



## Fire Learning Network Notes from the Field

# Western Klamath Restoration Partnership Maps Out Prescriptions and Next Steps for Implementation

November 3-5, 2014

Happy Camp, CA

The Western Klamath Restoration Partnership, with support from the Fire Learning Network, held its eighth workshop focused on making a landscape-level shift away from full fire suppression toward increased use of prescribed fire to protect shared community values. Community support for restoring fire processes at the landscape scale is core to the group's landscape level planning efforts.

**This workshop** took place as participants were still articulating lessons learned from an intense fire season and prescribed fire training exchange that both wrapped up in October. A recent large influx of federal funds to build momentum toward realizing the group's goals signals high level support within the Forest Service for such a shift, and puts participants under pressure to produce results. The funding stream enables hiring of employees to do the work outlined in these capacity-building grants.

**During the workshop**, the group honed in on the nuts and bolts of treatment prescriptions, repeatedly coming back to the questions, "What did this place look like 100 years ago?" and, "What do we want this place to look like 100 years from now?" Using ecological forensics as a basis for prescriptions surfaced during the field trip of burned areas: "When you plant trees, ask 'What will the soil support?'" suggested a member of the Happy Camp Fire Safe Council and the Karuk Tribe. To get site-specific, a second tribal member proposed looking closely for clues about past uses of a place, such as stumps where fire-resistant conifers may have been prior to



A partnership co-leader from the Forest Service points out how the summer's fires relate to treatment priorities previously identified by the group.

logging, or gathering grounds where oak woodlands may have once dominated a slope before fire exclusion.

**More immediately**, the group's zones of agreement will be tested by the Forest Service's proposed Westside (Fire) Recovery Project. That project proposes combining salvage logging with the removal of killed trees near homes and along roadways, which led the group to tackle a tough question: Can fire recovery activities that include controversial logging techniques actually advance the group's strategies for restoration and community vitality? If so, how could the treatments be refined?

**Discussions about salvage logging** resulted in a series of principles that could guide specific prescriptions. For example, salvage areas could be located where the group wishes to maintain low fuel loads such as along strategic fire control lines (near roads, ridges and/or in the Wildland Urban Interface), only on the uppermost third of the slope. Or, some salvage and post-salvage prescriptions could be planned to



In the field, workshop participants discuss post-burn hazards and treatment options, including salvage logging, to find zones of agreement.

allow for prescribed burning within 3-10 years, then every 5-15 years after that.

**The group agreed** that a Western Klamath Restoration Partnership annual work plan would help keep all participants in the loop about activities under different grants towards the same goals. A work plan could also help spell out how key tasks would reinforce shared values, strategies and principles of the group.

**For more information** about the Western Klamath Restoration Partnership and Western Klamath Mountains FLN, contact:

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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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v. 24 Nov 2014/Erica Terence