

# FLN Networker No. 170: October 29, 2014

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*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](http://www.conservationgateway.org/fln) or contact Lynn Decker.

## News from the Field

**Arizona:** Mark Brehl of the **Flagstaff Fire Department** has shared the “Flagstaff **Watershed Protection Project Cost Avoidance Study**” [report](#) with the FAC Learning Network. He notes that “while the estimates in our new report are VERY conservative, it still shows that our \$10 million voter approved bond funded project will help us avoid upwards of \$1.2 billion in post fire impacts.”

**California:** Fire was the topic on **KHSU Radio**’s “Thursday Night Talk” a couple of weeks ago. In addition to the local **fire chief**, **Desmond Cowan** of the Arcata FPD, **three TRES people** were there: **Lenya Quinn-Davidson**, **Will Harling** and **Jeremy Bailey**. There’s a good deal of local fire department talk in the **hour-long segment**, but also a lot of good talk about good fire and the way that TRES helps people get there. The [link to the recording](#) of the show should be **available through Thursday** of this week.

**California:** The **Klamath River TRES** was also [in the news](#): yesterday’s *Two Rivers Tribune* ran the story “Learning to Burn Again,” focusing on the **community safety** and **cultural fire** aspects of the training exchange.

**California:** The **Western Klamath Mountains FLN** will hold a **workshop** next week that focuses on how to implement its collaborative restoration plan—moving from “**agreement in principle**” to “**agreement in practice**.” Agreement in principle was reached with the [collaborative restoration plan](#), completed in July. Agreement in practice will mean accomplishing deliverables specified in multiple funding agreements totaling \$1.1 million. The group’s task is **complicated by the 220,000 acres of wildfires** that burned over the summer: in response to the fires, the Klamath National Forest recently issued its [notice of intent](#) for the Westside Klamath Restoration Project, which has considerable **geographic overlap** with the collaborative restoration plan.

**Nebraska:** In an overlooked bit of **media coverage** from last summer, *QUEST Nebraska* did an [audio report](#) on the **Loup Rivers TRES** that was held in the spring. “Fire Returns to the Great Plains” includes information about the why and how of burning, as well as about the training exchange.

**New Jersey:** **Barnegat Township’s membership in the FAC Learning Network** appears in a [recent story](#) in a local paper—along with a little history of efforts in the area and a reminder of the need to become more fire adapted.

**New Mexico:** **FAC leaders**—Firewise community members, elected officials, fire departments, state and federal forestry officials, and local businesses—from throughout northern New Mexico gathered in Taos last week for a **peer-learning workshop**. They worked in small groups to discuss challenges and tools for addressing them in regards to **three important topics**: coordination and collaboration; engaging residents and assessing hazards; and community planning for evacuation and post fire recovery. **Common challenges** identified included managing slash from thinning projects, engaging non-resident landowners, and managing collaborative relationships. **Solutions shared** included using multiple messages to reach resistant landowners (fire danger, forest health, wildlife etc.), reaching out to utility companies as potential partners, and hosting tours of successful defensible space and thinning projects. Planning is underway for a second peer-learning workshop for communities in north-central New Mexico.

**New Mexico:** There is a long [article](#) about the **Rio Grande Water Fund** in the digital magazine TakePart. It covers the issues—**ecological and social**—surrounding the project, as well as its **history**, including the key role played by **Laura McCarthy** ([lmccarthy@tnc.org](mailto:lmccarthy@tnc.org)).

**New Mexico:** **Jorge Pulido** ([jorgepulidoluna@gmail.com](mailto:jorgepulidoluna@gmail.com)), a participant in last month's **International TREX**, has written a good **report** of that event—see the attached *Notes from the Field*.

A **profile of participant Elyssa Durán**'s work at the TREX also appeared on the [news page](#) of New Mexico Highlands University, where she is a student.

**New Mexico:** And—last one from NM!—**Eytan Krasilovsky** ([eytan@forestguild.org](mailto:eytan@forestguild.org)), who headed up the **Black Lake TREX**, has written about **communications lesson** learned. See the attached *Notes from the Field* about the **trap-lining** they did in and around the community of Angel Fire.

**North Carolina:** In the **Southern Blue Ridge FLN**, the **Central Escarpment** landscape team met last week to discuss projects for the current fiscal year. Working with the **Grandfather Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Project**, the team will be adding an **FLN intern**. Following in the steps of the Central Appalachians FLN (see [Networker 165](#)), the intern will help develop **signage for a driving tour** on the Grandfather Ranger District; signs will explain relationships between **prescribed burning, wildfire and invasive species**. The intern will also help communities with Community Wildfire Protection Plans move toward becoming Firewise and **Fire Adapted Communities**. For more information, contact **Adam Warwick** ([awarwick@tnc.org](mailto:awarwick@tnc.org)).

**Texas:** The **Austin Fire Department** recently hosted its first official **Wildfire Hazard Assessment Training** (WHAT is your risk?). Participants in this **train-the-trainer workshop** honed their fundamental skills at conducting wildfire risk assessments while learning about the **human factors that motivate** residents to join the fight against wildfire. The department plans to host this workshop at least twice a year to increase the capacity to conduct assessments. For more information, contact **Justice Jones** ([justice.jones@austintexas.gov](mailto:justice.jones@austintexas.gov)).

## Recognize Someone: Mitigation Awards

**Mitigation Awards:** The **National Association of State Foresters**, the **International Association of Fire Chiefs** and the **National Fire Protection Association** are inviting **nominations** for their **first annual wildfire mitigation awards**—the Fire Adapted Community Fire Service Leadership Award, the Wildfire Mitigation Innovative Award and the Community Wildfire Preparedness Pioneer Award. [Details](#) are on the Fire Break website; nominations are due by **November 21**.

## Resources: FEMA / Risk to Communities

**FEMA:** The **Federal Emergency Management Agency** is reportedly making strides toward collaborative natural hazard mitigation management, and may be a useful partner or source of information. Their [searchable library](#) of resources includes a number of relevant documents that may provide a useful, slightly different view of **mitigation planning and processes**; see, for example "[Mitigation Ideas: A Resource for Reducing Risk to Natural Hazards](#)."

**Risk to Communities:** The [front page](#) of the **Headwaters Economics website** is dedicated to a set of items under the banner of "**Reducing Wildfire Risk** to Communities." It includes a little graphic that breaks wildfire's "worrisome trends" into those that we can and can't control—nice reminder.

## Articles: ScienceDaily

**ScienceDaily:** Several interesting stories based on journal articles have been posted on the *ScienceDaily* **digest** site recently. These include:

- A [story](#) based on the article “Is **Climate** an Important Driver of Post-European **Vegetation Change** in the **Eastern United States?**” (Quick answer: Not as important as changes in disturbances.)
- The [story](#) “Mountain **Pine Beetles Get Bad Rap** for Wildfires,” based on the journal article “Recent Mountain Pine Beetle Outbreaks, Wildfire Severity, and Postfire Tree Regeneration in the US Northern Rockies”
- A [story](#) based on the article “Historical, Observed, and Modeled **Wildfire Severity** in Montane Forests of the **Colorado Front Range**,” which suggests that current “fire severity [is] not much different than past.”

## Jobs: Burn Crew Member / Assistant FMOs

**Burn Crew Member:** The **Conservancy**’s Mississippi chapter is seeking a **stewardship-fire team technician** to be part of a burn crew from January through June of the coming year. For more information, see the Conservancy’s careers page ([job ID 42533](#)); applications are due by **November 4**.

**Assistant FMOs:** The **Forest Service** has posted a listing seeking **Forest Assistant Fire Management Officers**, with vacancies in more than **60 locations**. See job [announcement number 15-FIREOCR-3-1AFMOH-1112DP](#) for complete details; the open period extends through **next September**.

## Webinars

**November 17**      **Modifying Data—Leveraging LANDFIRE for the Southern Wildfire Risk Assessment**  
 9:00 Pacific / 10:00 Mountain / 11:00 Central / noon Eastern  
 This Southern Fire Exchange webinar will be presented by Curt Stripling and David Buckley of SouthWRAP.  
 Information: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/landfire-webinar-modifying-data-leveraging-landfire-for-the-southern-wildfire-risk-assessment-tickets-13675039411>

## FLN Workshops & Field Tours

**November 3-5**      **Western Klamath Mountains FLN / Happy Camp, CA**  
**new listing**  
 This workshop will focus on implementation of the recently-completed collaborative restoration plan.  
 Information: **Mary Huffman** ([mhuffman@tnc.org](mailto:mhuffman@tnc.org))

**November 5**      **Central Appalachians FLN Annual Workshop / Warm Springs, VA**  
 Colleagues from Virginia, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, Maryland and Kentucky will discuss the state of fire management as a tool for eastern forests; plans for 2015 controlled burns; updates on monitoring programs; communications, outreach and education; and ecological zones mapping, vegetation assessment tool and other resources.  
 Information: **Laurel Schablein** ([lschablein@tnc.org](mailto:lschablein@tnc.org))

**December 2-3**      **A Future with Fire: Exploring Opportunities for a More Resilient California / McClellan, CA**  
**updated**  
 Registration is now open for this conference being hosted by the **Northern California Prescribed Fire Council**, **Southern Sierra Prescribed Fire Council** and other partners. It will focus on increasing the pace and scale of fire-based treatments—both managed wildfire and landscape-scale prescribed fire—in CA.  
 Information: <http://www.norcalrxfirecouncil.org/home.html>

- December 4**  
**new listing**      **Georgia Blue Ridge Mountains FLN / Ellijay, GA**  
Partners will meet for presentations on fire in the Georgia Blue Ridge Mountains, and discussions on facilitating the wise use of fire and protecting communities that shouldn't burn.  
Information: **Malcolm Hodges** ([mhodes@tnc.org](mailto:mhodes@tnc.org))
- May 12-14, 2015**  
**new listing**      **Southern Blue Ridge FLN / location TBD**  
Save the date for the 10<sup>th</sup> annual regional workshop of the SBR FLN; details will follow. (Meanwhile, you can check out information from this past May's workshop at <http://sbrflnworkshop9.weebly.com/>.)

## FLN Prescribed Fire Training Exchanges

- Feb 15-28, 2015**  
**deadline**      **North Carolina Prescribed Fire Training Exchange / Ellerbe, NC**  
The North Carolina Prescribed Fire Council, Southern Blue Ridge FLN and numerous other partners will host this TREX in the sandhills and piedmont region of the state. Applications are due by **November 10**.  
Information: see the flyer attached to [Networker #168](#)

## Conferences, Workshops, Etc.

- January 18-23, 2015** **Wildland Urban Interface: Fire Adapted Communities / Emmitsburg, MD**  
The National Fire Academy is offering this course (R0614) for persons with organizational responsibility for WUI risk reduction operations in their agency or jurisdiction (federal, state, tribal and local governments).  
Information: see the flyer attached to [Networker #168](#)
- Feb 17-19, 2015**      **Midwest Fire Conference: Keep Fire Working for the Land / Dubuque, IA**  
This Tallgrass Prairie and Oak Savanna Fire Science Consortium conference will focus on fire in the tallgrass prairie, savanna and oak woodland region of the Midwestern United States and adjacent regions of Canada. Submissions for oral and poster presentations are encouraged from all fire practitioners—researchers, natural resource managers, students, contractors, and private landowners; abstracts are due by November 7.  
Information: <http://www.tposfirescience.org/mwfire15-overview/>
- March 22-27, 2015**      **Wildland Urban Interface: Fire Adapted Communities / Emmitsburg, MD**  
See the January 18-23 listing.
- April 20-24, 2015**      **Managing Fire, Understanding Ourselves: Human Dimensions in Safety and Wildland Fire / Boise, ID**  
13th International Wildland Fire Safety Summit & 4th Human Dimensions of Wildland Fire Conference.  
Information: <http://www.iawfonline.org/>
- May 2, 2015**  
**updated**      **International Wildfire Community Preparedness Day**  
Various events will be taking place. The logo and a save-the-date postcard are now available; for those, and more information, visit <http://www.nfpa.org/safety-information/for-consumers/outdoors/wildland-fires/national-wildfire-community-preparedness-day>.

May 5-7, 2015

**11<sup>th</sup> Symposium on Fire and Forest Meteorology / Minneapolis, MN**

The American Meteorological Society is hosting this conference; the abstract deadline is January 12.

Information: <http://www.ametsoc.org/MEET/fainst/201511fireforest.html>

October 22-24, 2015 **Backyards & Beyond: Wildland Fire Education Conference / Myrtle Beach, SC**

The deadline for abstracts for next year's NFPA conference is December 15.

Information: <http://www.nfpa.org/training/backyards-and-beyond>

Nov. 16-20, 2015

**Fire Ecology & Management Congress / San Antonio, TX**

Information: <http://afefirecongress.org/>

## Send News, Links & Comments

**Lynn Decker** – [ldecker@tnc.org](mailto:ldecker@tnc.org) – Lynn is in Warm Springs, VA November 4-7.

**Jeremy Bailey** – [jeremy\\_bailey@tnc.org](mailto:jeremy_bailey@tnc.org) – Jeremy is in the office.

**Wendy Fulks** – [wfulks@tnc.org](mailto:wfulks@tnc.org) – Wendy is in Boise October 27-29; out October 31.

**Mary Huffman** – [mhuffman@tnc.org](mailto:mhuffman@tnc.org) – Mary is in the Klamath Mountains, CA November 2-15.

**Heather Montanye** – [hmontanye@tnc.org](mailto:hmontanye@tnc.org) – Heather is in the office.

**Guy Duffner** – [gduffner@tnc.org](mailto:gduffner@tnc.org) – Guy is in Arlington (VA) October 27-31.

**Liz Rank** (editor) – [lrnk@tnc.org](mailto:lrnk@tnc.org) – Liz is in the office.

Note: November 11 is a Conservancy holiday.

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—AZ—Cost avoidance report: <http://www.flagstaffwatershedprotection.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/Final-FWPP-Cost-Avoidance-October-27.pdf>

News from the Field—CA—Thursday Night Talk: <http://khsu.streamguys.net/ThursdayNightTalk-Previous.aspx>

News from the Field--CA--Two Rivers Tribune: <http://www.tworivertribune.com/2014/10/learning-to-burn-again/>

News from the Field—CA—Klamath collaborative restoration plan: [http://karuk.us/images/docs/dnr/2014%20Western%20Klamath%20Restoration%20Partnership\\_Restoration%20Plan\\_DRAFT\\_FINA%20%20%20.pdf](http://karuk.us/images/docs/dnr/2014%20Western%20Klamath%20Restoration%20Partnership_Restoration%20Plan_DRAFT_FINA%20%20%20.pdf)

Klamath NF notice of intent: [http://www.fs.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsinternet!/ut/p/c5/04\\_SB8K8xLLM9MSSzPy8xBz9CP0os3gDfxMDT8MwRydLA1cj72BTUwMTAwgAykeaxRtBeY4WBv4eHmF-YT4GMHkidBvgAl6EdleDXlvfdrAJuM3388jPTdUvyA2NMMgyUQQAyrgQmg!!/dl3/d3/L2dJQSEvJUit3QS9ZQnZ3LzZfS000MjZOMDcxT1RVODBJN0o2MTJQRDMwODQ!/?project=45579](http://www.fs.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsinternet!/ut/p/c5/04_SB8K8xLLM9MSSzPy8xBz9CP0os3gDfxMDT8MwRydLA1cj72BTUwMTAwgAykeaxRtBeY4WBv4eHmF-YT4GMHkidBvgAl6EdleDXlvfdrAJuM3388jPTdUvyA2NMMgyUQQAyrgQmg!!/dl3/d3/L2dJQSEvJUit3QS9ZQnZ3LzZfS000MjZOMDcxT1RVODBJN0o2MTJQRDMwODQ!/?project=45579)

News from the Field—NE—Loup Rivers TREX: <http://science.kqed.org/quest/audio/prescribed-burn/>

News from the Field—NJ: <http://thesandpaper.villagesoup.com/p/barnegat-joins-federal-pilot-fire-adapted-community-program/1254919>

News from the Field—NM—RGWF: <http://www.takepart.com/feature/2014/10/17/rio-grande-water-fund-forest-treatments>

News from the Field—NM—Elyssa Durán: <http://www.nmhu.edu/news.aspx?recid=1109>

Recognize Someone—Mitigation awards: <http://wildfire.blog.nfpa.org/2014/09/new-wildfire-mitigation-awards-announced.html>

Resources—FEMA library: <https://www.fema.gov/resource-document-library>

Resources—Risk to communities: <http://headwaterseconomics.org/wildfire/reducing-wildfire-risk>

Articles—ScienceDaily—Climate & eastern forests: <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2014/10/141015112321.htm>

Pine beetles: <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2014/09/140929174410.htm>

CO fire severity: <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2014/09/140924144951.htm>

Jobs--Asst FMOs: <https://www.usajobs.gov/GetJob/ViewDetails/382493100>

The Fire Learning Network is supported by *Promoting Ecosystem Resilience and Fire Adapted Communities Together: Collaborative Engagement, Collective Action and Co-ownership of Fire*, 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

## International TREX Northern New Mexico September 2014

### Eight Countries—One Common Goal

#### Entrenamiento e intercambio en quemas controladas: Ocho países un objetivo común

Jorge Pulido  
Chiapas BIOMASA  
Méjico

Cada día, en algún lugar en la tierra, miles de hectáreas de bosques, selvas, sabanas, pastizales, matorrales, tundra, desiertos, humedales y campos de cultivo se están quemando, en todos los continentes excepto en la Antártida (Hardesty, 2005)<sup>1</sup>.



El fuego prescrito es una herramienta común para conservar y manejar la integridad de los ecosistemas forestales (Brown et al., 2011)<sup>2</sup>, es innegable según (Bond et al., 2005)<sup>3</sup> que el fuego ha quemado los ecosistemas por cientos de millones de años, lo que ayuda a dar forma a la distribución global de biomasa y a mantener la estructura y función de las comunidades que son propensas a los incendios.

The Nature Conservancy a través del Fire Learning Network (FLN), ha desarrollado desde 2008, en Estados Unidos, un programa de entrenamiento e intercambio en quemas controladas (denominado como TREX), buscando la integración e intercambio de conocimientos entre bomberos forestales de todo el mundo de habla hispana y bomberos locales.



El propósito es agruparlos en brigadas y trabajar en el campo compartiendo experiencias en quemas controladas, analizando efectos de incendios forestales y aprendiendo acerca de conservación de bosques y praderas.



Del 15 al 30 de septiembre de 2014, se llevó a cabo en Nuevo Méjico, EU, el TREX en su 4<sup>o</sup> versión en español, con la colaboración del U.S. Forest Service (Bosque Nacional de Santa Fe), Bandelier National Monument, Los Álamos National Laboratory, U.S. Geological Survey y New Mexico Highlands University.

El TREX es realizado en el norte de Nuevo Méjico, EU, debido a la presencia arraigada del español en la región, aunado a esto, en el Bosque Nacional de Santa Fe se implementan quemas controladas tanto para el manejo de los ecosistemas como para la prevención de mega incendios.

El grupo internacional del TREX estuvo integrado por participantes de Andorra (1), Argentina (1), Costa Rica (2), España (3), Méjico (5), Portugal (1), Puerto Rico (1) y Estados Unidos (2), con instructores de España, Estados Unidos y México.

La seguridad de los participantes es una de las prioridades del evento, por lo que se realizó un repaso de los cursos S190 y S130, incluyendo

<sup>1</sup> Hardesty, J., R. L. Myers y W. Fulks. 2005. Fire, ecosystems, and people: a preliminary assessment of fire as a global conservation issue. *The George Wright Forum* 22:78-87.

<sup>2</sup> Brown, D.J., J.T. Baccus, D.B. Means, and M.R.J. Forstner. 2011. Potential positive effects of fire on juvenile amphibians in a southern USA pine forest. *Journal of Fish and Wildlife Management* 2:135-145.

<sup>3</sup> Bond WJ, Keeley JE. 2005. Fire as global 'herbivore': The ecology and evolution of flammable ecosystems. *Trends in Ecology and Evolution* 20:387-394.

el uso del refugio ignífugo; la Estación del Bosque Nacional Bandelier, facilitó equipo de protección individual (EPI) a todos los participantes, además de las herramientas y el equipo necesario para la ejecución de las quemas prescritas.



*Cada participante realizó la prueba del refugio (consiste en desplegarlo apropiadamente en menos de 25 segundos) el cual es un requisito para poder participar en quemas controladas.*



Se visitó el incendio El Pino, un incendio natural manejado producto de un rayo en una área preparada para quema controlada. Asimismo se visitó una unidad de quema del 2013 en la misma zona del incendio El Pino para analizar los efectos de la quema.

En total, durante el TRES, se quemaron 212 acres en el sector de Los Griegos, dentro del Bosque Nacional de Santa Fe. Como parte del entrenamiento el equipo internacional TrEx se dividió en dos brigadas



(ignición y contención), rotando posiciones dentro de la organización para dar oportunidad a todos de tomar responsabilidades diferentes durante la ejecución de quemas controladas.



*En cada quema controlada realizada, el grupo de instructores con personal del Servicio Forestal y participantes del TrEx ofrecieron sesiones informativas en breve para dar a conocer el plan de quema y medidas de seguridad.*

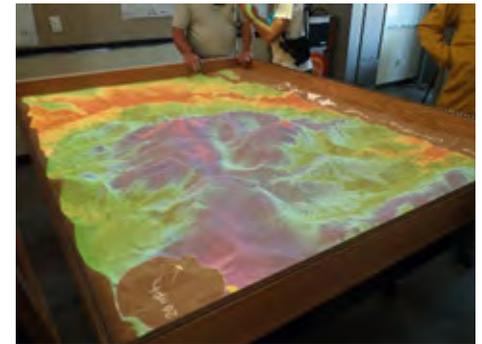


*El grupo Trex construyó líneas de defensa en las unidades de quema asignadas.*

Para completar el aprendizaje, cada participante realizó una exposición sobre los avances y problemáticas de los incendios forestales y las quemas controladas en su región de origen. Líderes y científicos locales ofrecieron presentaciones sobre

temas relacionados sobre manejo de recursos naturales, ecología del fuego y la historia natural de la región. Entre estos se contó con la participación de Bill Armstrong, administrador del programa de manejo de combustibles del Bosque Nacional de Santa Fé; Dennis Carrill, ecólogo del fuego del Bosque Nacional de Santa Fé; Dr. Craig D. Allen ecólogo investigador del US Geological Survey; Dr. Sara Brown catedrática de New Mexico Highlands University; Bill King, oficial de manejo del fuego de Jémez Springs, NM.

Adicionalmente, en el TA-49 Bandelier, se realizó el análisis del incendio Las Conchas ocurrido en 2011 por medio de un modelador de incendios forestales sobre una caja de arena en donde se analizaron detalles del incidente bajo condiciones de topografía, vegetación y tiempo atmosférico.



**Para mas informacion de TRES:**

**Rodolfo Zúñiga Villegas**  
rvillegas@tnc.org

**For more about TRES:**

**Jeremy Bailey**  
jeremy\_bailey@tnc.org

Prescribed fire training exchanges (TRES) 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, contact Lynn Decker at [ldecker@tnc.org](mailto:ldecker@tnc.org) or (801) 320-0524.



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## Fire Learning Network Notes from the Field

# Black Lake TRES

## Angel Fire, New Mexico September-October 2014

### Lessons Learned from Controlled Burns in the WUI

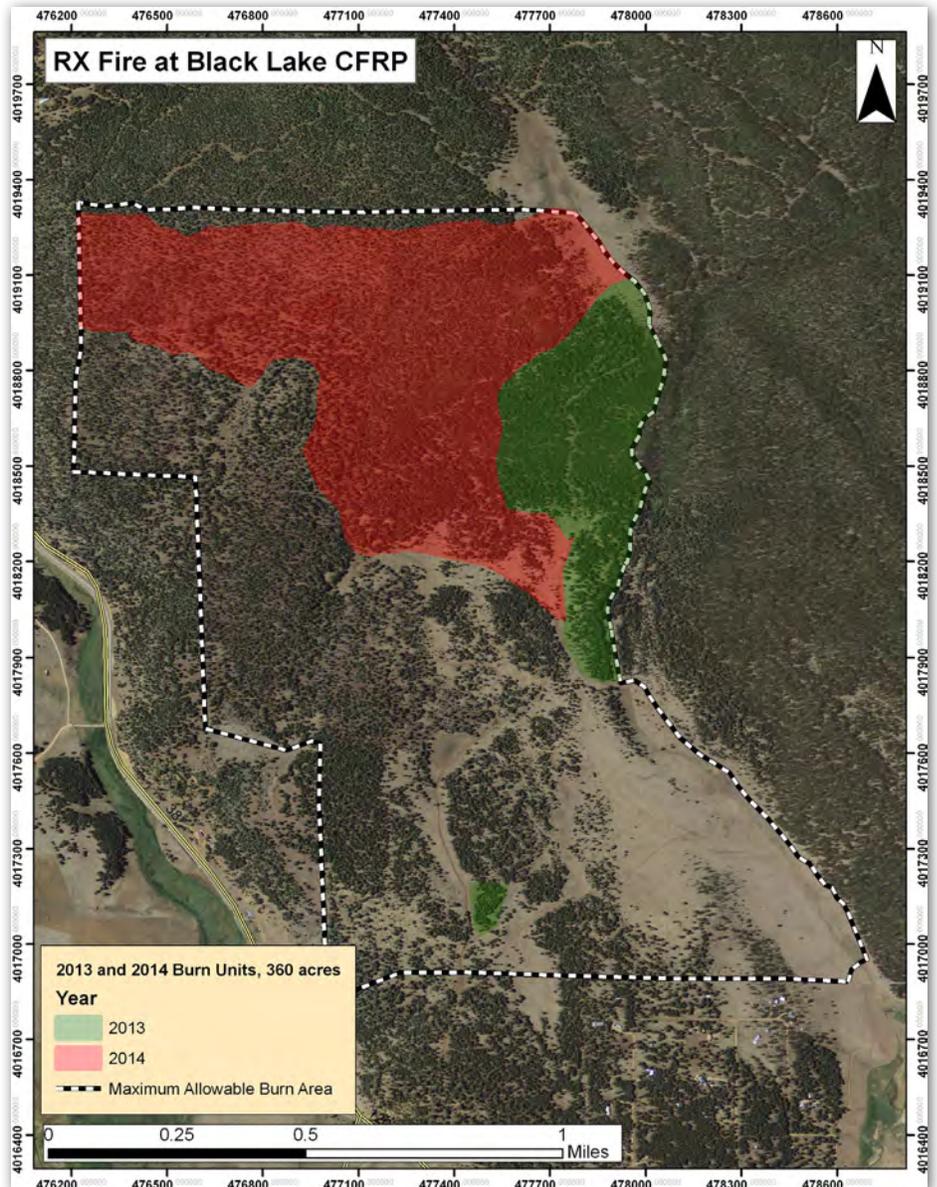
*Eytan Krasilovsky  
The Forest Guild  
Santa Fe, NM*

The Forest Guild has led two prescribed fire training exchange (TRES) events in northern New Mexico, in 2013 and 2014. The Black Lake TRES have returned fire to 360 acres of high-priority ponderosa pine and mixed conifer forests in the greater Angel Fire wildland-urban interface (WUI). Partners include the New Mexico State Land Office, HR Vigil Small Products, Rocky Mountain Youth Corps, Bureau of Land Management (Taos office), Moreno Valley Fire Department, Village of Angel Fire (Fire Department) and the Fire Learning Network.

#### Building Locally

Support for the two TRES from the New Mexico State Land Office, FLN, and the Forest Service Collaborative Forest Restoration Program (CFRP) provided training for more than 20 first-time firefighters as well as training opportunities for higher-level NWCG positions. The TRES also successfully engaged local fire departments in their first controlled burn, engaged communities through education and outreach events, and are part of a change in New Mexico toward local and state agency support for the use of good fire.

Building on 2013 efforts led to an even better outcome for the 2014



Black Lake TREX. The acreage treated nearly doubled, thanks to both returning partners and newcomers Taos County and City of Santa Fe Fire Department Wildland Division. New Mexico State Forestry also provided significant support for the controlled burn, with crucial contributions such as drip torches, radios and post-burn site patrolling by the Cimarron District engine.



## Lessons in Communication

New this year was a formal communications plan that sent information officer resources to “trap-line” around town on ignition days. This effort was led by New Mexico State Forestry District Forester Mary Stuever, who instructed Forest Guild staff on what public information officers call working a trap-line: how to make the rounds to distribute press releases, ask questions, listen, and insert project talking points into answers as a way of building public knowledge—and eventually having members of the public relay our information to others around town.

For example, on the first ignition day, folks at the Mini Mart were relaying concerns to us that many hunters—elk season had just opened—were



upset and concerned that the TREX was going to ruin their hunts or the hunts they were guiding for. The information officer was able to respond that, relative to the size of the game unit, the burn was small, smoke was dispersing well, that this was leading to long-term habitat improvements, and that immediately after the burn wildlife like to lick and roll in the ashes. On the phones that day, hunters showed that they understood the scale of the impacts, but mentioned that the burn was in their favorite hunting spot due to the thinning and 2013 burn—thus confirming the conventional wisdom about thinning, prescribed fire and wildlife.

On the next ignition day, during the morning trap-line route around town, Mini Mart staff (without prompting) related all the hunting-related talking points back to the information officers and said, “I’m telling all the hunters that this will be a great spot for next year and everyone else that this smoke is better now than more smoke in June!” There were no calls related to the burn this day.

In addition to the Forest Guild information officers who trap-lined on ignition days, we recruited a local retired wildland firefighter who then recruited an interested resident who had attended our public meetings. Together they drove—in their yellows and greens, in their own Type VI wildland engine—around the communities of Black Lake and Angel Fire to talk to folks about wild-fire risk and smoke, and convey project details, providing unanticipated community support. They



reported at the afternoon command and general staff meeting that they spoke to about a dozen residents and answered project questions.

In the future, the Forest Guild will continue trap-lining techniques before and during ignition days—as well as identifying, recruiting and training volunteer public information officers.



## For more information:

**Eytan Krasilovsky**  
eytan@forestguild.org



Information about the Black Lake burns, including media coverage and public meetings held before and afterwards, can be found at:

[www.forestguild.org/blacklake](http://www.forestguild.org/blacklake)

Prescribed fire training exchanges (TREX) 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.

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