Southern Blue Ridge Fire Learning Network

www.tncfire.org/usfln

What is a Fire Learning Network (FLN)?

· *A landscape-scale collaborative effort to accelerate the restoration of fire-adapted ecosystems*
· A nationwide effort that operates through regional and local partnerships
· Funded by the National Fire Plan

The Southern Blue Ridge FLN:

· Initiated in 2007 by a diverse group of partners including federal and state agencies, Universities, and NGOs including The Nature Conservancy
· Comprised of 7.7 acres of public and private land in the Southern Appalachian Highlands, USA
· *Our vision:* To increase the capacity for prescribed burning and improve the collective ability to achieve meaningful fuel reduction and ecological restoration objectives

SBR FLN Project Areas
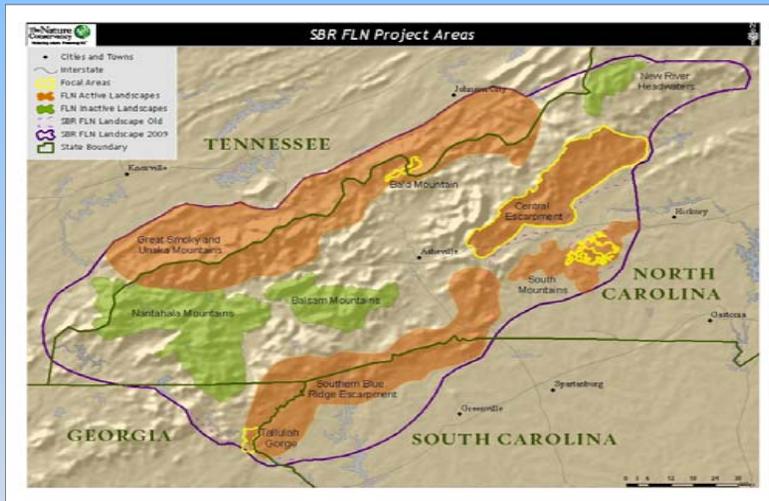
Where are we working?

· The Southern Blue Ridge FLN features 7 distinct "Landscapes" and 4 "Focal Areas" where collaborative projects are being implemented.

The Collaborative Process

Step 1. Through a series of workshops, partners identified 4 fire-adapted forest communities:

Pine-Oak Heath   Shortleaf Pine-Oak   Dry-mesic Oak-Hickory   High Elevation Red Oak

Conceptual models were created for each of the fire-adapted communities to document the state of the knowledge and to guide development of desired future conditions.

Step 2. A landscape model was used to determine the relative amounts of each fire-adapted community within the Southern Blue Ridge FLN Landscapes.

Landscape Area Name	Total Acres	Total Acres: Fire Adapted	Oak-Hickory	Pine-Oak-Heath	Shortleaf Pine-Oak	High Elevation Red Oak
Balsam Mountains	235,582	96,806 (41%)	56,053 (58%)	7,634 (8%)	51 (.1%)	33,068 (34%)
Central Escarpment	425,160	230,526 (57%)	133,265 (58%)	55,636 (24%)	38,072 (17%)	3,553 (2%)
Nantahala Mountains	625,044	276,156 (44%)	195,086 (71%)	47,054 (17%)	2,652 (1%)	31,364 (11%)
New River Headwaters	94,762	54,767 (58%)	49,339 (90%)	1,704 (3%)	0 (0%)	3,723 (7%)
Great Smoky and Unaka Mountains	1,559,161	552,464 (49%)	265,534 (48%)	214,940 (39%)	10,334 (2%)	61,664 (11%)
S. Blue Ridge Escarpment	867,413	337,397 (52%)	230,336 (68%)	9,988 (3%)	100,885 (30%)	1,603 (1%)
South Mountains	216,668	189,393 (87%)	47,103 (25%)	25,374 (13%)	116,916 (62%)	0 (0%)
Totals	**4,023,790**	**1,737,509 (52%)**	**976,716 (56%)**	**362,330 (21%)**	**268,910 (16%)**	**134,975 (8%)**

Step 3. Partners developed implementation plans for Focal Areas within the FLN Landscapes. These plans identified objectives and timelines as well as barriers and solutions.

Step 4. *Follow through* – Burns are implemented; fire effects data will be analyzed & shared

Step 5. Partners reconvene to share successes and lessons learned with other FLN members, thereby enhancing learning and facilitating future success.

Step 6. Explore where restoration can be expanded from focal areas to the larger landscapes and partner with the Appalachian Science Consortium to bring the best current science to the work.

Contacts: Beth Buchanan bbuchanan@fs.fed.us (828) 257-4374 or Margit Bucher mbucher@tnc.org (919) 403-8558 x 1015, Rob Klein rob_klein@nps.gov, Dean Simon dean.simon@ncwildlife.org, Doug Sprouse doug.sprouse@ncdenr.gov, Bart Kicklighter bkicklighter@fs.fed.us, Greg Salansky gregsalansky@fs.fed.us, David Ray david_ray@tnc.org, Mike Brod mbrod@fs.fed.us