

FLN Networker No. 179: March 4, 2015

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: After working through an Open Standards process to come to agreement in principle, stakeholders in the **Western Klamath Restoration Partnership** held a **workshop in the field** last month. At the workshop, they discussed in depth and with specificity how to **translate their planning work to treatments on the ground**. For two views of the workshop, see **Malcolm Terrence's** [article](#) in the *Two Rivers Tribune* and **Bill Tripp's** FAC Learning Network [blog post](#).

California: The **Mid Klamath Watershed Center** has launched a **new blog**—[Klamath Waypoint](#)—about the center's work in fisheries, fire and fuels, plants, food security, watershed education, wildlife and building a restoration economy. The inaugural post, by **Will Harling**, is about "How to Ditch a Century of Fire Suppression."

California: A summary of **FireScape Mendocino's fifth Open Standards planning workshop** during which participants **refined strategies** and tested them in light of **climate change projections**, is in the attached *FLN Notes from the Field*. A [presentation](#) by **Chad Roberts** that gave an introduction to climate change science as well as location-specific projections is also available on the Conservation Gateway.

California: Weather conditions are setting up for good fire and good training along the **Klamath River**. Firefighters—including some newly trained ones—from the **Yurok Tribe** in partnership with **Terra Fuego** and **Firestorm** are hoping to mobilize this Friday for a **week-long TRES**. This TRES was scheduled flexibly, to occur during the best window within a broader time range; the participants have been poised and ready to **mobilize on 48-hour notice** for the last couple of weeks. This is the **first TRES** using this **rapid mobilization approach**, and organizers are looking forward to seeing how it goes. The TRES will focus on training **local fire practitioners** to NWCG standards while completing several **culturally important burns**. The burning should result in regrowth that produces the straight hazel sticks with minimum taper needed for basket-making.

Central Appalachians: Thanks to **Laurel Schablein** (lschablein@tnc.org), the **Central Apps FLN** once again has a good summary of the work completed in the last year. From bats to TRES, their **2014 highlights** are in the attached *FLN Notes from the Field*.

New Mexico: The **Forest Guild** recently led another **6.5 acres** of Scaling-up to Promote Ecosystem Resiliency (**SPER II**) burning on private land in the **Santa Fe WUI**, in support of fire adapted communities efforts ([picture](#)). Some modest snow cover made this pile burning, on south-facing slopes near homes, possible. More acres are planned for next season. For more information, contact **Eytan Krasilovsky** (eytan@forestguild.org).

North Carolina: Check out **#NCTRES2015** on social media (especially Instagram) for photos and videos from the recent **Prescribed Fire Training Exchange**, which featured an **unreasonable amount of ice** (in spite of which, **more than 500 acres** of burning was accomplished).

Washington: The **Chumstick Wildfire Stewardship Coalition** has launched a **new website**, <http://www.chumstickcoalition.org/>, chock full of information for central Washingtonians (and others) to start getting better prepared to live with wildfire.

Resources & Articles: HRV / Sage Infographic / Trends in Rx

HRV: The [article](#) “**Historic Variability:** Informing Restoration Strategies, Not Prescribing Targets” examines **implicit assumptions** often underlying the use of the concept of HRV in ecosystem management. In it, Constance Millar argues that in most situations, “historic reconstructions are best used to **improve understanding of ecological response** to a wide range of forcing factors, and thereby to inform (rather than prescribe) management strategies.” For systems that are not severely degraded, such strategies can focus on “(a) **removing barriers that impede inherent ecological capacities** to respond to change, and (b) assisting species and communities to **transform in ways most compatible** with their **inherent capacities** and with **social goals**.”

Sage Infographic: SageSTEP has an [infographic](#) that nicely outlines causes and effects of, and treatments for, the **expansion of pinyon and juniper** in the Great Basin.

Trends in Rx: The [article](#) “Perspectives on **Trends, Effectiveness, and Impediments** to Prescribed Burning in the **Southern U.S.**” is based on a survey of 523 fire-use practitioners.

Jobs: FAC Project Coordinator / Outreach Rep / Graduate Assistantships

FAC Project Coordinator: High Country RCD is hiring a **full-time project coordinator** for **Island Park Sustainable Fire Community** (which is a **hub** in the **FAC Learning Network** in southeast Idaho). Applications are due by **March 30**; for more information, see the announcement at <http://islandparkfirecommunity.com/now-hiring/>.

Outreach Reps: The **Island Part Sustainable Fire Community** is also hiring two part-time seasonal **project outreach representatives**. See <http://islandparkfirecommunity.com/now-hiring/> for more information.

Graduate Assistantships: **Texas A&M University**—Kingsville has two **M.S. graduate research assistantships** available; applicants will study effects of prescribed burning on cordgrass communities and livestock distribution. For more information, see the attached announcement.

Webinar

March 12
new listing

Learning from our Ancestors: Combining Ancient Knowledge Systems and Modern Science to Achieve Restoration

9:30 Pacific / 10:30 Mountain / 11:30 Central / 12:30 Eastern

This 1.5-hour webinar is part of a Forest Service “Human Side of Restoration” series. Serra Hoagland and Frank Lake will describe traditional ecological knowledge and invaluable contributions of Native wisdom to ecological restoration. They will also discuss case studies where traditional ecological knowledge has been incorporated into wildlife management plans, fire and fuel management strategies and collaborative research efforts.

Register: <http://www.fs.fed.us/rmrs/events/registrations/human-restoration/>

FLN and FAC LN Workshops & Field Tours

March 6

Pike’s Peak FLN

The agenda will include the status of planning for the Sourdough project and continued development of key messages and outreach strategy.

Information: **Paige Lewis** (paige_lewis@tnc.org)

March 19
new listing

FAC LN Peer Learning Workshop / Albuquerque, NM

At this workshop hosted by the Forest Guild, various peer leaders will share success stories and best management practices for implementing FAC concepts. Participants will work together in small groups to identify challenges and solutions to common problems related to making our communities fire adapted and look for ways to improve the New Mexico FAC LN.

Information: <http://www.fireadaptednewmexico.org/index.php/peer-learning-workshop>

April 16-17
new listing

Burned Area Learning Network / Santa Fe, NM

“Planning for the Next Big One: Managing the Postfire Environment in a Time of Change.” Core partners will discuss the development of a new learning network at this workshop supported by the FLN, Southwest Fire Science Consortium and Southern Rockies Fire Science Network.

May 12-14

Southern Blue Ridge FLN / Morganton, NC

Registration is now open for the 10th annual regional workshop of the SBR FLN. Information: <http://sbrfln2015.weebly.com/>

FLN Prescribed Fire Training Exchanges

March 6-13*

Klamath River Communities TREX / Weitchpec, CA

* Dates are tentative. Burn boss and firefighters standing by, awaiting a favorable weather window. Participants have agreed to mobilize on 48 hours' notice.

March 14-29

Niobrara River Valley TREX / Ainsworth, NE

This “spring break TREX” will integrate a diverse group of fire practitioners, and provide experiential learning while burning on The Nature Conservancy and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service lands. (The application deadline has passed.)

March 16-27

Lower Loup Valley TREX / Broken Bow, NE

The TREX is a partnership between Pheasants Forever, The Nature Conservancy, Fire Learning Network, and Rainwater Basin Joint Venture. A grant from the Nebraska Environmental Trust Fund provided resources to allow landowners to rest the land from grazing to build up fuel that will increase the effectiveness of the burns. (The application deadline has passed.)

March 20-22

Firing Operations on Wildland Fires TREX / Johnstown, NE

This brief event, aimed at rural and municipal fire departments in the Great Plains, will focus on ignition techniques, timing and sequence of ignition patterns, and planning and briefing firing operations. (Application deadline has passed.)

April 27 – May 6
May 11-20

East River TREX—Session I / eastern SD

East River TREX—Session II / eastern SD

These TREX are supported by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Bureau of Indian Affairs, SD Wildland Fire Division, TNC and other partners to improve wildlife habitat and range conditions, reduce the possibility of damaging wildfires and provide training and learning opportunities. (The application deadline has passed.)

May 14-21

Central Oregon Ecological Fire Training Exchange / Bend, OR

This TREX will focus on the ecological, social, communications, monitoring and operational dimensions of planning and implementing ecologically-based prescribed fire for restoration goals in Oregon. (Application deadline has passed.)

Conferences, Workshops, Training, Etc.

- March 10-12** **Preparing for Wildfires: Moving from Crisis to Opportunity / Tucson, AZ**
Information: <http://tucsonfireworkshop.org>
- March 24-26** **Wildland-Urban Interface Conference / Reno, NV**
There will be a FAC track at this IAFC conference.
Information: www.iafc.org/wui
- April 6-10**
new listing **Basic Wildland Firefighter Training / Orleans, CA**
The **Karuk Tribe** is presenting this fire school (S130, S190, L180)—it will cover qualifications needed to take part in the Klamath River TREX planned for the fall. Apply by March 16.
Information: see the flyer on the [Mid Klamath Watershed Council's Facebook](#)
- April 20-24** **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: <https://inawf.memberclicks.net/upcoming-conferences>
- May 1-3**
new listing **Colorado Certified Burner B - RXB3 Training / Larkspur, CO**
The Colorado Division of Fire Prevention and Control and Pikes Peak Wildfire Prevention Partners are offering this course on planning, designing and implementing low complexity pile burns in Colorado.
Information: see attached flyer
- May 2** **International Wildfire Community Preparedness Day**
Various events will be taking place.
Information: <http://www.nfpa.org/wildfirepreparednessday>
- May 5-7** **11th Symposium on Fire and Forest Meteorology / Minneapolis, MN**
The American Meteorological Society is hosting this conference.
Information: <http://www.ametsoc.org/MEET/fainst/201511fireforest.html>
- May 18-19** **Intro to State-and-Transition Simulation Modeling of Landscape Vegetation Dynamics / Ft Collins, CO**
Information: http://wiki.syncrosim.com/index.php?title=Courses#Course_Descriptions
- May 27-29** **5th Fire in Eastern Oak Forests Conference / Tuscaloosa, AL**
Information: <http://easternfire.as.ua.edu>
- September 24-26** **Colorado Wildland Fire Conference: Creating Fire Adapted Communities / Snowmass Village, CO**
Information: <http://www.wildfire-colorado.com/>
- October 22-24** **Backyards & Beyond: Wildland Fire Education Conference / Myrtle Beach, SC**
Information: <http://www.nfpa.org/training/backyards-and-beyond>
- November 16-20** **Fire Ecology & Management Congress / San Antonio, TX**
The call for proposals (oral & poster presentations, special sessions, workshops & trainings, attached meetings) is now open; deadlines vary.
Information: <http://afefirecongress.org/>

Send News, Links & Comments

Lynn Decker – ldecker@tnc.org – Lynn is in Weitchpec, CA March 12-15.

Jeremy Bailey – jeremy_bailey@tnc.org – Jeremy is in the office.

Wendy Fulks – wfulks@tnc.org – Wendy is out March 12.

Mary Huffman – mhuffman@tnc.org – Mary is in Colorado Springs March 6; in Weitchpec, CA March 12-15.

Heather Montanye – hmontanye@tnc.org – Heather is in the office.

Guy Duffner – gduffner@tnc.org – Guy is out March 3-8; in Arlington, VA March 9-12; at Lower Loup Valley TREX March 16-27.

Liz Rank (editor) – lrnk@tnc.org – Liz is in the office.

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—CA—*Two Rivers Tribune*: <http://www.tworivertribune.com/2015/02/forest-management-plans-led-by-community/>

FAC LN blog post: <http://facnetwork.org/western-klamath-restoration-partnership-hits-the-ground-running/>

News from the Field—CA—New Klamath blog site: <http://www.mkwc.org/blog/>

News from the Field—CA—FireScape Mendocino presentation: <http://www.conservationgateway.org/ConservationPractices/FireLandscapes/FireLearningNetwork/RegionalNetworks/Pages/FSMendo-Roberts-ClimateChange.aspx>

News from the Field—NM—WUI burning: https://twitter.com/Eytan_Forest/status/571013768353677313

Resources & Articles—Sage infographic: http://sagestep.org/pdfs/expansion_Infographic.pdf

Resources & Articles--HRV: http://www.fs.fed.us/psw/publications/millar/psw_2014_millar004.pdf

Resources & Articles--Trends in Rx: <http://www.mdpi.com/1999-4907/6/3/561>

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

On the half-day field trip, participants warmed themselves by a campfire while increasing their shared learning about management issues and sensitivities in late seral conifer forests.

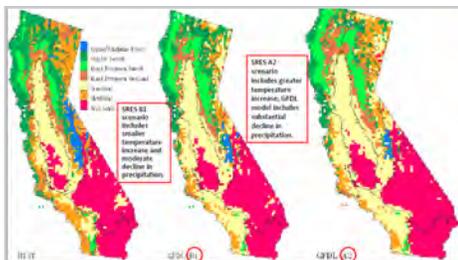


FireScope Mendocino Workshop #5

January 28-29, 2015

In late January, 44 stakeholders in the FireScope Mendocino landscape took part in the fifth of a series of planning workshops using the Open Standards for the Practice of Conservation. Those present brought a wide range of expertise, including in botany, ecology, archaeology and fisheries, as well as forestry and fire. They represented industry, homeowner groups and conservation organizations, as well as CAL FIRE and significant commitment from the Mendocino National Forest, including the acting forest supervisor, two district rangers and a deputy district ranger.

The group worked on refining strategies developed earlier in the process. This included testing those strategies in light of climate change forecasts. Two presentations on climate change science, and predictions scaled to California and the scope of FireScope Mendocino helped participants develop a shared understanding.



Chad Roberts (Tuleyome) gave a presentation (“Climate Change Primer—What is Climate Change and How Should We Think about It?”) tailored to the landscape. The presentation is available on www.conservationgateway.org (search *FireScope Mendocino climate change*).

Subgroups that will advance work on four key strategies were also identified at this workshop, as were pairs of people to lead each subgroup. The subgroups (and their leads) are:

- *Collaborative Vegetation Management*—Chad Roberts (Tuleyome/Audubon) and Gary Urdahl (Mendocino NF).
- *Fire Adapted Communities*—Dawn Pedersen (CAL FIRE), Curtis Coats (Mendocino NF), and Linda Juntunen (Lake County Fire Safe Council).
- *Tribal Involvement*—Mike Dugas (Mendocino NF tribal liaison)
- *Air Quality Issues*—Don Amador (OHV Blue Ribbon Coalition), Frank Aebly (Mendocino NF) and Tom McCubbins (Tehama County Resource Conservation District)

Assignment for Subgroup Facilitative Co-Leads

1. Provide an open, inclusive environment.
2. Act as convenors for the group.
3. Reach out to additional stakeholders.
4. Keep basic records.
5. Report to the core team and group participants.
6. Make sure all ideas are considered.

Participating Agencies & Organizations

American Forest Resource Council
 Audubon Society—Tuleyome/Yolo
 CAL FIRE
 Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board
 Crane Mills
 Environmental Protection Information Center
 Lake County Fire Safe Council
 Office of Congressman Doug LaMalfa
 Pillsbury Homeowners’ Association
 Sierra Pacific Industries
 Tuleyome
 USDA Forest Service—Mendocino National Forest
 USDA Forest Service—Region 5
 as well as private landowners, citizens and foresters

For more information, contact:

Rick Mowery
rmowery@fs.fed.us

Chad Roberts
recp@cal.net

The Fire Learning Network (FLN) is 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 ldecker@tnc.org](mailto:Lynn.Decker@tnc.org) or (801) 320-0524.



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Fire Learning Network Notes from the Field

Central Appalachians FLN 2014 Year in Review

Controlled Burning

Since its formation in 2006, the Central Appalachians FLN's growth in both diversity and strength of our partnership has been key to restoring the role of fire at an ecologically meaningful scale. Increased communication and coordination has resulted in nearly all controlled burns being conducted by multiple partners regardless of land ownership, and completion of memoranda of understandings between founding and new partners has enabled treatments to expand into additional geographies and has directed significant funding towards our restoration efforts.

In 2014, Central Appalachians FLN partners burned over 36,000 acres in Virginia, West Virginia, Kentucky and Pennsylvania. Burns were conducted on several new partner lands this year, including Douthat State Park in Virginia, New River Gorge National River in West Virginia, and Bethlehem (Water) Authority lands in Pennsylvania. Several large-scale burns were conducted over multiple

days allowing for slow-paced and deliberate firing operations and longer residence times on the landscape.

Prescribed Fire Councils

Active prescribed fire councils in several states continue to make contributions to the FLN and vice versa. Membership continues to increase in the Pennsylvania Prescribed Fire Council, which now has 144 members—twice what participation was four years ago. This council also successfully obtained status as a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization. In Virginia, partners recently reinvigorated a council, holding its first meeting after a three-year hiatus, electing new officers, and working collaboratively on new training offerings for the 2015 Virginia State Wild-fire Training Academy.

Non-Native Invasive Species Control

Thanks to continued support from Scaling-up to Promote Ecosystem Resiliency (SPER), FLN partners were able to treat 147 acres of non-native invasive species (NNIS) in Highland Wildlife Management Area (managed by the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries) and the George Washington National Forest. Many of these acres were treated in burn units or special biological areas where fire-adapted species are present. SPER funding helped leverage NNIS control efforts initiated by the Potomac Highlands Cooperative Weed and Pest Management Area (CWPMA) and effectively linked those activities with management actions taken by the FLN. The CWPMA field crew treated an

additional 1,343 acres in the Monongahela National Forest, on lands owned or managed by The Nature Conservancy and on other privately-owned lands in West Virginia.



CWPMA NNIS field crew at work.

Photo: TNC/Ben Rhodes

Burning for Bats

The U.S. Geological Survey's Virginia Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit at Virginia Tech received funding from the Joint Fire Science Program to begin a comprehensive bat research and monitoring program in partnership with the USDA Forest Service, Radford University, Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries and the Conservancy. The project will document bat species and their foraging and tree-roosting habitat use on Warm Springs Mountain Preserve and the adjacent George Washington National Forest, with a particular focus on forests being restored through controlled burning.

Previous work suggests that forest conditions with more open canopy cover and abundant standing snags improves habitat for many bat species. Last fall, graduate students Lauren Austin, Emily Thorne and



Aaron Bennington and Lindsey Curtin (USFS) patrol the Blue Suck Burn in March 2014.

Photo: TNC/Sam Lindblom

Alex Silvis from Virginia Tech started an initial acoustic assessment of bats on Warm Springs Mountain and documented the pre-hibernation foraging occurrence of Indiana bats, northern long-eared bats and tri-colored bats (all species impacted by white-nose syndrome). Because these species overwinter in local caves, this is a positive sign that enough individuals remain to be studied in the years to come.

Field work in 2015 will focus on using radio-telemetry to track individual tagged females to their day-roosts, and then comparing day-roost use, characteristics and roost-switching between bats in burned and unburned areas.



In August, Virginia Tech grad students Alex Silvis and Lauren Austin placed bat acoustic detectors at Warm Springs Mountain Preserve.

Photo: TNC/Marek Smith

Fire Effects Monitoring

Significant progress has been made in all FLN landscapes to implement effectiveness monitoring programs. Members of the Monitoring Working Group in the Heart of the Appalachians landscape in Virginia and West Virginia completed data entry into a Feat/Firemon Integrated (FFI) database for all 401 macroplots monitored by the Conservancy and the George Washington and Jefferson National Forests. The Monitoring Working Group also teamed up with the Forest Service

FFI lead, Duncan Lutes, to host two webinar trainings that gave users an in-depth look at the Data Analysis and Reports and Query Builder tools in the FFI program. Trainees used real data to practice the exercises and produce several reports and graphs of vegetation data.

On the Daniel Boone National Forest, the Stearns and London Ranger Districts installed over 40 new vegetative monitoring plots located across their landscape and in Pennsylvania, the Conservancy and the Pennsylvania Game Commission contracted with Arcadia University to provide fire effects monitoring for their growing program.



The FLN Monitoring Working Group met in mid-November for training and monitoring coordination.

Photo: TNC/Marek Smith

Avian Monitoring

We completed a fourth year of monitoring avian community response to landscape-scale controlled burning in the Warm Springs Mountain Restoration Project, a collaborative initiative spanning lands owned by the Conservancy and the George Washington and Jefferson National Forests in the Allegheny Highlands of Virginia. Preliminary results indicate that while specific avian species



David Fox and Laurel Schablein presented a poster on the FLN's avian monitoring program at a Partners in Flight conference in October.

Photo: TNC/Nikole Swaney

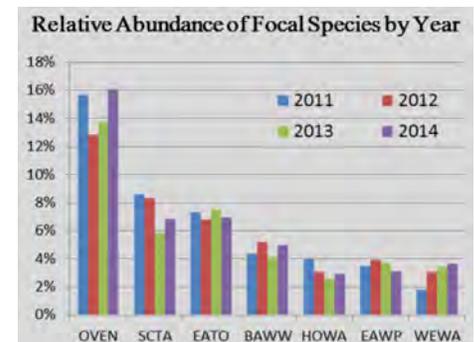


PIO station at the Blue Suck Burn, with maps, handouts and fire tools to engage visitors and support outreach.

Photo: TNC/Marek Smith

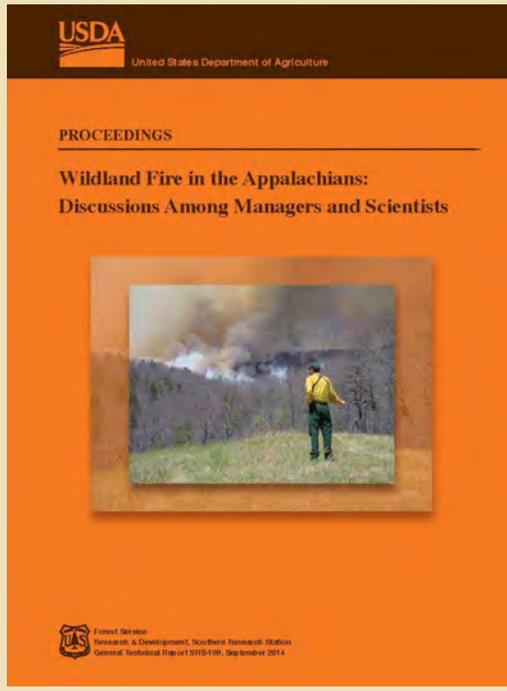
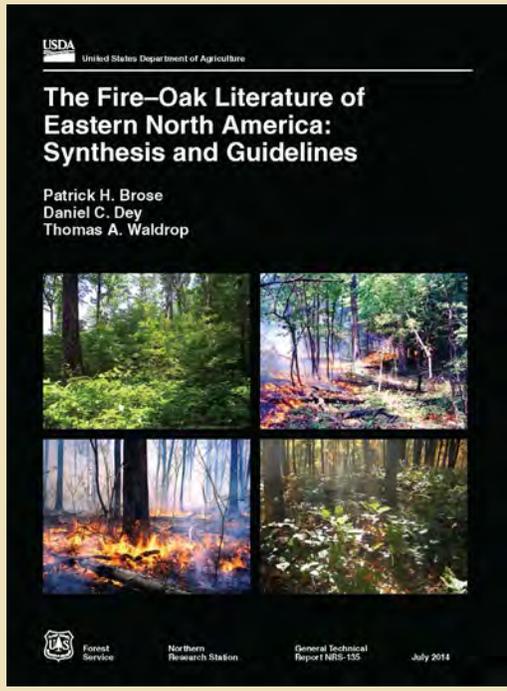
The Heart of the Appalachians landscape increased its efforts to position public information officers at highly visible controlled burns this year. Staff were able to enlighten curious passers-by about the ecology and history of fire in the Appalachians.

can show positive or negative responses to prescribed fire, their populations are resilient in geographic space and over time. Even after fire has been reintroduced to over 50% of the landscape, birds with negative associations to burned habitat show stable abundances across the broader landscape. Temporal effects of fire on habitat are very likely constrained to relatively short time horizons. A poster of this work was presented at the fall 2014 Northeast and Southeast Partners in Flight joint conference in Virginia Beach.



Mean relative abundance of focal species in the years 2011-2014 from 107 plots in the avian monitoring program. Relative abundance is the percent of the total bird population a species represents. Although there are yearly fluctuations, none of the focal species are showing significant trends.

Table: Warm Springs Mountain Restoration Project Avian Monitoring 2014 Summary



Through the work of the Consortium of Appalachian Fire Managers and Scientists (CAFMS), a key partner in this FLN, two invaluable technical resource reports were published in 2014. Both *The Fire-Oak Literature of Eastern North America: Synthesis and Guidelines* and *Wildland Fire in the Appalachians: Discussions among Managers and Scientists* will serve as practical guides to applying recent research findings to the field.

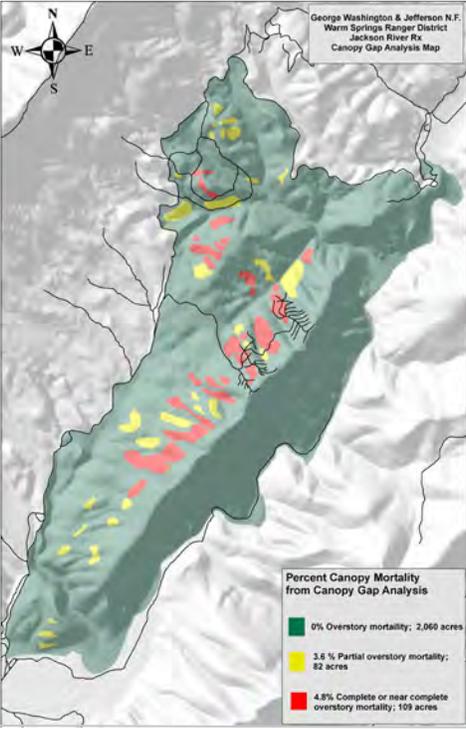
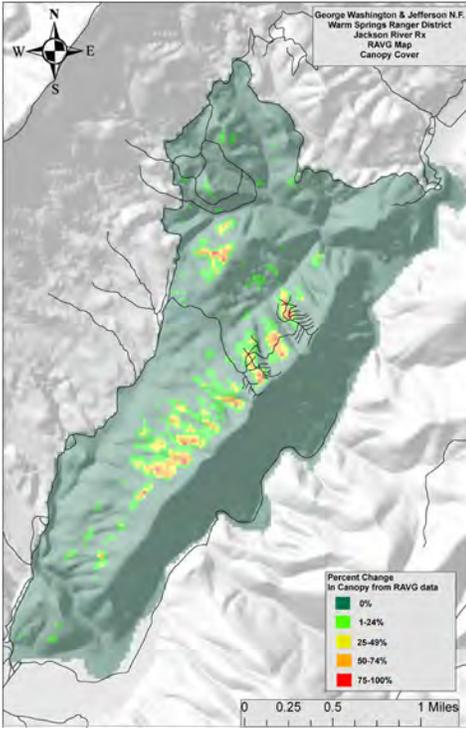
Burn Severity Monitoring

Partners in the Central Appalachians and Southern Blue Ridge regional networks began coordinating on ground-based protocols and remote sensing tools such as Rapid Assessment of Vegetation Condition after Wildfire (RAVG) imagery and the Composite Burn Index (CBI) to better understand burn severity and translate those results to meaningful

explanations of fire effects for interested stakeholders. The Conservancy and the George Washington and Jefferson National Forests also started characterizing burn severity, specifically canopy gaps, using National Agriculture Imagery Program (NAIP) aerial photography for a number of large burns conducted over the past 5-10 years.

Education & Outreach

In the Heart of the Appalachians landscape, partners developed a set of four interpretive signs that have been placed at Douthat State Park, Warm Springs Mountain Preserve and the Hidden Valley Dispersed Recreation Area in the George Washington National Forest to help interpret sites with various histories of controlled burns.



Restoring the Natural Role of Fire

Fire has been an essential natural process in Appalachian oak and pine forests for thousands of years. Lightning caused some fires, and Native Americans intentionally set others. Fires opened the forest understory, which increased plant diversity, improved browse for wildlife and made traveling easier. Early European settlers continued to use fire as a tool to shape their surroundings.

Acres, hardwoods and blackberries are important food sources for white-tailed deer, wild turkeys, black bears, songbirds and many other wildlife species. The increased fuel production in some places can reduce response time and permit for other.

Years of timber harvest have created canopy gaps in some areas. These gaps allow sunlight to reach the forest floor, which can lead to increased understory growth and reduce the safety of the forest, nearby residents and private property.

The natural role of fire in the forest is to clear out dead trees and to stimulate the germination of oak, hickory and white pine. A series of controlled burns can clear the forest floor, resulting in less severe disease and insect pest outbreaks.

FLN

The signs convey messages about the historic role of fire in the Appalachians, fire history research, the benefits of controlled burns for plants and wildlife, fuel reduction benefits of controlled burns, the work of fire teams, and safety. The messages, many of which are repeated across sites, were refined from those in the Conservancy's 2012 Fire Communications Kit, with some locally-adapted messages and

content—such as fire history—unique to the location or systems in which they were installed. The messages and graphics also closely mirror content used in the *Controlled Burning for Healthy Forest Management in the Appalachians* brochure that was revised and reprinted earlier in 2014. A small team of partners developed the content, then contracted with a graphic designer for refinement. The signs are 24"x36" fiberglass-embedded panels with low-profile traditional "T" style aluminum bases. The total cost for design, labor and bases was about \$1000 per sign.



Interns from the Conservancy's Leaders in Environmental Action for the Future (LEAF) program installed the signs in late summer. *Photo: TNC/Jen Dalke*



Steve Croy (USFS) spoke to a university "Ecology of Place" class at the Big Wilson South Burn on May 8. *Photo: TNC/Marek Smith*



Thirty-six people from nine states took part in the Virginia TREX, with a multi-agency crew operating under the Incident Command System throughout the training. *Photo: TNC/Sam Lindblom*

TREX—Boosting Staff Capacity and Specialized Qualifications

The first TREX—Prescribed Fire Training Exchange—offered in the eastern U.S. took place in Virginia in the spring of 2014. Participants completed about 1,200 acres of prescribed burning, including some in support of conservation of the endangered red-cockaded woodpecker at the Conservancy's Piney Grove Preserve near Essex, in the Coastal Plain region. Participants spent the second week based out of Stokesville, near Shenandoah Mountain, where they were able to experience quite different fuel types and terrain. The burns conducted in the mountains showcased ecological management at popular destinations for national forest visitors.



The annual workshop included a damp but productive field tour. *Photo: TNC/Marek Smith*



TREX burn *Photo: TNC/Robert B. Clontz*

Annual Meeting

More than 80 participants from 14 agencies and organizations took part in the annual meeting of the Central Appalachians FLN in November. Morgan Varner (Virginia Tech) kicked off the meeting with a keynote presentation, "Past, Present, and Future of Fire in the Eastern United States." Subsequent presentations included updates from the Consortium of Appalachian Fire Managers and Scientists, a summary of recent fire-oak literature, an analysis of the effects of prescribed fire on forest overstory, and a report on dendrochronological studies on North Fork Mountain in West Virginia. There were also updates from the Monitoring and Communications & Outreach Working Groups, along with an interactive panel discussion that provided a forecast for prescribed fire from federal, state and private perspectives.

The Fire Learning Network (FLN), Scaling-up to Promote Ecosystem Resiliency (SPER) and 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.

For more information, contact Lynn Decker ldecker@tnc.org or (801) 320-0524.

For more information about the Central Appalachians FLN, contact:

Sam Lindblom
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Laurel Schablein
lschablein@tnc.org

Links to products of the Central Appalachians FLN, including reports, posters, interpretive signs and brochure and other materials can be found on the network's Conservation Gateway page at:

<http://www.conservationgateway.org/ConservationPractices/FireLandscapes/FireLearningNetwork/RegionalNetworks/Pages/CentralApps.aspx>



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v. 4 Mar 2015/Laurel Schablein

POSITION ANNOUNCEMENT

CAESAR KLEBERG WILDLIFE RESEARCH INSTITUTE
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY-KINGSVILLE
DICK AND MARY LEWIS KLEBERG COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE, NATURAL
RESOURCES, AND HUMAN SCIENCES

Position Title: M.S. Graduate Research Assistantships, 2 positions available

Position Description: Successful applicants will study effects of prescribed burning in varying seasons on cordgrass vegetative communities and livestock distribution on the South Texas Gulf Coast. Project goals include designing and conducting vegetative surveys to determine herbaceous biomass and species diversity, as well as determining cattle usage of burned areas using streaming GPS collar data, with opportunities to expand into topics pertaining to fire ecology and range management. Successful candidates will pursue M.S. degrees in Range and Wildlife Management at Texas A&M University-Kingsville.

Qualifications Required: B.S. degree in range, wildlife, ecology, biology, or a related field, minimum 3.0 GPA, and competitive GRE scores. Successful applicants must be capable of working under adverse field conditions (hot humid Texas environment), identifying plant species and assisting with prescribed burns; must have a strong work ethic, good verbal and written communication skills, ability to work well with landowners, ranch managers, and employees, and ability to work independently and within a group; must be able to drive state vehicles within 30 days of employment.

Stipend/Salary: \$1,400/month plus benefits (medical package has a 60-day waiting period). Nonresident tuition waived (resident tuition fees apply). Partial tuition fee assistance may be provided based on availability of funds.

Start Date: June 1, 2015 (pending receipt of funds from funding entity).

Application Deadline: Review of applications will begin immediately and will continue until suitable candidates are selected.

To Apply: Send cover letter stating interests and career goals; resume; copies of transcripts; GRE scores; and names, addresses, phone numbers, and email addresses of 3 references to:

Dr. Sandra Rideout-Hanzak
Caesar Kleberg Wildlife Research Institute
Texas A&M University-Kingsville
700 University Blvd., MSC 218
Kingsville, Texas 78363
361-593-4546
e-mail: sandra.rideout-hanzak@tamuk.edu

Texas A&M University-Kingsville (TAMUK) enrolls approximately 6,000 students. The Department of Animal, Rangeland and Wildlife Sciences grants B.S., M.S., and Ph.D. degrees in wildlife. The Caesar Kleberg Wildlife Research Institute is a research unit of the university with 15 scientists, 50+ graduate students, and numerous support staff. TAMUK is located in Kingsville, TX, a city of approximately 26,000 in south coastal Texas. Kingsville is surrounded by the historic King Ranch and is about 40 miles south of Corpus Christi, TX (population 175,000+).

Texas law requires that males 18 through 25 show proof of compliance with Federal Selective Service law in order to be eligible for employment.

Selected candidate must pass a pre-employment background investigation to be hired for this position.

EEO/AA/ADA

Certified Burner (CCBB) / Introduction to Agency Burn Boss (RXB3)

This 20-24 hour course is designed to enable attendees to receive basic introductory training in the planning, design and implementation of low complexity "pile" burn projects. Topics include a fundamental review of basic wildland fire behavior, project design, smoke management, legal liability, implementation techniques and the development of site specific burn plans with risk management and project complexity as a foundation.

Private entities, upon successful completion of this course, will be enabled to initiate a task book certification process through the Colorado Division of Fire Prevention and Control (DFPC) as a Certified Burner Level B Trainee. Once certified, private individuals may receive limited liability protection from the State of Colorado in the event unforeseen and undesirable events occur on a burn project.

Local, county, state and federal agency attendees, upon successful completion of this course will be encouraged to seek a task book certification through their respective agency as a Burn Boss Type III.

Prerequisites: None for private attendees. Agency attendees must have an NWCG agency currency as FFT1 or ICT5 as well as successful completion of the Intermediate Wildland Fire Behavior (S-290) NWCG course.

Dates: Friday May 1st 2015 through Sunday May 3rd 2015
Times: May 1st (1:30 – 5:30 pm); May 2nd and May 3rd (8 am – 5 pm)
Location: Larkspur Fire Protection District; 9414 S. Spruce Mountain Rd; Larkspur, Colorado
Cost: None

To Register:

Email Kirk A. Will, DFPC Regional Fire Management Officer at kirk.will@state.co.us or call 720-556-5100

Important Note: Private entities must attend all three sessions unless they can meet the agency required prerequisites. Agency attendees, having met the prerequisite training and NWCG qualifications, will start the class on Saturday May 2nd

Sponsored By:



**Colorado Division of Fire Prevention & Control
and
Pikes Peak Wildfire Prevention Partners**

