



Margit Bucher Wins the Herbert Stoddard Lifetime Achievement Award

The Association for Fire Ecology (AFE) is pleased to announce that Margit Bucher has been awarded the 2021 Herbert Stoddard Lifetime Achievement Award for her significant contribution to fire ecology and management in the eastern United States.

Margit worked as the Fire Manager for The Nature Conservancy (TNC), North Carolina Chapter for 32 years, retiring after the spring fire season of 2021. She earned a B.S. in Biology from the Karl Eberhardt University in Tuebingen, Germany (1982), and a M.S. in Natural Research Ecology from Duke University (1985). Her contributions overseeing the TNC North Carolina burn program since 1997 are far-reaching and long-lasting. Under Margit's leadership, the program directly led or supported 1,600 burns on 305,000 acres. Margit partnered with USFS Fire Research Lab in Missoula Montana and the NC Forest Service to determine thresholds of ignition in organic soils in coastal NC since 1996. She also partnered with LANDFIRE and the Fire Learning Network to test and improve vegetation maps to inform fire needs. Throughout her career, Margit taught numerous burn workshops and fire courses, leading the implementation section of the Advance Fire Effects Course. Margit was elected as founding President for the NC Prescribed Fire Council in 2006, and again in 2016. She has led collaborative partnerships such as the Onslow Bight Fire Learning Network (2003-2009) and the Southern Blue Ridge Fire Learning Network (SBR FLN, 2007-2021) to return fire to the oak and pine forests and maintain resilient forests for future generations. Margit has mentored countless burn bosses, fire ecologists, and fire practitioners over her career, in what many of those recipients consider her greatest gift to the practice of fire management and ecology in the southeastern US.

AFE honors career achievements in fire ecology and management by recognizing the pioneers and early advocates in our field. Each year, lifetime achievement awards are presented to individuals who have made significant contributions to fire ecology and management and who have inspired and mentored a generation of fire ecologists. The award for individuals who primarily work in ecosystems found in the eastern United States or in similar ecosystems internationally is named after wildlife biologist Herbert Stoddard. Stoddard spent decades studying and managing longleaf pine forests in Georgia and Florida in the 1900's. He became an early advocate for the reintroduction of fire in southern ecosystems, and his forest management practices are still being used today.

Margit was presented with the Stoddard Award at the 9th International Fire Ecology and Management Congress, which was held online from November 30-December 3, 2021. A list of all Lifetime Achievement Award winners is available at <https://fireecology.org/afe-award-winners>.

About AFE

The Association for Fire Ecology (AFE) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the knowledge and use of fire in land management. Our members include scientists, educators, students, managers, practitioners, policymakers, and interested citizens. To learn more about AFE, visit www.fireecology.org.



"Throughout her distinguished career, Margit has maintained a commitment to science-based prescribed burning for ecological purposes. The sheer volume of ecologically-focused prescribed burns she has planned and conducted makes Margit a towering figure in the history of ecological burning across the southeastern US."