

Semi-Annual Report

July – December 2014

Promoting Ecosystem Resilience and Fire Adapted Communities Together (PERFACT):
Collaborative Action and Co-ownership of Fire
2014 – 2019

and

Promoting Ecosystem Resiliency through Collaboration (PERC):
Landscapes, Learning and Restoration
2011 – 2015

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Promoting Ecosystem Resilience and Fire Adapted Communities Together (PERFACT)

Semi-Annual Report: July – December 2014

Executive Summary

The Promoting Ecosystem Resilience and Fire Adapted Communities Together (PERFACT) partnership works to restore our relationship with fire, helping us get to “right fire” through:

- the Fire Learning Network (FLN), fostering collaboration for restoration and fire management in landscapes across the country;
- the Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network (FAC LN), which is doing the same for communities adapting to wildfire;
- Prescribed Fire Training Exchanges (TREX), experiential training that integrates a range of people, places and aspects of fire; and
- targeted restoration action under Scaling-up to Promote Ecosystem Resiliency (SPER).

PERFACT efforts—the FLN and the FAC LN, TREX and SPER work that it has inspired and incubated—are inter-connected and continue to support each other. We are finding that our impacts are greater and results more durable where multiple overlapping and complementary efforts are directed. As the four strategies are becoming more interwoven, they are becoming more powerful.

In the Fire Learning Network, nine established regional networks and demonstration landscapes submitted proposals and were supported during this reporting period: California Klamath-Siskiyou, Central Appalachians, Centennial Valley, Great Plains, Northwest, Rio Grande Water Fund, South Central, Southern Blue Ridge and Western Klamath Mountains. The Pike’s Peak FLN in Colorado joined the network as a new landscape working in the area near Colorado Springs. The Washington Dry Forests FLN submitted a proposal in December and will be supported in the next reporting period. FLN staff continue to lead planning workshops in the developing FireScope Mendocino landscape and in the Klamath Mountains.

In addition to meeting with partners in landscape and regional workshops to share learning and coordinate work, FLNs engaged in activities as varied as providing leadership to prescribed fire councils, supporting TREX, holding partner field tours to assess wildfire effects, completing a watershed restoration prioritization project, developing interpretive signs and brochures, supervising youth volunteers and interns doing restoration work, establishing a post-fire flood mitigation working group, and providing

input and field connections for researchers investigating the challenges they face. As always, in doing this, FLNs engaged hundreds of partners, from state and federal agencies to private landowners and researchers, and from coast to coast.

The Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network—modeled after the FLN—was launched in April 2013 and expanded in March of 2014. Seventeen hub organizations are now working with pilot communities in California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Minnesota, Montana, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, Oregon, Texas and Washington.

Working collaboratively with community teams, these hubs are receiving financial, technical and peer network support to implement and innovate fire adapted community concepts and best practices, and to share them within the network and beyond. In recent months, the network hubs have worked on projects as diverse as updating CWPPs and county-wide integrated fire plans, hosting chipper days, conducting defensible space home assessments and treatment demonstration projects. Many of the hubs have also begun beta-testing the FAC Learning Network’s new Self-Assessment Tool. Communication within the network is supported by three liaisons, who keep in regular contact with all hubs, as well as through quarterly webinars and a shared online workspace (Podio). Communication with those beyond the network is supported through the FACNetwork.org website; central to this is a blog updated twice weekly by staff, hub leads and community partners.

Staff and network members are continuing to work with researchers Sarah McCaffrey (USFS Northern Research Station) and Bruce Goldstein (University of Colorado), to increase the rigor of network operations and activities, and investigate how networks and the FAC approach contribute to growing community resilience. This will help the network make the greatest possible impact on the development of fire adapted communities nationwide.

Four prescribed fire training exchanges built on the principles of integrated fire management were held this fall: the International and Black Lake TREX in northern New Mexico and the Klamath River and NorCal TREX, in northern California. Together these served 202 practitioners and

treated 1,084 acres with fire. Planning was also completed for a fifth TREX, in northern Arizona, which was postponed due to prolonged heavy rains.

The integration of professional wildland firefighters with less-traditional training partners at these events expands both the capacity of the fire community and its breadth of knowledge. It strengthens the ability to conduct controlled burning effectively and with full social license, and develops connections that are helping wildfires be managed with more sensitivity to local concerns. TREX also actively engage local, regional and national media, and help participants communicate key messages with skill.

All of the TREX this fall met multiple objectives and supported FAC LN and SPER objectives. Three of the events—in Black Lake and the two California TREX—were aimed largely at non-federal, in-state participants. By doing so, they increased the number of local practitioners skilled and NWCG qualified to conduct prescribed fire treatments, a long-term benefit to these places.

Accelerating the trend begun last year, PERFECT staff are taking less of a lead role in implementing TREX, and are instead focusing more effort on guiding and mentoring others. Thus this fall, planning and mentoring was already underway for training exchanges being offered by FLNs and SPER projects in the coming spring, with a total of eight TREX now planned for February through May 2015.

Scaling-up to Promote Ecosystem Resiliency II supported five landscape projects in Arkansas, California, New Mexico, Oregon and Virginia that are wrapping up a variety of prescribed fire, mechanical and chemical treatments with a variety of goals, including reducing fuels; managing invasive species; restoring forests, glades and grasslands; and protecting communities. SPER II funds also supported the fall TREX. The SPER projects complement FLN and FAC LN work in their landscapes, and leverage efforts on adjacent federal lands.

SPER III work began this fall, with a targeted request for proposals for projects that will develop strategies and enabling conditions to get to “right fire” in three years. These places are integrating fire/fuels management and water security in their landscapes and fire adapted communities’ actions to support enabling social conditions.

More information about PERFECT is now available online, with a newly-revised field guide that gives an overview of the scope of FLN, FAC Learning Network, TREX and SPER efforts and highlights the variety of local efforts.

REPORT CONTENTS

HIGHLIGHTS & LEARNING

One- and two-page summaries that focus on specific aspects of PERFECT—each has general information about PERFECT and is illustrated with examples from this reporting period so they are suitable for use as handouts or information sheets. Of necessity, they cover but a small proportion of the work completed.

PERFACT Overview—structured around a brief introduction to each of the four areas of work (FLN, FAC LN, TREX and SPER)

Living with Fire—selected highlights from recent work in a framework based on our conceptual model of how we can better live with fire

In Our Own Words—a compilation of quotations from landscape, project and community leaders that capture the essence of PERFECT work

Best of 2014 Online—links to the best PERFECT products and media coverage

APPENDICES

A: Delivery on PERFECT Work Plan Actions

table of actions proposed, with work delivered July-December

B: FLN Regional Network & Landscape Work Plan Progress Detail

work plan tables for all funded FLNs for July-December, with work delivered

C: Prescribed Fire Training Exchanges

TREX offered July-December, and a table of number and affiliations of students served; also includes a report on the effectiveness of the *Unit Log Books* distributed and used at TREX

D: FAC Learning Network Hub Organization Work Plans

tables for FAC hub organizations for July-December, with work delivered

E: Scaling-up to Promote Ecosystem Resiliency (SPER)

work plan tables for SPER II implementation projects for July-December, with work delivered; also includes summary of SPER-supported TREX outcomes

F: Media Coverage Resulting from PERFECT Actions

media and website coverage of projects, and leaders quoted, with links



Promoting Ecosystem Resilience and Fire Adapted Communities Together (PERFACT)

A cooperative agreement between The Nature Conservancy, USDA Forest Service and agencies of the Department of the Interior.

This partnership works to restore our relationship with fire by helping us get to “right fire”—where good fire can do its necessary work on the landscape, and both human and natural communities are better able to live with fire. As partners, we work in key places with individual people, and also at regional and national scales. We also leverage the connections between those scales. This work is accomplished through:

- the Fire Learning Network (FLN), fostering collaboration for restoration and integrated fire management in landscapes across the country;
- the Fire Adapted Communities (FAC) Learning Network, which is doing the same with communities adapting to wildfire;
- prescribed fire training exchanges (TREX), experiential training opportunities that integrate a range of people, places and aspects of fire; and
- targeted restoration action under Scaling-up to Promote Ecosystem Resiliency (SPER).

These efforts—the FLN and those that it has inspired and incubated—are interconnected and continue to support each other. We and our partners are starting to see that our impacts are greater and results more durable where multiple

overlapping and complementary efforts are directed. As the four strategies are becoming more interwoven, they are becoming more powerful.

Fire Learning Network

More than thirty landscapes—most working as part of regional networks—are now active in the FLN. In addition to long-established partnerships, collaborative groups in the early stages of their FLN work are growing in California and Colorado. The FLNs under development generally focus on using a collaborative planning process that brings stakeholders together to work through where they want to go and how they can get there. The more established FLNs, having done this planning work, are now engaged in a diversity of place-specific activities and adaptive learning.



Last summer youth interns installed interpretive signs developed by the Central Appalachians FLN. The signs talk about the vital ecological role fire plays in the forest, as part of a larger strategy to increase the social license for the prescribed fire needed in this landscape. *Photo: TNC/Marek Smith*



These include hosting workshops to share knowledge and develop local tools, as well as those that support the work of landscape-scale projects and statewide prescribed fire councils; they nurture the development of fire adapted communities, host prescribed fire training exchanges, monitor fire effects on bird populations, develop interpretive signage, and publish restoration resources. In doing so, they engage hundreds of diverse partners, from state and federal agencies to researchers and private citizens, and from coast to coast.

Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network

Modeled after the FLN, the FAC Learning Network was launched in April 2013 with a workshop for representatives and partners from eight community-based “hub” organizations. In March 2014, another set of organizations joined, and 17 are now active in the network. Collaborative teams at each hub receive financial, technical and peer network support to implement and innovate fire adapted community concepts and best practices in their pilot communities, and to share them within the network and beyond. Communities have worked on projects as diverse as updating CWPPs and county-wide integrated fire plans, securing funding for mitigation projects, and gathering and sharing the lessons learned from first-hand experiences



FACNetwork.org is the public face of the FAC Learning Network. In addition to information about the network and links to a range of resources, there is a blog, updated twice weekly, where staff and community leads alike share useful tools, success stories and lessons learned.



The newly-revised field guide gives an overview of the scope of FLN, FAC Learning Network, TREX and SPER efforts and highlights the variety of local efforts.

with wildfires. The network communicates regularly through an online workspace (Podio) and public blog (<http://facnetwork.org/>), as well as in quarterly peer-learning webinars and an annual workshop.

Staff and network members are working with researchers Sarah McCaffrey (USFS Northern Research Station) and Bruce Goldstein (University of Colorado), to increase the rigor of network operations and activities, and investigate how networks and the FAC approach contribute to growing community resilience. This will help the network make the greatest possible impact on the development of fire adapted communities nationwide.

Prescribed Fire Training Exchanges

Training events combining experiential learning and principles of integrated fire management are now being held in numerous locations each spring and fall. The integration of professional wildland firefighters with less-traditional training partners at these events expands both the capacity of the fire community and its breadth of knowledge. It strengthens the ability to conduct controlled burning effectively and with full social license, and develops connections that are helping wildfires be managed with sensitivity to local plans and concerns. TRESX also actively engage local, regional and national media, and help participants communicate key messages with skill.

Since 2008, 38 events have served more than 1,100 practitioners and treated more than 79,000 acres. The earliest TRESX were in FLN grasslands, but they are now offered in forested landscapes and quite frequently in wildland-urban interface (WUI) areas, in support of fire adapted community efforts as well as landscape-scale ecological restoration. TRESX efforts are



The fall 2014 Klamath River TRESX integrated the participation and knowledge of about 80 fire practitioners, the majority of whom were local residents. Seventeen of these individuals fulfilled the requirements for Firefighter Type II and received certification on completion of the TRESX. This collective effort, which treated more than 240 acres of private and tribal lands adjacent to dozens of homes and buildings, directly contributed to restoring fire adapted communities along the Klamath River and to an empowered, engaged local workforce.
Photos: Mid Klamath Watershed Center

now at an important growth point—in the past year or so it has almost simultaneously moved toward larger crew sizes, spread into new geographic areas (and habitats), become more closely tied to fire adapted communities efforts, and become more locally based. Numerous participants have attended multiple events, and are becoming sources of leadership and support. Staff support is now shifting from running the events to mentoring others. Efforts are shifting toward helping this model—and this integrated way of viewing fire management and doing prescribed fire—become adaptable, self-sustaining, and ever more widespread.

Scaling-up to Promote Ecosystem Resiliency

Under the first two phases of SPER, modest amounts of implementation funding are targeted to either fill gaps in a landscape, or provide a catalyst to accelerate work. Prescribed fire, thinning, helicopter logging and invasive species management treatments are conducted under SPER, mainly on relatively small, strategically-placed parcels that leverage and connect existing or planned treatments on federal lands.

SPER II is now nearing completion, with five landscape-based projects wrapping up work on about 3,000 acres of treatments in support of fire adapted communities through the FAC Learning Network or FLN. In addition, SPER II supported several prescribed fire training events aimed at building local capacity while conducting treatments near at-risk communities.

Working Together

Staff and partners at all levels work to tie the networks, training and implementation into a larger whole. FLNs and FAC Learning Network hubs meet and work together on projects, and both have hosted TRESX to increase

their capacity to do the work they have identified as necessary for resilience. Similarly, SPER implementation projects treat areas identified as priorities by the network partnerships, and in many cases provide the burn units needed for TRESX training opportunities.

Learning and sharing knowledge also span all areas of work. In addition to the essential person-to-person contacts within and between the networks and the communities of practice we foster, we share through publications and connections with the larger conservation and fire adapted communities world, and with the general public, either directly or through the media. Each of these in its way helps develop the set of conditions that will enable the wider spread of right fire.



Northern New Mexico is one of the places where all four PERFECT efforts are coming together to support and accelerate each other. In addition to FLN (Rio Grande Water Fund) and FAC Learning Network efforts, two TRESX were held in the fall, and SPER implementation work is wrapping up.

Photo: Liz Rank/TNC

Fire Learning Network, Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network, Scaling-up to Promote Ecosystem Resiliency and Prescribed Fire Training Exchanges and are supported by *Promoting Ecosystem Resiliency and Fire Adapted Communities Together* (PERFACT), a cooperative agreement between The Nature Conservancy, the USDA Forest Service and agencies of the Department of the Interior.

PERFACT is an equal opportunity provider. For more information, contact Lynn Decker at (ldecker@tnc.org) or (801) 320-0524.

More Online

Fire Learning Network

<http://www.conservationgateway.org/fln>

Prescribed fire training exchanges

<http://nature.ly/trainingexchanges>

Fire Adapted Communities

<http://facnetwork.org/>

FLN Networker (biweekly newsletter)

<http://www.conservationgateway.org/ConservationPractices/FireLandscapes/FireLearningNetwork/FLNNetworker/Pages/fln-networker.aspx>

Promoting Ecosystem Resilience and Fire Adapted Communities Together (PERFACT)

A cooperative agreement between The Nature Conservancy, USDA Forest Service and agencies of the Department of the Interior.

The goal of this partnership is to help us all live with fire—with fire adapted human communities, resilient natural landscapes, and the social and operational capacity to flourish in a challenging, changing fire environment.

Our efforts are rooted in collaboration and integrating the best available science and cultural knowledge with a strong emphasis on co-learning and adaptive management. We work by:

- Using the Fire Learning Network and the Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network together to create a system of Learning Networks to address the complete scope of landscape and community integrated fire and landscape management issues;
- Focusing on training and development for durable capacity-building, risk management, prescribed fire knowledge and skills, bridging organizational boundaries, and public-private collaboration; and
- Engaging at all levels, from local to national, to strengthen the framework of enabling conditions needed to accelerate the pace of restoration and community resilience at targeted sites.



RECENT WORK

In the second half of 2014, PERFACT supported:

- 13 Fire Learning Networks (FLNs) that encompass more than 30 landscapes and 66 million acres;
- 17 Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network (FAC LN) hub organizations working with pilot communities in 13 states;
- 4 Prescribed Fire Training Exchanges (TREX) that provided training and experience for 202 people while treating 1,084 acres with fire, as well as planning for 8 spring 2015 TREX; and
- 5 Scaling-up to Promote Ecosystem Resiliency (SPER) implementation projects completing treatments that complement existing and planned federal projects.

PERFACT staff at The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and the Watershed Research and Training Center (WRTC) guide these efforts, help build networks among them, and ensure that learning is captured and shared. Staff facilitated eight FLN and FAC LN workshops, as well as nine wildfire season after action reviews for communities in the Klamath landscape. By phone, email and in-person visits, they guided FAC LN hubs in planning and implementing actions to expand their impact.

To communicate about our work, we also updated the Conservation Gateway website to improve access to information about TREX and *Notes from the Field* covering many aspects of PERFACT work, produced a bi-weekly newsletter that goes to over 600 partners and practitioners, and published an all-new *Learning Networks Field Guide*.

Exploring and launching new efforts and methods is also important. This

fall, that included starting on a third SPER effort, aimed at helping three large landscapes--in California, New Mexico and Oregon--reach enabling conditions for “right fire” within three years, and increasing connections with tribal partners to expand the integration of cultural knowledge in projects. In the FAC LN, most of the hubs have begun beta-testing a new FAC Self-Assessment Tool, developed by the network to help communities take themselves through a comprehensive assessment; once refined, this will be shared widely.

The wide range of work done under PERFACT informed Mary Huffman’s writing of “Making a World of Difference in Fire and Climate Change,” which appeared in *Fire Ecology* in December. The FLN was also one of 10 generative networks in *Connecting to Change the World: Harnessing the Power of Networks for Social Impact*, a primer on network theory by Peter Plastrik, Madeleine Taylor, and John Cleveland.

More Online

Fire Learning Network

<http://www.conservationgateway.org/fln>

Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network

<http://facnetwork.org/>

Prescribed Fire Training Exchanges

<http://nature.ly/trainingexchanges>

Learning Networks Field Guide <http://www.conservationgateway.org/ConservationPractices/FireLandscapes/FireLearningNetwork/USFLNPublications/Pages/FLN-Field-Guide.aspx>

“Making a World of Difference in Fire and Climate Change” (*Fire Ecology*)

<http://fireecologyjournal.org/docs/Journal/pdf/Volume10/Issue03/090.pdf>

On the Ground: Samples of Work under Promoting Ecosystem Resilience and Fire Adapted Communities

Fire Adapted Communities



FAC hubs engage communities to work locally, and share nationally.

In Washington, the “After the Fire” toolkit that was developed earlier in the year was widely distributed during the summer fire season. The toolkit provides simple ways for post-fire preparedness information to be shared during the “teachable moment” that occurs during a fire incident. The Chumstick Wildfire Stewardship Coalition’s post about this on the FAC Learning Network’s blog was the most-read post of the year.

In New Jersey, network partners are adding a FAC section to Sustainable Jersey, a certification program that helps municipalities “go green, save money and sustain quality of life.” They have drafted standards for certifiable actions (such as Firewise; CWPPs; Ready, Set Go!; Fire Safe Council) and a model Fire Safe ordinance for municipalities to adapt and adopt. This work has required working with a wide range of partners—which has been extremely time consuming, but also rewarding, especially as the product will affect the whole state.

Our FAC efforts in Georgia are centered in Towns County, where November 3-9 was proclaimed wildfire awareness week. Partners talked FAC on the radio, flashed messages on electronic bill boards, taught high schools classes, and visited elementary schools with Smokey Bear and messages about the dangers of bad fire and the benefits of good fire. This hub’s work is also spreading outward—they gave FAC presentations to commissioners and civic groups in four adjacent counties and are in the process of developing FAC Citizens Coalitions in two of those counties.

Social & Operational Capacity for “Right Fire”

In addition to work directly supported by PERFACT, the FLN lays the foundation for conservation and restoration work across wide landscapes. From partnership-building to the development of plans and models for prioritizing work, the FLN promotes landscape resiliency. For 2014, network and landscape leads reported that their FLN work facilitated or otherwise furthered treatments on over 282,000 acres, and leveraged over \$9.2 million in funding.

Restoring & Sustaining Resilient Landscapes

The Klamath River TREX joined local fire management capacity-building, targeted WUI treatments to support local FAC efforts, and exemplary outreach through social media. Using Facebook pages that had become local go-to information sources during recent fire seasons, they kept the community posted, shared stories about the people of TREX, and answered concerns in near real-time.

In New Mexico, a second Black Lake TREX was held this fall. The intensive public engagement that is part of this effort is paying off. A local resident who was highly skeptical of WUI burning last year—he was quoted in the paper as having purchased his own firefighting equipment to protect his house from the TREX burn—this year worked as a volunteer public information officer. He and others “traplined” during the event, circulating throughout the community to share information and listen to concerns. He is also talking about collecting photo-point data to track recovery and change at the site.



The three locally-hosted TREX in New Mexico and California met their goals of building local fire-management capacity, with participation that was overwhelmingly local (65-92% in-state) and overwhelmingly non-federal (62-93%). Training that meets NWCG standards is often difficult or impossible for many of these participants to access.

In the Centennial Valley (Montana), partners are working on watershed prioritization to set management recommendations. This year they sampled late-season flows and analyzed the results. A strong ability to predict climate resilience from a few simple attributes was found. The methodology is intuitive to stakeholders, who are increasing the consideration of climate effects when prioritizing work. Private grants will allow a research team to look at ways to seasonally store water in the alluvial aquifer to improve late-season flows.

Central Appalachians partners expanded the use of prescribed fire to several new locations, conducting collaborative burns on state, National Park Service and local water utility lands for the first time this fall.

The Trinity Integrated Fire Management Partnership (California) SPER project completed about 115 acres of fuels reduction work, mainly in WUI. This included 22 acres of pile burning that required working with 26 land-owners. These treatments will help facilitate and control about 250 acres of Rx burning planned for the fall.

The Northern California Prescribed Fire Council held a workshop on “Managing Fire for Resource Benefits in California.” The December event brought together nearly 200 fire managers, tribe members, non-profit and federal agency staff, researchers and professors for presentations, discussion and networking.

In New Mexico, managing the after-effects of large wildfires is becoming increasingly important. FLN leads have helped establish the post-fire flood mitigation working group for the Rio Grande Water Fund, in which the FLN is a key founding partner. The FLN is also helping the Southwest Fire Science Consortium define research needed in this area.



The FLN, FAC LN, TREX and SPER are supported by *Promoting Ecosystem Resilience and Fire Adapted Communities Together* (PERFACT), a cooperative agreement between The Nature Conservancy, the USDA Forest Service and agencies of the Department of the Interior. For more information, contact Lynn Decker (ldecker@tnc.org).

Science, Learning & Cultural Knowledge

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In addition to reporting on progress on their work plans, project leaders from the Fire Learning Network, Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network and Scaling-up to Promote Ecosystem Resiliency were asked to reflect on their work and share some lessons learned, unexpected successes and other observations.

“Many of us fire practitioners have agreed in principle, and most are now seeking agreement in practice so we can increase the scope and scale of implementation. There are still regulatory barriers being created to our successful implementation of the Cohesive Strategy ... but we must overcome the constant barrage of barriers that are impacting the abilities of tribal and non-tribal communities alike to regain fire as an integral component of their culture and place.”

On the Critical Support that PERFACT Provides

“With the FLN, we have created a positive forum through which we can work collaboratively to increase awareness of local fire ecology and support the use of fire as a critical management tool—we’ve established new, valuable partnerships and built local energy for use of prescribed fire.”

“With FLN support, the Northern California Prescribed Fire Council continues to gain momentum. Participation, interest and activity levels are high and increasing. Formation and investment in this forum have been instrumental steps in growing both a community of practice, and a constituency that is highly effective in shaping a vision for fire management in northern California.”



With support and leadership from the FLN, the Northern California Prescribed Fire Council has emerged as “the go-to source for expertise on enhancing and increasing prescribed fire use in California.” The council hosted the Northern California TREX (left) in October and a conference (right) for a wide array of practitioners, agencies, researchers and others involved with prescribed fire in the northern part of the state.



IN OUR OWN WORDS

“This influx of SPER funding allowed us to treat a large portion of the natural area in a short amount of time, creating a greater landscape impact. The partnerships that were formed during the project period built professional relationships focused on common goals of the SPER objectives. These partnerships will lead to continued landscape restoration well beyond the funded period.”

“Thanks for all the support you have provided over the past year to allow such incredible leaps forward in the realm of landscape level fire management.”

On Being Part of a Network

“FAC hub partners have been a great source of information (regarding volunteers, processes, funding, etc.) and have been more than willing to share their experiences, successes and failures. Strong partnerships exist amongst network organizations.”

“Being part of the FLN provides great support for difficult outreach and collaboration that is time-consuming and slow to deliver outcomes, but essential to delivering good outcomes with community support for conservation.”

“Sharing of ideas for community outreach and marketing in our community led to a number of productive discussions about how best to market and develop a community wildfire awareness day (or week) in May. Several network organizations have shared materials that provide a great starting point.”

“The FLN is really useful for the back and forth sharing of ideas and best management practices with colleagues outside of our ‘home’ landscape.”

Changing the Local Context

“A National Park Service unit here has a new chief ranger who is very supportive of increasing the fire program. We expect that having a set of neighbors who already work well together will help convince him that the transition to using fire will be smooth and efficient.”

“I think it’s safe to say we are directing more agency planning efforts [to places] within the boundaries of the FLN for future burn units and collaborative projects.... Participation in the FLN is changing how and where other state funding might be used for future projects. Firewise Communities and the FAC pilot projects are also beginning to take priority with the local forestry commission units in regard to burning with the community wildfire protection grants.”

“We gave presentations about FAC concepts to several community and civic groups. Many of the goals of the residents in our county align with FAC goals. However people did not have an official definition or term to give to their efforts. Now the definition is being clarified.”

“We got good feedback at our FAC presentations. At the smoke workshop, feedback was about ‘Can the hub be expanded?’ ‘Can I get one in my area?’ ‘What about grassland communities?’”

“We’ve learned that if we lay the facts and our results before the commissioners they can’t say No. At the one county commissioners’ meeting, the chairman said, ‘Why would we not want to do this?’ This is the kind of attitude we are looking for. This is contagious and these commissioners talk to each other.”



Getting Fire on the Ground

“A significant success this year was the willingness of the state fire agency to support in-season TRES burning, even during burn bans. We were the only ones burning for two weeks in early October last year, and we have a tentative agreement with them to allow controlled burning at this same time next year.”

“This year, partners in one of our landscapes successfully involved the state forestry staff in prescribed fire. They were able to actively engage the field foresters in the planning, monitoring, implementing, and best of all, documenting results and adjusting prescriptions of the prescribed burns.”

“The county had never permitted a burn of more than one pile on private land. This project is now unintentionally setting a precedent and breaking new ground in terms of fire on private land in this county.”



Testing the New FAC Learning Network Self-Assessment Tool

“Using the Self-Assessment Tool to identify community awareness, values at risk, and capacity to respond yielded productive conversations at the steering committee and built nicely on the CWPP revision process. In addition, the discussions provided an interesting backdrop for the revision of our organization’s mission and vision statements.”

“CWPPs are shifting to include an emphasis on fire preparedness elements beyond fuels reduction projects. The FAC Self-Assessment Tool provides a concise method of assessing a community’s capabilities and opportunities for improvement. The results can form the basis for prioritized projects included in a CWPP.”

“Drafts of seven area CWPPs have been completed and are in agency review. Some experienced multiple delays, but some of these are due to expanding scope and the desire to include more information than was originally planned—such as the incorporation of the FAC Self-Assessment Tool.”

“The FAC LN Self-Assessment Tool is currently in use to inform our organization’s program of work. We used the tool to plan the sub-committee meeting agenda with six steering committee members in early January. The Self-Assessment Tool provided new insight into our work. Some topics typically not included in our program of work, since they were deemed not appropriate for us (like prescribed burning messaging) will most likely be included for 2015.”

Making Connections

“We are engaging a larger array of partners and it has been slower than I would like to bring everyone together. I am pleased with results to date, but diverse sets of partners increase the complexity. Adding less-familiar partners like the Army Corps of Engineers and county governments takes time because we need to understand each other’s needs, resources and culture in order to operate efficiently.”

“Developing the field guide entry allowed us to consider our long term goals for FAC, and to reflect on how our recent work may help others.”

“Since this FLN is now more fully engaged in the FAC, I have a much better sense of the needs of the local communities who desire to become fire adapted.”

“Summarizing our diverse and numerous activities into a short synopsis for the field guide was challenging—but it illustrated the interrelations of our many activities and how each helps contribute to the aligned goals of the FAC, CWPP, other local efforts and the Cohesive Strategy.”

Top row (left to right): Partners at fall 2014 FLN workshops in the Central Appalachians, Western Klamath Mountains and FireScape Mendocino.

Bottom row (left to right): Getting fire on the ground at the Black Lake TRES in New Mexico, Klamath River TRES in California and the Ozark Pine-Oak Woodlands & Glade Restoration Partnership SPER project in Arkansas.

The FLN, FAC LN, TRES and SPER are supported by *Promoting Ecosystem Resilience and Fire Adapted Communities Together (PERFACT)*, a cooperative agreement between The Nature Conservancy, the USDA Forest Service and agencies of the Department of the Interior. *PERFACT is an equal opportunity provider.* For more information, contact Lynn Decker at (ldecker@tnc.org) or (801) 320-0524.

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PERFACT Publications

Learning Networks Field Guide—

<http://www.conservationgateway.org/ConservationPractices/FireLandscapes/FireLearningNetwork/USFLNPublications/Pages/FLN-Field-Guide.aspx>

Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network Field Guide—

<http://facnetwork.org/resources/hub-communications-toolkit/>

FLN Notes from the Field—new index to all issues (23 published this year)

<http://www.conservationgateway.org/ConservationPractices/FireLandscapes/FireLearningNetwork/USFLNPublications/Pages/Index-FLN-Notes-from-the-Field.aspx>

Recommended fall issues:

67: Klamath River TREX: Community Engagement through Use of Social Media

69: Lessons Learned from Controlled Burns in the WUI (Black Lake TREX)

FLN Networker archive—

<http://www.conservationgateway.org/ConservationPractices/FireLandscapes/FireLearningNetwork/FLNNetworker/Pages/fln-networker.aspx>

Journal Articles

“Making a World of Difference in Fire and Climate Change” (*Fire Ecology*)

<http://fireecologyjournal.org/docs/Journal/pdf/Volume10/Issue03/090.pdf>

“Adopting a Learning Network Approach for Growing Fire Adapted Communities” (*Fire Management Today*) http://www.fs.fed.us/fire/fmt/fmt_pdfs/FMT73-3.pdf

Videos

“Fall Burning in Orleans 2013”—Klamath TREX, with property owner Jon Martin

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cgSBqr2kgaA>

“A Fire Wise Story: Klamath River 2014”—a neighborhood saved by family’s work

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QiP2roGaNck>



BEST OF 2014 ONLINE

Our Websites

Fire Learning Network <http://www.conservationgateway.org/fln>

Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network <http://facnetwork.org/>

Prescribed Fire Training Exchanges <http://nature.ly/trainingexchanges>

Recommended Media Stories

“Learning to Burn Again” (*Two Rivers Tribune*)—Klamath River TREX—

“Success isn’t measured in just acres, but by the locals who choose to carve a few weeks out of their busy fall to help bring good fire back these mountains again.”

<http://www.tworivertribune.com/2014/10/learning-to-burn-again/>

Editorial: “Balance is Key to Fire Safety” (*Sangre de Cristo Chronicle*)—Black Lake TREX—“As a community we need to put in as much effort into reintroducing fire into our forests as departments like the Eagle Nest Volunteer Fire Department do into stopping devastating fires at our homes and businesses.”

http://sangrechronicle.com/opinion/article_2f0b970c-4e70-11e4-a5cb-4fc6776a05dd.html

“Fire Council Ignites Long Term Burn Plan” (*Yurok Today*)—June Yurok TREX—“Restoration of the land means restoration of the people.”

http://www.yuroktribe.org/documents/june_2014_YUROK_web.pdf

“Fires Don’t Wait, Neither Should We” (*Wenatchee World*)—FAC—

“We must recognize that by being prepared we can make a difference.”

<http://www.wenatcheeworld.com/blogs/community-connections/2014/jun/09/annie-schmidt-fires-dont-waitneither-should-we/>

“Igniting Fires, Sparking Change” (*Prairie Fire*)—Nebraska TREX—“The absence of fire creates hazardous conditions. Fire is a required process if we are to protect and manage a majority of our natural lands locally and worldwide.”

<http://www.prairiefirenewspaper.com/2014/05/igniting-flames-sparking-change-fire-trainees-leave-nebraska-with-new-skills-perspectives>

The Fire Learning Network, Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network, Scaling-up to Promote Ecosystem Resiliency and Prescribed Fire Training Exchanges and are supported by *Promoting Ecosystem Resilience and Fire Adapted Communities Together* (PERFACT), a cooperative agreement between The Nature Conservancy, the USDA Forest Service and agencies of the Department of the Interior. *An equal opportunity provider.* For more information, contact Lynn Decker at (ldecker@tnc.org) or (801) 320-0524.