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FLN



DISPATCH

*Emerging Lessons From
The Fire Learning Network*

FIRE LEARNING NETWORK A cooperative project of The Nature Conservancy, the USDA Forest Service, and the Dept. of the Interior, the network was created in 2002 to catalyze efforts to reduce hazardous fuels across the country. Part of the larger joint program *Restoring Fire-Adapted Ecosystems* that includes fire education and training components, the network operates at both local and national levels to overcome barriers to implementing ecologically appropriate fuels reduction and restoration projects.

<http://tncfire.org/usfln>

THE NATURE CONSERVANCY FIRE INITIATIVE This 20-person team is working to assess, abate and prevent fire-related threats to biodiversity conservation around the world. In the U.S., the Initiative is working with a variety of partners to promote ecologically appropriate fire management, develop and implement science-based planning tools and monitoring techniques, and further fire education and training efforts.

<http://nature.org/fire>

In Utah's Grouse Creek and Raft River mountain ranges, The Nature Conservancy is working with a variety of public and private partners to improve land management across 1.3 million acres of sagebrush shrublands and aspen-conifer forest. The coalition is using cutting-edge spatial modeling and GIS techniques pioneered by the **Intermountain West Fire Learning Network** to better understand the lands and waters of this region. The computer models will help land managers analyze the impacts of various land-use practices on this vast ecosystem, and to collaborate on future management scenarios—developing a unified and strategic vision to benefit both humans and nature.

“It's inspiring to see the many landowners and stakeholders in this region come together to use this technology,” said Elaine York, the Conservancy's west desert regional director. “A collaborative vision for this area will not only alleviate risks to its plants and animals, but it will also foster information exchange among



Wildcat Creek in the Raft River Mountains.
—Photo by Elaine York

GROUSE CREEK/RAFT RIVER MOUNTAINS GIS AND MODELING PROJECT PARTNERS

- Bureau of Land Management
- Private landowners
- Sawtooth National Forest
- Utah Division of Wildlife Resources
- Natural Resources Conservation Service
- The Nature Conservancy
- Utah Partners for Conservation and Development

For more information, contact Elaine York at 801-238-2320 or eyork@tnc.org.

the stakeholders, and better equip them to meet their various land management goals.”

To get the process started, the Conservancy will host a series of partner workshops to develop objectives and specifications, and then launch the actual spatial modeling program. The program—which is called the Tool for Exploratory Landscape Scenario Analyses or TELSAs—will compile and analyze historical land-use data to help community partners forecast and explore the past and future implications of specific land-use scenarios, including grazing, weed control, prescribed fire and other types of restoration.

With this valuable information, the partners can explore future projects that could differ from current management regimens. One potential scenario, for example, could be to concentrate all restoration projects in one watershed for five years before concentrating on another watershed.

The results of the models will be disseminated through an electronic database

and report, as well as another round of community workshops. When complete, the Grouse Creek and Raft River Mountains technology and collaboration could serve as a model for community-based conservation in large-scale landscapes throughout Utah and the West.

The Grouse Creek/Raft River Mountains landscape has been active in the Intermountain West Fire Learning Network since its inception. In addition to this project, the Network has developed and tested GIS and spatial modeling techniques at landscapes in Nevada and Washington State.

GET INVOLVED!

If you're interested in participating in a regional or national level meeting, or just learning more:

- Browse the FLN Web site
<http://tncfire.org/usfln>
- Join and contribute to the FLN listserv
http://tncfire.org/training_listservs
- Contact TNC or agency leads:
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The Nature Conservancy
SAVING THE LAST GREAT PLACES ON EARTH