

Kick-off Meeting Summary

Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network

Pilot Project

April 10th and 11th 2013
Boise, Idaho

Setting the context: reflecting on current conditions and efforts

The first day of the Fire Adapted Communities (FAC) Network meeting was designed to set the context and foundation for the learning network. National FAC Coalition members framed existing nation-wide efforts and hub leaders and community teams provided an overview of specific on-the-ground efforts being carried out at multiple scales across the country.

Pam Leschak, Fire Adapted Communities Program Manager for the US Forest Service, kicked off the program. She introduced FAC Network partners to the history and goals of the USFS' suite of FAC investments and the FAC Coalition. Following this introduction, Nick Goulette, Director of the Watershed Center, laid out the meeting format and objectives, further exploring FAC learning network concepts and rationale, and setting expectations for participants and the broader network. Lucian Deaton, of the International Association of Fire Chiefs and Ready, Set, Go! (RSG) program introduced participants to that program and provided examples of how RSG is working to cultivate Fire Adapted Communities through partnerships between local fire departments and other community stakeholders. Aron Anderson then oriented the FAC Network to the National Fire Protection Association, fireadapted.org, and the Firewise Communities U.S.A. (Firewise) program. The fireadapted.org website is an excellent web portal, housing resources and information about the full suite of FAC strategies. Rounding out presentations from FAC Coalition partners, Steve Quarles provided an orientation to the Insurance Institute for Building and Home Safety and their suite of work around wildfire.

After introductions, orientation and framing, and presentations from the FAC Coalition, the hub organizations shared introductory presentations about their work with the rest of the Network. Each hub was able to share the history of their "fire adaptation" efforts in their respective locations. Following these presentations, the group worked on developing a shared vision of the FAC Network. Participants wrapped up the day with a group dinner in downtown Boise, connecting with each other in an informal setting, building on the relationship-driven structure the network has been designed to achieve.

Weaving the network: making new connections and scaling up the network

On the second day of the meeting, Network participants began to design strategies for improving fire adaptation in their communities. Each team began by completing a situational analysis based upon their local fire adapted communities context. They identified strengths and weaknesses internal to their fire adapted communities coordinating groups and partnerships, along with external opportunities and threats. They then used this elevated understanding of local context, coupled with expanded awareness of FAC strategies from around the country, to suggest appropriate goals for their FAC efforts.

After a poster review and note-taking, each team made a presentation to the full group framed around learning questions about primary challenges and opportunities. They then engaged in open peer assistance discussions, sharing insights across geographies and experience.

Following these exercises, the hub teams developed work plans building off of their identified priorities and the recommendations of their network peers. The resulting work plans identify actions, specific objectives, and outcomes the teams aim to achieve. Each team then shared their work plans with the whole group in a round robin report out.

The two-day meeting concluded with a discussion about how to structure the FAC Network to achieve learning at multiple levels. The groups discussed and outlined strategies for delivery of technical support, methods of information dissemination, facilitation of cross-site learning, and aggregation of learning.

Some of the Network's suggestions for next steps included:

- Structuring external communications to deliver an expanded vision of the competencies a Fire Adapted Community needs
- Developing cross-site learning forums including virtual work space, file sharing and webinars for Network learning
- Further refinement and articulation of the Network's form and participant roles
- Refinement of a "tool kit"
- Sharing lessons learned and cataloguing best practices
- Integrating with the efforts of the FAC Coalition
- Delivering technical assistance for messaging and communications and team coaching
- Creating visual products, including maps, videos and presentations describing the activities of the FAC Network and the ultimate vision for FAC



Meeting Goals and Objectives

Orient and introduce FAC Network leaders and partners

Establish common understanding of current FAC programs, goals, strategies and challenges

Share contexts, competencies, expertise, innovations and challenges of partners

Share contexts, competencies, expertise, innovations, and challenges of hub leaders

Develop situational analyses to serve as baselines that inform individual work plans and network strategies

Foster relationships and a sense of shared-purpose among all participants

Define key support and networking functions of FAC Net leaders and partners

Define strategies for integration with existing FAC programs and initiatives

Explore opportunities for integration with larger efforts such as the Cohesive Strategy and regional initiatives

Develop draft year one work plans for hubs and partners

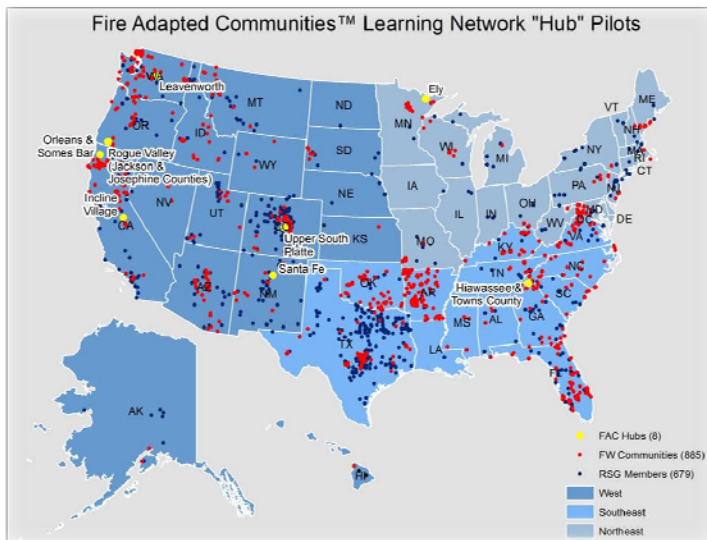
The Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network

Background

The US Forest Service's Fire Adapted Communities program, working through a partnership with the Watershed Research & Training Center (WRTC) and the US Fire Learning Network (FLN), is establishing a nation-wide Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network (FAC Network) pilot project.

Over the last decade, fire managers and researchers have found that in-person and interactive forms of communication and learning provide the most efficient and effective means of accelerating adoption of programs, and transferring best practices and innovations across geographies. The FLN has demonstrated this model for advancing the restoration of fire adapted ecosystems across the US over the last decade.

The project partners intend to adapt the FLN model, in coordination with the existing Fire Adapted Communities Coalition and others, to accelerate the growth of Fire Adapted Communities nationwide.



FAC Network Goals

- *Work with place-based partners to facilitate the development of sub-regional peer learning networks*
- *Use regional peer learning networks as venues to accelerate the adoption, innovation and diffusion of best practices associated with FAC programs across communities and geographies*
- *Share learning and innovation across the three goals of the National Cohesive Wildland Fire Strategy: resilient landscapes, fire adapted communities, and response to wildfire, supporting their purposeful integration to build truly fire adapted communities*
- *Provide a meaningful and efficient feedback loop to the FAC Coalition and federal program leaders to more efficiently and effectively support fire adapted communities*

Initial "Hub" Communities

Santa Fe County, New Mexico
Tahoe Basin, Nevada/California
Towns County, Georgia
Mid-Klamath, California
Leavenworth, Washington
Rogue Basin, Oregon
Ely, Minnesota
Woodland Park, Colorado

“It's easy to get everyone's attention when a wildfire threatens our community. The real trick is sustaining the energy and collaboration to act before the fire. That's what it takes to be a fire adapted community. The FAC Network is going to help us to become fire adapted, to stay fire adapted, and to share and learn with communities across the country. We're excited to be a part of this. “

Network Structure and Function

Working under the administration of the Forest Service's Fire Adapted Communities Program, the WRTC and FLN serve as the project managers for the FAC Network. Representatives from the Fire Adapted Communities Coalition are working with the WRTC and FLN to coordinate and steer the project.

Together, the WRTC and FLN have jointly designed and will administer the project working with sub-regional network hub leaders, providing technical guidance and support, facilitating communications, documenting learning, and aiding in sub-regional workshops. They are also responsible for leveraging and integrating with existing efforts.



Hub organization leaders will convene and facilitate workshops and peer learning exchanges with other public and private community-based institutions and partnerships working on fire adaptation in their respective geographies. The WRTC and FLN will convene national workshops, aggregate learning, and share across regions and with Forest Service program leaders, FAC Coalition members and other partners to aid in adapting programs and strategies over time. These collective efforts will promote collaboration among local, state, tribal, and federal partners at the community level and beyond, creating a multi-scalar network.

Next Steps

The FAC Learning Network kick-off was held in Boise on April 10-11, 2013. Representatives from the eight initial hub communities along with representatives of The Watershed Center, The Nature Conservancy, and representatives from the Fire Adapted Communities Coalition met to initiate the FAC Learning Network.

The U.S. Forest Service began developing the Fire Adapted Communities program in 2009 through the Partnerships Staff of Fire and Aviation Management. The FAC Program has provided the funding for initiating the FAC Learning Network. Funding sub-awards will be initiated to support the work of hub organizations beginning in spring 2013.

The FAC Learning Network ("Hub and spoke network") is identified in the Regional Action Plans developed for the National Cohesive Strategy. The FAC Program and FAC Network will help implement these key aspects of the Cohesive Strategy.

For more information about the FAC Learning Network, contact Nick Goulette, Director of The Watershed Center, at nickg@hayfork.net (530) 628-4206, or Lynn Decker, Director of The US Fire Learning Network, at ldecker@tnc.org.

For more information on the Fire Adapted Communities program, visit <http://fireadapted.org/> or contact Pam Leschak, U.S. Forest Service Fire Adapted Communities program manager at pleschak@fs.fed.us or Tim Melchert, U. S. Forest Service Cooperative Fire Specialist at tmelchert@fs.fed.us.

Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network
Meeting Participants April 10-11, 2013

Team Member's Organization	Participant	Email
Georgia Team		
Chestatee Chattahoochee RC&D Council	Frank Riley, Executive Director	frank.ccrd@gmail.com
Georgia State Forestry Commission	Eric Mosley, State Firewise Coordinator	emosley@gfc.state.ga.us
Minnesota Team		
Dovetail Partners, Minnesota	Kathryn Fernholz, Executive Director	katie@dovetailinc.org
Community of Ely, Minnesota	Gloria Erickson, Outreach Coordinator	gjerickson@frontiernet.net
Colorado Team		
Coalition for the Upper South Platte	Jonathan Bruno, Operations Director	jonathan@uppersouthplatte.org
New Mexico Team		
The Forest Guild, New Mexico	Mike DeBonis, Executive Director	mike@forestguild.org
Santa Fe County Wildland Division	Krys Nystrom, Fire Prevention Specialist	knystrom@co.santa-fe.nm.us
Eastern Washington Team		
The Nature Conservancy, Eastern Washington	Lloyd McGee, Director, Eastern WA Forestry Program	lmcgee@TNC.ORG
Chumstick Wildfire Stewardship Coalition	Andrew Holm, Operating Officer, Tierra Learning Center	andrew@tierralearningcenter.org
Lake Tahoe Team		
North Lake Tahoe Fire Protection District, and Northern CA Prescribed Fire Council	Norb Sczurek, Division Chief	nszczurek@nltpd.net
Tahoe Regional Planning Agency	Mike Vollmer, Forest Management Program Manager	mvollmer@trpa.org
Southern Oregon Team		
Southern Oregon Forest Restoration Collaborative	George McKinley, Coordinator	george@jeffnet.org
Josephine and Jackson County Coordinating Group	Jim Wolf, Fire Specialist	jamesawolf@gmail.com
Northern California Team		
The Karuk Tribe	Bill Tripp, Eco-Cultural Restoration Specialist	btripp@karuk.us
Mid-Klamath Watershed Council and Orleans Somes Bar Fire Safe Council	Will Harling, Executive Director	will@mkwc.org

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Regional and National Organizations		
Colorado State University	Tony Cheng, Director, Colorado Forest Restoration Institute	Tony.CHENG@colostate.edu
Colorado State University	Casey Metz, Graduate Student	caseymetz@gmail.com
Department Of Interior, Office of Wildland Fire	Erin Darboven, Communications Specialist	erin_darboven@ios.doi.gov
Insurance Institute for Building and Home Safety	Steve Quarles, Senior Scientist	squarles@ibhs.org
International Association of Fire Chiefs	Lucian Deaton, Program Manager, Ready, Set, Go!	ldeaton@iafc.org
National Fire Protection Association	Aron Anderson, Fire Adapted Communities Initiative	AAnderson@nfpfa.org
The Nature Conservancy	Lynn Decker, US Fire Learning Network Director	ldecker@TNC.ORG
The Nature Conservancy	Wendy Fulks, Landscape Conservation Network Director	wfulks@tnc.org
The Watershed Research and Training Center	Nick Goulette, Executive Director	nickg@hayfork.net
The Watershed Research and Training Center	Lynn Jungwirth, Senior Fellow for Policy and Development	lynnj@hayfork.net
The Watershed Research and Training Center	Michelle Medley-Daniel, Communications and Partnership Coordinator	wrtc@hayfork.net
United States Forest Service	Pam Leschak, Fire Adapted Communities Program Manager	pleschak@fs.fed.us
United States Forest Service	Tim Melchert, Cooperative Fire Specialist	tmelchert@fs.fed.us
University of Colorado, Boulder	Bruce Goldstein, Associate Professor Environmental Design	brugo@colorado.edu
University of Colorado, Boulder	David Burchfield, Graduate Student	

CELEBRATE SUCCESS, FIND CHAMPIONS

**Fire, not just another four-
letter word**

**HELP GEORGIA FRANCHISE FIRE
ADAPTED COMMUNITIES**

Fire on the ground

**THE SLOW BLADE
PENETRATES THE SHIELD**

Burn and Reuse!

**IT DOESN'T HAVE TO BE
PRETTY TO WORK**

Adapt or die