

East Texas Prescribed Burn Association

Tyler County Forest Landowner Association

Spring General Meeting - March 16, 2024

Chris Schenck, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, and Kyle Carrington, East Texas Prescribed Fire Outreach Coordinator for Tall Timbers, shared information about the East Texas Prescribed Burn Association (PBA) and how it might benefit Tyler County landowners.

Historically, Native Americans used fire to effectively manage the longleaf forests in what is now Tyler County. Today, fear of fire creates resistance to using fire as a forest management tool. The East Texas Prescribed Burn Association (PBA) is a volunteer landowners cooperative that strives to overcome fear with education, training and on-site support.

Prescribed fires reduce the risk of wildfires, improve the habitat for wildlife and grazing, and provide nutrients for the soil. During the 2024 gigafire in the Texas Panhandle, one community in the path of the flames was spared because it had conducted prescribed burns.

When considering a prescribed burn, a landowner should

- Have a goal in mind.
- Consult a specialist.
- Develop a manageable and achievable plan.
- Implement the plan in small sections.
- Monitor the progress and make changes.

The East Texas Prescribed Burn Association (PBA) is a non-profit organization of volunteers working collaboratively to help each other safely use prescribed fire. The PBA does not conduct burns as a service for the landowner; its role is to support the landowner. The landowner is the burn boss responsible for the burn and all consequences of the burn. The PBA provides training, guidance, and resources. In return, the landowner is asked to become an active member of the PBA and assist other landowners with their prescribed burns.

The inaugural meeting of the East Texas Prescribed Burn Association, held on January 5, 2024, in Nacogdoches, was attended by 40 individuals. Just 2 ½ months later, the organization has 70 landowner members in 16 counties. The PBA has already conducted six burns in four counties. Texas Parks and Wildlife provided equipment for the burns, further reducing the cost to the landowner. The organization is actively seeking additional members, i.e., landowners who wish to use prescribed burns on their land.

For more information, access <https://www.pbatexas.org/> and https://tpwd.texas.gov/landwater/land/technical_guidance/burn/.