



# **FIRE, LANDSCAPES & PEOPLE: A CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP**

**January 2007 – December 2010  
FINAL REPORT**

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# FIRE, LANDSCAPES & PEOPLE: A CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP



In four years the Fire, Landscapes & People (FLP) agreement allowed the partners to make significant contributions to collaborative, sustainable resource management across the United States. The partnership has made a difference both on the ground across millions of acres, and in the hearts and minds of the tens of thousands of people affected by the partnership. FLP's legacy is a cohort of dedicated people working through public-private partnerships at the national, state and local levels to support sustainable and fire-adapted communities. FLP's three-pronged approach helps partners deal with natural and socioeconomic environments that are changing rapidly. The Fire Learning Network, training, and education and outreach components of the agreement work together to build capacity and knowledge at multiple spatial scales in support of ecosystem restoration.

## Why It Works

The partnership fundamentally **connects** people at all levels, within and between organizations. People are joined by their work on current projects, but are also laying groundwork for greater integration over time. By working collaboratively and sharing knowledge and lessons learned, people build connections that serve both present and future needs, and that would not be made without this partnership. These efforts have built capacity and accelerated and scaled up restoration across all lands where the partnership works.

The partnership is **nimble** and flexible, and is able to try things that may or may not work in a relatively low risk way. We have the ability to shift quickly; and with connections to several large partners, we have the capacity to try things that smaller partners (or units) would not historically have been able to attempt. The partnership consistently looks for **gaps and bottlenecks**, and finds creative ways to fill or eliminate them. Fire management and restoration are rapidly changing, and existing organizations and structures are sometimes not able to change as fast as needed. We specifically look for places where long-term barriers exist and find ways to surmount them.

The partnership allows for **long-term, in-depth involvement** and delivers a flexible **blend** of network / training / outreach, which results in a capacity to address complex or otherwise intractable problems. The regular, long-term delivery of activities to a broad range of stakeholders also builds social resiliency so that projects and connections are continued even as personnel change.

In short, the partnership is an effective **catalyst**—it brings together resources (human, financial and tactical) to do more than any had been able to do alone, or without the assistance of the partnership.

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*"I have been reminded once again, how invaluable networking and exchange of ideas with other agency personnel, other disciplines and peer groups can be."*

*Botanist, National Park Service  
Prescribed Fire Workshop for Resource Specialists*

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## Long-Term Partnership

The Fire, Landscapes & People (FLP) agreement continued the work begun by The Nature Conservancy, USDA Forest Service and agencies of the Department of the Interior under the Restoring Fire-Adapted Ecosystems (RFAE) agreement in 2002. Work under the FLP agreement built upon the successes of RFAE, but also broke new ground, for example with the development of innovative training exchanges that rely on both the training program and Fire Learning Network. The FLP agreement also solidified the foundation for continued, expanded cooperation among the partners under the Promoting Ecosystem Resiliency through Collaboration (PERC) agreement, starting in 2011.

## Selected Accomplishments 2007–2010

- The Fire Learning Network (FLN) engaged 83 landscapes in 26 states, plus Puerto Rico and five Caribbean countries, working with more than 550 partner groups to overcome barriers to fire regime restoration across large landscapes
- FLN projects leveraged over \$5.2 million in restoration and other funding, and collectively treated more than 60,000 acres
- Training staff led 40 experiential training courses and workshops—including a new workshop developed for resource specialists—on fire ecology, fire effects and fire operations, serving 1,200 students
- Training exchanges, developed under this agreement to meet an agency need for prescribed fire experience and evaluation opportunities, delivered training to 213 participants and treated 35,400 acres
- Education and outreach staff delivered tools and training to hundreds of communications and fire professionals, and—through means ranging from small-town newspapers to social media—directly reached an audience in the hundreds of thousands with messages about fire and ecosystem restoration.

enhancing the fire ecology, prescribed fire and fire use skills, education and qualifications of fire and resource management professionals

3. Increased public understanding of fire's role and support for the use of fire in today's ecological and human landscapes
4. Strengthened agency and conservation community understanding and support for the role of fire in restoring and maintaining ecosystems
5. Improved collaboration and integration with diverse resource management disciplines (vegetation, wildlife, hydrology, etc.) in the planning and implementation of landscape restoration
6. Fire regime restoration plans and actions developed through the Fire Learning Network are prototypes of the successful integration of all appropriate science, technology and cultural knowledge

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*"We made so much progress in just four years, and I think there's so much more progress we can make. I think the ball is really just getting rolling—it takes some time, as you all know. I think we should be proud of the accomplishments over four years."*

*District Ranger, USDA Forest Service  
Fire Learning Network landscape leader*

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## Components of the Agreement

The Fire, Landscapes & People cooperative agreement had three components, which are briefly described in the next section of this document:

- U.S. Fire Learning Network
- Training Program
- Education and Outreach Program

## Outcomes of the Partnership

The three components worked together to further the six outcomes set for the agreement, which are reported on in the last section of this document. Those outcomes are:

1. Improved collaboration and learning at the landscape level in planning, prioritization, implementation, and monitoring
2. Increased capacity for beneficial fire use by

For more information on the Fire, Landscapes & People cooperative agreement, contact:

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