

Rogue Valley PBA: Relationships, Fire Training and Workshops

Southwestern Oregon, 2023

By Aaron Krikava, Prescribed Burn Program Director, Applegate Partnership

Building on the foundation of organizational strength developed in 2022, the [Rogue Valley Prescribed Burn Association](#) (RVPBA) has grown and expanded its efforts to engage with the public on the use of good fire as a land management tool. Through educational workshops, live-fire training events, and inter-organizational relationship development, the RVPBA is building a movement for meaningful understory burning on private lands.

Landowner Workshops

To help build and harness a supportive community, the RVPBA held two free workshops to explore key concepts and practical learning related to prescribed burning. The first workshop introduced water handling equipment and a practicum on construction of a slip-in pumper unit, and the second introduced elements of burn site evaluation. The workshops were advertised through the RVPBA email list, website and a media press release. Four RVPBA members presented the workshops, which together had 31 participants.

The water handling equipment workshop, attended by nine people, covered water use for prescribed burning, including holding, wet-lining and mop up. Participants were able to view a range of water handling equipment—from backpack pumps and hose lay components, to slip-in units and a full Type 3 fire engine—while discussing the situations where each was appropriate. They then turned to the workshop's primary focus, a demonstration of building a pick-up truck slip-in unit¹. Participants followed along as the unit was constructed and discussion covered the pros and cons of alternative parts for the pump, water tank, hose reel, hose and fittings. Participants each received a complete parts list with prices and sources, to support them in building a unit of their own.

The second workshop, on burn site evaluation, was attended by 22 people and involved facilitated discussion on a tour of an 80-acre private parcel and adjoining BLM land. Before the tour, participants were given a worksheet that covered many of the considerations that go into evaluating a burn unit and planning a burn. These included fuel loading and previous treatments, fuel type, slope, aspect, control features like roads or trails, adjoining property conditions,

and the landowner's desired outcomes. The group stopped at multiple sites to talk about and evaluate each unit and apply the worksheet. A variety of site conditions provided opportunity to see and differentiate units that are ready to burn from others needing significant work before fire could be applied safely and effectively. Differences in fuel type and aspect allowed for discussions of appropriate weather conditions and seasonality of burning. By grounding this group in the basics of burn site evaluation, the RVPBA prepared the participants to volunteer in the future to conduct initial site visits of prospective burn units as the number of interested landowners continues to increase.

Live-Fire Training

The RVPBA implemented four live-fire training events, one in the fall of 2022, and three in the spring of 2023. These events brought together a wide array of participants, including more than 60 community members; five wildland firefighting contractors; staff from four fire departments, the Oregon Department of Forestry, Oregon State University, and Natural Resource Conservation Service; and a 20-person crew from the Northwest Youth Corps. The trainings took place on three private parcels and a unit in Oregon State University's Collins Demonstration Forest². This was the first understory burn conducted on an OSU demonstration forest, and they are excited to use prescribed burning more frequently, using the PBA model.

An [article](#) in *The Oregonian*, based on one of the private burns, highlighted the role of the RVPBA. Following the success of these training events, the RVPBA has multiple burns planned for the fall of 2023 and spring of 2024.

Building Relationships

► To better support the need for workforce development, the RVPBA is working with the [Rogue Community College Fire Science](#) program to develop training opportunities³. The community college will conduct the necessary National Wildfire Coordinating Group certified field day exercises and arduous pack tests for free, allowing individuals to receive Fire Fighter Type 2 qualifications after completing the online S-130/S-190 courses. Northwest Youth Corps is among the groups interested in taking advantage of this

Visit www.roguevalleypba.com to learn more about the PBA or to sign up for the mailing list to hear about upcoming events.

opportunity. Each of their cadres completes most of the requirements for FFT2 qualification, but they lack the final pack test and field day. By working with the community college and RVPBA, they will be able to get their young adults fully certified.

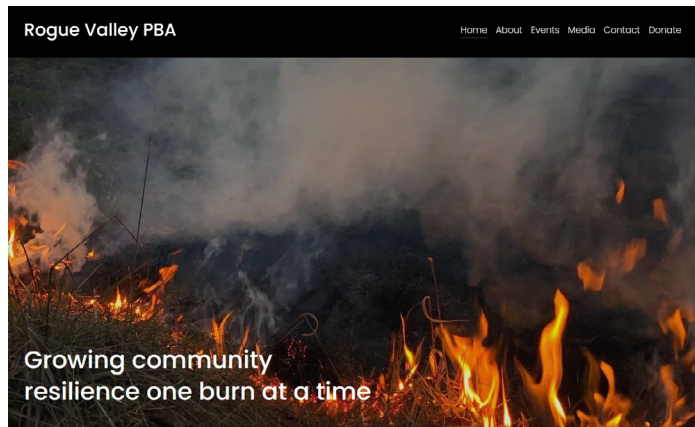
► The [Firebrand Resiliency Collective](#), founded in response to the destructive 2020 Almeda Fire, supports community solutions for long-term recovery, resilience and preparedness. RVPBA is partnering with the collective to provide opportunities for those impacted by the wildfire to experience fire as a restorative, beneficial tool. Being part of a planned understory burn helps people become more comfortable with the role fire plays on the landscape and its importance in increasing fire resiliency.

► As the Oregon Department of Forestry rolls out their [Certified Burn Manager](#) program, they are looking to use RVPBA training events as opportunities for students to get their certificate books signed off. Towards that end, they and the RVPBA are developing an intergovernmental agreement and memorandum of agreement to more easily cooperate and share funding.

Expanding Impact

By providing topical educational opportunities and live-fire training events to community members and developing cooperative burn relationships among organizations and agencies, the Rogue Valley Prescribed Burn Association is advancing the use of controlled burning on private lands. Increasing access to NWCG courses and opportunities for state certification will help build the skilled and knowledgeable workforce needed to implement an expanding number of burns in the future.

The RVPBA is also looking beyond the Rogue Valley. To help spread its successes to other areas of the state, as RVPBA steering committee chair, I travel to give presentations on the concepts, development and usefulness of PBAs⁴. In 2023, I presented to groups from all over Oregon, including the Wild Rivers Coast Forest Collaborative (Gold Beach), Klamath Lake Forest Health Partnership (Klamath Falls) and at the Oregon Prescribed Fire Council's annual meeting in Baker City.



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Growing community resilience one burn at a time

Prescribed Burn Associations (PBAs) bring together

The **Rogue Valley Prescribed Burn Association** fosters community safety and

Prescribed Burn Associations (PBAs) bring together landowners, volunteers, and trained fire professionals to put good fire on the land.

The **Rogue Valley Prescribed Burn Association** fosters community safety and preparedness, ecological land stewardship, and resilient ecosystems by educating and training community members in the use of prescribed burning.

Want to learn how to use fire as a land management tool?

We can help! Our community burns welcome people of all skill levels and backgrounds. Our experienced team will help you learn how to use fire safely and effectively. Fill out our interest form at the link below and we'll be in contact.



For more about the Rogue Valley PBA, contact:

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Footnotes—Funding RVPBA Work:

- ¹ The Jackson County Soil and Water Conservation District provided funding to purchase parts and equipment for the slip-in unit build demonstration.
- ² One of the private land burns was supported by funding from the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board through the Applegate Partnership and Watershed Council, a member of the RVPBA. Two were implemented on a completely volunteer basis. The OSU burn was primarily volunteer, with the university providing support through staff time.
- ³ Rogue Community College courses are supported in part by funding from the Bureau of Land Management through the RVPBA.
- ⁴ Primary funding for presentations about the PBA model was provided by Sustainable Northwest.

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