



# Fire Learning Network Notes from the Field

## Central Oregon Prescribed Fire Training Exchange

Bend, Oregon  
May 14-21, 2015

**Thirty-five firefighters**, conservation stewards and managers gathered to learn about the social and ecological challenges and opportunities for the use of prescribed fire in the forests, shrublands and grasslands of Oregon. Hosted by the Central Oregon Fire Management Service—a joint BLM-USFS program—and TNC, and with participation from the Oregon Prescribed Fire Council and the University of Idaho, this was the first prescribed fire training exchange in Oregon.

**Despite a rainy start**, the team remained patient and focused. Participants spent time in the classroom, as planned, and went on field trips. And in spite of the forecast, they were able to find weather windows and burn units where fire could be used to meet ecological and training objectives, as well as opportunities for local community engagement and outreach. A few days in, participants implemented a controlled burn on the Deschutes National Forest, and two more days of burning followed.



Maintenance fire in a restored ponderosa forest. By taking advantage of brief, unexpected burning windows, this TRES was able to complete 191 acres of needed treatments that would otherwise likely not have been done this year, as local crews had had to turn their focus to preparing for the wildfire season.



### Participating Organizations

- Bureau of Land Management
- Central Oregon Fire Management Service
- Grayback Forestry
- Lomakatsi Restoration Project
- Oregon Department of Forestry
- Oregon Prescribed Fire Council
- The Nature Conservancy
- University of Idaho
- USDA Forest Service

**For more information** about this training exchange, contact:

**Pete Caligiuri**  
pcaligiuri@tnc.org

**For more information** about TRES being offered elsewhere across the country, visit:

<http://nature.ly/trainingexchanges>



It wasn't all ponderosa: participants discussed the ecology of sage-steppe ecosystems on a field tour. Classroom and field learning, as well as burning, were key to the event's success.

*Photos: TNC/Pete Caligiuri*

**Over the course of the event**, participants learned and practiced a variety of skills—including interviewing with the media, speaking with the public about beneficial fire and monitoring the effects of fire on vegetation, as well as implementing controlled burns. Diverse teams were tasked with igniting and holding prescribed fires, and monitoring and documenting fire effects. They also worked with local community members to promote the use of fire in and around communities—helping pave the way for safer communities and fire-adapted ecosystems restored to a healthier, more resilient condition.

The Fire Learning Network and Scaling-up to Promoted Ecosystem Resiliency (SPER) are part of *Promoting Ecosystem Resilience and Fire Adapted Communities Together (PERFACT)*, a cooperative agreement between The Nature Conservancy, USDA Forest Service and agencies of the Department of the Interior. For more information on PERFACT, contact Lynn Decker ldecker@tnc.org or (801) 320-0524.



*An equal opportunity provider*