1. **Purpose**
   The purpose of this policy is to provide information to employees of Bowdoin College regarding the safe setting of open-air fires including bonfires, campfires, and portable fire pits on campus for planned events.

   **Approval.** A request to set an open-air fire must be proposed by the department or group involved (i.e., Athletics, Events, Student Activities, etc.) at least 10 business days prior to the planned event. Open-air fires will only be approved if they are to be scheduled and managed by a recognized College department or group, as part of a regular, advertised event; requests from individual student(s) for the casual lighting of open-air fires for private events will NOT be approved by either the College or the Brunswick Fire Department (BKFD). **Open-air fires may only be lit in approved outdoor spaces. If the use of a portable steel fire pit is being proposed, only College-specified commercial or residential units will be approved for use.**

2. **Policy Scope**
   This policy applies to all Bowdoin College faculty, staff and students.

3. **Policy Owner**
   The Office of Environmental Health and Safety (EHS)

4. **Procedures**
   The following actions must be taken to schedule an open-air fire:

   a. The office of EHS should be provided with the following information:
      
      i. name of the event;
      ii. specific timeframe of the event when the fire is wanted;
      iii. recognized college department or group sponsoring the event;
      iv. name of the college employee sponsor who will request the burn permit, supervising the fire, and acting as the fire warden;
      v. number of event participants;
      vi. purpose of the open-air fire;
      vii. type of open-air fire (i.e., bonfire, campfire, portable fire pit); and,
      viii. a sketch outlining the proposed location of the open-air fire, and distance to buildings, structures, or other combustible surfaces (i.e., building, fence, deck, etc.).

   b. If approved by the office of EHS, BKFD must be contacted for prior approval of the intended location and purpose of the fire. **NOTE:** Requests for lighting of fires on the College’s quads will not be approved due to lack of water resources, difficulty of crowd control, and potential damages to the landscaping.

   c. If the proposed event is approved by the office of EHS and BKFD, a Facilities Workorder must be submitted by the requesting department or group, to document the details of the event and determine related costs, if any, incurred by Grounds personnel.

   d. The **Grounds Maintenance Manager** must then be contacted directly regarding preparation of the proposed location for the fire (i.e., laying a sand base), as well as the scope and duration of the event. Details of the event may dictate specific labor and material costs being involved, which would need to be resolved prior to the event going forward.
e. If a portable fire pit will be used, it must be inspected prior to use by a competent person (i.e., Grounds staff, office of EHS, employee supervising the event) and used per the manufacturer’s instructions. The portable fire pit inspection will confirm that there are no signs of rusting in the bowl, the metal components are in sound condition, and the pit sit level and firmly on the ground.

f. Notice must also be provided to Security prior to the event so they may monitor the situation. In addition, BKFD may request that a Security Officer or a qualified firefighter be present for the duration of the event (note that this may incur additional costs).

g. Once finalized, the date, time, duration, and location of the event must be conveyed to any persons who may be impacted, including residents of the College and neighbors, at least 3 days prior to the event.

h. A burn permit must be applied for on the day of the event online at the: Town of Brunswick website. Please note that burn permits are only issued by the Town the same day, and due to dry weather, winds, or other conditions the permit may be refused outright and/or revoked by BKFD at the last minute.

i. **Precautions.** The following precautions will be observed in the setting of open-air fires:

   i. The original burn permit will be posted or available at the event location.

   ii. At least one water-can fire extinguisher and hand tools will be made available at the burn site for the duration of the event. If the BKFD so requests, or if deemed necessary by the Grounds Maintenance Manager, a water supply and hose will also be available.

   iii. The fire must be a minimum of 25-feet away from buildings, structures or combustible surfaces,

   iv. Remove any combustible debris from the area adjacent to the fire. If there are dry leaves and pine needles, be sure to rake a 10-foot circle around the fire. If a hose is available for the event, be sure to douse the surrounding vegetation generously with water prior to lighting the fire.

   v. Before lighting an open air fire, assess the environmental conditions. Avoid windy conditions that can blow embers, even if a fire permit has been issued.

   vi. A college employee sponsor will be designated as the competent person, responsible for monitoring the fire for its duration (Fire Warden). If necessary, Grounds personnel will instruct this person on fire safety, including but not limited to maintaining and damping the fire.

   vii. Grounds personnel will provide the materials for the proposed fire and, if occurring during normal work hours, will also set, light, and eventually extinguish the fire. If the event is scheduled after normal work hours, the employee sponsor will be responsible for setting, lighting, and extinguishing the fire themselves. Directions will be provided to the employee sponsor, if warranted.

   viii. Only suitable wood and tinder materials will be burned; trash, waste paper, or other debris may not be burned – these materials pose serious safety hazards due to hazardous smoke
and flying debris. Fire-starting accelerants are not permitted. No flammable materials will be allowed within 10-feet of the firebase.

ix. Be sure to keep the fire small. There is no need for a blazing bonfire, and the bigger the fire, the greater the potential for disaster.

x. When extinguishing the fire, be sure to saturate the wood with water. Stir the remaining wood and coal with a shovel to expose any burning embers and add more water as needed to sufficiently extinguish the fire.

xi. Once the event is concluded and the fire is extinguished, the employee sponsor will be responsible for clearing the site of any debris, securing the water can extinguisher for pickup (if after hours), and submitting a second Grounds workorder for any further cleanup that may be necessary.

j. Emergency Response. In the event of personal injury or property damage, excessive smoke, and/or the need to use the extinguisher, the person acting as the fire warden will immediately contact Security (207-725-3500/x3500) and follow their instructions. In the event of an immediate threat to life safety due to smoke or fire, the venue will be evacuated before contacting Security.

5. Effective Date
   October 13, 2017