 - 11	2010 - 150
	2011 - 97	2011 - 24	2011 - 21	2011 - 142

**2010 - 2011 Program of Work Overview Continued**

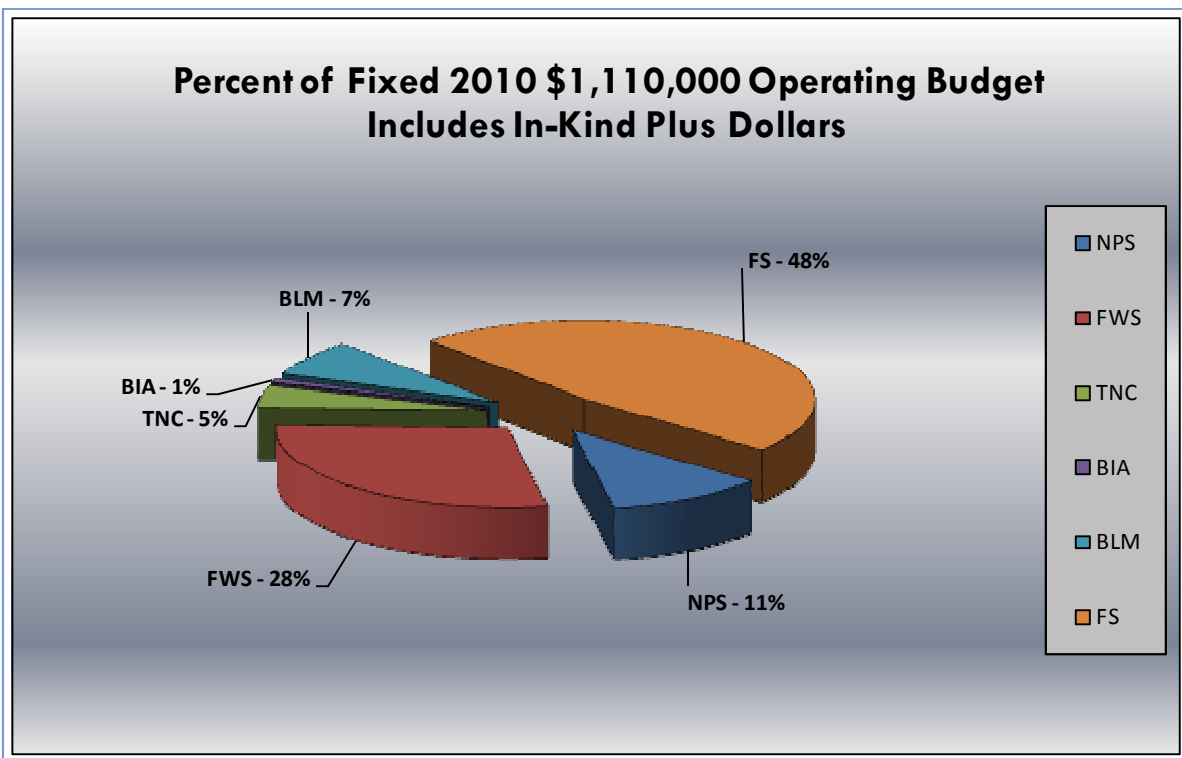
<b>Task Book Assignments</b>			
<b>Task Book</b>	<b>Session</b>	<b>No. of Assignments</b>	<b>Number of Individuals</b>
<b>RXB2</b>	2010	130	37
	2011	156	32
<b>RXB3</b>	2010	10	9
	2011	11	6
<b>FIRB</b>	2010	151	54
	2011	180	51
<b>ENGB</b>	2010	32	18
	2011	30	13
<b>FEMO</b>	2010	72	31
	2011	79	30



“The role and mission of PFTC in the training it provides is working to fulfill that call for "an extra margin of safety in all that we do" and for me... the dedication of the training cadre honors those who have fallen.”

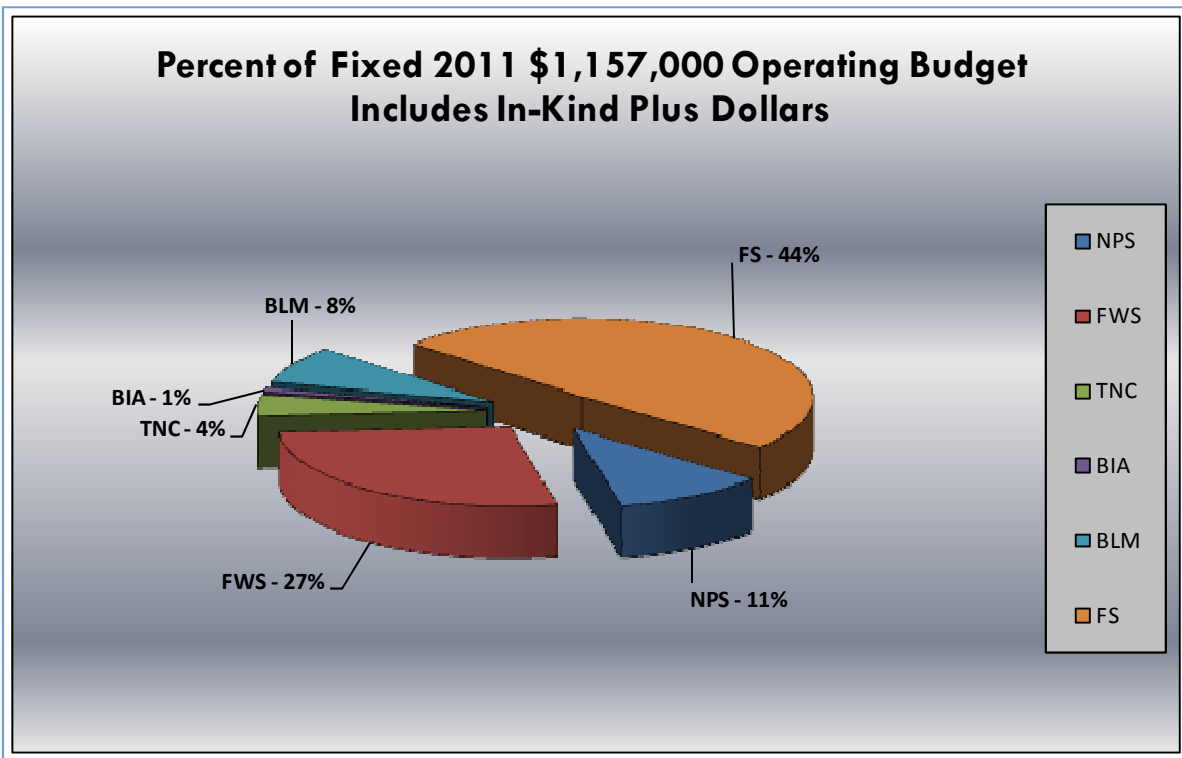
2011 Agency Administrators Workshop  
 Michael Atkinson, District Ranger  
 Kiowa and Rita Blanca National Grasslands

### 2010 - 2011 Program of Work Overview Continued



*Excellence In...*

**2010 - 2011 Program of Work Overview Continued**



*...Prescribed Fire*

## ***Take Home Messages for 2010 and 2011***

Since its inception PFTC has charged the participants during every session to collect a list of ten succinct messages that represent the lessons learned during the 21-day training. The only requirements for these messages are that they be brief and important enough that the trainees will take them home and keep them as a prompt of the experiences gained while attending PFTC.

The following categories contain typical messages that exemplify the general content of similar messages collected by this year's participants:

### Ecological

- ◇ Fire is as natural as rain, wind, sunshine and blue skies.
- ◇ Lack of fire is the disturbance.

### Weather

- ◇ A weather forecast is just a forecast.
- ◇ You don't choose your burn days, they choose you.

### Education

- ◇ We must be educators and advocates of prescribed fire in order to be successful practitioners of it.
- ◇ Public education is essential to a successful burn program.

### Communications

- ◇ DDI...If it doesn't feel right, don't do it! Ask questions, clarify, then reassess.
- ◇ Fire transcends all language barriers.

### Cooperation

- ◇ We all speak the same language (fire) but there are a lot of different dialects.
- ◇ Building relationships is key to building a successful burn program.

### Objectives

- ◇ You have to have defined objectives to burn effectively and efficiently.
- ◇ Create measurable objectives and measure your results.

### Operations

- ◇ Make sure you can take a few steps before you lay down fire.
- ◇ Listen to your test fire, it produces more than just hot air.

### Flexibility

- ◇ Make a decision upfront, you can always change it.
- ◇ Learn to be adaptable.

### Planning

- ◇ Have a number of units ready and know their prescription limits so that windows of opportunity can be maximized.
- ◇ Understand the local ecology and write your burn plans to meet those needs.



## ***Take Home Messages for 2010 and 2011 Continued***

### Fuels and Topography

- ◇ Topography is relative in the south. Slope doesn't have to make you breathe hard to affect fire behavior.
- ◇ The SE is flat, therefore wind is the primary driver of fire behavior and it can be variable and lazy.

### Training and Self-Awareness

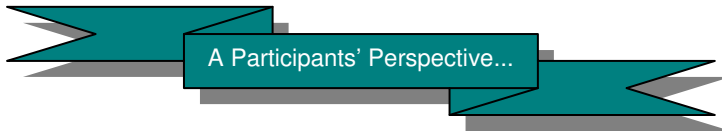
- ◇ Being outside the comfort zone is a great way to learn.
- ◇ If you approach each burn with an open mind there is always something that can be learned.



Sitka Pence uses matches to light point source fires across the unit during the February 2011 21-day session.

## Cumulative Program of Work Overview

Accomplishments FY1998 - FY2011							
Fiscal Year	Total Participants	Total Field Coordinators	No. of Host/ Cooperators	No. of training Assignments	No. of Burns	WUI Acres	Total Acres w/WUI
1998 - 2008	1,170	179	290	2,917	1,623	143,221	602,150
2009	105	17	49	419	177	38,631	78,192
2010	150	19	40	395	162	18,933	59,206
2011	142	19	31	456	176	17,803	45,301
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,567</b>	<b>234</b>	<b>410</b>	<b>4,187</b>	<b>2,144</b>	<b>218,588</b>	<b>784,849</b>



"Every Forest Service District Ranger who has limited fire experience should be required to take this course."

2011 Agency Administrators Workshop  
Rob Fallon, District Ranger  
Allegheny National Forest

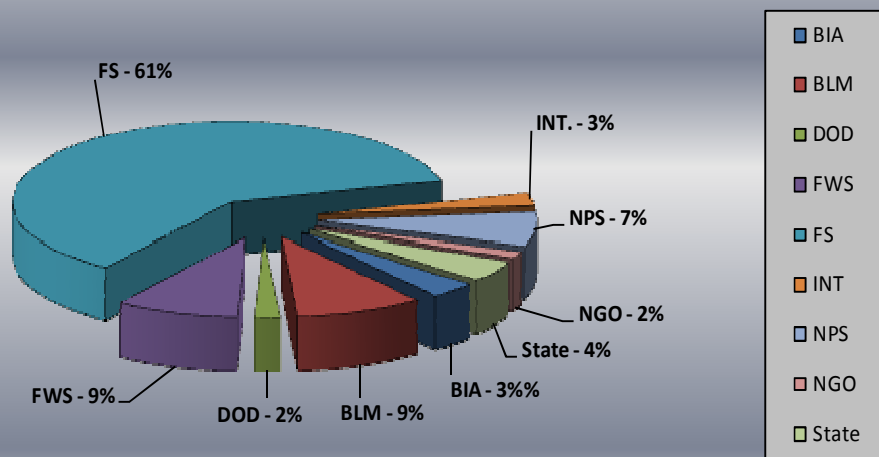


## Participants by Agency FY1998 - FY2011

Agency	Participants	Percent
Bureau of Indian Affairs	55	4%
Bureau of Land Management	140	9%
Department of Defense	28	2%
Fish & Wildlife Service	144	9%
Forest Service	956	61%
International	39	3%
National Park Service	112	7%
NGO	25	2%
State	68	4%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,567</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Cumulative Program of Work Overview Continued

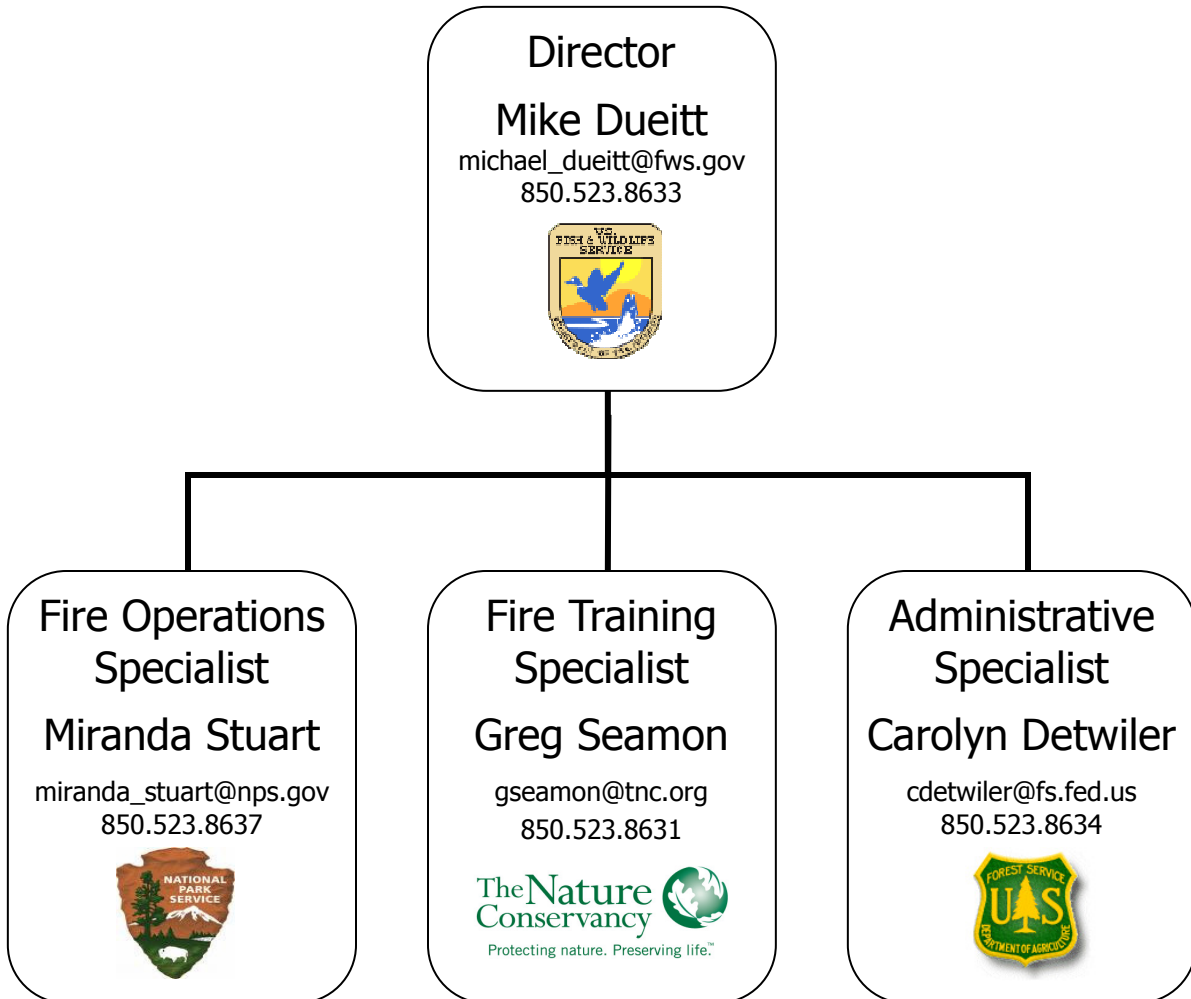
#### Participants by Agency FY1998 - FY2011



Dot ignition under long-leaf pine restoration area during the February 2010 21-day session.



## Organization Chart



PFTC falls under the umbrella of the National Advanced Fire and Resource Institute (NAFRI). The Institute is a national level center serving the interagency wildland fire community through the development and implementation of fire, fuels, resource, and incident management skills and educational processes. NAFRI is dedicated to the diverse interagency fire, fuels, resource, and incident management community in developing and enhancing learning experiences. The Institute assists in the creation of innovative solutions that concern fire and all-hazards management.

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**BIA Rep Vacant**

(\*) Advisory non-voting member(s)

## Participants' Perspectives...

*"At this point, this is the best workshop I've had. It has been absolutely timely in terms of encouraging me to push our program forward...and I think that was really what I wanted coming into it."*

*2009 Resource Specialists Workshop  
George Ramseur, Fire Program Manager  
MS Department of Marine Resources, Biloxi, MS*

*"The anecdotal coupled with the science (it worked, and here's what we learned) is a great way to get ideas. The TNC example is the story, including the funding, trial and error, logistics, etc. The science of wiregrass propagation is a chapter within that story. The mix of the two aspects of the project (the science and the "other") was great...I am super excited about Rx after this workshop and see it improving every year. Keep doing these! "*

*2009 Resource Specialists Workshop  
Melanie Vining, Hydrologist  
USFS Council RD, Payette National Forest, Council, ID*

*"I will be able to bring back the knowledge gained to my home unit and career. This was a great opportunity and something I never would have had in my current job. This is a great way to get "outside of the box" training from private/state/federal teachers."*

*March 2010 21-Day Session  
Matt Miller, Hotshot  
USFS Cherokee National Forest, Cherokee Hotshots, Unicoi, TN*

*"This course met my expectations in terms of education and operational experience. One of the best fire related courses I have ever done because I learn and retain information and experiences better by actually implementing them on the ground. "*

*March 2010 21-Day Session  
Stewart Robertson  
NPS Bandelier National Monument, Los Alamos, NM*

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**PFTC Staff**



**Mike Dueitt, Director** - US Fish and Wildlife Service has been involved with PFTC first as a Cooperator where he hosted modules and now as Director. He has conducted over 700,000 acres of prescribed burning, functioning in all prescribed fire positions.

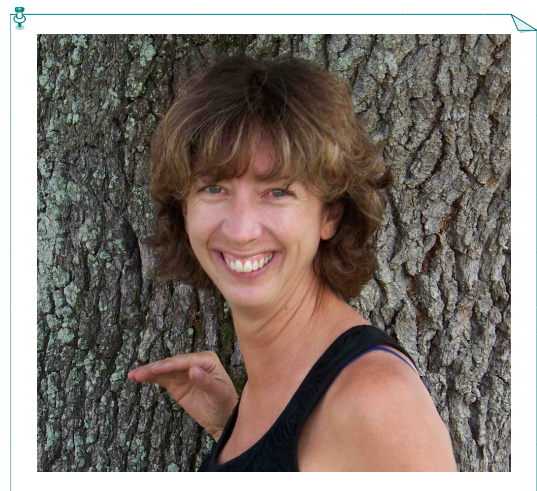
**Carolyn Detwiler, Administrative Specialist** - US Forest Service has been part of PFTC since its inception January 1998. She oversees budget, grants/agreements, micro-purchasing support, and logistics for session modules and workshops.

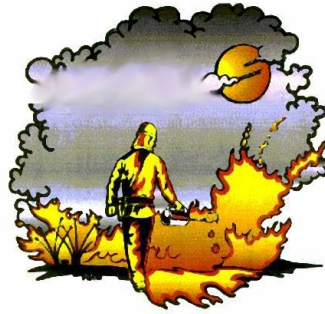


**Greg Seamon, Fire Training Specialist** - The Nature Conservancy has also been involved with PFTC since 1998 where he hosted PFTC modules until his current position at the Center. He oversees and coordinates all session orientation programs, and session and workshop nominations. Greg has been involved in prescribed fire and wildfire for the past 30 years primarily in the Southeast.



**Miranda Stuart, Operations Specialist** - National Park Service supervises field coordinators, coordinates prescribed fire projects with host units, and manages equipment and fleet. She has burned throughout the Southeast, Southwest, and Northwest.





*...Everyday is a Burn Day...*



The Nature Conservancy   
Protecting nature. Preserving life.™

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