

# FLN Networker No. 173: December 10, 2014

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*The FLN Networker is a publication of the Fire Learning Network—a partnership of the USDA Forest Service, Department of the Interior (BIA, BLM, National Park Service, US Fish & Wildlife Service) and The Nature Conservancy—intended to foster communication within the network and among its friends. Submit comments, links and subscription requests to Liz Rank.*

For more about the FLN, visit [www.conservationgateway.org/fln](http://www.conservationgateway.org/fln) or contact Lynn Decker.

## News from the Field

**California:** The conferences of the **Northern California Prescribed Fire Council** keep getting bigger and better, with **almost 200 people** at last week's event. Check out the recent [FAC Network blog](#) for some highlights of "**A Future with Fire.**"

**California:** After a summer of numerous wildfires, the **Klamath National Forest** held a series of **after action reviews**, meeting with the public in **eight communities** to get their insights on the management of the events. An overview of the whole series of meetings, which were facilitated by **Mary Huffman** ([mhuffman@tnc.org](mailto:mhuffman@tnc.org)), is in the attached *Notes from the Field*. The [Two Rivers Tribune](#) also ran a good **article covering one of the meetings**, in Salmon River, in greater depth.

**California:** The [June issue](#) of *Yurok Today* covers last spring's **prescribed fire training exchange** near Weitchpec in the story "Fire Council Ignites Long Term Burn Plan: **Yurok Fire Crew Trains to Conduct Cultural Burns.**"

There's more about **Yurok—and Karuk**—cultural burning in the [article](#) "Traditional Knowledge Fuels Yurok and Karuk **Habitat Restoration Project with USDA**" on the *Indian Country Today Media Network* site.

**Georgia:** The **Georgia Blue Ridge Mountains** landscape held its **third gathering last week**, with 29 people from 10 stakeholder groups there to discuss fire in the landscape. There were presentations on the local **Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network** and on two **watershed projects** in **Chattahoochee NF**, where fire is a major component of the restoration. The afternoon was devoted to group discussions about **communications** within the group and with the public in the landscape, and about fire **implementation**. Conversations were very **frank and productive**, and the group is growing to be an efficient, productive team. For more, contact **Malcolm Hodges** ([mhodes@tnc.org](mailto:mhodes@tnc.org)).

**New Mexico:** Channel One News—which reaches **over 5 million** young people around the country in middle and high schools—visited the **Forest Guild** to talk **youth conservation, forest restoration and fire adapted communities**. They spent a day in the **Santa Fe National Forest** at a ponderosa pine restoration site where the Guild is partnering with the University of Arizona Tree Ring Lab and others ([twitter picture](#)). A 2014 Forest Guild **Youth Conservation Corps crewmember** and a **Highlands University fire ecology student** who burned at the **Black Lake TRES** in 2013 and 2014 were interviewed. The story will go live in January. For more, contact **Eytan Krasilovsky** ([eytan@forestguild.org](mailto:eytan@forestguild.org)).

**North Carolina:** In the **Central Escarpment** landscape, staff from the **Grandfather Ranger District**—with assistance from the **North Carolina Forest Service**—have **burned about 300 acres** at two sites to prepare for **shortleaf pine planting**. Smoke management has been a significant hurdle—although burns have been within parameters, **smoke models failed** to accurately predict transport winds, and smoke tended to hang around at ground level on site, which required **extra care in planning** burn days. In spring, contractors will plant shortleaf seedlings and seedling survival will be monitored. For more information, contact **Adam Warwick** ([awarwick@tnc.org](mailto:awarwick@tnc.org)).

**Virginia:** In the **Allegheny Highlands**, a fourth year of **monitoring** was completed this past summer at the Warm Springs Mountain preserve as part of long-term study of **landscape-scale response of avian communities** to **controlled burning**. A [brief report](#) is available on the Conservation Gateway; for more information, contact **Laurel Schablein** ([lschablein@tnc.org](mailto:lschablein@tnc.org)).

**National:** **Peter Plastrik**, lead author of the **book** *Connecting to Change the World: Harnessing the Power of Networks for Social Impact*, [blogged](#) about his **visit to the Colbert Report** promoting it. The book profiles ten **social impact networks**, including the **FLN**.

## Contest: Reducing Risk

**Reducing Risk:** Solution Search is looking for **innovative solutions to weather-related disasters** (including wildfire). **Enter or nominate** an organization on [their website](#) (note: poor page design—you must scroll down to see details.)

## Resource: Forest Threats Newsletter

**Forest Threats:** The **Forest Service's Eastern Forest Environmental Threat Assessment Center** has a bi-monthly **newsletter**, *The Forest Threatnet*. Among the stories in the [November/December issue](#) are pieces on invasive species, and on wildfires and the water supply.

## Articles: Forest Structure Restoration / Defensible Space

**Forest Structure Restoration:** The [article](#) “A **New Approach to Evaluate** Forest Structure Restoration Needs across Oregon and Washington, USA” (Haugo et al.) concludes that **changes in structure** are needed on **40% of the coniferous forests** in this region. The study is intended to “facilitate the ability of local land managers to **incorporate regional scale, multi-ownership context** into local forest management and restoration.” A [story about this work](#) appears in the *Bend Bulletin*.

**Defensible Space:** The article “The Role of Defensible Space for Residential Structure Protection During Wildfires” is in the *International Journal of Wildland Fire* ([abstract](#)). The authors looked at **1000 structures that burned vs. 1000 that survived wildfires** in San Diego County, and found that the “most effective actions were reducing woody cover up to 40% immediately adjacent to structures and ensuring that vegetation does not overhang or touch the structure.”

## Video: NW Fires

**NW Fires:** In spite of the title, the [video](#) “Pacific Northwest Fire Siege 2014” posted by the **Pacific Northwest Coordinating Group** gives a good **overview of this year's active fire season** in Oregon and Washington. It's suppression-oriented, but with plenty of messages about **cooperation, collaboration**, and the **range of values** at stake.

## Jobs: Squad Boss / Burn Crew / Aquatics & Fire Technician / Fire Module Crew

**Squad Boss:** **Wildland Restoration International** is hiring a squad leader for a team they are starting in **northeast Florida**. Details are available in their [announcement](#); applications are due by **December 15**.

**Burn Crew:** The **Conservancy's** Kentucky chapter is seeking a **burn crew manager** and three **burn crew members** for the spring season. For more information, see the Conservancy's [careers page](#) (job ID #42646 and #42647); applications are due by **December 17**.

**Aquatics & Fire Technician:** **Missouri State University**, in partnership with the **National Park Service's** Heartland and Inventory Monitoring Unit, is seeking a technician to assist **aquatics and fire ecology monitoring teams**. Details are available on the [MSU employment site](#) (posting #20140230FTS); applications are due by **December 19**.

**Fire Module Crew:** The **Conservancy's** Colorado chapter is hiring a crew member for its **Southern Rockies Wildland Fire Module**. Details are available on the Conservancy's [careers page](#) (job ID #42653); applications are due by **January 30**.

## Webinars

**December 11**  
**new listing**      **State-and-Transition Modeling for Ecosystem Assessment, Restoration Planning and Collaborative Learning**

9:00 Pacific / 10:00 Mountain / 11:00 Central / noon Eastern  
Randy Swaty will be the presenter in this Southern Fire Exchange webinar. Information: <https://www.conservationgateway.org/ConservationPractices/FireLandscapes/LANDFIRE/Pages/STSMSFEwebinar.aspx>

**January 21, 2015**      **Training Exchanges from the Ground Up**  
11:00 Pacific / noon Mountain / 1:00 Central / 2:00 Eastern (1:15 long)  
The Great Plains Fire Science Exchange will host this webinar with **Jeremy Bailey** and **Ben Wheeler** discussing the strategy behind TREX and how to create burn units across multiple landownerships in the Great Plains. Log in: <http://acp2.missouristate.edu/trex/>

**January 21**      **The Ability of Wildfire to Act as a Fuel Treatment**  
11:00 Pacific / noon Mountain / 1:00 Central / 2:00 Eastern  
This Northern Rockies Fire Science Network webinar will be based on the research of Sean Parks, Carol Miller and Lisa Holsinger. Log in: <http://nrfirescience.org/event/ability-wildfire-act-fuel-treatment>

## FLN Workshops & Field Tours

**December 11**      **Pike's Peak FLN / Monument, CO**  
Agenda items for this planning team meeting will include discussion of the vision, mission and charter for this FLN, as well as specific activities to be completed in the coming months. Information: **Paige Lewis** ([paige\\_lewis@tnc.org](mailto:paige_lewis@tnc.org))

**January 28-29**  
**new listing**      **FireScope Mendocino / Elk Creek, CA**  
Objectives for workshop #5 include refining the draft strategies developed in the last workshop, using results chains to test strategies, and starting work in subgroups to tackle the strategies while continuing to build shared learning among participants. Information: **Mary Huffman** ([mhuffman@tnc.org](mailto:mhuffman@tnc.org))

**May 12-14**      **Southern Blue Ridge FLN / Morganton, NC**  
Save the date for the 10<sup>th</sup> annual regional workshop of the SBR FLN; details will follow. (Meanwhile, you can check out information from this past May's workshop at <http://sbrflnworkshop9.weebly.com/>.)

## FLN Prescribed Fire Training Exchanges

- February 15-28**      **North Carolina Prescribed Fire Training Exchange / Ellerbe, NC**  
The North Carolina Prescribed Fire Council, Southern Blue Ridge FLN and numerous other partners will host this TREX in the sandhills and piedmont region of the state. (The application deadline has passed.)
- March 14-29**      **Niobrara River Valley TREX / Ainsworth, NE**  
This “spring break TREX” will integrate a diverse group of fire practitioners, including university students; municipal, state, federal and contract firefighters; and other natural resource managers, scientists and researchers. It will provide experiential learning opportunities through a series of controlled burns on The Nature Conservancy’s Niobrara Valley Preserve and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Fort Niobrara NWR. Applications are due by February 2.  
Information & application form are on the Conservation Gateway:  
<http://www.conservationgateway.org/ConservationPractices/FireLandscapes/HabitatProtectionandRestoration/Training/TrainingExchanges/Pages/NVP-2015.aspx>
- March 16-27**      **Lower Loup Valley TREX / Broken Bow, NE**  
This TREX will focus on about 5,000 acres of privately-owned grassland that is used for livestock production. Prescribed fire is being used to manage eastern redcedar and promote habitat for grassland-dependent species such as the greater prairie chicken. The TREX is a partnership between Pheasants Forever, The Nature Conservancy, the Fire Learning Network, and the Rainwater Basin Joint Venture. A grant from the Nebraska Environmental Trust Fund has provided financial resources to allow participating landowners to rest the land from grazing in order to build up fuel that will increase the effectiveness of the burns.  
Applications are due by February 2.  
Information & application form are on the Conservation Gateway:  
<http://www.conservationgateway.org/ConservationPractices/FireLandscapes/HabitatProtectionandRestoration/Training/TrainingExchanges/Pages/Loup-2015.aspx>

## Conferences, Workshops, Etc.

- February 17-19**  
**updated**      **Midwest Fire Conference: Keep Fire Working for the Land / Dubuque, IA**  
This Tallgrass Prairie and Oak Savanna Fire Science Consortium conference will focus on fire in the tallgrass prairie, savanna and oak woodland region of the Midwestern United States and adjacent regions of Canada. Registration is open (the early registration rate is good through **January 15**).  
Information: <http://www.tposfirescience.org/mwfire15-overview/>
- March 24-26**  
**new listing**      **Wildland-Urban Interface Conference / Reno, NV**  
There will be a FAC track at this IAFC conference.  
Information: [www.iafc.org/wui](http://www.iafc.org/wui)
- April 20-24**      **Managing Fire, Understanding Ourselves: Human Dimensions in Safety and Wildland Fire / Boise, ID**  
13th International Wildland Fire Safety Summit & 4th Human Dimensions of Wildland Fire Conference.  
Information: <http://www.iawfonline.org/>

- May 2, 2015**      **International Wildfire Community Preparedness Day**  
 Various events will be taking place. The logo and a save-the-date postcard are now available; for those, and more information, visit <http://www.nfpa.org/safety-information/for-consumers/outdoors/wildland-fires/national-wildfire-community-preparedness-day>.
- May 5-7, 2015**      **11<sup>th</sup> Symposium on Fire and Forest Meteorology / Minneapolis, MN**  
 The American Meteorological Society is hosting this conference; the abstract deadline is **January 12**.  
 Information: <http://www.ametsoc.org/MEET/fainst/201511fireforest.html>
- October 22-24 deadline**      **Backyards & Beyond: Wildland Fire Education Conference / Myrtle Beach, SC**  
 The deadline for abstracts for next year's NFPA conference is **December 15**.  
 Information: <http://www.nfpa.org/training/backyards-and-beyond>
- November 16-20**      **Fire Ecology & Management Congress / San Antonio, TX**  
 Presentation and poster abstracts are due **January 15**.  
 Information: <http://afefirecongress.org/>

## Send News, Links & Comments

**Lynn Decker** – [ldecker@tnc.org](mailto:ldecker@tnc.org) – Lynn is in the office.

**Jeremy Bailey** – [jeremy\\_bailey@tnc.org](mailto:jeremy_bailey@tnc.org) – Jeremy is in New Mexico December 10-12, Ashland (OR) December 15-19.

**Wendy Fulks** – [wfulks@tnc.org](mailto:wfulks@tnc.org) – Wendy is out December 12.

**Mary Huffman** – [mhuffman@tnc.org](mailto:mhuffman@tnc.org) – Mary is in Colorado Springs December 11; out December 21-30.

**Heather Montanye** – [hmontanye@tnc.org](mailto:hmontanye@tnc.org) – Heather is out December 22-26.

**Guy Duffner** – [gduffner@tnc.org](mailto:gduffner@tnc.org) – Guy is in the office.

**Liz Rank** (editor) – [lrnk@tnc.org](mailto:lrnk@tnc.org) – Liz is in the office.

To stop receiving the FLN Networker, please reply to this message and include your request in the body of the message.

## Full Links

News from the Field—CA—NorCal Rx conference: <http://facnetwork.org/future-fire-conference-held-sacramento/>

News from the Field—CA—AARs: <http://www.tworivertribune.com/2014/12/meeting-of-the-fire-minds/>

News from the Field—CA—Yurok: [http://www.yuroktribe.org/documents/june\\_2014\\_YUROK\\_web.pdf](http://www.yuroktribe.org/documents/june_2014_YUROK_web.pdf)

Yurok & Karuk: <https://indiancountrytodaymedianetwork.com/2014/12/02/traditional-knowledge-fuels-yurok-and-karuk-habitat-restoration-project-usda-158099>

News from the Field—NM—Twitter picture: [https://twitter.com/Eytan\\_Forest/status/535125167819612160/photo/1](https://twitter.com/Eytan_Forest/status/535125167819612160/photo/1)

News from the Field—VA:

<http://www.conservationgateway.org/ConservationPractices/FireLandscapes/FireLearningNetwork/NetworkProducts/Pages/Avian-Monitoring-Allegheny-Highlands-2014.aspx>

Contest—Reducing risk: <http://www.solutionsearch.org/contest/reducing-our-risk>

Resources—Forest threats: <http://www.forestthreats.org/products/news-updates/volume-7-issue-5-november-december-2014>

Articles—Forest structure restoration: <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0378112714005519>

Story about study: <http://www.bendbulletin.com/home/2604294-151/study-more-thinning-burning-needed-in-region#>

Articles—Defensible space: <http://www.publish.csiro.au/nid/114/paper/WF13158.htm>

Jobs—Squad boss: <http://wildlandrestoration.org/news-announcements>

Jobs—TNC careers page:

[https://careers.nature.org/psp/tnccareers/APPLICANT/HRMS/c/HRS\\_HRAM.HRS\\_CE.GBL?SiteId=1](https://careers.nature.org/psp/tnccareers/APPLICANT/HRMS/c/HRS_HRAM.HRS_CE.GBL?SiteId=1)

Jobs—Aquatics & fire technician: <https://jobs.missouristate.edu/postings/17016>

The Fire Learning Network is supported by *Promoting Ecosystem Resilience and Fire Adapted Communities Together: Collaborative Engagement, Collective Action and Co-ownership of Fire*, a cooperative agreement between The Nature Conservancy, USDA Forest Service and agencies of the Department of the Interior.

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## Fire Learning Network Notes from the Field

# After Action Reviews Klamath Area Fires, Summer 2014

November 7-14, 2014

In the second week of November, nine meetings were held in Siskiyou County communities that had been affected by the summer wildfires in the Klamath National Forest. These after action reviews were intended to allow community members and agency staff together to:

- reflect upon experiences from the 2014 fires and to share lessons learned;
- use the experiences from the 2014 fires to improve wildfire response, forest resilience and fire adapted communities; and
- continue to build fire-related partnerships in Klamath area communities.

**The Klamath National Forest** organized the meetings, and FLN staff member Mary Huffman assisted by facilitating them. In all, about a hundred people from the area took part in the meetings, representing local fire departments and fire safe councils, CAL FIRE and the county sheriff's office, business owners and residents. About 15 staff from the Klamath National Forest also took

part, with the forest supervisor attending all meetings, along with the forest deputy fire chief, fire planner, and at least one district ranger.

**At each meeting**, participants introduced themselves, then broke into small groups for a World Café exercise. Topics addressed in this way included interagency coordination and communication; field operations and tactics; fire effects and landscape condition; community safety and well-being; and "Please answer my question." The groups then shared two key highlights from their table's conversation with the

larger group. Each meeting then closed with a round-robin of final remarks, or with guided discussion of the question "How can we use what we've learned to make things better in the future?"

**Recurring themes and messages** that local participants expressed to the Forest Service:

- If the Forest Service would log the forest, the fires wouldn't be this bad because there wouldn't be all this fuel.
- Because you're not logging, the roads aren't maintained and fewer



*Right:* A news release distributed locally outlined the goals, locations and dates of the nine after action review community meetings hosted by the Klamath NF.

*Above:* A notice on the county fairground marquee helped get the word out further.



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## News Release

Media Contact: Kerry Greene  
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October 30, 2014

### Community After Action Reviews for the 2014 Season Klamath Fires

**Yreka, CA** - The Klamath National Forest has scheduled eight community meetings for community discussion regarding the Little Deer, Logs, Whites, and Beaver Fires as well as Happy Camp Complex. The goal of these meetings is to reflect upon experiences from the 2014 fires and share lessons learned; use the experiences from 2014 to improve wildfire response, ecosystem resilience and fire adapted communities; and to continue to build fire-related partnerships in local communities.

Presentations are planned in the following communities:

- November 7th** 5:00-7:00pm **Yreka** at Winema Hall at the Fairgrounds
- November 10th** 12:00-2:00pm **Klamath River** at the Klamath River Community Center
- November 10th** 5:00-7:00pm **Macdoel** at the Butte Valley Fire Hall
- November 11th** 6:00-8:00pm **Seiad** at the Seiad Fire Hall
- November 12th** 4:00pm-6:00pm **Sawyer's Bar** at the Salmon River Restoration Council
- November 13th** 12:00-2:00pm **Happy Camp** at the Happy Camp Grange Hall
- November 13th** 6:00pm-8:00pm **Scott Bar** at the Community Hall
- November 14th** 2:00-4:00pm **Fort Jones** at the Fort Jones Community Center

people are present in the woods—this makes it harder to find fires right away and to fight them.

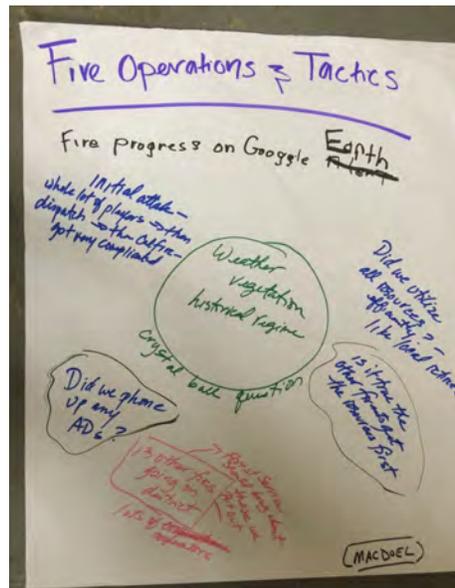
- Salvage logging needs to be done faster. The value of salvaged timber falls dramatically after the first year.
- The Forest Service isn't aggressive enough in initial attack. The system is too cautious and this is what lets fires get big. We wouldn't have this problem if we were aggressive in initial attack.
- You don't engage local knowledge during firefighting. Some of the incident management teams didn't listen to us, and they don't know the area (e.g., they don't know where the houses are).
- We could see the fire coming for days, but nobody came. Why couldn't you send resources to us sooner?
- If we could spend a fraction of the money on fuel management that we do on fire fighting, we would be way ahead.



The Klamath National Forest supervisor and a district ranger exchange ideas with residents of Sawyers Bar and staff from the Salmon River Restoration Council.



The Forest's deputy forest chief discusses firefighting strategy with a local business owner and a local river guide at the meeting in Happy Camp.



Sample page from the meeting in the village of Macdoel, with notes from participants on the topic of fire operations and tactics.

**Key information** shared with the community by the Forest Service:

- During the current forest supervisor's tenure (seven years), the Klamath NF's approach to wildfire has been aggressive initial attack.
- Altogether, the fires burned roughly 200,000 acres on Klamath National Forest lands.
- The firefighting costs totaled roughly \$150 million for the Klamath National Forest.
- When the line of storms came through on August 11, there were about twenty new fire starts. We put as many resources as possible on the line and still it was not enough.
- At one point we had five incident management teams working and 6,000 people working on the fires.
- The proposed Westside Recovery Project includes removing hazard trees from along roads, removing fuels in and around communities, salvage logging for timber value and replanting. Please send your comments on the proposed action.
- The earliest that work could begin on this recovery project, using the exceptions we have requested under NEPA and without litigation, is nine months (as opposed to the typical 2-3 years).
- We can expand the community liaison program and pre-fire planning to improve the use of local

knowledge during firefighting. In some places we need more than one approved community liaison.

**In summary**, the main outcomes from this series of meetings were:

- The USFS and participants exchanged facts and clarified rumors about the firefighting effort.
- Residents shared their frustrations; a few picked up claim forms for damages on private property resulting from firefighting operations.
- Firefighting cooperators (agencies including fire departments and law enforcement) exchanged ideas for improved communication and coordination for future fires.
- Fire Safe Councils were endorsed for citizen action relating to fuel reduction on private property.
- Several communities realized how participation in the Klamath National Forest's community liaison program is a powerful and effective avenue for exchange of local knowledge during firefighting.



An area of known spotted owl habitat on the Klamath National Forest burned in the summer fires. The scorched conifer needles and oak leaves will fall during the winter rains.

All photos: TNC/Mary Huffman

**For more information** about these AAR workshops, contact:

**Mary Huffman**  
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The Fire Learning Network (FLN) is part of *Promoting Ecosystem Resilience and Fire Adapted Communities Together*, a cooperative agreement between The Nature Conservancy, USDA Forest Service and agencies of the Department of the Interior. For more information, contact Lynn Decker ldecker@tnc.org or (801) 320-0524.



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