

Ashland Prescribed Fire Training Exchange

Ashland, Oregon
May 13-24, 2019

The Ashland TRES brought together 55 people for two weeks of multifaceted prescribed fire training, in the classroom—and in the field, where they accomplished 263 acres of burning on federal and private lands. Participants and organizers together represented four countries—Canada, Mexico, Spain and the U.S.—and 31 federal, state, private, educational and non-profit organizations and entities. The TRES also provided valuable opportunities for engaging with the public through the media and a public event featuring a screening of a wildfire documentary followed by a panel discussion.

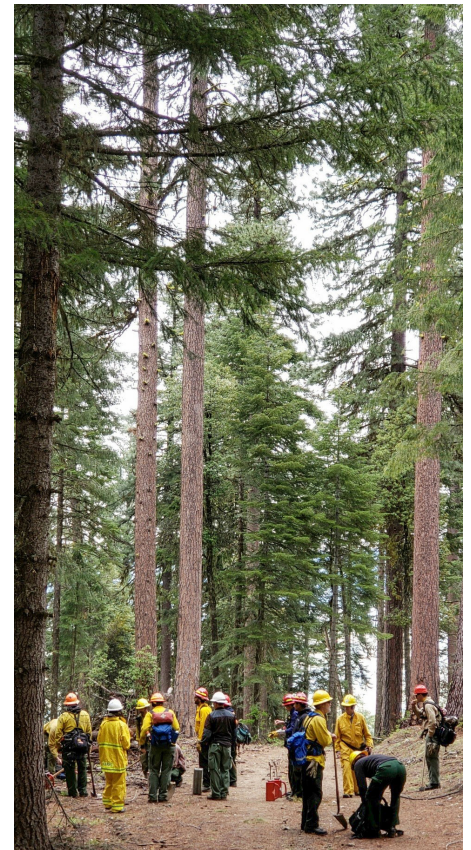
Prescribed Fire Training

To set the stage and provide a well-rounded experience, several days were put to good use in a classroom setting. The first day of the TRES was committed to establishing crew cohesion and gearing up with equipment needs. The second day then focused on project orientation and education. TRES leaders and partners spoke about regional and project ecology, and the importance of social engagement and partnerships in controlled burning. There was training on sexual harassment prevention. And

an elder of the Confederated Tribes of the Siletz Indians offered words of wisdom from her Takelma Tribal view. On day three, the modules mobilized with engines to practice basic wildland fire skills such as pump and hose operations, hand tool and firing device use, and hand-held radio use. Modules also gained experience in unit reconnaissance, unit preparation including cutting fire lines, and gathering pre-burn fire effects monitoring data. Unusually wet weather prevented broadcast burning, but leaders and partners had four units of piles ready to burn on the Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest and on a private tract; this included 48 acres in the Ashland Forest Resiliency Stewardship Project (AFR), a multi-partner project working to protect the City of Ashland and its municipal watershed.

Ignitions followed, with four days burning hand piles and providing opportunities for incident commander trainees to work through fire size-up scenarios. Mop up afterward added to constructive field days.

Despite unfavorable weather for ecological broadcast burning, the TRES was deemed a great success for



The crew prepares for controlled burning of piles in the Ashland Forest Resiliency Project Eastview units. © TNC (Darren Borgias)



Early in the TRES, Aggie Baker Pilgrim, Takelma Elder of the Confederate Tribes of the Siletz Indians shared some of her knowledge of burning for safety and sustenance, and the importance of clean water. © TNC (Darren Borgias)

the diverse training opportunities it provided. Participants also appreciated the exceptional team cohesion, and the completion of tasks needed to advance their fire qualifications.

Engaging the Community

To facilitate conversations with the community, TRES organizers partnered with the Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest, Ashland Forest Resiliency Stewardship Project partners and the Klamath Siskiyou Wildlands Center to host an evening event with a screening of the documentary *Wilder than Wild: Fire, Forests, and the Future* and



Because unusually wet weather precluded broadcast burning, the TRES crew focused on pile burns in four units. These included from piles from roadside hazard tree removal on the Klondike Fire of 2018 (left) and work in the Eastview units of the Ashland Forest Resiliency Project (right).

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several short videos provided by the partners. This was followed by a panel discussion with Merv George (Forest Supervisor), Katie Sauerbrey (TRES Incident Commander), Christopher Orr (National Park Service), Rick O'Rourke (Yurok Tribe, Cultural Fire Management Council) and Joseph Vaile (KSWild Executive Director). More than 130 people attended

this event to learn more about their forests, their fires, and the choices they face. Local media were also invited to visit the TRES, and several outlets took advantage of this, highlighting the purpose of TRES, its drawing an international crew to learn together, and the importance of prescribed burning for community safety.

More Online

Media Coverage

KOB15 (Facebook livestream)

<https://www.facebook.com/kobitv/videos/2178816505535731/>

"TRES Event Brings in Firefighters From Across the Country" <https://kobi5.com/news/trex-event-brings-in-firefighters-from-across-the-country-102099/>

"Prescribed burn training under way in Ashland"

<https://www.kdrv.com/content/video/509991812.html>

"Firefighters Across the World are Learning About Prescribed Burning in Ashland"

<https://www.kdrv.com/content/video/509991682.html>

Documentary

Wilder than Wild: <https://www.wilderthanwildfilm.org/>

For more about the Ashland TRES:

Katie Sauerbrey
katie.sauerbrey@tnc.org

Darren Borgias
dborgias@tnc.org

For more about the TRES model:

Jeremy Bailey
jeremy_bailey@tnc.org

<http://nature.ly/trainingexchanges>

Participating Organizations

Aerie Backcountry Medicine
 Applegate Partnership and Watershed Council
 Ashland Fire & Rescue
 Bratcher Services LLC
 British Columbia Wildfire Service
 Bureau of Land Management—National Operations Center
 Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation
 Cultural Fire Management Council
 GFP Enterprises
 Heroico Cuerpo de Bomberos Voluntarios de Guanajuato A.C. (Mexico)
 Incident Support
 JD Forestry, LLC
 Key Peninsula Fire Department
 Lomakatsi Restoration Project
 Long Tom Watershed Council
 Miller Timber Services, Inc.
 National Park Service—North Cascades National Park
 Nevada Division of Forestry
 Oregon Department of Forestry
 Oregon State University
 Oregon Woods Inc.
 Servei de Bombers Forestals—Generalitat Valenciana (Spain)
 The Nature Conservancy
 University of California Santa Barbara
 University of California Davis
 University of Idaho
 University of Oregon
 USDA Forest Service—Klamath NF, Mount Hood NF, Rogue River-Siskiyou NF



Prescribed Fire Training Exchanges are part of *Promoting Ecosystem Resilience and Fire Adapted Communities Together*, a cooperative agreement between The Nature Conservancy, USDA Forest Service and agencies of the Department of the Interior. For more information about PERFECT, contact Marek Smith at marek_smith@tnc.org.

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