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FOCUS ON RESILIENCE:

# FRAMING THE POST-FIRE CONVERSATION

Our fire networks are expanding the scope of fire ownership, shifting the regulatory, policy and funding environment, and changing the way communities live with wildfire.

As communities throughout the nation continue to be heavily impacted by wildfire, the need to address what happens after wildfires has become clear. The PERFECT family of fire networks is working to support communities as they wrestle with impacts to infrastructure, social systems, agriculture, housing, public health and more.

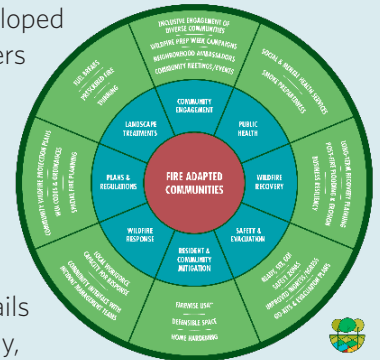
## Wildfire Resilience Means Recovery Too

To better live with wildland fire, adaptation has to include our actions before, during and after wildland fire. Not only must communities prepare for the fire itself, but they also must prepare for what comes next.

### FIRE ADAPTED COMMUNITIES

This graphic was developed and refined by members of FAC Net. Wildfire recovery shown on the inner teal ring is an important part of fire adaptation.

Expanding our vision of what resilience entails—and more specifically, the concept that fire adaptation includes recovery—is a key outcome of the work of FAC Net and other partnerships under the PERFECT agreement. (Click on the diagram to see a full-sized version. It is also available in Spanish.)



The goal of the Burned Area Learning Network (BALN) is to improve scientific understanding, policy and management practices for burned areas to enhance long-term resilience of ecological systems and provide for human safety.

## HIGHLIGHTS FROM PERFECT POST-FIRE WORK

### 2014



PERFACT investments in the Chumstick Wildfire Stewardship Coalition enabled the creation of the After the Fire Toolkit, a communications toolkit to help rural communities prepare for post-fire flooding and debris flow impacts. [SEE THE TOOLKIT](#)

## Framing of the Issue Expands the Scope of Fire Ownership

Working to recover from wildfire, and even to better prepare for recovery, yields new relationships and expanded partnerships. Non-traditional partners such as public health practitioners, social service organizations, and utility companies all have a stake in wildfire recovery. Expanding our understanding of what happens after wildfire to include these partners enables a more connected, cohesive and effective approach to wildfire resilience.

FAC Net developed a fire recovery graphic (left) to address the diversity of community and landscape needs after wildfire, and to provide a common framework for post-fire discussions. Visually similar the FAC Net fire adapted communities graphic on the previous page, the fire recovery graphic helps explore the diversity of community needs after wildfire and provides a starting point for planning and adaptation action.

Informed by network members across the country, the FAC Net recovery graphic integrates experiential knowledge from diverse communities, ecosystems and perspectives. Developed by practitioners, for practitioners, it enables communities to start planning for locally led fire recovery in advance of the fire.

## New Tools Empower Individuals to Share In, and Lead, Local Recovery

A resident recovery guide, developed by Washington State Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network members and with support from the family of fire networks, is scheduled for release in 2020. Designed to kick-start resident recovery, the guide covers essential



The teal ring in this diagram contains broad elements of post-fire recovery actions. (Click on the diagram to see a full-sized version.)

The left half of the ring (below left), with elements like Landscape and Infrastructure, is organized topically, while the right half of the ring, with elements like Planning and Preparedness and Emergency Management, is organized chronologically. This blended framework of chronology and topical focus enables a more complete approach to what happens after a wildfire.



TOPICAL ELEMENTS



CHRONOLOGICAL ELEMENTS

2015

The Washington State Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network fire cycle graphic highlighted after-the-fire issues.



2016

The Burned Area Learning Network kicked off with strategic planning workshops. [READ ABOUT THE BALN](#)



A Pacific Northwest Exchange expanded pre-fire planning for post-fire impacts among participating FAC Net members.

2017

"After the Fire: Connecting People, Ideas and Organizations," a workshop held in Wenatchee, Washington, created opportunities for cross-regional learning. [READ MORE](#)



A case study on pre-fire planning to improve post-fire outcomes was completed for the Greater Santa Fe Fireshed Coalition. They began giving presentations on the inclusion of post-fire planning in Community Wildfire Protection Plans.

A learning exchange on the Dog Head/Ojo Peak Fires in New Mexico highlighted challenges and opportunities on burned landscapes. [READ MORE](#)

tools, tips and preparedness actions that can be taken to help recover better from wildfire.

Residents are encouraged to connect with local emergency managers, the developers of their Community Wildfire Protection Plans, and social service organizations ahead of a wildfire to ensure their community has the resources, connections and tools they will need after a fire.

## Pre-Fire Planning for Post-Fire Recovery Creates Resilience

After participating in several PERFACT learning exchanges throughout the Pacific Northwest, Project Wildfire in Deschutes County, Oregon, was inspired to begin planning for long-term recovery. The effort is being led by the Deschutes County Sheriff's Office, in partnership with Project Wildfire, the U.S. Forest Service, the Oregon Department of Forestry, and other federal, state and local agencies, who have come together with local residents to create a long-term recovery plan. Outreach has focused on creating an inclusive process for diverse stakeholders to have a voice in long-term recovery planning. Presentations on this effort to other fire network members have shared this collaborative approach and laid the foundation for similar work in other places.

## Fire Networks Are Changing the Conversation to Support Integrated Fire Management

Participants in the family of fire networks are moving resilience forward by embracing the challenges and opportunities created by fire recovery. Network members

## Burned Area Learning Network: Leveraging Resources for Landscape Recovery

Efforts in New Mexico's Jemez Mountains led to a successful Wildlife Conservation Society Climate Adaptation grant to complete a climate-ready reforestation project in the Las Conchas burned area. The project helps the landscape recover and plans for fire's eventual return. By leveraging private grant funds to plant trees in groups that mimic their natural distribution on the landscape, a more fire-resilient landscape is created during recovery. Partners include the U.S. Forest Service, National Park Service, the Santa Clara Pueblo, U.S. Geological Survey and several universities. ([READ MORE](#))



“ We began to think about our need for pre-planning for post-fire recovery because of connections we made through FAC Net.... You can read about post-fire planning needs, but they may not hit home and may quickly get brushed aside for other urgent work. FAC Net enabled face-to-face and place-based connections that gave us a deeper understanding of post-fire recovery and really started us working on this in earnest. Now we have a whole host of partners that have a better understanding of the need for, and their role in, post-fire recovery.

**2018**

A presentation to Incident Management Teams in Oregon and Washington focused on integrating post-fire recovery into fire response operations.



“State of the Knowledge About Post-Fire Response” report from the BALN highlighted post-fire research in a rapidly emerging field.

[READ THE REPORT](#)

The Greater Santa Fe Fireshed Coalition demonstrated the value of “Pre-Fire Planning to Improve Post-Fire Response.”



Post-fire considerations were a major part of the fire networks workshop in Wenatchee, Washington. Participants explored post-fire policy changes and experienced a deep-dive into long-term community recovery.

Federal policies that guide and constrain Burned Area Emergency Response policy on federal, state and private lands are examined and conversations about changes at a national level begins.





are hard at work integrating post-fire considerations into their Community Wildfire Protection Plans, developing long-term recovery plans, and contributing to national conversations through the National Academies of Sciences, Western Governors' Association, Wildland Fire Leadership Council, and Western Region Cohesive Strategy working groups. In addition, members partnered with the National Weather Service, U.S. Geological Survey, U.S. Forest Service, National Park Service and non-profit partners to plan a post-fire science symposium. In 2019 and 2020, conversations about wildfire recovery also occurred with mitigation practitioners, emergency managers, public health officers, Community Wildfire Protection Plan developers, and more. Together—and before, during and after wildfires—we are creating more resilient communities and landscapes.

### What is PERFECT?

Promoting Ecosystem Resilience and Fire Adapted Communities Together is a cooperative agreement between The Nature Conservancy, USDA Forest Service and agencies of the Department of the Interior. The agreement supports the Fire Learning Network (since 2002), Prescribed Fire Training Exchanges (2008), Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network (2013), Indigenous Peoples Burning Network (2016) and other efforts that bring people together to collectively identify and meet our wildfire challenges. For more about PERFECT, contact Marek Smith at [marek\\_smith@tnc.org](mailto:marek_smith@tnc.org).

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## Post-Fire: In the Words of Network Members

### iBAER: How We Formed, Funded and Dispatched a State and Private Lands Burned Area Emergency Response Team

“Burned Area Emergency Response (BAER) teams, the people who assess ecological, hydrological and forest conditions after a wildfire, are not cheap. And, BAER teams are usually federal employees, working on federal lands. What happens, then, when private or state lands burn in a wildfire and need ecological assessments? In the spirit of learning by doing, Washington funded and deployed nonfederal BAER teams (think “iBAER”) in 2014 and again in 2015, and we thought others could learn from our effort.” [\(READ MORE\)](#)

### Block Captains: Community Leaders Emerge in the Wake of the 2017 Sonoma Fires

“Even as we put so much effort into recovering from the disaster that had just struck our community, we needed to build resilience into the future at the same time.” [\(READ MORE\)](#)

### Equity in Action: Long-Term Disaster Recovery in North-Central Washington

“The Okanogan County Long-Term Recovery group dictum —‘What does this person need to recover from this disaster in this community?’—guides each step of the process. This is, in fact, the definition of equity: to give people what they need, taking what has been and is happening around them into consideration. Implicit in [their] motto is the idea that the people impacted by adversity know better than anyone else what they need, and it is up to them to define the terms of their recovery.” [\(READ MORE\)](#)

## 2018

Santa Clara field tour and East Jemez “Landscape Futures” workshop builds the foundation for 2020 restoration and replanting work.

[READ MORE](#)

## 2019



The Greater Santa Fe Fireshed Coalition briefing paper on post-fire impacts explored the true cost of wildfire and advocated for changes on the landscape.

[READ THE PAPER](#)

## 2020

“After the Fire” storymap created to demonstrate lessons and best practices from burned areas in the Southwest.

[EXPLORE THE STORYMAP](#)

FAC Net held a workshop on integrating post-fire considerations into Community Wildfire Protection Plans.

The Seigler Springs Community Redevelopment Association, formed after the 2015 Valley Fire in Lake County, CA, joined FAC Net as a core member. Demonstrating that fire adaptation can begin at any point before, during or even after wildfire, the SSRA is sharing their experiences and challenges throughout FAC Net.

