

Promoting Ecosystem Resiliency and Fire Adapted Communities Together



**FIRE ADAPTED
COMMUNITIES**
LEARNING NETWORK



Left to right: A crew conducts mop-up during the spring 2017 Yurok TREX; this training exchange focused on local capacity-building and burning in support of cultural resources. Participants at a FireScape Mendocino FLN workshop look on as the “forest treatments” in their sand table model are about to face fire. A Utah neighborhood was one of many where FAC Net members helped residents reduce fuels and otherwise prepare for wildfire. A local landowner was initiated into the world of prescribed burning at the spring 2017 Loup River TREX. © Elizabeth Azzuz; MKWC; UT Division of Forestry, Fire & State Lands; Pheasants Forever

Our Partnership: 2002-2018

PERFACT is a cooperative agreement between the U.S. Forest Service, Department of the Interior agencies and The Nature Conservancy. It supports the Fire Learning Network, Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network, Prescribed Fire Training Exchanges, the Indigenous Peoples Burning Network, and other efforts that together are restoring our nation's forests and grasslands and making communities safer from fire. A small core staff engages hundreds of agency and private partners across the U.S. to increase ecosystem resiliency to benefit nature and people.

National Impact

- Since its start in 2002, the FLN has supported 162 landscapes in 40 states and worked with more than 1,440 partner groups.
- Network projects and partners have raised over \$30 million to support their land management activities, collectively treating more than 500,000 acres.
- Since 2008, 64 prescribed fire training exchanges have provided more than 2,100 training opportunities and treated over 100,000 acres with ecological fire.
- The FAC Learning Network was launched in 2013, rooted in the lessons of the FLN. It now engages well over 100 people in 28 states. Together, members and partners are creating the relationships and connections that are the foundation of resilience.

PERFACT is addressing the country's wildfire problem head-on with a flexible approach that is constantly evolving in response to emerging issues and partner priorities. Millions of acres of land are at risk from wildfires and related threats. Thousands of communities are also at risk. There is widespread, urgent need for preparation and mitigation—proactive tactics from prescribed burning and managing wildfires for resource benefit, to collaboratively developing community plans and creating defensible space.

For years, PERFACT partners have led the way in making progress on the three inter-connected goals now embodied in the National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy:

- Resilient landscapes,
- Fire adapted communities, and
- Safe and effective wildfire response.

From coast to coast, PERFACT supports landscapes and communities that are advancing planning, implementation and adaptive management that move people and places toward these goals.

PERFACT Strategies

Under the PERFACT agreement, people work together to increase the capacity and social capital needed to make ecosystems and communities more resilient to wildfire. PERFACT supports effective learning networks, as well as training, capacity-building and targeted collaborative projects on the ground.

The Fire Learning Network (FLN) engages dozens of multi-stakeholder partnerships in a process that accelerates the restoration of landscapes that depend on fire to sustain both natural and human communities. Through highly effective collaboration, the

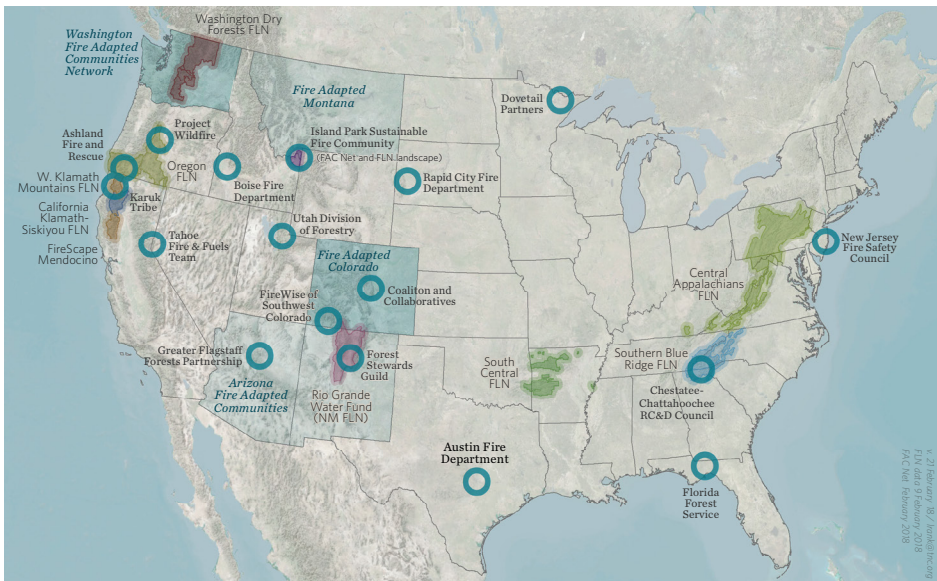
ecological and social values of the landscapes can be maintained, and the consequences of catastrophic wildfire can be reduced.

The Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network (FAC Net) has a similar role, but works from the human communities outward. Members are spreading better ways of living with wildfire—ways that recognize the role of fire in our ecosystems, provide alternatives to costly fire suppression, and reduce risk for residents and firefighters. This includes embracing resiliency concepts and taking action before, during and after wildfires.

Prescribed Fire Training Exchanges (TREX) and cooperative burning events provide experiential training that builds robust local capacity for fire management and offers professional fire practitioners a more holistic perspective—while implementing treatments that support community and landscape objectives.

Scaling-up to Promote Ecosystem Resiliency (SPER) is creating conditions that accelerate progress toward the goal of “right fire” in strategic landscapes. SPER is moving these landscapes and communities toward being fully in support of, and prepared to use, fire—especially managed wildfire—to reduce both risk and the cost of suppression.

The Indigenous Peoples Burning Network (IPBN) brings together Native American people working to revitalize traditional fire cultures in a contemporary context. Their work includes connecting elders and youth to prepare the next generation of cultural fire practitioners, controlled burning to bring back native foods and fiber, and empowering agencies to embrace tribal perspectives.



The Fire Learning Network currently includes 10 landscape-scale collaborative partnerships (colored patches). The geographic reach of Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network groups varies widely; core members include 17 locally-based efforts (blue circles) and five established or emerging state-wide networks (blue shading).

All of these strategies are flexible, adapting as needed to changing circumstances. PERFECT staff and network members actively work to identify challenges and seek opportunities to meet them. From developing tools for collaboration in fire planning to helping communities and businesses plan ahead for post-fire recovery, these networks and partnerships are leaders in the field, making landscapes and communities more resilient.

How it Works

PERFACT's multi-faceted approach helps diverse stakeholders—agencies, organizations and residents—build trust and understanding, and work together to improve their capacity to safely co-exist with fire. Training and co-learning opportunities offered by PERFECT support collective action, helping professionals and communities alike build the capacity and relationships to meet their shared goals.

The FLN provides landscapes and regional networks with modest funding to support workshops and other co-operative actions that build their ability to collaborate. These partnerships integrate science with cultural and local knowledge to create plans, measure results, and adapt their approaches to restoring landscape resiliency.

Core FAC Net communities also receive support to nudge them past barriers, and to allow them to test and refine strategies for preparing for—and recovering from

—wildfire. A growing network of affiliate members is expanding the reach of this network, allowing more communities to benefit from the learning.

The IPBN provides work space where Native American people can focus on cultural aspects of fire. Integrated with other PERFECT partners and strategies, this network elevates members' ability to contribute centuries of fire experience to contemporary fire problem-solving.

TREX and cooperative burning increase local capacity for cross-boundary fuel reduction and restoration work while strengthening partnerships. Participants get hands-on experience in ecological burning and in communicating with the media, develop their fireline qualifications, and learn about local ecology and conservation issues, all in a setting that emphasizes safety, learning and co-operation. The TREX Coaches Network is dramatically expanding the reach of this strategy by mentoring and linking those moving into leadership roles.

Linking members into national networks—and forging connections among the networks—provides an effective means to share and access innovations and lessons learned. In addition, the personal connections across networks and across the country often spark new ideas and new solutions.

A Cohesive Approach

SPER pilots have drawn from other PERFECT strategies to focus on getting to “right fire”—prescribed fire and

natural ignitions managed to benefit human communities and natural systems. Three years of intensive work in landscapes in California, New Mexico and Oregon has clearly made an impact in these landscapes, with more good fire on the land, and more productive conversations in the communities. These projects are grounded in FLN partnerships and planning. Much of the implementation was conducted through, or informed by the lessons of, TREX. FAC Net members contributed to some of the outreach efforts, which will extend the social benefits of the work into the future. In short, these SPER projects are on-the-ground embodiments of the Cohesive Strategy emphasis on an integrated and broad-based approach to fire management.

Who We Are

PERFACT is led by staff from The Nature Conservancy, who partner with the Watershed Research and Training Center to facilitate the FAC Learning Network. PERFECT also partners with numerous other programs, including many projects in the Forest Service's Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program (CFLRP).

Partners in individual landscape and community efforts span a full range of affiliations, including federal, state, local and tribal agencies; businesses; non-profit organizations; universities; private landowners; and engaged residents. Interests are equally varied, and this diversity helps build strong, resilient networks.

Learn More

FLN resources are posted at:

www.conservationgateway.org/fln

FAC Network blogs and more are at:

<https://fireadaptednetwork.org/>

TREX information is at:

<http://nature.ly/trainingexchanges>

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