

FLN Networker No. 145: November 13, 2013

The FLN Networker is a publication of the Fire Learning Network—a partnership of the USDA Forest Service, Department of the Interior (BIA, BLM, National Park Service, US Fish & Wildlife Service) and The Nature Conservancy—intended to foster communication within the network and among its friends. Submit comments, links and subscription requests to Liz Rank.

For more about the FLN, visit www.conservationgateway.org/fln or contact Lynn Decker.

News from the Field

California: The **Northern California Prescribed Fire Training Exchange** wrapped up last week, with the crews having burned on 16 units in four different areas (Redwood National Park, Orleans & Somes Bar, Hayfork and the Whiskeytown National Recreation Area). Incessant rains—and a government shutdown—in the weeks leading up to the event had caused organizers concern, but they pressed on and ended up having an **extremely successful** two weeks, whether measured **in terms of acres, learning** or **landowner response**. See the attached *Notes from the Field* and the story in [Wildfire Today](#) for more.

California: **Bill Tripp** (btripp@karuk.us) and **Will Harling** (will@mkwc.org) were among those quoted in a [lengthy article](#) in the *Two Rivers Tribune* that reviewed the numerous fires in the Klamath-Siskiyou area last summer. They succinctly captured much of the suppression dilemma:

“There is a **fine line between success in suppression** and transference of **risk to future** firefighter and public safety” (Bill)

“That is why we need to come up with a plan that invests in **defensible space**...around communities. Only then will the public feel safe enough to **let fires burn on the edges of fire season** and do some good work out there...” (Will)

California: Elsewhere, **FireScape Mendocino** held its **first planning workshop** last week. According to **Wendy Fulks**, who helped facilitate, the group showed a **remarkably diverse** set of perspectives and lots of good work was done in the small group breakout sessions. More details in the next issue.

Idaho: **Jeremy Bailey** (jeremy_bailey@tnc.org) spoke on “**Fires, Forest, Communities and Management: Surviving and Thriving during the Next Generation of Wildfires—What Everyone Should Know**” in a public lecture hosted by the Idaho chapter of The Nature Conservancy yesterday.

National: **Chris Topik** testified last week before the **Senate Agriculture Subcommittee on Conservation, Forestry and Natural Resources** at a hearing intended to address pre-emptive measures to **reduce the ever-increasing cost of wildfires** across the West. He reported that his testimony was well-received, based on conversations afterwards. Transcripts from the hearing—“Shortchanging Our Forests: How Tight Budgets and Management Decisions Can Increase the Risk of Wildfire”—is available on the [subcommittee's website](#).

News from the Field: Prescribed Fire Councils

National Leadership: The **Coalition of Prescribed Fire Councils** ([website](#)) has [announced](#) a **change in leadership**, following its recent board meeting. **Morgan Varner** (mvarner@cfr.msstate.edu) was selected as the **new chair** of the Coalition, and **Jeremy Bailey** (jeremy_bailey@tnc.org) was appointed to the new **vice-chair** position.

National Survey: Last winter, **Lenya Quinn-Davidson** (nwcapfc@gmail.com), **Morgan Varner**, **Mark Melvin** and **Jeremy Bailey** conducted a **survey of 24 prescribed fire councils**. Their [summary of key findings](#) is a good quick snapshot of what councils are doing.

California: In central California, the **Southern Sierra Prescribed Fire Council** held its **inaugural meeting last week**, with 75 participants from communities, tribes, academia, and conservation groups, as well as federal, state and local agencies. Classroom sessions ranged from the **history of fire** in Yosemite and current research being done on the Rim Fire, through panels on **air quality regulations** and training, to public outreach **lessons learned**. A half-day field tour of Grant Grove focused on challenges that park staff face with **outreach and smoke management** during times of high visitor use and the **coordination** between **National Parks staff** and the local **fire safe council** to complete fuels reduction and restoration of fire to **protect the surrounding community**. Presentations and a full summary will be posted on the [council's website](#); contact **Tim Kline** (tkline@berkeley.edu) or **Karina Silvas-Bellanca** (sosierapfc@gmail.com) for more information or to **sign up for email updates**.

Florida: The Nature Conservancy hosted two **field tours** of the Tiger Creek Preserve in conjunction with the **Central Florida Prescribed Fire Council's** 2013 meeting this fall. Fifty-two land managers and biologists took part in the tours, which showcased the management approach for this **model of resilient longleaf pine**, and highlights were presented at the meeting, which had 270 attendees. For more information, contact **Zach Prusak** (zprusak@tnc.org).

Online: Quite a few councils are now **on Facebook**. Among them is the fairly new **Oregon Prescribed Fire Council** ([page](#)), where it's good to see **cross-posting** from the neighboring **Northern California Prescribed Fire Council** ([page](#)). Councils in [Arkansas](#), [North Carolina](#), [Pennsylvania](#) and [Washington](#) also have pages.

Reports & Resources: Wildfire Attitudes & Actions / WUI Fact Sheet

Wildfire Attitudes & Actions: The Rocky Mountain Research Station has released a **pair of reports** based on public surveys conducted three years apart in Boulder and Larimer counties (Colorado); the surveys assessed **WUI residents' attitudes towards wildfire** and their **wildfire risk mitigation actions**. Among the interesting nuggets are findings in the [Boulder report](#) about the effects of an individual's source of information on their degree of mitigation:

“Compared to low mitigators, both mid-level and high mitigators are more likely to have received information from a variety of sources. There is a significant relationship between the percent of respondent that received information from the volunteer fire department and their level of mitigation...

There is no significant difference between the mitigation levels for receiving information from [acquaintances]; media: USFS; NPS; and those reporting receiving no information...”

(Interestingly, the pattern in the [Larimer report](#) was not the same.)

These studies (and other work) are **synthesized** in the [Science you can use Bulletin](#), “Fire on the Mountain: **What Motivates Homeowners** to Reduce Their Wildfire Risk?”

WUI Fact Sheet: IAWF produced an [11-page fact sheet](#) this summer. It has information about the **extent and growth of the WUI** and their effects on the **cost** (and safety) of managing wildfires. It also gives an overview of the **International Wildland Urban Interface Code** (IWUIC) and its role in mitigating the WUI fire problem.

Symposium Recordings: Herps & Fire

Herps & Fire: The Wildlife Society annual conference (in Milwaukee last month) included a symposium on “**Effects of Wildland Fire & Fire Management on Amphibians & Reptiles**,” one of the goals of which was to “discuss solutions that best integrate habitat management with species persistence.” Videos of the **eight presentations** (pertaining mainly to eastern species) are at <http://vimeo.com/channels/herpetiles/videos>.

Jobs: Grad Student / Stewardship Program Manager

Grad Student: **Texas Tech University** is seeking a **funded PhD** student in **fire ecology / wildlife management**, beginning in January 2014. Details are in the attached flyer; position is open until filled.

Stewardship Program Manager: **Wallowa Resources** is hiring a manager responsible for various partnership, forest collaboration and stewardship contracting program elements. Visit [their website](#) for details; applications are due by **November 18**.

Webinars

November 19
new listing

A Roadmap to Support Collaboration Before, During and After the NEPA Process

11:00 Pacific / noon Mountain / 1:00 Central / 2:00 Eastern (1.5 hours)

This peer-learning session about the new National Forest Foundation [tool](#) of the same name will be led by Annie Schmidt (Chumstick Wildfire Stewardship Coalition) and Karen DiBari (NFF).

Information: <http://www.nff.wildapricot.org/Default.aspx?pageId=471105&eventId=783901&EventViewMode=EventDetails>

November 21
updated

The Role of Fire in Shortgrass Rangelands

noon Pacific / 1:00 Mountain / 2:00 Central / 3:00 Eastern

This webinar will be co-hosted by the Southwest Fire Science Consortium, Great Plains Fire Science Exchange and Southern Rockies Fire Science Consortium.

Information: http://gallery.mailchimp.com/2263fe298f4df255d22b80097/files/FINAL_shortgrass_flyer_wLink.pdf

FLN Workshops

November 20

Parashant Partnership / St. George, UT

This workshop, originally scheduled for October 15-18, will focus on the Uinkaret Mountains Vegetation Management Plan.

→ Participants are asked to attend the November 19 NEPA webinar (see above).

Information: **Eli Lauren-Bernstein** (eli.bernstein@nau.edu)

December 3

Georgia Blue Ridge Mountains Landscape / Blairsville, GA

The inaugural workshop (originally set for October 22) of this new landscape will include introductions to fire adapted communities, fire ecology and lessons learned from the FLN as a diverse partnership comes together in north Georgia.

Information: **Malcolm Hodges** (mhodges@tnc.org) or **Jim Wentworth** (jwentworth@fs.fed.us)

December 4
cancelled

Southern Blue Ridge FLN Leads Workshop / Asheville, NC

This workshop has been cancelled to allow for landscape meetings and calls.

Information: **Margit Bucher** (mbucher@tnc.org) or **Beth Buchanan** (bbuchanan@fs.fed.us)

December 5-6
updated

Northern California Prescribed Fire Council / Redding, CA

Registration is now open for this meeting, which will focus on prescribed fire and oak woodlands, wildlife and habitat. As usual, there will be a full-day meeting with research and management presentations, an evening social with good food and drink, and a field tour guided by local land managers and scientists.

Information: http://norcalrxfirecouncil.org/Fall_2013_Meeting.html

Training, Conferences & Workshops

- November 14** **Complex Prescribed Burning for Scrub Jays / Ocala NF, FL**
The Northeast Florida Scrub Working Group is presenting this one-day workshop, which includes a demonstration burn.
Information: see the agenda attached to [Networker issue #143](#); RSVP to Parker Titus (ptitus@tnc.org)
- November 14-16** **Backyards & Beyond: Wildland Fire Education / Salt Lake City, UT**
This National Fire Protection Association conference will bring together wildfire experts, Firewise community representatives, community planners, civic leaders, homeowners, insurance professionals, landscape architects and others for a chance to network and share best-practices.
Info: <http://www.nfpa.org/training/backyards-and-beyond>
- November 15** **Professional Development Workshop / Ft. Collins, CO**
The Society of American Foresters is sponsoring this workshop for early-career professionals and students.
Information: see the flyer attached to [Networker issue #143](#), then [register online](#)
- November 16** **Living with Fire in Northern New Mexico / Santa Fe, NM**
This free public Southwest Fire Consortium workshop will feature presentations and the opportunity to interact with regional scientists and land managers in breakout sessions and one-on-one.
Information: <http://livingwithfire.eventbrite.com/>, or contact Eytan Krasilovsky (eytan@forestguild.org)
- Jan 13-17, 2014 updated** **Rx510 – Advanced Fire Effects / Tucson, AZ**
The National Advanced Fire & Resource Institute (NAFRI) is offering this course; the nomination deadline for this course has been extended to December 6.
Information: http://www.nafri.gov/pages/description_rx510.htm
- Feb 8-13, 2014** **Society for Range Management: 67th Annual Meeting, Technical Training & Trade Show / Orlando, FL**
The theme for the meeting, “From Dusty Trails to Waning Wetlands,” will bring drought and water management to the fore. The technical sessions, workshops and symposia will cover a wide range of topics, from wildlife to fire ecology.
Information: <http://rangelands.org/orlando2014/>
- Feb 20-22, 2014** **Fire Ecology of the Northeast: Restoring Native and Cultural Ecosystems / New Haven, CT**
This workshop hosted by the Yale School of Forestry & Environmental Studies and Tall Timbers Research Station & Land Conservancy.
Information: <http://www.talltimbers.org/YALEworkshop/>
- Feb 25-27, 2014** **Fostering Resilience in Southwestern Ecosystems: A Problem-Solving Workshop / Tucson, AZ**
This JFSP workshop will help develop answers to pressing questions such as “How can managers build resilience when ecosystems are undergoing rapid change?” and “What are our options when megafires removes huge swaths of forests not adapted to this disturbance?”
Info: <http://swfireconsortium.org/Fire%20and%20Resiliency%20Ecology%20Workshop/>

- March 31-April 11** **Virginia Prescribed Fire Training Exchange / VA**
 This training exchange, hosted by the Central Appalachians FLN and partners, will be held in the mountains and coastal plain of Virginia. Nomination forms are due by **December 31**.
 Information: see the information attached to [Networker issue #144](#)
- April 8-10, 2014** **Oregon Prescribed Fire Council / Bend, OR**
 The first meeting of this new prescribed fire council will be held in conjunction with the Central Oregon Fire Science Symposium at OSU. Rx310 Fire Effects will be offered that week as well.
 Information: oregonrxfirecouncil@gmail.com
- May 19-23, 2014** **Large Wildland Fires: Social, Political & Ecological Effects / Missoula, MT**
 The call for workshops and special sessions for this conference co-hosted by the Association for Fire Ecology and the International association of Wildland Fire is now open. Early bird registration is open.
 Information: <http://largefireconference.org/>

Send News, Links & Comments

- Lynn Decker** – ldecker@tnc.org – Lynn is on call for jury duty November 11-15.
Jeremy Bailey – jeremy_bailey@tnc.org – Jeremy is in Virginia November 17-21.
Wendy Fulks – wfulks@tnc.org – Wendy is in Virginia November 17-21.
Mary Huffman – mhuffman@tnc.org – Mary is in the office.
Heather Montanye – hmontanye@tnc.org – Heather is in the office.
Liz Rank (Networker Editor) – lrnk@tnc.org – Liz is in the office.

Note: November 28 and 29 are Conservancy holidays.

To stop receiving the FLN Networker, please reply to this message and include your request in the body of the message.

Full Links

- News from the Field—*Wildfire Today*: <http://wildfiretoday.com/2013/11/08/prescribed-fire-task-force-mobilizes-for-14-days-in-california/#comments>
- News from the Field—*Two Rivers Tribune*: <http://www.tworivertribune.com/2013/10/looking-back-firestorm-on-the-rivers/>
- News from the Field—Senate hearing transcripts: http://www.ag.senate.gov/hearings/shortchanging-our-forests_how-tight-budgets-and-management-decisions-can-increase-the-risk-of-wildfire
- News from the Field—Rx councils—National coalition site: <http://www.prescribedfire.net/about-us>
 Announcement: <http://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&pid=sites&srcid=cHJlc2NyaWJIZGZpcmUubmV0fGNvYWxpdGlubi1vZi1wcmVzY3JpYmVklWZpcmUtY291bmNpbHN8Z3g6M2FkNzZlOTZlODk0ZTE2MQ>
- News from the Field—Rx councils—Survey summary: <https://www.conservationgateway.org/ConservationPractices/FireLandscapes/Pages/Rx-Councils-Survey-2013.aspx>
- News from the Field—Rx councils—Southern Sierra Prescribed Fire Council: <http://www.sosierrapfc.org/>
- Reports & Resources—Wildfire attitudes & action—Boulder: http://www.fs.fed.us/rm/pubs/rmrs_rm057.pdf
 Larimer report: http://www.fs.fed.us/rm/pubs/rmrs_rm058.pdf
 Bulletin: <http://www.fs.fed.us/rm/science-application-integration/docs/science-you-can-use/2013-09.pdf>
- Reports & Resources--WUI fact sheet: http://www.iawfonline.org/pdf/WUI_Fact_Sheet_08012013.pdf
- Jobs--Wallowa Resources: <http://www.wallowaresources.org/>
- Training, Conferences & Workshops—Professional development (Nov 15): https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1-nbcN0OgkVqYZUzvFSwuTwscaRojvmU_fuoivRKpDOI/viewform

The Fire Learning Network is supported by *Promoting Ecosystem Resiliency through Collaboration: Landscapes, Learning and Restoration*, a cooperative agreement between The Nature Conservancy, USDA Forest Service and agencies of the Department of the Interior.

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Fire Learning Network Notes from the Field

Northern California Prescribed Fire Training Exchange

October-November 2013

Redwood National Park, Orleans & Somes Bar, Hayfork, Whiskeytown National Recreation Area

Over the course of two weeks, more than 40 participants in the Northern California Prescribed Fire Training Exchange conducted 14 controlled burns, treating a total of 389 acres on private and federal lands, and assisted with another two burns conducted by the Forest Service and BLM. They burned across northwest California, from the Pacific coast near Arcata to the interior eastern extent of the Klamath Mountains near Redding. They burned in remote back country prairies and conifer forests as well as in the front country

treatments in high-priority locations that will help promote community safety and forest health in these fire-prone forests, while enhancing local capacity to help meet the next round of wildfires.

In the weeks leading up to the event, amidst ceaseless rains and a government shutdown, the organizing team debated canceling the event. Instead, they developed additional contingency plans, and



Hands down, it was the best training I have ever experienced, with an excellent balance of the science and application of Rx fire management, and a wonderful group of people to build working relationships with.

Fire Planner, US Forest Service

adjacent to homes. Participants ranged from university students, educators, researchers and scientists to municipal firefighters, federal firefighters, conservationists and private contractors, and included a fire photographer and even an air quality regulator. They came from various organizations throughout northern California, and from Colorado, Florida, Missouri, Nevada, Oregon, Washington and Spain. Together, they conducted



Top: The crew paused during their work at Whiskeytown National Recreation Area, the last burn of the training exchange, for a group shot.

© Eamon Engber

Bottom: A participant from the North Lake Tahoe Fire Protection District assesses a sappy, torching tree.

© Lenya Quinn-Davidson

Top: A fire captain with the Milpitas Fire Department, the Plans Section Chief for the training exchange, enjoys some awesome late-October fire behavior.

© Lenya Quinn-Davidson

Bottom: Crews adjust the hose lay on a burn on private land immediately adjacent to a structure.

© Larry Luckham

moved ahead: past controlled burns and training exchanges have shown that cancelling early is a sure way to not accomplish objectives. So the team stayed focused on mobilizing crews and being fire-ready.

As the start of the training exchange drew near, the stars aligned: the rains ended and a spell of perfect burning weather set in. Federal agency employees returned from furloughs. And the numerous host units and landowners were gracious, prepared for the group's arrival, and trusted the organization to lead burns and train on their lands. The caterer who traveled with the group—which relocated its incident command post four times—was superb, providing delicious home-cooked meals that nourished exhausted bodies and comforted the team's taxed spirits. Burning every day for two weeks is not easy.

According to Jeremy Bailey, who has organized such events for years, "There were numerous



After a summer of wildfires in the area, a landowner in Orleans expresses his "fire happiness" over the controlled burn in his back yard. © TNC/Mary Huffman

lessons learned, but the one that resonates most strongly with me is that despite many reasons and excuses to not conduct our controlled burns, by staying focused, working with our partners and neighbors, and through tireless planning and re-planning, we accomplished the burning." They were able to spread

good fire—and, as one participant put it, "fire happiness"—to many communities, parks, forests and individuals. This was evident in the days following the exchange, as both private landowners and the Forest Service expressed interest in taking part in the next such event.



For more information, contact:

Lenya Quinn-Davidson
nwcapfc@gmail.com

Jeremy Bailey
jeremy_bailey@tnc.org



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The Northern California Prescribed Fire Council (and its director, Lenya Quinn-Davidson, right) took the lead in organizing the numerous partners that worked together to host the northern California training exchange. © Larry Luckham



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PhD Assistantship in Fire Ecology/Wildlife Management

The Verble Fire Ecology Laboratory (Department of Natural Resources Management) at Texas Tech University seeks a funded Ph.D. student to begin in *January 2014*. The position is located in Lubbock, Texas, a city of approximately 225,000 people in the Texas Panhandle.

The student will be part of a large-scale study on the effects of fire and fuels treatments on bobwhite quail and arthropod prey responses. Working in conjunction with private landowners, the student will be responsible for monitoring fuels treatments and wildlife responses, assisting with prescribed burns, and supervising undergraduate volunteer crews. The student will additionally also work with the Texas Tech Center for Fire Ecology and Quail Tech Alliance to promote best management practices for native rangelands and bobwhite quail to private landowners.

Required qualifications include a B.S. in Natural Resources, Biology, Ecology or related field, GPA >2.75, at least one statistics course, and the ability to make extended trips to remote locations.

Preferred qualifications include an M.S. degree in a related field, prior prescribed burning experience, experience working in remote conditions, experience handling and/or monitoring wildlife, and a proven record of supervisory experience. Strong communication and statistical skills are a plus.

Please direct applications and questions to Dr. Robin Verble (robin.verble@ttu.edu). Required application materials include:

1. Cover letter
2. Resume/CV
3. GRE scores (may send unofficial copies)
4. Wildfire/prescribed burning master record (if applicable)
5. Names, phone numbers and addresses of three references.

Additional information about the lab, department and programs is available at the following websites:

Texas Tech University: www.ttu.edu
Department of Natural Resources Mgmt: <http://cherokee.tosm.ttu.edu/ttunrm/>,
Verble Fire Ecology Lab: <http://fireecologylab.blogspot.com>
Quail Tech Alliance: <http://www.quail-tech.org>

Review of materials will begin immediately and continue until the position is filled.