



# Kristen Miller

## Crew Leader 2013

Brad Kildow  
WI DNR  
Coordinator

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Faculty Advisor





# UWSP Fire Crew

- Established in 1986
- Para-professional
- Memorandum of Understanding with Wisconsin DNR
- WI DNR provides oversight, training, and some equipment.
- Fire Crew reciprocates with personnel when requested





# UWSP Fire Crew

- Offers students who join
  - Fire Training
  - Prescribed Fire Experience
  - Opportunities to Experience Fire in Other Parts of the Country (Fire Tourists)
  - Wildfire Suppression Experience



# Training

- Through combination of WI DNR staff, faculty, cooperators, and qualified alumni, the following courses have been offered to crew and the public.

I-100	Into to ICS	S-130	Firefighter Training
S-131	Advanced Firefighter	S-133	Look Up, Look Down, Look Around
L-180	Human Factors on the Fireline	S-190	Intro to Fire Behavior
I-200	Basic Incident Command System	S-211	Portable Pumps and Water Use
S-212	Wildland Fire Chain Saws	S-215	Fire Operations in the Urban Interface
S-270	Basic Air Operations	L-280	Followership to Leadership









# Prescribed Fire

- Originally burned campus owned lands
- The Crew offers prescribed fire services to landowners throughout Wisconsin for prairie and savannah restoration.
- Fire Crew assists with burns on agency managed lands



# Restoration Assistance Through Prescribed Fire

- Brochure from the Wisconsin Central Sands Regional Plan by the University of Wisconsin, Madison and The Nature Conservancy listing Fire Crew as source for prescribed fire.

 <b>Prescribed Fire</b>	 <b>Mechanical Removal of Vegetation</b>	 <b>Invasive Species Control</b>	 <b>Establishment of Native Vegetation</b>
<p><b>Why you do it:</b> Historically, frequent fire was essential in maintaining many native plant communities. Without fire, the regional landscape and plants shift and change from the precolonial historic condition. With proper timing, prescribed burning controls many undesirable native and herbaceous weeds while invigorating native, fire-dependent species. Prescribed burning can prepare a site for planting and/or seeding, improve habitat for fire-adapted species, and reduce the potential for property-damaging wildfires.</p> <p><b>How you do it:</b> With an experienced resource manager develop a comprehensive fire plan for the site. The Prescribed Burn Plan is prepared in detail before the burn and includes details such as maps, permits, a burn prescription (including proposed date and weather conditions, personnel, equipment, map up plan, etc.), emergency assistance sources, safety plan, necessary notifications, and a checklist for burn boss and crew. The day of the burn, the crew leader adds notes on the fire's behavior and results.</p> <p><b>Documentation</b> Documentation of prescribed burning may include the fire management plan, dated farm records, permits, and photographs. The landowner or field ecologist should monitor the site afterwards, evaluating plant recovery by measurement or photographs.</p>	<p><b>Why you do it:</b> Some natural communities require tree thinning to reach the desirable canopy density (trees/acre) detailed on the management plan. Without thinning, shade-tolerant understory plants out-compete the prairie grasses and light dependent flowers of these natural communities. Pulling, cutting, or damaging plants can also control some invasive plants, especially if the population is relatively small.</p> <p><b>How you do it:</b> Work with an ecologist to identify and mark the plants to be removed. Vegetation is removed by hand pulling, chainsaw, or brush pile. Timing and labor requirements be considered. (and using brush chips, loggers) may be off-site that large equipment vegetation, and disturb existing native species. Invasive becoming desirable for removing vegetation, consider applying herbicides to sprouting undesirable plants.</p> <p><b>Documentation</b> Documentation may include and after treatments, can or progress records of the specific species.</p>	<p><b>Why you do it:</b> Invasive plant species are problem plants that are foreign to the natural community. They displace or replace native species, causing economic, environmental, or human health harm. To prevent invasive from spreading into the targeted natural plant community, stop small infestations before they are well-established. For most restorations, the minimal goal is to reduce invasive to less than 25% of the stand population.</p>	<p><b>Why you do it:</b> Planting native species can approximate the species composition of the target community type. Because establishing a native plant community is costly and time intensive, this treatment is limited to priority areas selected because of their location in the natural landscape or because a farm has few other options.</p> <p><b>How you do it:</b></p>
<p><b>Assistance numbers and websites:</b> University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point Fire Crew for low-cost prescribed fire assistance to private landowners. See <a href="http://www.uwsp.edu/stuorg/fire">www.uwsp.edu/stuorg/fire</a> or contact by phone, (715)-346-2897 or email, <a href="mailto:firecrew@uwsp.edu">firecrew@uwsp.edu</a></p> <p>Wisconsin Prescribed Fire Council has contacts for private contractors, training opportunities for landowners, and educational materials. See: <a href="http://www.prescribedfire.org">http://www.prescribedfire.org</a></p> <div data-bbox="600 1186 909 1376">  <p>A controlled burn on an Oak Barrens</p> </div> <div data-bbox="1251 1186 1580 1376">  <p>Treating a stand of redcedar grass</p> </div>			



# “Fire Tourists”

- During winter and spring breaks Fire Crew members travel to other regions of the country to gain fire experience.
- Past trips have visited Eglin Air Force Base near Pensacola, FL; Blackwater NWR Maryland; St Johns River Water Management District, FL.
- This year trips visited Gold Head State Park in Keystone Heights, FL over Winter Break and plan to visit Oklahoma over Spring Break.

## Firecrew members gain hot tips on prescribed burns in Florida



Firecrew members in Florida  
Picture courtesy of Steve Miller

Beach plans for spring break? Not for the UW-Stevens Point Firecrew. Eight firecrew members spent their spring break in Florida learning different methods of starting prescribed burns, including the use of a helicopter to set a fire from the air.

Shelby Worel, a junior majoring in forestry recreation, stated “In Wisconsin, we usually use bulldozers during prescribed burns, here we got to see an aerial ignition using helicopters and napalm. It was really exciting!”

The students, participating as district volunteers, worked alongside the St. Johns River Water Management District land managers to conduct four prescribed burns on district lands which included a 3,000-acre burn at the Seminole Ranch Conservation Area.



## Blackwater Fire program host University of Wisconsin Stevens Point Wildland Fire Crew

Region 5, January 17, 2012



Member of Stevens Point fire crew igniting marsh grasses with the powerboat. - Photo Credit: n/a

This past January the Blackwater Fire Zone hosted a five person wildland fire crew from the University of Wisconsin Stevens Point. During the seven days, the crew was at Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) where they assisted fire staff in completing



Joareyn Hill and Steve Stack preparing to burn - Photo Credit: n/a

seven prescribed fires for over 1,000 acres. The completed burning met multiple objectives, such as hazardous fuels reduction and habitat restoration. The crew is made up of students working on natural resource management degrees with an emphasis on forestry and fire ecology. The crew leader, Mrs. Joareyn Hill, has worked at Blackwater NWR as a volunteer and emergency firefighter for the past two summers and is now entering into the Student Career Experience Program (SCEP) program as a biotech. We encourage others out there to look into internships and volunteer opportunities to help the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service fire programs. We look forward to hosting the Stevens Point fire crew in the future and if others are interested please contact the Blackwater Fire program for more information at 410-228-2692 ext. 128.

# Fire Suppression

- Fire Crew members support the state and federal wildland agencies.
- For WI DNR they serve as lookouts, “riders”, and hand crews
- Busy fire years Fire Crew provides 25-30 squads of 4-7 members. Real busy fire days as many as 80 Fire Crew members are assigned.







# Questions

**I want to thank :**

UWSP

Dr. James Cook, the Fire Crew Faculty Advisor

Brad Kildow, WI DNR Coordinator to the Fire Crew

The Fire Crew members for allowing me to serve as the Crew Leader