

North Georgia Prescribed Fire Meeting Speakers 2021



Kevin Hiers

Current Georgia Prescribed Fire Council Chair Kevin Hiers is an Associate Scientist at Tall Timbers Research Station where he leads wildland fire research and training applications. For more than 25 years, he has worked on the interface of management and science. His program applies research to support the safe and effective use of prescribed fire through research on interacting fire lines, fire-atmospheric feedback driving smoke transport, and mechanistic understanding of fire effects. Prior to joining the research team at Tall Timbers, he served as Prescribed Fire Program Manager and then Wildland Fire Program Manager at Eglin Air Force Base, one of the nation's largest prescribed fire programs. He also served as the interim Chief of the USAF Wildland Fire Center and was a Technical Advisor to DoD's Strategic Environmental Research and Development Program for 5 years. He co-founded the Prescribed Fire Science Consortium as a co-production strategy dedicated to integrating research into management applications. He has more than 100 peer-reviewed publications.

Tim Lowrimore

Tim Lowrimore was appointed as Director/State Forester of the Georgia Forestry Commission in December 2020. Lowrimore is a registered forester with the Georgia Board of Foresters who has more than 20 years of forestry and professional experience. Prior to his appointment at GFC, he served as public affairs manager for Interfor, one of the largest lumber producers in the world. There, he worked with all levels of government regulatory agencies and community and economic development officials to promote and protect operations and sustainability initiatives. Lowrimore is the current chairman of the Georgia Paper and Forest Products Association. He is a Society of American Foresters Fellow who served on its National Policy Committee for four years, Georgia Forestry Association member, and was Chairman of the Georgia Forestry Foundation in 2016. Lowrimore was Southeastern Division Chairman of the Society of American Foresters in 2014, its Georgia State Chair in 2009 and its Ocmulgee Chapter Chair in 2005. He has also served on the University of Georgia Warnell School of Forestry and Natural Resources' Deans Advisory Committee, and is a UGA Warnell Jay Hole Society member and past chair. Lowrimore and his wife, Wendi, have two daughters. The family lives in Macon.

Dr. Callie Schweitzer

Callie Schweitzer is a Research Forester with the USDA Forest Service, Southern Research Station, Upland Hardwood Forest Ecology and Management Research Work Unit. She is located in Huntsville, AL and studies upland hardwood silviculture in the Cumberland Plateau and associated highlands. Dr. Schweitzer received her Ph.D. from Penn State, did post-doc studies at the Southern Hardwoods Lab in Stoneville, MS and spent a few years as an analyst in the USFS Forest Inventory and Analysis unit.

Cole Fagen

Cole Fagen is a graduate student at Oklahoma State University working to get his Master's degree in Natural Resource Ecology and Management with a specialization in Prescribed Fire. Cole received a bachelor's degree in Natural Resource Management from Angelo State University in 2019. As a part of his graduate appointment at OSU, he is responsible for working with the Oklahoma State University Cooperative Extension Service by assisting with extension events, creating social media content and writing extension publications related to prescribed fire and natural resources. A large portion of his experience at Oklahoma state involved working very closely with Prescribed Burn Associations to create an Extension video and through that work, developed an understanding of the importance of motivated private landowners who want to use fire to manage their properties.

Amy McClave

Amy McClave is currently the District Fire Management Officer for the Chattooga River Ranger District on the Chattahoochee-Oconee NF's. She began her fire career in 2002 after receiving her BA in Biology from Hanover College in Hanover, IN. Her first fire job was at the nearby Big Oaks NWR in southern Indiana where she worked for their brand new fire program on both an engine and a helitack crew. Always on the lookout for more adventure, Amy moved out west in 2003 to the Six Rivers NF in California. She worked on engine and hand crews in California before moving to the Fremont-Winema NF in Oregon in 2006. After several years of fighting fire as both an Assistant Engine Captain and Engine Captain in Oregon, she moved to Tennessee in 2014 to be closer to family. She was the AFMO on the Tellico RD of the Cherokee NF for 5 years until coming to the Chattooga River RD in the fall of 2019. Amy's fire qualifications include RXB2, DIVS, and ICT3(t).

Michael Black

Mike Black has served as the Director for the Shortleaf Pine Initiative since 2014. He graduated from the University of Tennessee with a B.S. in Forestry in 1985 and has held past positions with Bowater as a Landowner Assistance Forester, owner of Sequatchie Forest and Wildlife as a consulting forester, Restoration Ecologist and contractor at Arnold Air Force Base and as past Forestry Coordinator for the NBCI. In his spare time Mike is an avid cook, hunter, fisherman and hunter education instructor.

Dr. James Martin

James Martin is an Associate Professor of Wildlife Ecology at the Warnell School of Forestry and Natural Resources at the University of Georgia. His research lab focuses on game bird ecology such as northern bobwhites and ruffed grouse in the context of forest and agricultural management. He is an avid bird hunter with 4 bird dogs. He and his wife raise three children, bees, and pigeons.

Michael Stambaugh

Mike Stambaugh is an Associate Research Professor at the University of Missouri. He is the Director of the Missouri Tree-Ring Laboratory and PI of the Oak Woodlands & Forests Fire Consortium funded by the Joint Fire Science Program. His research is heavily focused on recovery and analysis of historical fire regime data in the eastern U.S. as a means to inform fire and ecosystem management in the future. Other research interests include high precision tree growth analysis, prescribed burning and silviculture experiments, and assessing effects of climate change on fire regimes.

Dr. Joseph O'Brien

Joe O'Brien is a Research Ecologist and the Fire Team Leader at the Athens Fire Lab of the USDA Forest Service Southern Research Station. The Athens Fire Lab is a facility that leverages fire science and operational management expertise to support the broader application of prescribed fire. Since joining the Forest Service in 2002, Joe's research has centered on fire science, specifically the spatial interactions among wildland fuels, fire behavior and fire effects. He aims to uncover the mechanisms on how fire supports forest function and biological diversity. He also is focused on understanding the impacts of fire exclusion on ecosystem function and how to best restore fire into long-unburned fire dependent ecosystems. His graduate training and prior work experience have given him expertise in plant ecology and ecophysiology, conservation science and forest management. He has global fire experience with active research on fire ecology in the Caribbean, Central America and Africa. He has worked as an ecologist in the southeastern US for 30 years. He received a bachelor's degree in Biology from SUNY Geneseo in 1986 and his master's and Ph.D. in Biological Sciences from Florida International University in 1997 and 2001 respectively.

Dr. Scott Goodrick

Scott Goodrick is a Research Meteorologist with the US Forest Service Southern Research Station and serves as Director of the Station's Center for Forest Health and Disturbance in Athens GA. Scott has been working as a scientist with the Forest Service specializing in fire-atmosphere interactions and smoke management for 19 years. Prior to joining the Forest Service, Scott spent 4 years as the fire weather meteorologist for the state of Florida and helped develop their Fire Management Information System.

Jennifer Fawcett

Jennifer Fawcett is an Extension Associate in the Department of Forestry and Environmental Resources, Extension Forestry at North Carolina State University (NCSU). She serves as Coordinator for the Southeast Regional Partnership for Planning and Sustainability (SERPPAS) Prescribed Fire Work Group and assists in implementing prescribed fire-related education and outreach programs across the Southern region. She received her M.S. in Forest Resources from Clemson University, and is working towards her Ed.D. in Agricultural and Extension Education at NCSU, with a focus on Prescribed Burn Associations. She is currently the Vice President of the North Carolina Prescribed Fire Council, and serves as an Advisory Board member for the Southern Fire Exchange.

J. Holly Campbell

Holly Campbell is a Public Service Assistant with the University of Georgia Warnell School of Forestry and Natural Resources, where she focuses on wildland fire and community forestry outreach and instruction. Ms. Campbell has authored/coauthored several wildland fire outreach publications, including the recently published Smoke Management Guidebook for Prescribed Burning in the Southern Region. She also developed a community wildfire preparedness training for the Cooperative Extension, helped deliver several wildland fire workshops, and is a co-instructor of the popular Warnell-Jones Center Prescribed Fire in the Forest Ecosystem field course.

Shardul Raval

Shardul Raval is the Regional Fire and Aviation Management Director for the USDA Forest Service Southern Region. He currently oversees all fire management and aviation programs that supports 15 National Forests, 13 States and two Territories located in the southern United States and the Caribbean. He previously served as the Assistant Director for Fire overseeing a \$100 million budget, over one million acre prescribed fire program, fire ecology, cooperative fire programs for 13 states and fire planning for 16 National Forests. Shardul joined the USDA Forest Service in 2008 as a program specialist with the National Incident Management Organization (NIMO). While with NIMO Shardul worked on a variety of national scale projects related risk management, ICS training, continuous improvement, American Recovery and Recovery Act (ARRA), and agency organizational transformation. Prior to joining the USDA Forest Service Shardul worked with the North Carolina Forest Service as the fire control & prevention staff forester. In this role he supervised the State's Central Operations Center, managed the state's three Type II Incident Management Teams and National Fire Plan grants, was a State Emergency Response Team member, and was the interagency liaison to the agency cooperators and State Emergency Operations Center. Shardul received a bachelor's in science in Biology from Campbell University, a Master of Forest Conservation from the University of Toronto, and a graduate degree in Environmental Management from the University of London. Shardul lives in Roswell with his wife and two children. They enjoy outdoor activities and travel.