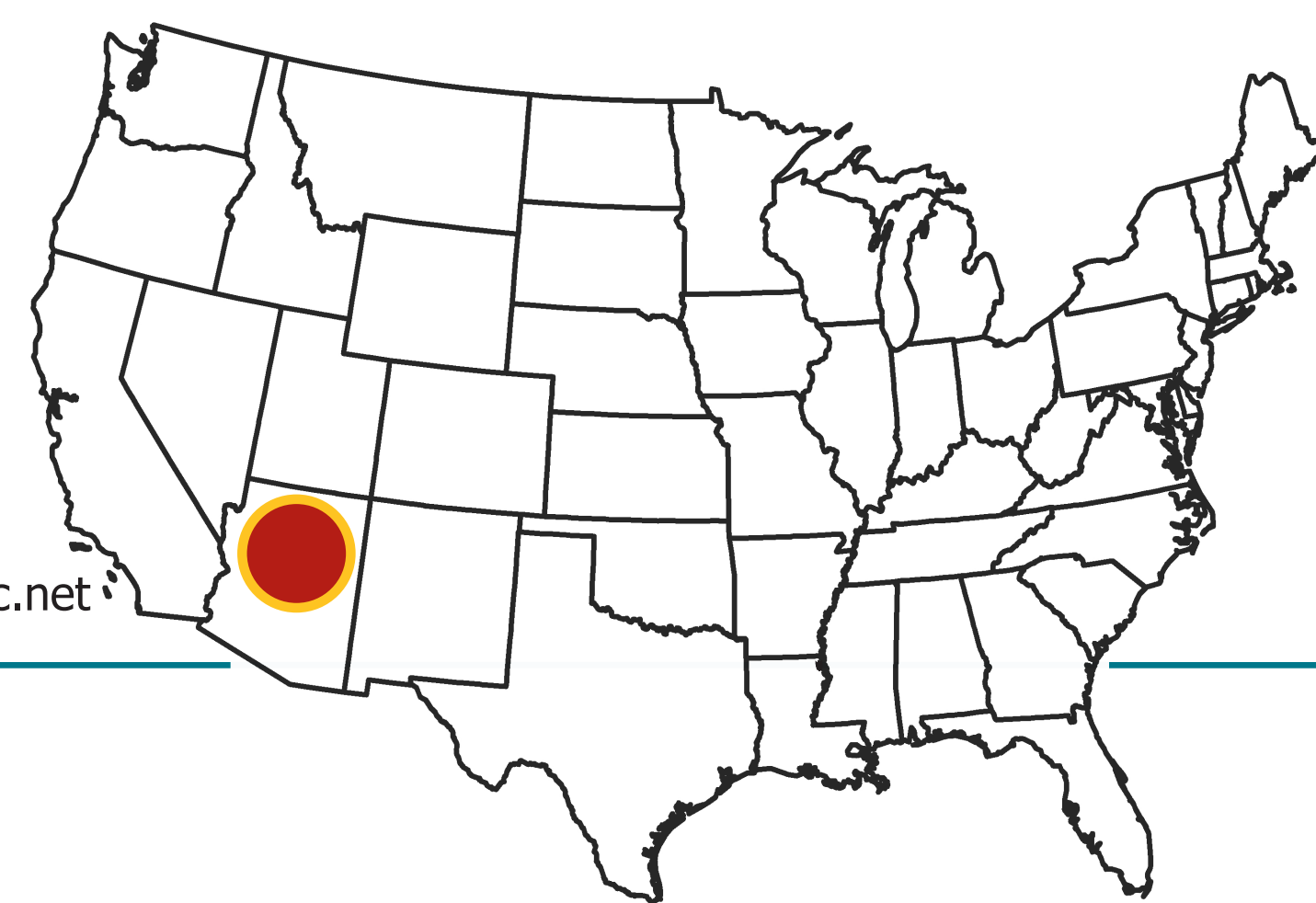


Greater Flagstaff Forests Partnership

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Anne Mottek Lucas
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A long-standing collaborative, the Greater Flagstaff Forests Partnership is made up of academic, environmental and private organizations as well as municipal, county, state and federal agencies. Since 1998, the Partnership has endeavored to increase community protection through research and demonstration of various approaches to restore natural ecosystem structure, function and composition in the ponderosa pine forests surrounding Flagstaff. The Partnership has helped lead a shift in public understanding and support for proactive forest management designed to promote the safety and sustainability of our community and forests.

In 2012, City residents chose not to be helpless victims in the face of inevitable wildfire, but instead voted with overwhelming support (74 percent) to spend municipal bond money to fund forest treatments on state and federal land that would reduce risks of severe wildfires and minimize post-fire impacts such as flooding.

The Partnership's work to advance the goals of the Flagstaff Watershed Protection Project (FWPP) is well aligned with Fire Adapted Communities and national Cohesive Strategy frameworks. The Partnership hosted and participated in numerous events in 2014 to promote these goals. Events included community meetings, open houses and activities associated with the annual Flagstaff Festival of Science, including the Science in the Park Festival, a "Forest Fires & Floods Hike" into the Dry Lake Hills and a Brown Bag Lunch detailing the history of our local forest ecosystems and efforts—current and planned—to create sustainable communities and resilient forests.

The Partnership also collaborated with the Arizona Rural Policy Institute, City of Flagstaff and Ecological Restoration Institute on the FWPP Cost Avoidance Study. The study conservatively estimates the FWPP's proactive funding of \$10 million was a sound investment that will avoid between \$552 million and \$1.2 billion in potential damages—not to mention the scenic and spiritual loss the community would endure.

Helping initiate discussions, planning efforts and permitting with the Navajo Nation, the Partnership facilitated the Flagstaff Fire Department's Wildland Fire Management Division meadow restoration project, eliminating pine encroachment on a 140-acre tribal in-holding in the middle of the Dry Lake Hills area surrounded by the Coconino National Forest. A two-panel log kiosk was built and installed on the property to host project details, parcel history and forest and fire management information.

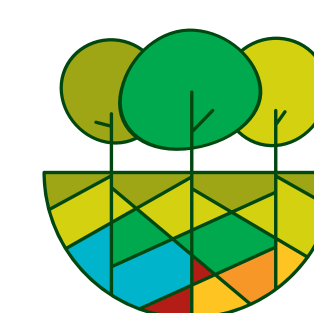
In 2015, we continue to promote fire adapted communities concepts and actions at various community events, host field trips and produce videos related to prescribed fire and smoke management. We held a community wildfire preparedness contest in conjunction with the 2015 National Wildfire Community Preparedness Day and are also working on yard signs recognizing property owners who are working proactively to reduce wildfire risk.



Informational kiosk on Navajo Nation parcel in the Flagstaff Watershed Protection Project.

COMMUNITIES

working in the
Greater Flagstaff
area of **northern Arizona**



**FIRE ADAPTED
COMMUNITIES
LEARNING NETWORK**

<http://FACNetwork.org>

Key Partners

Arizona Game and Fish
Department
Arizona Prescribed Fire Council
Arizona State Forestry Division
Centennial Forest
City of Flagstaff
Coconino County
Coconino Natural Resource
Conservation District
Flagstaff Fire Department

Friends of Northern Arizona
Forests
Northern Arizona University—
Ecological Restoration Institute
Northern Arizona University—
School of Forestry
Ponderosa Fire Advisory Council
Southwest Fire Science
Consortium
The Nature Conservancy
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

2015 FAC Learning Network Projects

Firewise / Fire Adapted Landscaping Contest

Greater Flagstaff Forests Partnership promoted this community-wide contest at Earth Day celebrations. The contest encouraged homeowners to prepare landscapes around their homes and communities for the threat of wildfire. Prizes totaling \$1000 were awarded based on overall appeal, with an emphasis on incorporation of Firewise concepts and aesthetics



Prescribed Fire Smoke Awareness Campaign

Greater Flagstaff Forests Partnership and students from Northern Arizona University's School of Communication created a video that describes the need for prescribed fire and the efforts made by professionals to mitigate smoke effects on the community. The video will be shared on various websites and used during outreach events. View it at <https://vimeo.com/128093109>.

Outreach Highlight:



Excerpt from a post on the FAC Learning Network blog—read the post at <http://facnetwork.org/progress-promoting-treatments-in-flagstaff/>

GFFP Combines Culture, Art and Science to Teach Forest Restoration to Kids

The Greater Flagstaff Forests Partnership developed the **Yellow Belly Ponderosa**, an outreach program that began as an exciting play created by middle and high school students, for elementary students. The play combines **culture, art and science** to convey an **understanding** of sustainable forests and watersheds, and support a **lifelong connection** to them. Originally designed as a traveling performance delivered at elementary schools in northern Arizona, the program has been adapted for classroom use, with a professionally-produced DVD of the performance, pre- and post-lesson plans, and an evaluation. This **curriculum was developed by teachers** to meet State Standards and is now **used across the state**. Salt River Project, the largest utility company in the state, funded development of this curriculum and hosts the materials on its website, as well as conducting teacher workshops based on it throughout the state. (Find the materials at <http://www.srpnet.com/education/yellowbelly.aspx>)

MORE INFORMATION

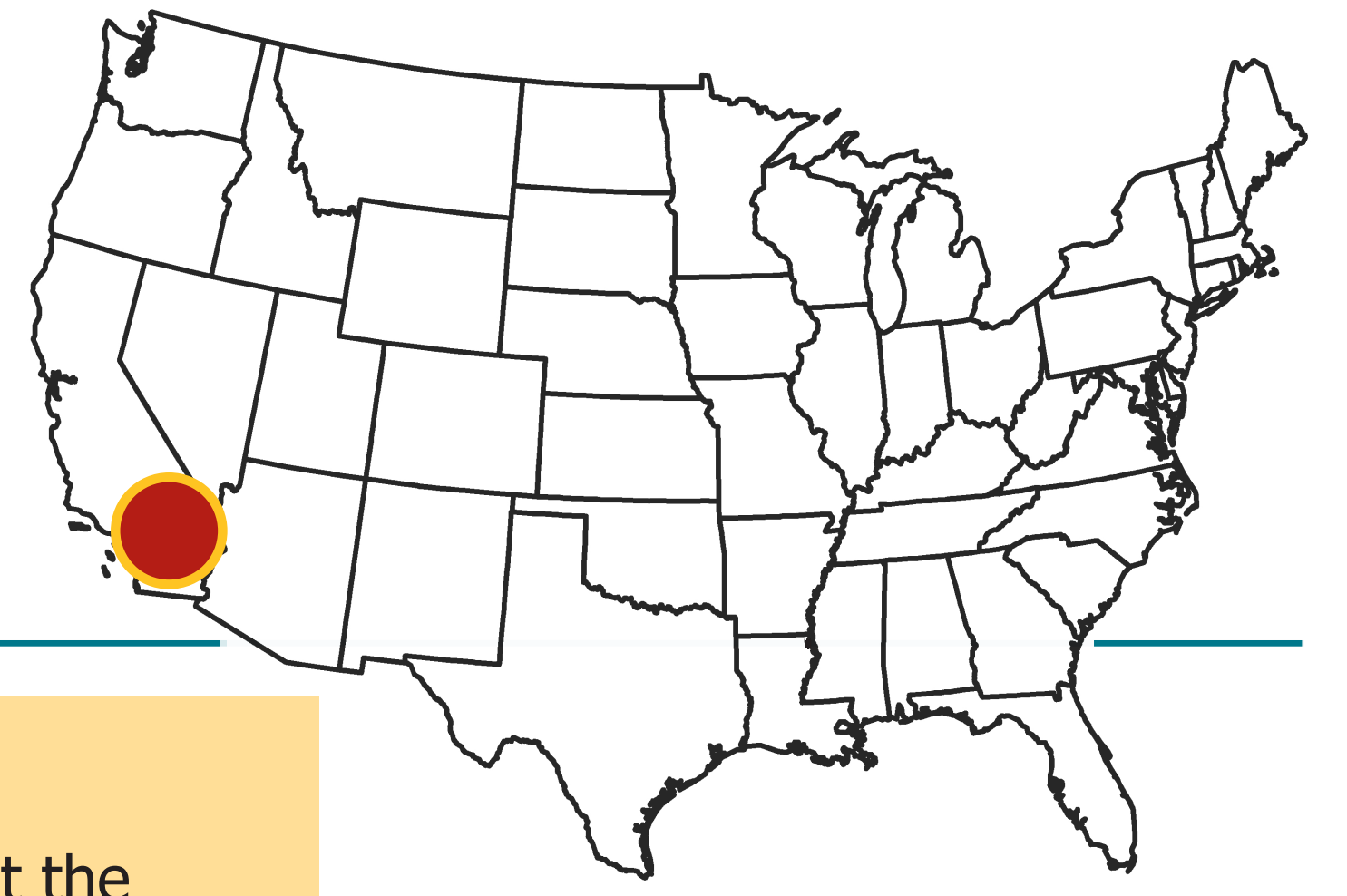
Greater Flagstaff Forests Partnership <http://www.gffp.org/>
Flagstaff Fire Department Wildland Fire
Management Division <http://www.flagstaff.az.gov/wildlandfire>
Coconino National Forest <http://www.fs.usda.gov/COCONINO>
Flagstaff Watershed
Protection Project <http://www.flagstaffwatershedprotection.org/>



The Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network is supported by Promoting Ecosystem Resilience and Fire Adapted Communities Together (PERFACT), a cooperative agreement between The Nature Conservancy, the USDA Forest Service and agencies of the Department of the Interior. For more information, contact Nick Goulette (nickg@hayfork.net).

California Fire Safe Council

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The California Fire Safe Council (CFSC) is a state-wide non-profit that provides wildfire education and outreach support and capacity-building assistance to organizations in California that are engaged in fire preparedness. This wide-reaching influence and support of local community groups makes us especially well positioned to spread innovative ideas from local California Fire Safe Councils and Firewise Communities through the FAC Learning Network, and to bring innovations back to our California partners.

For more than 20 years, CFSC has been a leader in California's fight to reduce the impact of wildfire. CFSC is recognized by state and federal fire agencies as a vital link to communities. Since 2004, CFSC has administered nearly 800 grants for wildfire mitigation projects and education programs totaling over \$80 million in federal funds. These grants have helped communities across California prepare for wildfire and become more fire adapted. In addition to the federal funders, private corporations, including insurance and utility companies, have shown generous support for CFSC's work.

CFSC offers workshops and one-day conferences on fire and disaster prevention topics several times each year in locations throughout the state. Fire Safe Councils communicate regularly with CFSC to share information about local events and successful projects and outreach programs. In turn, CFSC offers networking and training opportunities that help the local groups continue their critical work in wildfire prevention and preparedness.

A key area of focus as part of the FAC Learning Network this year is to advance networking among local Fire Safe Councils and Firewise Communities in California. CFSC will create an atmosphere of collective learning by developing an online forum will allow FSCs, Firewise Communities, grantee organizations and community groups to share tips, lessons learned and best practices. Additionally, the CFSC website will be expanded to spotlight some of the abundant success stories from across the state.

In addition to online tools, CFSC will host workshops on Fire Adapted Communities principles to Fire Safe Councils, Firewise Communities, and residents of the wildland urban interface. The workshops will feature firsthand accounts of how fire adapted, Fire Safe, and Firewise concepts are being applied by local groups and agencies, furthering the network approach.

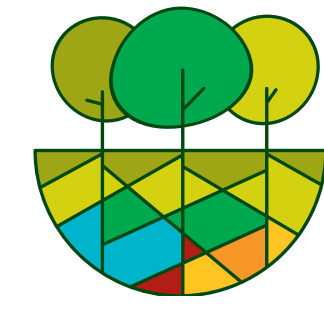


COMMUNITIES

working throughout the state of **California**

Key Partners

CAL FIRE
National Fire Protection Association—Firewise
USDA Forest Service
and local Fire Safe Councils throughout the state



FIRE ADAPTED COMMUNITIES
LEARNING NETWORK

<http://FACNetwork.org>



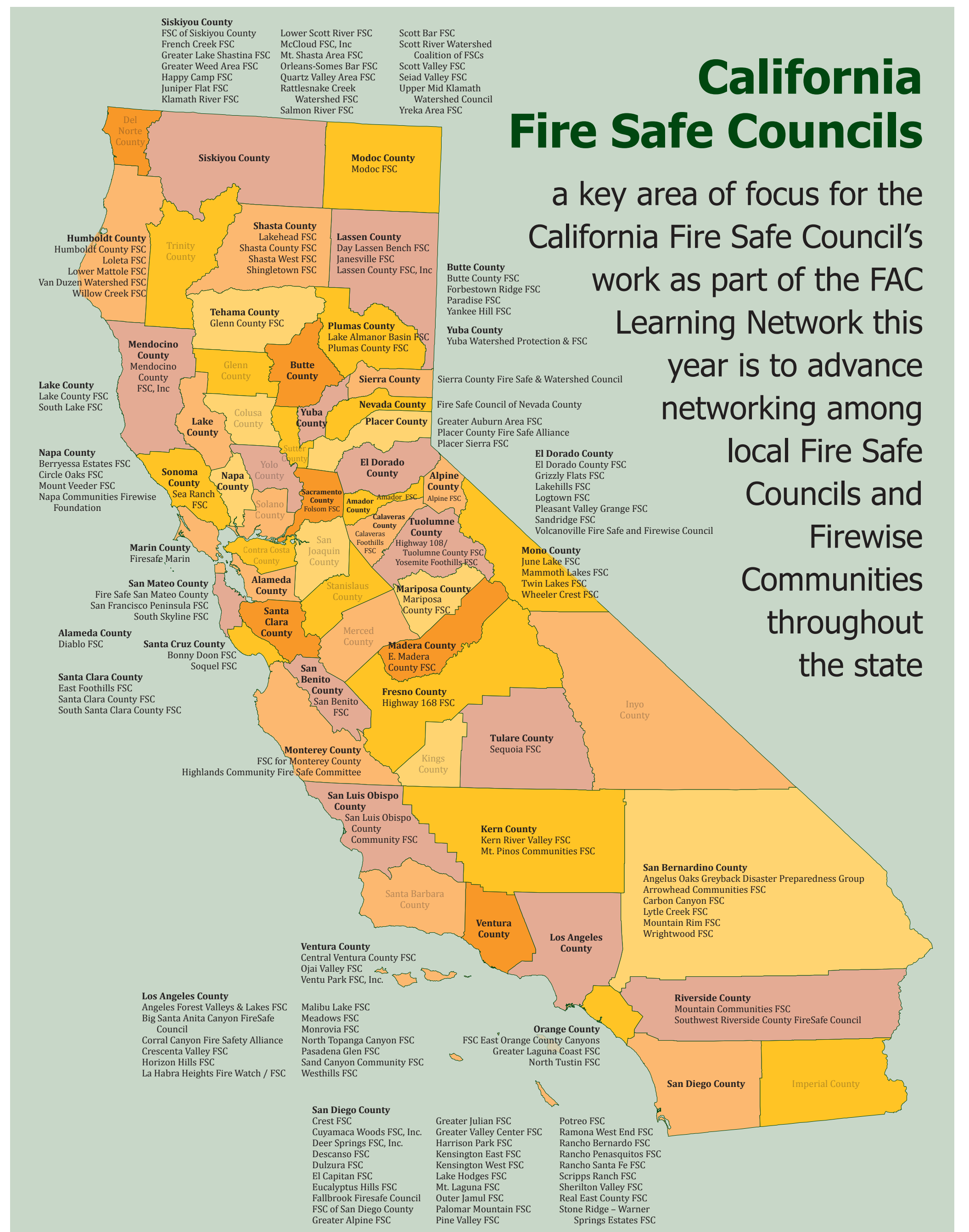
Homeowners participate in home ignition zone assessment training organized by the California Fire Safe Council. Photo: CFSC/Katie Martel



Attendees visit exhibitors at the 2014 Fire Summit, which was hosted by the Southern California Regional Area Taskforce and sponsored by California Fire Safe Council. Photo: CFSC

California Fire Safe Councils

a key area of focus for the California Fire Safe Council's work as part of the FAC Learning Network this year is to advance networking among local Fire Safe Councils and Firewise Communities throughout the state



CALIFORNIA FIRE SAFE COUNCIL MISSION

Mobilizing Californians to protect their homes, communities and environment from wildfires

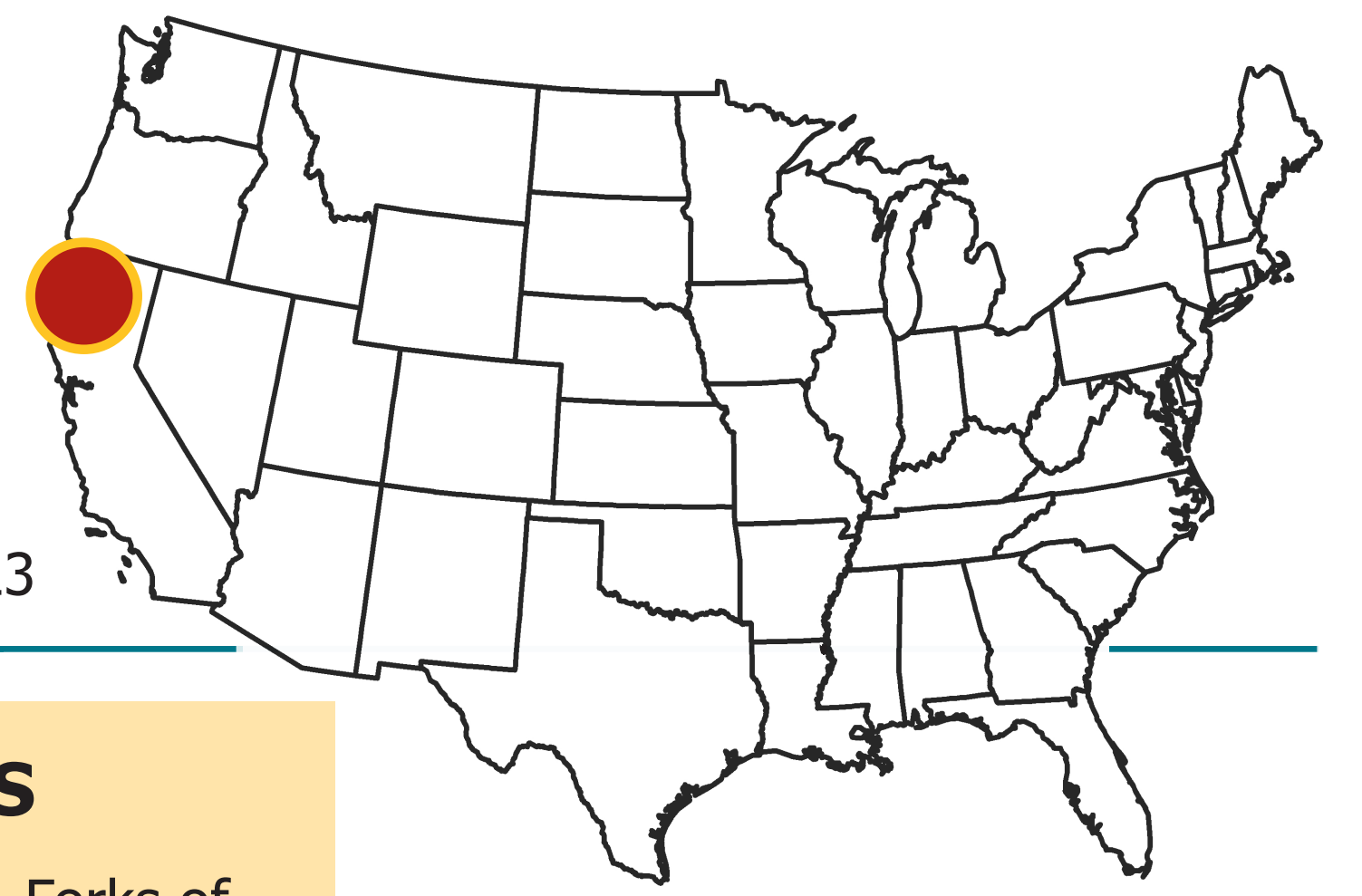
For more about the **California Fire Safe Council**, visit <http://www.cafiresafecouncil.org/>

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Karuk Tribe

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Recent accomplishments in this landscape include the establishment of the Western Klamath Restoration Partnership (WKRK), a collaborative that is working to improve forest resiliency and community safety. As part of the Fire Learning Network, this partnership has held a series of eight facilitated three-day workgroup sessions, and has reached agreement in principle for projects at the landscape scale.

Our current focus is on convening partners to ramp up the scope and scale of our planning and implementation capacities. We are improving mechanisms to obligate funds from the Forest Service to the Bureau of Indian Affairs for the tribe to systematically progress our WKRK collaborative endeavors as a Cohesive Strategy Demonstration Area. More than \$1.1 million in funding was obligated in 2014 for NEPA planning and for completing NEPA-ready projects, and an additional \$500,000 has recently been committed to non-federal partner activities related to this project from Six Rivers National Forest's 2015 Program of Work. Among the year's highlights was the fall Klamath River Prescribed Fire Training Exchange, where 53 participants built their fire skills while treating 240 acres with fire. Our integrated approach to fire management has been highlighted in the Western Region Strategy Committee newsletter, the Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy Facebook page, and in many newspaper articles.

Collaborative leadership in a large, complex system presents challenges. But we are progressing in a manner that we believe will produce tangible results for the long term. Seed money from the FAC Learning Network has been instrumental in convening the discussions needed to help our vision start to become a reality.

Our long-term goals include bringing fire back to the people in Karuk Territory. Fire as an ecological process is not currently fulfilling its functional role in this landscape. People have not been serving in their capacity as responsible stewards within ecological systems. We are trying to reverse that trend and revitalize the human-fire relationship so we can once again thrive as a people of place in our original homelands.

To help reach these goals, we have gained administrative access to the Incident Qualifications and Certification System (IQCS) and Resource Ordering Status System (ROSS) and are currently performing quality assurance checks on training records; we are requesting training slots for 2016. This will enable us to manage the qualifications of tribal, NGO and community volunteer personnel so the workforce that we are growing locally for the restoration and maintenance of fire resilient landscapes will also be able to respond to wildfires in a safe, effective, and consistent manner.



Photo: Thomas B. Dunklin

COMMUNITIES

working in Cecilville, Forks of Salmon, Happy Camp, Orleans, Sawyers Bar, Seiad and Somes Bar, and with the Karuk People in **northern California**



<http://FACNetwork.org>

Key Partners

Bureau of Indian Affairs
California Fire Science Consortium
Deer Creek GIS
Happy Camp Coordinating Committee
Happy Camp Fire Safe Council
Hayfork Watershed Research and Training Center
Inter-Tribal Timber Council
Karuk Tribe—Community Development Corporation, Department of Natural Resources, Emergency Preparedness Department
Klamath Forest Alliance
Mid Klamath Watershed Council
National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration—Fisheries
Northern California Prescribed Fire Council
Orleans Volunteer Fire Department

Orleans-Somes Bar Fire Safe Council
Salmon River Fire Safe Council
Salmon River Restoration Council
Salmon River Volunteer Fire and Rescue
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
University of California, Berkeley
USDA Forest Service—Klamath NF, Shasta-Trinity NF, Six Rivers NF;
USDA Forest Service—Pacific Southwest Research Station
USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service—Fortuna Service Center, Yreka Service Center
Western Klamath Restoration Partnership
Western Region Strategy Committee

Integration of Cohesive Strategy Goals a Reality in California's Klamath Mountains

A post by **Kate Lighthall**, Coordinator, Western Region; Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy on the Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network blog—online at <http://facnetwork.org/integration-of-cohesive-strategy-goals-a-reality-in-californias-klamath-mountains/>

I recently had the pleasure of visiting the Western Klamath Restoration Partnership (WKRK) and attending the field trip for the Somes Bar Integrated Fire Management and Capacity Development Project. As in most collaborative projects, I found stakeholders representing diverse interests who've come together to find shared values and goals for their landscape. Moving from agreement in principle to agreement in practice, however, is the true test of collaboration.

"We're going slow and starting small," I heard from many of the stakeholders from the WKRK. "This is good advice," I thought as I watched the environmental representative keep her eye on the tall Douglas firs (owl habitat needs tree canopy) and the Karuk Tribe's food security coordinator keep her eye on the huckleberries (they need sunlight). I found myself wondering how such diverse interests would get past the initial shared values and goal setting to actual implementation of treatment projects to achieve those goals.

The answer, I know, is through a rich collaborative process—one facilitated to move slowly and build trust over time. This is happening with the WKRK effort and I have no doubt that their unhurried and steady progress towards returning fire to the landscape will meet their shared goals and vision.

This type of community and stakeholder involvement is the core philosophy of the National Wildland Fire Management Cohesive Strategy. Simply put, people are dying, homes and communities are burning up, we are losing natural resources and habitat to extreme wildfire, and we can no longer afford the soaring costs of fire suppression. The Cohesive Strategy promotes collaborative efforts at all levels to find solutions to the wildland fire challenges across all jurisdictions. The three overarching goals of the Cohesive Strategy are to restore resilient landscapes, create fire adapted communities and have safe and effective wildfire response. The path to achieving those goals? Collaboration.

The "C word" gets thrown around a lot these days, and although it's becoming a bit cliché, the process of collaboration continues to be noted for its ability to bring diverse stakeholders to consensus and subsequent success.

This sounds like a huge undertaking on the national scale. Where successful integration of the Cohesive Strategy is easy to see, though, is at the local level, as in the WKRK. Land management agencies are working together with diverse stakeholders to identify shared values and goals, and to turn that vision into treatment projects that make meaningful reductions in risk across landscapes.

The WKRK identified six clear objectives through its collaborative planning process:

- Fire adapted communities,
- Restored fire regimes,
- Healthy river systems,
- Resilient bio-diverse forests/plants and animals,
- Sustainable local economies, and
- Cultural and community vitality.

Each of the proposed activities discussed on the field trip—using prescribed fire, biomass utilization, mechanical fuels reduction, training and using local fire crews and workforces—will work synergistically toward achievement of all six values.

Sound familiar? Restoring resilient landscapes—check. Creating fire adapted communities—check. Safe and effective wildfire response—check.

I like the way Tom Harbour, director of fire and aviation for the Forest Service sums it up: the Cohesive Strategy is "a commitment to the philosophy that as stakeholders, we all share responsibilities for managing our lands; protecting our nation's natural, tribal and cultural resources, and making our communities safe and resilient for future generations."

In northern California, the WKRK is integrating the core tenets of the Cohesive Strategy by using a collaborative process to identify values and goals that address their six values that, in turn, make meaningful progress towards achievement of the three goals of the Cohesive Strategy.



From left: Fire rejuvenating a patch of bear grass; a basket woven from materials that depend on fire; acorns. Prescribed fire in this landscape supports cultural values as well as community safety and forest resilience. Photos: Bill Tripp; USFS/Frank Lake

More Information

For a blog post reporting on the field tour mentioned in the box at left, "Western Klamath Restoration Partnership Hits the Ground Running," go to <http://facnetwork.org/western-klamath-restoration-partnership-hits-the-ground-running/>

For more about the work of the **Karuk Tribe**, visit their website: <http://www.karuk.us/>

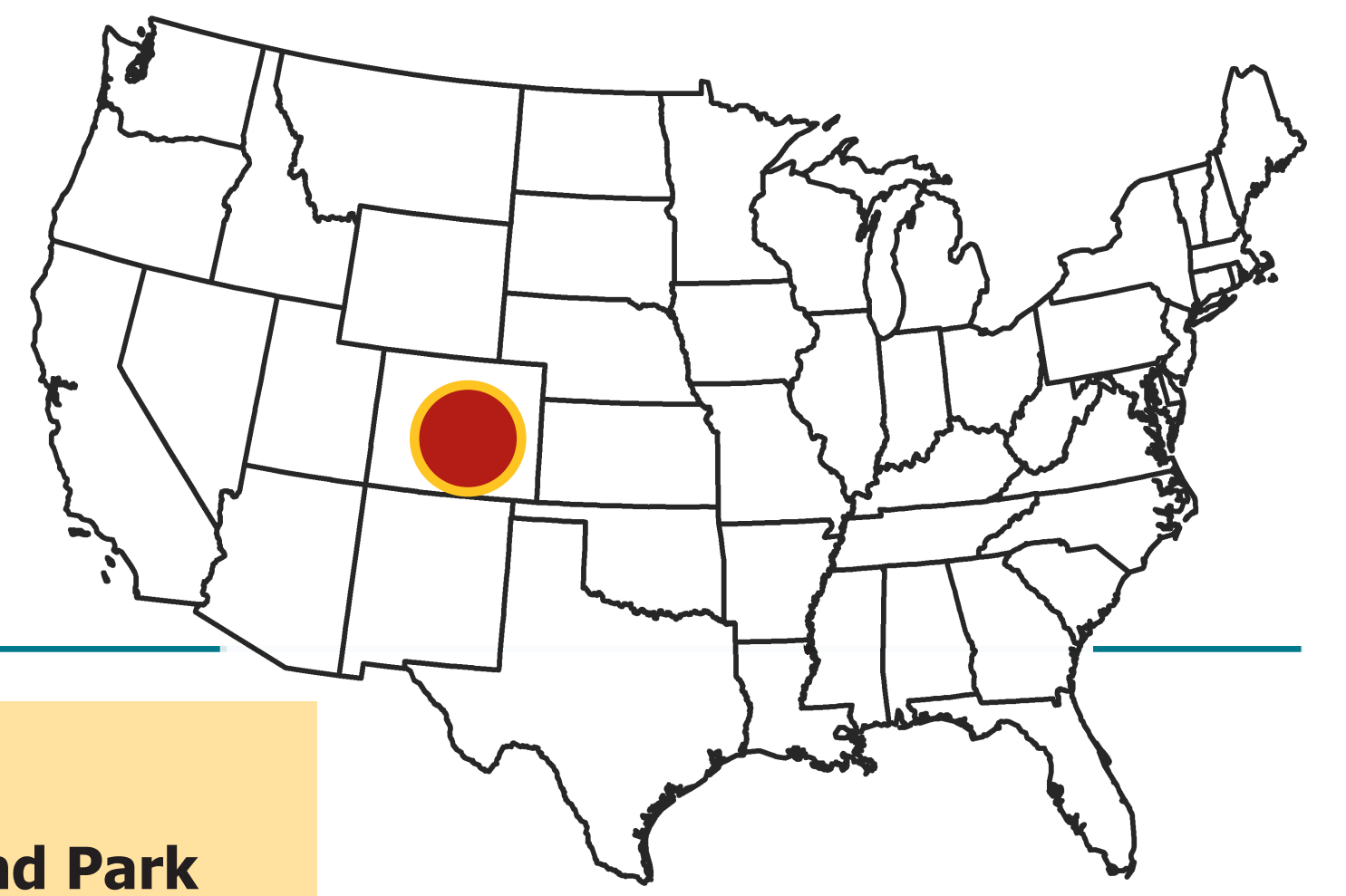
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An equal opportunity provider. v. 21 May 15

Coalition for the Upper South Platte

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To successfully implement the Front Range Fire Adapted Communities Program, the Coalition for the Upper South Platte (CUSP) focuses on areas of high to extreme fire risk and critical infrastructure.

In the Upper South Platte watershed, CUSP works to tie together completed and planned forest management in the watershed to increase the overall impact on ecosystem resilience and wildfire risk reduction. This program of work includes:

- implementing Community Wildfire Protection Plans and landscape-scale activities that reduce hazardous fuels;
- increasing forest resiliency;
- raising community awareness, preparedness and ownership; and
- building local capacity for both biomass utilization and project management and implementation.



Knowing that the only way to protect our communities is by working together, CUSP volunteers lend a hand. Photo: CUSP

CUSP works in areas adjacent to projects that are planned, already underway, or have been recently completed on federal, state and local lands, utilities lands and private properties. This coordinated work increases the overall impact on ecosystem resilience, wildfire risk reduction and watershed protection.

Projects in at-risk wildland-urban interface (WUI) zones along the Colorado Front Range are also a priority. Having completed over 2,000 acres of treatments in 2014, CUSP has begun to expand its area of influence, and has begun mentoring several other non-profit organizations facing the same challenges. CUSP's biomass facility, located in Fairplay, is now fully operational, providing wood chips from fuel management projects to heat the Fairplay School.

In 2015 CUSP is undertaking several prescribed burns, focusing efforts in the northern watershed. With a skilled staff of 25 and new pieces of equipment, CUSP is well positioned to even more effectively implement forest management projects. Participation in the FAC Learning Network affords staff opportunities to discuss with others in the fire and land management field both challenges and new approaches to creating more resilient communities. The FAC Learning Network has also raised the organization's national visibility, extending its impact.



A CUSP crew burns piled slash in the snow, to remove excess fuels from the forest when the risk of wildfire is at its lowest. Photo: CUSP

Looking ahead, CUSP will be focusing on risk reduction in the home ignition zone, influencing policy and tax code related to the WUI, identifying and securing sustainable long-term funding sources, and increasing awareness of the Front Range FAC program.

COMMUNITIES

working in **Woodland Park** and along the **Colorado Front Range**



<http://FACNetwork.org>

Key Partners

Black Forest Together
City of Woodland Park
Colorado Department of Natural Resources
Colorado Parks and Wildlife
Colorado Springs Utilities
Colorado State Forest Service
Denver Water
El Paso County
Florissant Fire Protection District
Front Range Fuels Treatment Partnership
Help the Needy
Jefferson County

Mile High Youth Corps
Northeast Teller County Fire Protection District
Palmer Land Trust
Park County
Pikes Peak Wildfire Prevention Partners
Teller County
The Nature Conservancy
U.S. Air Force Academy
USDA Forest Service
USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
and local Home Owners Associations

Lessons Learned: Working with Contractors to Ensure Economic Sustainability

Excerpts from a post on the Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network blog—to read the whole post, go to <http://facnetwork.org/insights-ensure-economic-sustainability-mitigation-projects/>

Over the years, CUSP has engaged many forest contractors. In 2014 alone we provided over two million dollars in funding to contractors undertaking forest management projects within the watershed. Throughout this process, we have learned some important lessons:

1. **Planning is key** to successful projects. Mapping & Marking: Know your project and property boundaries—often owners mistakenly think they own property that they do not, and even more common is faulty assessors data. When in doubt, contact adjacent owners, and mutually walk and agree upon the lines before beginning the work. Always re-walk the boundaries to ensure your ribbon or paint is still visible. On large projects we use the management by prescription approach, but will do sample marking on an acre or two. Request for Proposals (RFP)—Consider your RFP documents as some of the most important elements in the planning phase of your work. In them be clear about the goals, timelines, equipment needs, and whether there is a bond, insurance or damage deposit required. Always discuss the prescription in detail and know up front what the right equipment is for the job. Provide the contractors ample time to bid and review the project. CUSP requires all bidders to take part in a “show-me-tour” or site walk before bidding.
2. Selection criteria is **more than one number**. When selecting contractors, we consider past work history, references,

assumed ability to complete within budget and on time, and known customer service. Contractors often have more interaction with our clients than we do, so make sure they will represent you well. As I view the economic sustainability of our region, I also rank those contractors that have a local presence higher than those from out of the region or the state. This is vital to strong local forest economies. For every dollar I give them our region feels the benefits, from the forest employees to the coffee shops and the fuel stations.

3. **Contracts** are your guidebook for operations. The more detail you put within your contracts with regard to the project prescriptions, the more likely that you and the contractor will achieve real results with limited challenges. Always carry a contract copy with you when meeting with contractors—refer to this document when discussing requirements and outcomes.
4. **Budgeting** project payments requires planning. Plan your reimbursements and project timelines well. Be honest with your contractors and consider what options are available to help them make ends meet.
5. **Know your responsibility in ensuring safe and legal work environments**. As a contract manager, it is my responsibility to ensure crew, client, and staff safety. If I see something that is contrary to that, I will stop the project immediately. Only hire contractors that provide staff with the required workers compensation, proper equipment and PPE, and who treat their people well.

6. Keep good records.

When reviewing work and certifying it as complete, always do this with the contractor and the funder, if required. Take notes and provide the notes to the contractor for review. In some cases I will even make all parties sign the notes, acknowledging that they are aware of items to be wrapped up.



Logs from a thinning project are stacked for sale. Whenever possible, CUSP sells logs to local businesses to offset treatment costs. Photo: CUSP

Some of my strongest relationships are with local contractors. While the relationships can be heated at times, it is important to understand that we are dependent upon each other for success. I rely on them for insight on operations and challenges, and they depend on CUSP to keep up-to-date on funding news, scientific developments and the future of forest management. It is my responsibility to give them the tools to succeed and I am humbled when a small outfit purchases their first skidder or hires new employees. CUSP recently contracted with an outfit that had only worked on small lots. Now it is our responsibility to ensure that they succeed in reducing fire risk, increasing forest resilience and growing their company.

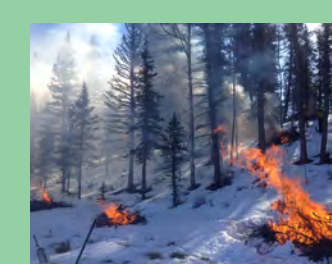
It is our duty to work with and manage our contractors in a way that makes us all shine.

Lessons Learned: Pile Burning

Having burned over 5,000 piles in the last few years on public and private property, CUSP has learned some key elements

that can help yield successful and safe burns. The post includes planning suggestions and some notes on cost, and emphasizes the importance of building relationships and having (and conveying) realistic expectations.

Read the post at <http://facnetwork.org/pile-burning-lessons-learned/>

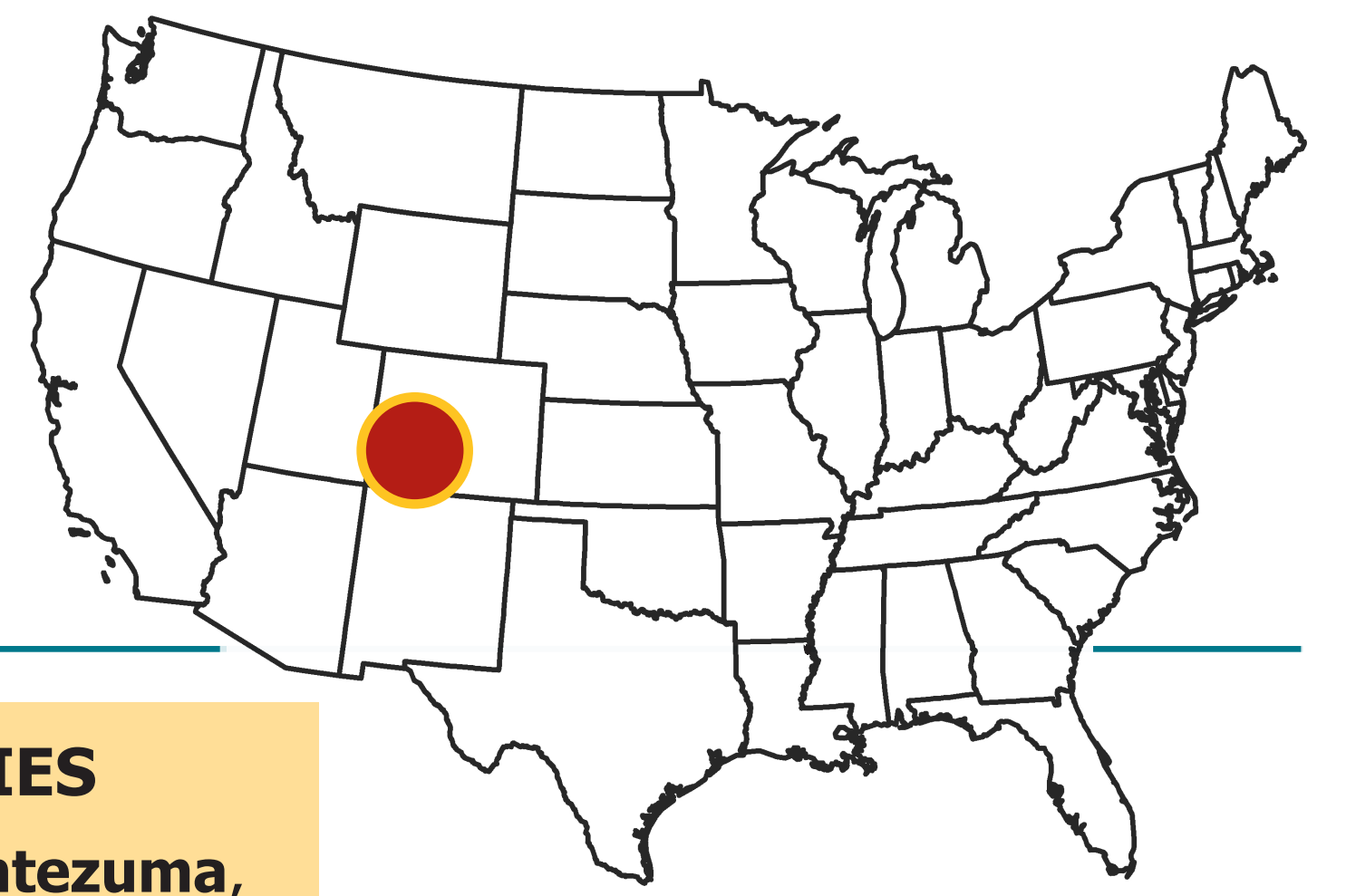


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FireWise of Southwest Colorado

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Since joining the FAC Learning Network, FireWise has hosted and taken part in numerous stakeholder meetings to discuss, plan, and implement activities across its three-county area. These included taking part in public meetings hosted by La Plata County to support new driveway standards; hosting a wildfire forum in Montezuma County; workshops on fire adapted communities and wildfire preparedness for realtors, insurance agents and residents; and workshop for new mitigation contractors. We also hosted follow-up meetings for two working groups that evolved from a Wildfire Collaboration Conference that FireWise held in May 2014: The Regional Council Working Group met to discuss the creating a group that would address regional issues, recommend areas of priority treatment, and guide grant applications. The Regional Biomass Working Group is addressing opportunities for developing a biomass industry in the region and recently commissioned a Community Supply Study for the region. In January we hosted another half-day Wildfire Collaboration Conference, which shared information on FAC and current mitigation efforts of several partners. Group consensus was to continue meeting twice a year. We also participated in two peer-learning workshops with the New Mexico FAC Learning Network group, in Taos and in Albuquerque. FireWise is an active participant in the planning of the 2015 Colorado Wildfire Conference and part of a group looking to create a Fire Adapted Colorado group that will plan future wildfire conferences and provide fire adapted communities leadership in Colorado.

Other recent accomplishments include the completion of four subdivision-level CWPPs (bringing the total to 21) and the addition of two new FireWise Communities (for a total of 9) and a variety of Wildfire Preparedness Day activities and events in all three counties. FireWise has been working with the Archuleta County landfill and other partners in to make three slash depot locations into sustainable operations. FireWise has also championed many other FAC-related projects that support regional wildfire risk reduction, including:

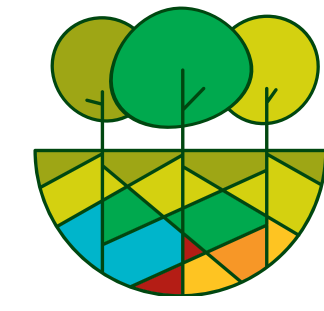
- development of a Best Practices for Homeowners directory;
- a pilot project in Montezuma County for low-income communities, that included creation of a fuel break to protect a 96-unit mobile home park and fuels reduction and hardening of homes on four individual properties;
- a new partnership with the La Plata GIS Department to map fuels-reduction efforts across the region;
- a new partnership with La Plata Open Space Conservancy, Montezuma Land Conservancy, Southwest Conservation Corps and the Colorado State Forest Service that looks at conducting fuels mitigation work on conservation easements near communities with CWPPs or FireWise Ambassadors.

In 2015, FireWise partnered with the San Juan National Forest to highlight a 1,100-acre prescribed burn conducted adjacent to a FireWise Community, which involved a FAC Network blog post and a tour of the burn. We are also participating in a social science research project that involves parcel-level wildfire risk assessments of 2,000 homes that will be followed up by a homeowner survey, which will measure the homeowner's perception of their wildfire risk against that of the professional assessor.



COMMUNITIES

working in **Montezuma, La Plata, and Archuleta Counties** in southwest **Colorado**



FIRE ADAPTED COMMUNITIES
LEARNING NETWORK

<http://FACNetwork.org>

Regional Partners

American Red Cross	Short Forestry
BLM—Southwest District Field Office	Southern Rockies Fire Science Network
Colorado Division of Fire Prevention and Control	Southwest Conservation Corps
Colorado Division of Homeland Security	State Farm Insurance
Colorado State Forest Service	University of Colorado, Boulder—Institute of Behavioral Sciences
Farmers Insurance	USDA Forest Service—Rocky Mountain Research Station, San Juan NF
Mountain Studies Institute	Wildfire Mitigation Professionals' Association
NRG Consulting	
San Juan Citizens Alliance	
San Juan Mountains Association	

ARCHULETA COUNTY PARTNERS

Archuleta County—Administrator, Board of County Commissioners, County Landfill, OEM / BIA—Southern Ute Agency / Colorado State University—Archuleta County Extension Office / Los Pinos FPD / Pagosa Area Water and Sanitation District / Pagosa FPD / Pagosa Springs High School / San Juan Headwaters Forest Health Partnership / Stollsteimer Watershed Group / USDA Forest Service—San Juan NF (Pagosa RD) / USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

LA PLATA COUNTY PARTNERS

BIA—Southern Ute Agency / City of Durango / Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad / Durango FPD / Fort Lewis Mesa FPD / La Plata Conservation District / La Plata County—Board of County Commissioners, OEM, Planning and GIS Departments / La Plata Electric Association / La Plata Open Space Conservancy / Los Pinos FPD / San Juan RC&D / Upper Pine River FPD / USDA Forest Service—San Juan NF (Columbine RD)

MONTEZUMA COUNTY PARTNERS

BIA—Ute Mountain Ute Agency / Colorado Division of Parks and Wildlife / Cortez FPD / Cortez Open Learning High School / Dolores County OEM / Empire Electric Association / Four Corners Bar Association / Four Corners Home Builders Association / K&N Fuels Management / Lewis-Arriola FPD / Mancos FPD / Montelores Habitat Partnership Program / Montezuma County—Administrator, Board of County Commissioners, County Landfill, OEM / National Park Service—Mesa Verde National Park (Fire Management) / Pleasant View FPD / Tri-State Generation and Transmission Cooperative / USDA Forest Service—Dolores Public Lands Office / Ute Mountain Ute Fire and Rescue / Western Area Power Administration

Lessons Learned: Low-Income Wildfire Risk Reduction Pilot Program

Risk Assessments, Community Fuel Breaks, and Outreach:

With a grant from the Colorado Department of Natural Resources, FireWise of Southwest Colorado designed a program to reduce fuels and ember ignition hazards around homes and develop community fuel breaks for low-income communities.

A local youth training program, the Southwest Conservation Corps, was brought on to do the fuel reduction work. A Volunteer Work Day was also scheduled to address ember ignition hazards at two homes. Contributions from a wide range of donors helped make the day a success. By the end of the day, decks were screened, weed cloth and gravel buffers were placed around homes, sections of wood fence

Excerpts from a post on the Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network blog—to read the whole post, go to <http://facnetwork.org/low-income-wildfire-risk-reduction-pilot-program-southwest-colorado/>

were replaced with metal, fire-resistant shrubs were planted, slash was chipped and a wooden carport was dismantled.

A few lessons learned from this pilot:

- **Allow plenty of time** for outreach for every step, from seeking applicants, to seeking donations and volunteers.
- **Slash! Slash! Slash!** You can never be over-prepared to deal with the biomass that will come from fuel reduction projects. Have plans A, B, and C and be sure to budget for a plan D.
- **Combining mechanical projects** with hand-thinning projects balances per-acre treatment costs.

- **Resident education** is a vital part of any program.
- **Help homeowners help themselves.** Once we provided detailed home assessments and instruction for evacuation readiness, the residents got involved. An 80-year-old woman was installing weed barrier and patterned stones around the base of the trees near her home.
- **Assess the level of need** for a new program before undertaking it. An in-depth, low-income needs assessment would have helped us better understand the specific needs of our communities.

Above: Southwest Open High School students sport the FireWise Helping Hands t-shirts they received for volunteering at a low-income pilot project work day. They helped install screening below decks, lay weed-barrier fabric and gravel near homes, plant fire-resistant shrubs and de-construct a carport.

Photo: Rita Strammel

Below, left: The 2014 FireWise chipper rebate program provided almost \$20,000 in rebates to 91 residents and HOAs, who matched it with \$107,000 and 4,065 hours of work.

Photo: Pam Wilson

Below, right: A 2014 tour of the 2012 Weber Fire. As a result of the education, mitigation and evacuation planning in their CWPP, no homes were damaged in the 10,000-acre fire and all residents were evacuated safely.

Photo: Cortez Journal/Jim Mimiaga



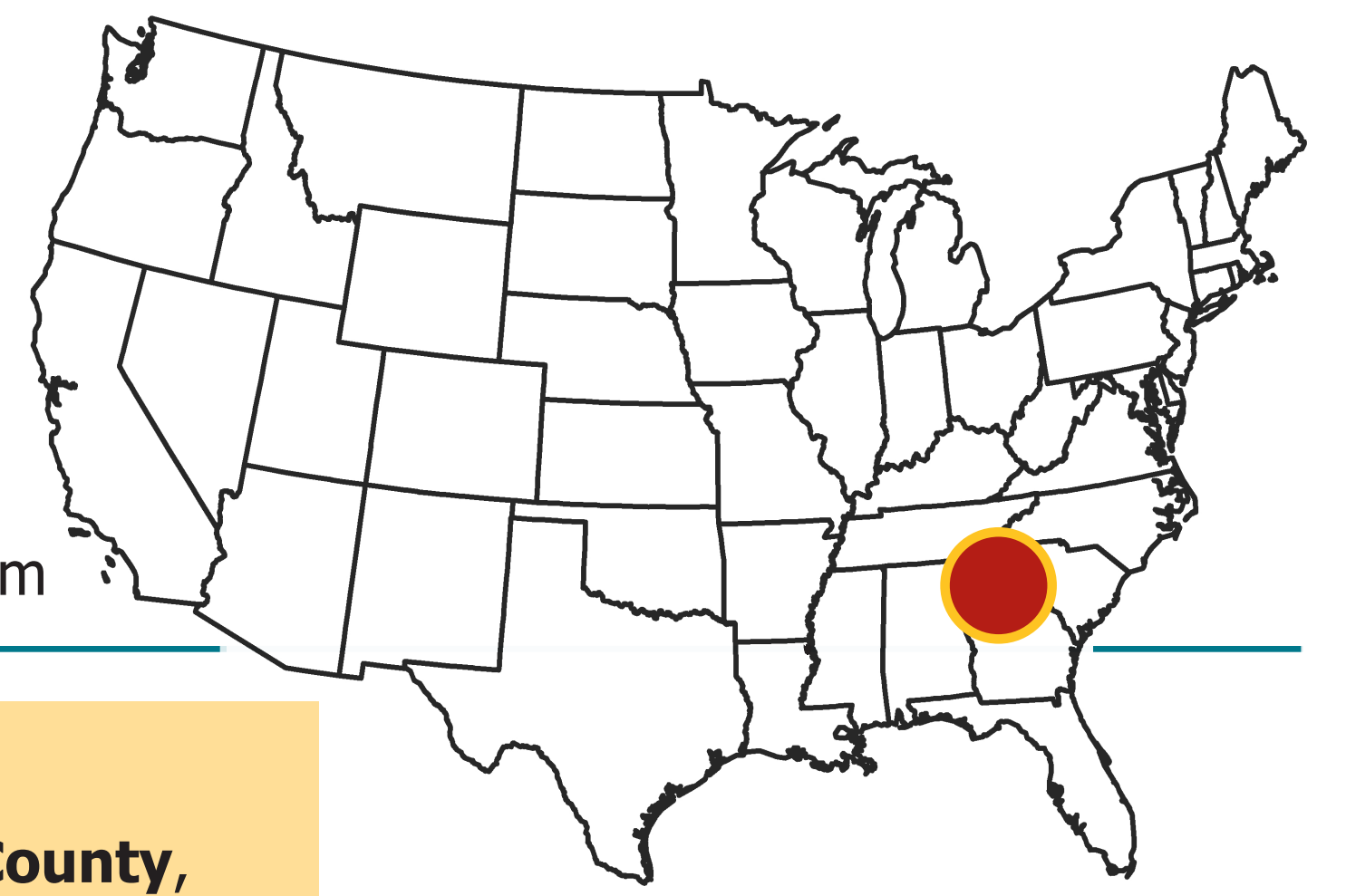
The Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network is supported by Promoting Ecosystem Resilience and Fire Adapted Communities Together (PERFACT), a cooperative agreement between The Nature Conservancy, the USDA Forest Service and agencies of the Department of the Interior. For more information, contact Nick Goulette (nickg@hayfork.net).



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Chestatee-Chattahoochee RC&D Council

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During its first year in the FAC Learning Network, Towns County FAC increased the number of Firewise communities from three to ten. Another ten communities are in the process of completing their plans, holding their work days, and submitting the paper-work needed to be recognized as Firewise communities.

Wildfire calls in Towns County have been reduced by 75 percent since starting the FAC/Firewise program. At a time when two neighboring counties had 57 and 33 wildfires, Towns County had only seven. This is attributed to the constant messages from the FAC group about wildfire safety and risk reduction around homes. Our success is due largely to the formation of a FAC Citizens Coalition, made up of six local citizens and representatives from three fire agencies (the U.S. Forest Service, Georgia Forestry Commission and Towns County Fire). This coalition gives ownership to local citizens, while FAC hub leaders can begin spreading the concept to other counties in the area. As a result, new FAC programs have recently been started in White and Lumpkin Counties in northeast Georgia, and more counties are inquiring about starting their own FAC programs.

The current focus for this FAC group is to develop more Firewise communities in the area, in order to further reduce wildfire calls. The group will continue to focus on homeowner education by all methods available, and will work on private lands hazard mitigation where possible. Most of the wildland-urban interface is connected to national forest land, which has limited opportunities for fuel reduction. However, the Forest Service is planning more prescribed burns in the future, which will help achieve the risk reduction that communities would like to see.

The long-term goal for this FAC Learning Network hub is to continue to actively spread FAC concepts among all of the 13 northeast Georgia counties served by the Chestatee-Chattahoochee RC&D, and to help facilitate their spread across the Southeast through the learning network process. The team's ultimate goal is to help make citizens' homes and property safer from wildfire and to minimize losses, thus boosting the economies and quality of life of communities all across the region.



Partners from federal, state and county agencies, as well as private citizens, make up the FAC coalition.
Photo: GFC/Tony Harkins

COMMUNITIES

working in Towns County, Georgia

- including the communities of
- Admirals Point
- Asheland Cove
- Brasstown Creek Estates
- Campbell Terrace
- Cedar Cliff
- Deerfield Estates
- Frog Pond
- Harris Ridge
- Hi River Country
- Hiawassee Overlook
- Lake Forest
- Leisure Woods
- Long View
- Nantahala Bay
- Pine Crest
- Plantation Villas
- Posey Road
- Riverstone
- Scarlets Way
- Shallow Creek
- Sherwood Forest
- Soapstone
- Tate City
- Twiggs Road
- Woodcrest
- Young Harris College

and expanding into White and Lumpkin Counties



<http://FACNetwork.org>



Volunteers at Leisure Woods Retirement Park—Towns County's second designated Firewise Community—marking the first neighborhood chipper day.
Photo: Frank Riley

Key Partners

- Blue Ridge Mountain Electric Membership Corporation
- Blue Ridge Mountain Soil & Water Conservation District
- Broad River Soil & Water Conservation District
- City of Hiawassee
- City of Young Harris
- Georgia Department of Agriculture
- Georgia Department of Natural Resources
- Georgia Forestry Commission
- Georgia Mountain Regional Commission
- Hall County Soil & Water Conservation District
- Hiawassee River Watershed Coalition
- Lumpkin County Homeowners Association
- Lumpkin County—CERT, County Commissioners, Emergency Management, Fire Department
- Stephens County Soil & Water Conservation District

- The Nature Conservancy
- Towns County— 911 Mapping, Chamber of Commerce, County Commissioner, Emergency Management Services, Fire Corps, Fire Rescue, Schools
- Towns County FAC Citizens Coalition
- Towns County Home Owners Association
- Upper Chattahoochee River Soil & Water Conservation District
- USDA Forest Service—Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest
- USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
- White County Homeowners Association
- White County—CERT, County Commissioners, Emergency Management, Fire Rescue
- Young Harris College and individual community HOAs

Making Things Happen for Rural America is What RC&Ds Do

Workers are the most valuable part of any program—and they can be the hardest part to find. But if you look under the right rocks, most communities have groups that will pitch in and make a worthwhile project happen. One long-standing organization of community volunteers that is often overlooked is the Resource Conservation & Development Council. For most of their history, RC&D Councils were embedded in the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS, formerly the Soil Conservation Service) and not very visible. But RC&D Councils are made up of community volunteers who are always looking for projects where they can make a difference in a community.

Fire Adapted Communities organizers should know that RC&D Councils:

- are **501(c)3 not-for-profit** corporations—not government entities—so some of the policies and constraints of local, state and federal government programs do not limit them.

- have a **high degree of independence** to carry out activities that will achieve their most important goals. RC&D Council volunteers are leaders and community stakeholders who play multiple roles and are typically involved in local government, school boards, churches and other civic activities.
- know how to **blend government programs with local needs** to produce results.
- were for many years the community **outreach arm of the NRCS**, and funding flowed through them into communities. However in recent years RC&Ds have suffered budget cuts and many are scrambling.
- are a **perfect fit with FAC** programs because both aim to help local people and make life in their communities better and safer.

Excerpted from a post on the Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network blog—see the post at <http://facnetwork.org/rcds-and-fac/>



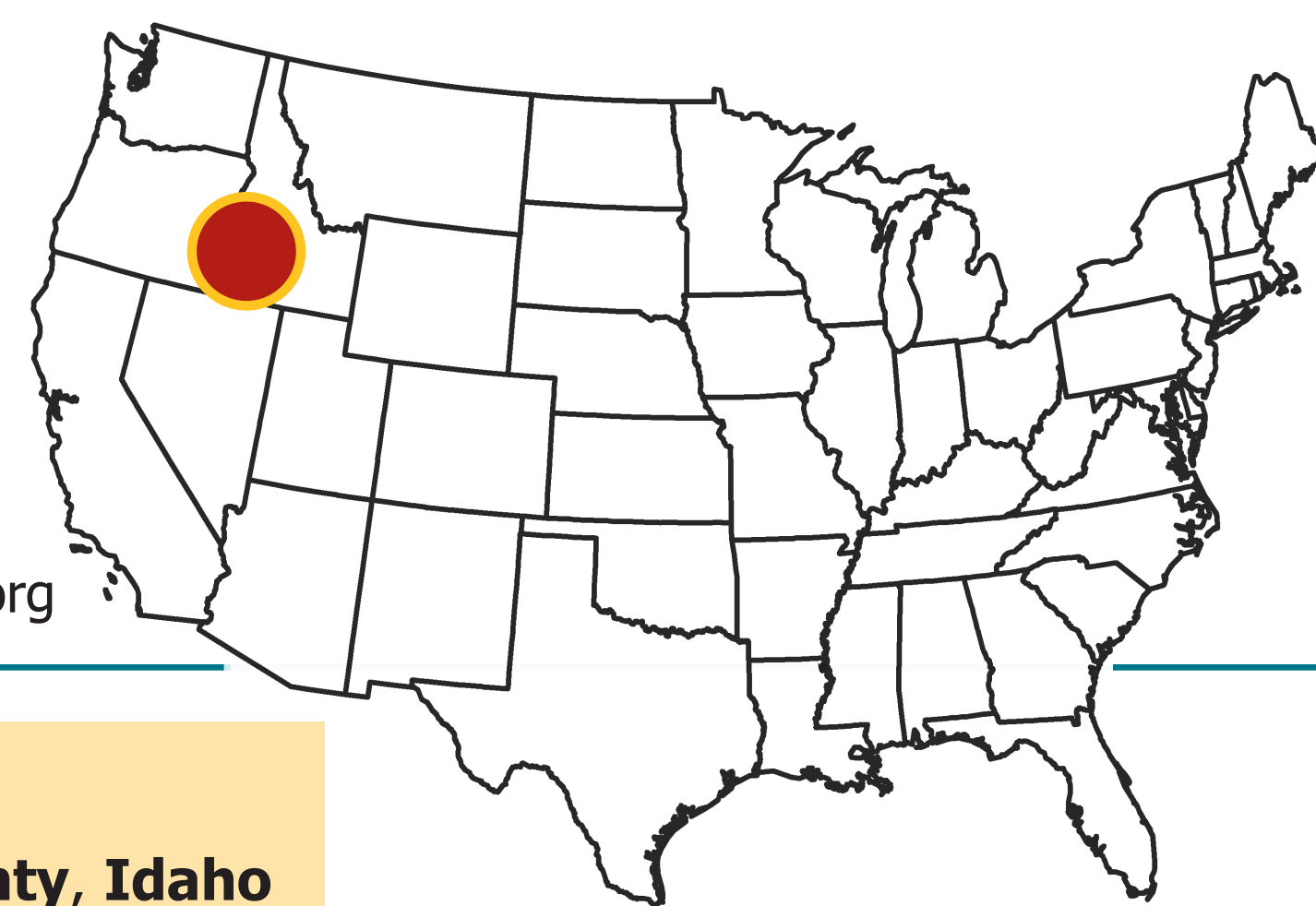
Community engagement strategies include plenty of outreach to schools.
Photo: Frank Riley

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Boise Fire Department

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The Boise Fire Department is engaged in many FAC activities supported by a variety of grants and through its participation in the FAC Learning Network. Most work directly tied to the FAC Learning Network is beginning in 2015. Leading up to that, the Boise Fire Department had been busy with many wildfire mitigation projects, including managing numerous projects supported by its partner, the Southwest Idaho RC&D. These included creating fuel breaks through sagebrush thinning, goat grazing, herbicide applications and re-seeding. Another project funded by the RC&D is the acquisition and installation of a Remote Automatic Weather Station (RAWS) in the Boise Front, which includes a VHF radio that can alert firefighters, in real time, to changing weather conditions during wildland firefighting operations. City of Boise Neighborhood Reinvestment Grant funding has supported chipping of hazardous fuels for homeowners in targeted neighborhoods throughout the Boise wildland-urban interface. The Boise Fire Department also recently learned that it will obtain funding, through a Western States Fire Grant and matching partnership funds from Ada County Emergency Management, to acquire remote sensing (LiDAR) data; this will enable creation of a county-wide wildfire risk map that will improve assessment and planning.

Sharing what has been learned is also important to the department and its partners. For example, a tour for the Public Lands Foundation examined an area where a fatal wildland fire occurred, and where several years of phased wildfire mitigation work have taken place to reduce future risks. A similar, more in-depth, version of this tour was part of the IAWF International Wildland Fire Safety Summit and Human Dimensions of Wildland Fire Conference, held in April 2015 in Boise. This tour was also provided to a group of eight personnel from the Austin Fire Department Wildfire Division, as part of an Austin-Boise learning exchange, sponsored by the FAC Learning Network. The Boise Fire Department also shares its expertise in classes at the National Interagency Fire Center and at Boise Fire Headquarters, teaching segments on FAC, Ready, Set, Go!, Firewise and local wildfire mitigation activities to professional firefighters.

Participation in the 2014 FAC Learning Network workshop enabled the Boise Fire Department to make new contacts and learn a great deal about wildfire mitigation initiatives around the country. The department has found that using FAC concepts and messaging helps more efficiently streamline and tailor mitigation and public outreach activities, and provides opportunities to share experiences with others. The Boise Fire Department's long-term FAC goal is to bring in additional partners and provide consistent, effective county-wide public outreach, in addition to ongoing boots-on-the-ground wildfire mitigation activities.



Participants in Public Lands Foundation tour of the Oregon Trail pause at an interpretive point. Signage with take-home flyers is used to share information about mitigation projects and increase communication about fire adapted communities concepts.
Photo: Boise Fire Dept./C. Colwell

COMMUNITIES

working in **Ada County, Idaho**

City of Boise communities:

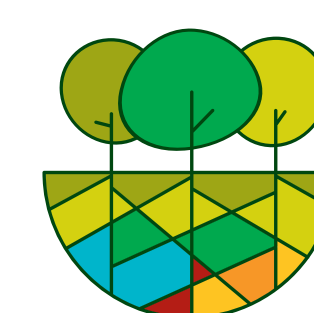
Boise Heights NA / Collister NA / Cove East / Dallas Harris Estates / East End NA / Harris Ranch NA / Highland NA / Homestead Rim / Hulls Grove / Oregon Trail Heights / River Heights / Surprise Valley

Firewise Communities

Briarhill / Central Foothills / Columbia Village / Morning-side Heights / Quail Ridge / Warm Springs Mesa

City of Eagle

Hidden Springs Town Association



FIRE ADAPTED COMMUNITIES
LEARNING NETWORK

<http://FACNetwork.org>



COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Ada County Emergency Management
Ada County Juvenile Court Services
Ada County Parks & Waterways
Boise Fire Department
Boise Heights Neighborhood Association
Boise Parks Department
Boise Planning & Development Services
Boise Police Department
Briarhill Owners' Association
Bureau of Land Management—Boise District
Central Foothills Neighborhood Association
City of Eagle Parks & Recreation
Collister Neighborhood Association
Columbia Village Owners' Association
CT Biological Weed and Brush Control Inc.

Eagle Fire Protection District
East End Neighborhood Association
Flutterby Gardens Landscaping LLC and North End Organic Nursery
Forest Management Inc.
Harris Ranch—Dallas Harris Estates
Harris Ranch Neighborhood Association
Harris Ranch Wildlife Mitigation Association
Healthy Hills Initiative
Highlands Neighborhood Association
Idaho Power
Morningside Heights HOA
Quail Ridge Neighborhood Association
Stone Creek Fire LLC
USDA Agricultural Research Service
Warm Springs Mesa Neighborhood Association

REGIONAL PARTNERS

Boise State University—Department of Community & Regional Planning; Department of Geosciences; Public Policy Center
Bureau of Land Management
Idaho Bureau of Homeland Security
Idaho Department of Fish & Game
Idaho Firewise
Idaho Transportation Department—District #3

International Association of Fire Chiefs—Ready, Set, Go!
International Association of Wildland Fire
National Interagency Coordination Center
Southwest Idaho RC&D
University of Idaho—Department of Agricultural Economics & Rural Sociology

Highlight: Boise-Austin Learning Exchanges

At the 2014 FAC Learning Network workshop, network members from Boise and Austin discovered that—though their geographies are different, and separated by many hundreds of miles—these large municipalities face similar WUI challenges. They hatched the idea of conducting some on-site learning exchanges to enhance both departments' programs, and to generate some best practices and lessons learned that could help other municipal fire departments. The first exchange took place in February 2015, in Texas, and highlights and lessons were captured in several forms.



Post on the Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network blog
<http://facnetwork.org/fire-departments-conduct-fac-exchange/>

"FAC Notes from the Field" handout
<http://www.conservationgateway.org/ConservationPractices/FireLandscapes/fac/facnet/Pages/FACNotes-Austin-Boise-Feb2015.aspx>

Video
<http://facnetwork.org/new-fac-learning-network-video/>



Goat grazing is one of the treatments being used to reduce fuels. Above, before and after grazing on a slope in the Oregon Trail area.

Photo: Boise Fire Dept./M. Beaudoin

More about this mitigation project can be found in a post on the Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network blog at <http://facnetwork.org/oregon-trail-landscape-scale-revegetation-project/>

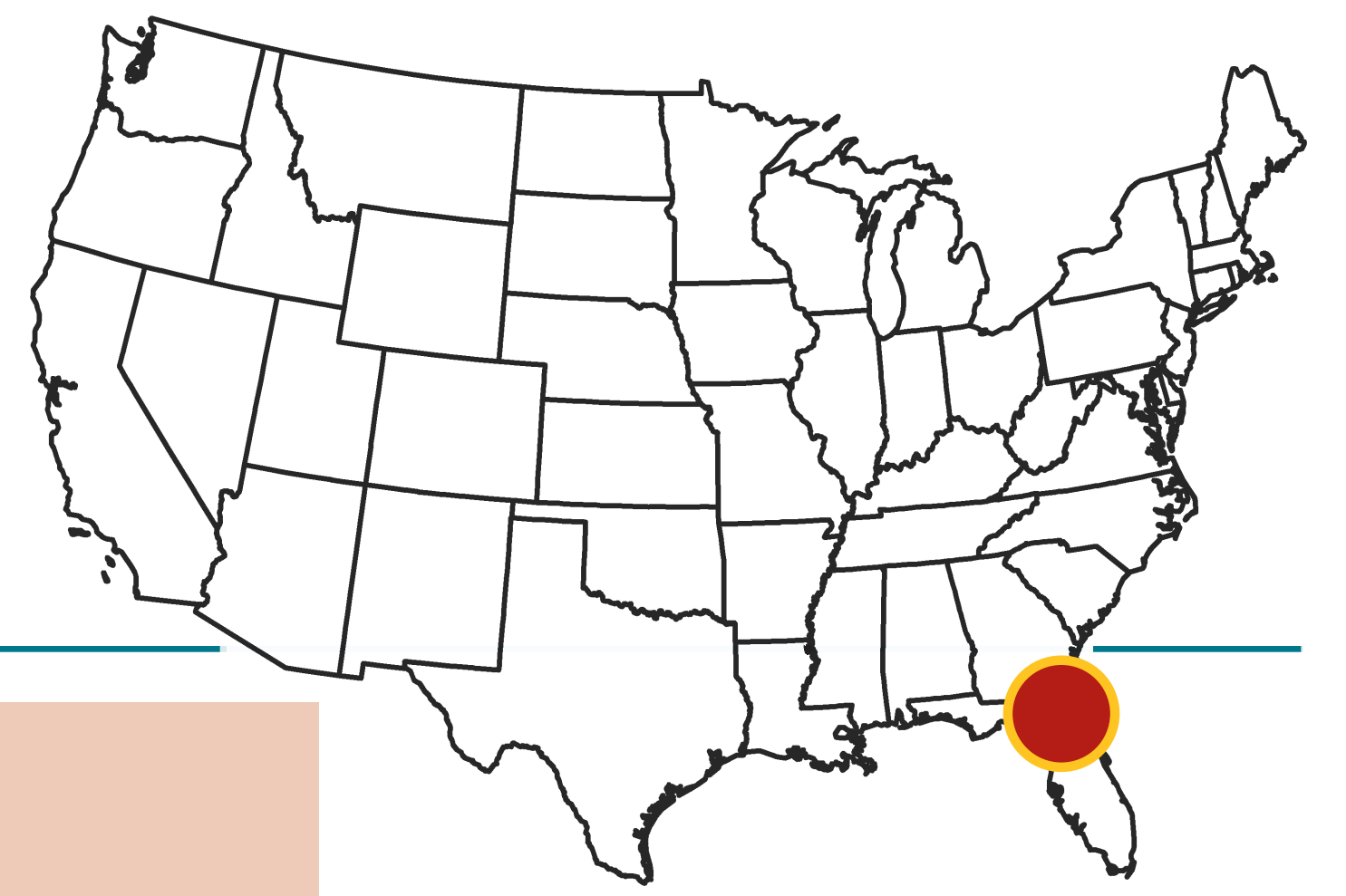


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Florida Forest Service

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Baker County embraces a vision of safely living with wildland fire, and brings this with it to the FAC Learning Network. The county has a long history of wildfire activity, which makes FAC a logical and needed next step. The concepts of FAC align well with existing local efforts, including the Local Mitigation Strategy, Community Wildfire Protection Plans and Action Plans, and Firewise Communities. The Florida Forest Service also actively partners with the Osceola National Forest, Baker County Fire Department and other local coordinators to successfully implement mitigation efforts, such as annual cleanup days, continued work on the control line around Taylor Firewise Community, and prescribed fire assistance on private, state and federal lands.

As part of their participation in the FAC Learning Network, the Florida Forest service works with new and existing partners in Baker County to undertake FAC activities that address mitigation challenges and opportunities. A significant kickoff event in October 2014 brought community leaders and stakeholders together to learn about FAC and its importance to Baker County and surrounding communities. The event also showcased a number of planned FAC activities highlighting the county as a FAC Learning Network pilot community. These activities fall broadly into the following categories: wildland fuel management, community outreach and education, Firewise Communities engagement through building retrofits and landscaping, policy and regulatory recommendations, and wildland fire response improvements.

The Florida Forest Service and county cooperators rely on partnerships to help coordinate FAC activities. As future efforts unfold, they will also look to reconvene existing collaboratives; recruit new partners; and build relationships with planning, zoning, and building code development and enforcement staff.



A Florida Forest Service ranger blows leaves from a roof as part of wildfire mitigation efforts.

Key Partners

- Baker County
- Baker County Fire Department
- Citizens Corp
- City of Macclenny
- Florida Division of Emergency Management
- Flatwoods Management, LLC
- Florida Forest Service
- Greater Okefenokee Association of Landowners
- North Florida Prescribed Fire Council
- Northeast Florida Chapter American Red Cross
- Plum Creek Timber Company
- Taylor Firewise USA Community
- The Longleaf Alliance
- The Nature Conservancy
- U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service—Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge
- USDA Forest Service



<http://FACNetwork.org>

COMMUNITIES

working in **Baker County, Florida**



At a Taylor Firewise Community work day, neighbors work and then play together to help prepare the community for wildfire.



All photos: Florida Forest Service

Highlights of 2014/2015 Work

A kickoff event on October 20, 2014 brought community leaders, stakeholders and key partners together to learn about the idea of fire adapted communities and its importance to Baker County and surrounding communities.

The 2012 Baker County CWPP was updated to incorporate FAC concepts. A key plan element updated was the vulnerability assessment and mapping of at-risk areas—the WUI Community Protection Zones. Using the new Southern Wildfire Risk Assessment Portal CAR Editor Application ensures that timely assessments drive mitigation planning activities.

A mechanical treatment and prescribed fire demonstration for public officials and land managers was held on a 2,400-acre private forest plantation and hunting preserve. As the landowner noted, “the burning away of forest brush has economic benefits in addition to ecological ones.”



Two Taylor Firewise Community Days and an event with the Longleaf Initiative’s Okefenokee/Osceola Local Implementation Team highlighted Taylor Community and Baker County as models of wildfire preparedness and mitigation for adjacent communities. The events featured FAC materials, displays and presentations that showcased FAC, CWPPs, Firewise landscaping, Firewise principles of defensible space, ignition-resistant construction, hazardous fuel reduction and the IAFC Ready, Set, Go! program.

Highlights of 2015/2016 Plans

Peer-leader learning workshops will support planning, provide training in the use of the **FAC Network’s self-assessment tool** and offer presentations on the Florida Wildfire Risk Assessment Score Sheet.

Fire Prevention Teams will help reduce human-caused wildfires, with efforts set up in conjunction with ongoing wildfire awareness activities of the Baker County FAC.

Utility and insurance companies will be sought as potential partners.

Three more Firewise Communities will be created in Baker County (using Title III funds).

Residents will be introduced to the Ready, Set, Go! program through county fire department and law enforcement efforts to help them learn about preparing for wildfire, developing situational awareness and planning for evacuation.

Continuing outreach will engage residents and assess hazards, host tours of successful defensible space and mitigation projects, and otherwise promote fire adapted communities.

Resistant landowners will be reached with multiple messages (about fire danger, forest health, wildlife etc.).

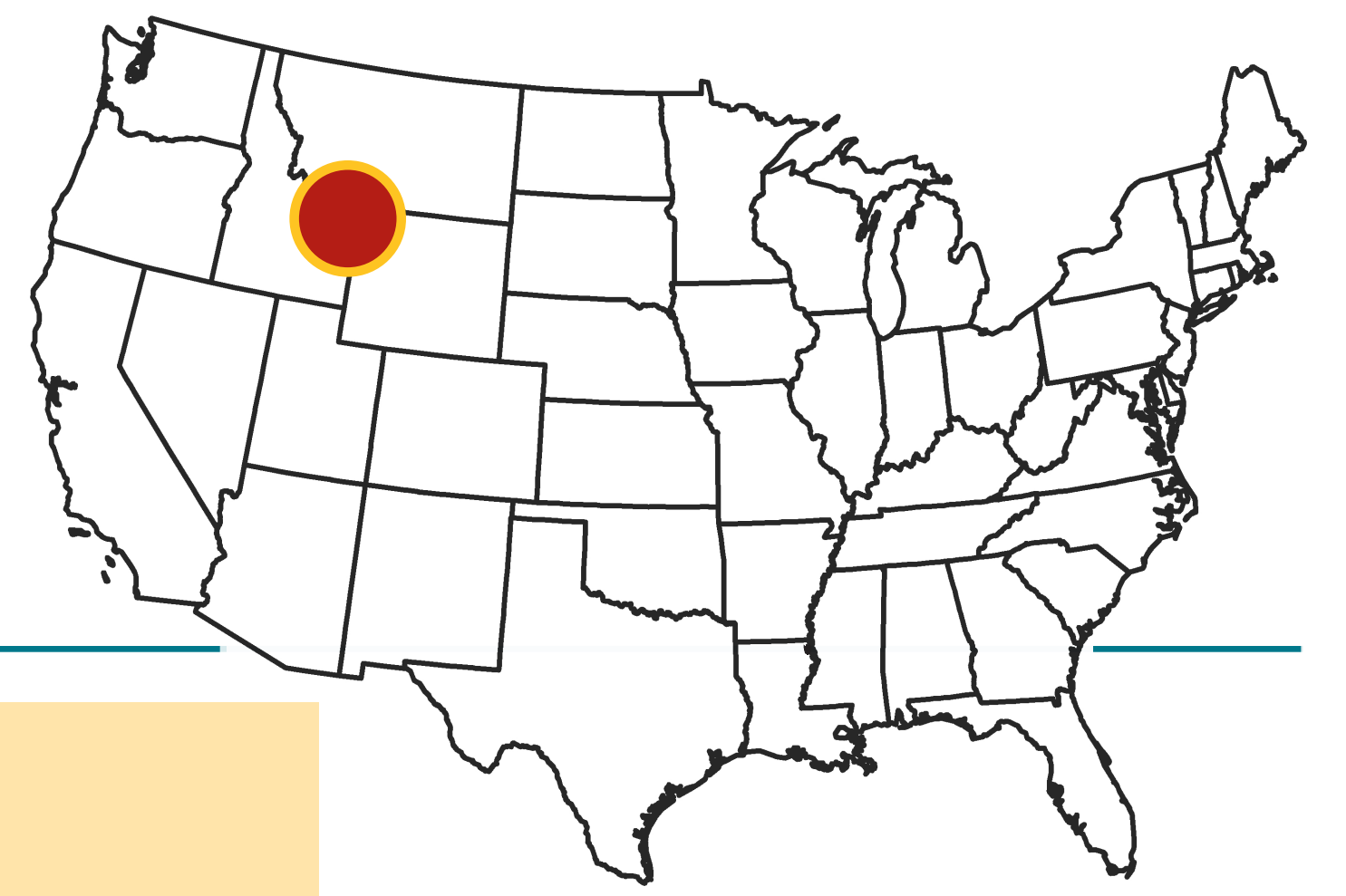


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Island Park Sustainable Fire Community

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www.islandparksustainablefirecommunity.com



The Island Park Sustainable Fire Community (IPSFC) is a collaborative group consisting of concerned citizens as well as representatives from private businesses; non-profit organizations; and local, state and federal government agencies. The IPSFC is working hard to help make Island Park and West Yellowstone fire adapted communities.

We are committed to developing strong social and ecological communities that live with fire.

To build those strong communities, we developed a strategic plan and a five-year implementation plan with help from Fire Learning Network. We also developed an outreach and education plan. Guiding our work is a full-time project coordinator, and we have two part-time outreach representatives who are responsible for contacting individual homeowners.

Our work includes risk evaluations for homeowners, fuels reduction demonstration projects (and tours of those projects), outreach and education about wildfire, hosting a website and Facebook page, and slash pickup days.

Wildfire Awareness Week in 2014 reached about 300 people, and we will hold a similar week in 2015. Topics discussed include wildfire risk to homes; wildfire insurance coverage for homes and property; forest insects and diseases in the area; and the Ready, Set, Go! program. Activities during the week include games and prizes for kids, meeting Smokey Bear, and demonstrations by the Island Park volunteer fire department and the Forest Service Fire Crew.

Our outreach representatives contacted about 200 people in 2014. This led to requests from 87 property owners to complete risk evaluations on their properties. This effort will continue in 2015, to encourage additional fuels reduction work. The representatives hand out informational brochures, let property owners know about our organization and services such as risk evaluations, Wildfire Awareness Week and slash pickup days.

We provided slash pick up in two subdivisions last year. Due the huge success of this effort, we will expand slash pick-up to all of Island Park. We will also continue to offer free home and lot evaluations. These services are in response to the needs of homeowners in the area—they have told us they want to know what to do to reduce fuels and to have a place or mechanism to use to dispose slash.

Another program expansion in 2015 will be in demonstration properties. We completed four demonstration sites in 2014, and will do another 10 this year so that more residents can see what a properly mitigated home or lot looks like. We will also begin a cost-share fuels reduction program, in which we will cover 75 percent of the costs for property owners who invest 25 percent in their project.

COMMUNITIES

working in
**Island Park, Idaho and
West Yellowstone, Montana**

Key Partners

City of Island Park
Farm Bureau Insurance
Fire Safe Landscaping, LLC
Fremont County
Greater Yellowstone Coalition
Hebgen Lake Fire Department
High Country RC&D
Idaho Bureau of Homeland Security
Idaho Department of Lands
Idaho State Fire Marshall
Island Park Volunteer Fire Department
The Nature Conservancy—Idaho (Flat Ranch)
USDA Forest Service—Caribou-Targhee and Gallatin National Forests (Ashton/Island Park and Hebgen Lake Ranger Districts) and local homeowners



<http://FACNetwork.org>

OUR VISION

Human and ecological communities of Island Park and West Yellowstone are resilient to fire, insect and disease through awareness, outreach and action.



In early 2015, the Island Park Sustainable Fire Community received the Intermountain Regional Forester Award for Conserving Open Space.



Fuels were cut and ready for removal at one of the four defensible space demonstration projects completed by the Island Park collaborative in 2014.
Photo: Jessica Simpson

Lessons Learned: Successful Field Tour of Prescribed Burn Project

Excerpts from a post on the Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network blog—to read the whole post, go to <http://facnetwork.org/lessons-successful-field-tour/>

Last fall, the District Ranger toured a prescribed burn site with a group who “did not appreciate” how she was managing the National Forest adjacent to their homes. They had held meetings before, but this was the first field tour. The burns—partly completed at that point—were to be intended to remove conifers and mature aspen trees and stimulate aspen regeneration through suckering. Homeowners were adamantly opposed, fearing it would threaten their homes, leave a black scar in their backyard and not accomplish the planned goals.

“I enjoyed this interaction and will take this approach more often. I won’t think of this project in a negative vein anymore and will look forward to interacting with these folks in the future.”

— District Ranger



Photos TNC/Guy Duffner

Lessons learned from the experience:

- Don’t overwhelm people** with “experts.” Forest Service participation was kept to just a fuels specialist and the District Ranger/forest ecologist.
- Talking is one thing—SHOWING** what you have accomplished and what you expect to accomplish is another ballgame.
- Including other interested persons** who don’t have a stake in the game can help defuse the situation and make for a more robust, interesting discussion.
- Scheduling to accommodate** people’s schedules is important. Demonstrating flexibility and interest in community input count.



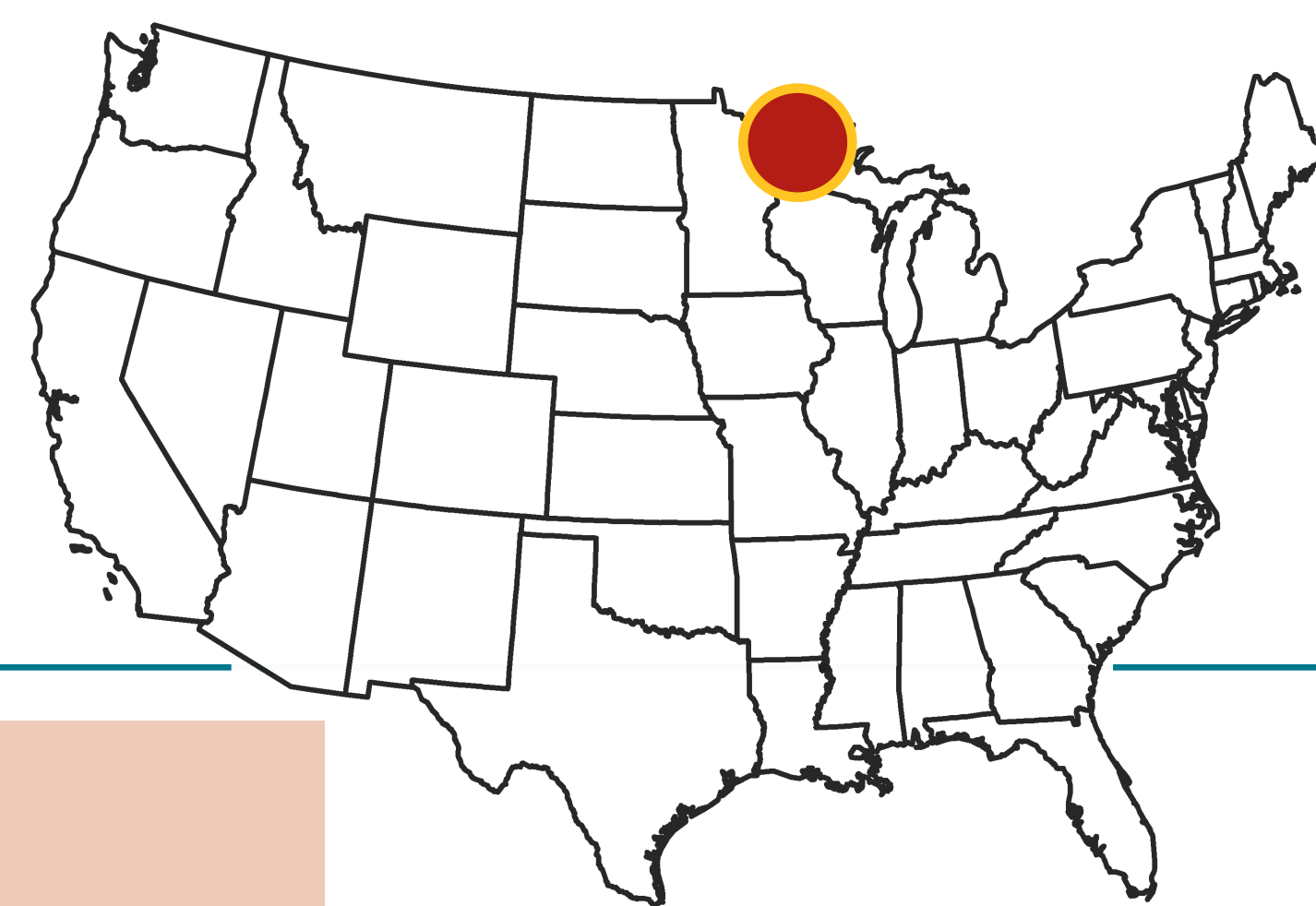
Smokey Bear was a popular visitor at Island Park’s first Wildfire Awareness Week.
Photo: Jessica Simpson

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Dovetail Partners

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Ely, Minnesota is a community within hiking distance of the Canadian border and about a 4-hour drive north of the Twin Cities. Ely also provides a gateway to the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness, drawing residents and visitors from all over the world. With a population of about 3,400, Ely is in the middle of a complex landscape. Forests in this region have regrown from the heyday of railroad logging and Paul Bunyan more than 100 years ago.

Ely is on the frontlines of wildfire risk for many reasons. The area has beautiful forests, but the forests are thick with balsam fir which burns like paper when green and is almost as bad as a box of matches when it is dead and dry. The balsam fir and other understory growth in the forests around Ely can act as ladder fuel and increases the risk from fires, such as the May 2012 Highway 1 Fire.

In the summer of 2014, local Ely FAC partners came together to implement a chipper day fuels reduction project. This event has sparked the interest of more neighborhoods, residents and lake associations. Additional chipper days are being planned, and local leadership and capacity are developing.

Partners have discussed the possibility of developing an Ely Area Fire Safe Council. The goal of the Council would be to engage and encourage community partnerships to identify and establish a wildfire resilient landscape for Ely and the surrounding wildland-urban interface. The main objectives are to provide education and demonstrations of Firewise best practices, and continue to identify and implement fuels reduction projects using the county as a baseline.

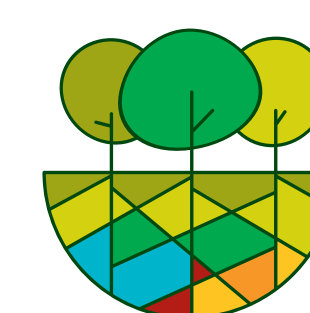
We will continue to explore how to collaborate with the Ely Emergency Preparedness Committee to establish evacuation strategies for Ely residents. County Emergency managers are also part of identifying much-needed evacuation plans and routes in the surrounding wildland-urban interface.

For Ely, being fire adapted requires balancing recreation needs, resource utilization and public safety. That's not always an easy balance to strike, but we are making progress.



Key Partners

Eagles Nest Township
Ely Emergency Preparedness Committee
Firewise—Northeast Regional Specialist
Lake County
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
Morse/Fall Lake Fire Department
USDA Forest Service
Vermilion Community College



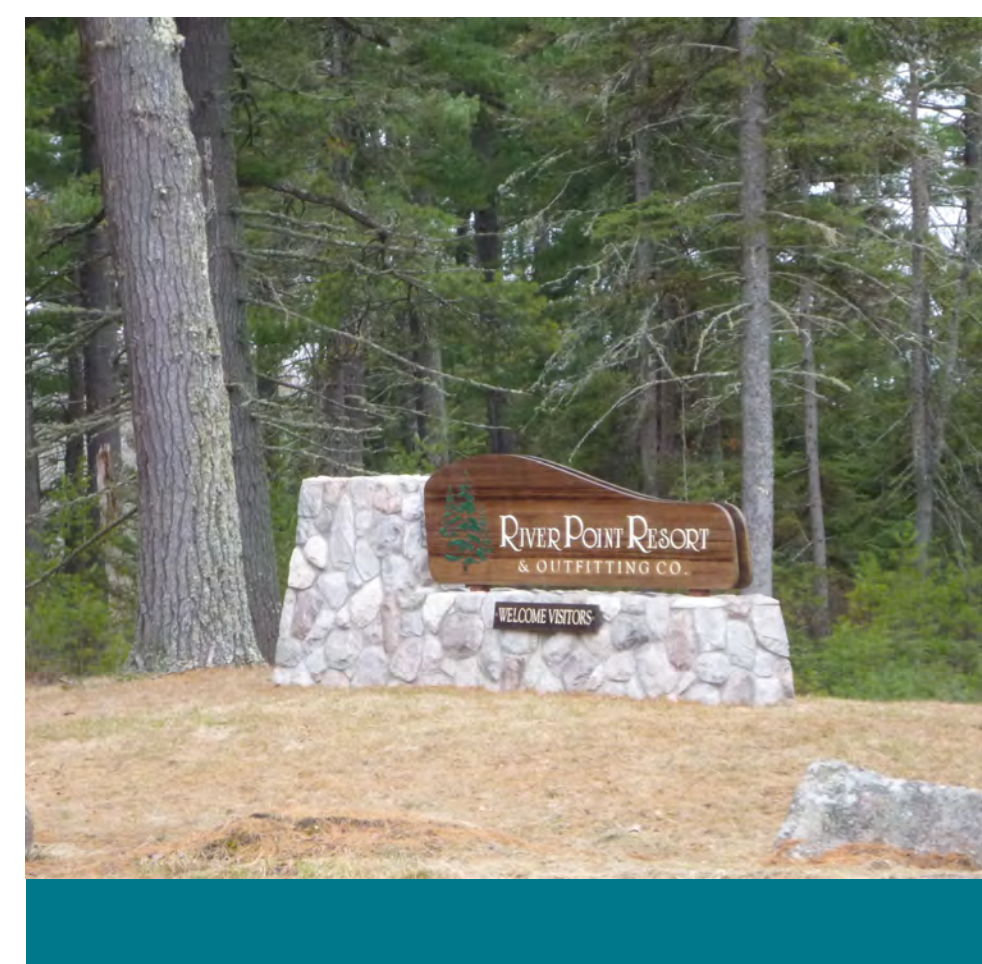
FIRE ADAPTED COMMUNITIES
LEARNING NETWORK

<http://FACNetwork.org>

COMMUNITY
working in **Ely, Minnesota**

FIRE SAFE COUNCIL VISION

To engage and encourage community partnerships to establish a wildfire resilient landscape for Ely and the surrounding wildland-urban interface.



Work in Ely has **benefitted from the FAC Network** in so many ways – it has been like getting a **jump start!** Seeing what other groups have done has helped the work in Ely by providing everything from **helpful advice and examples** to actual templates for the flyers and postcards used to raise awareness of chipper day opportunities. FAC Network friends and **colleagues are an irreplaceable resource** for helping understand what has worked (or not worked!) in other places and making **informed decisions** about what we want to do here.

Above, left: A FAC and Firewise presentation held at the Morse/Fall Lake Fire Department was aimed at raising awareness about the need for homeowners in the Ely region to create defensible space. *Photo: Gloria Erickson*

Above, right: The owners of this lake resort have worked with the Firewise program in Lake County and the Forest Service to mitigate wildfire risk on their property. *Photo: Lake County*

Below: Ely's first annual Chipper Day was sponsored by local FAC partners in the summer of 2014. *Photo: Gloria Erickson*



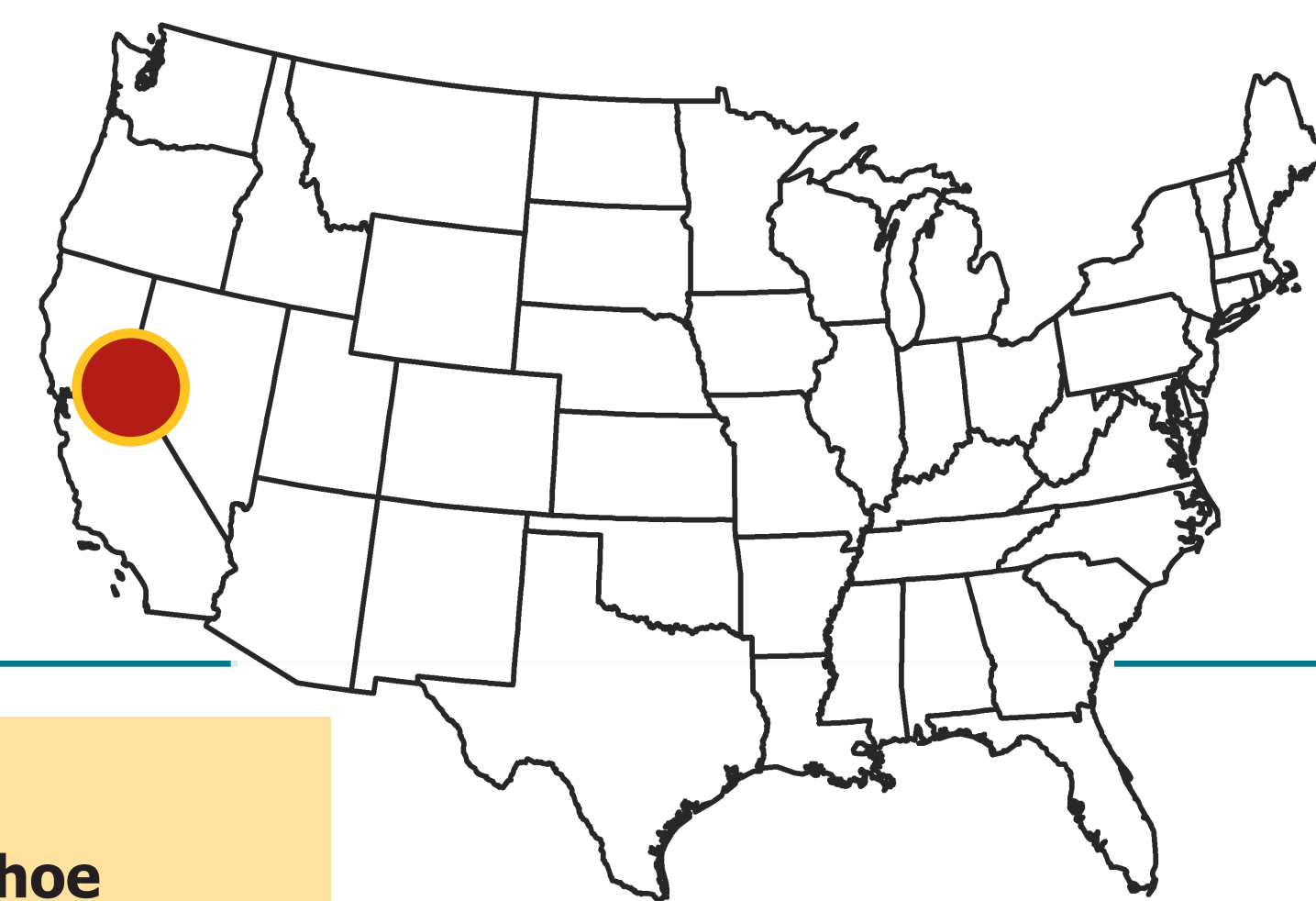
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Tahoe Fire & Fuels Team

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With seven fire districts, five counties, and two states the Lake Tahoe Basin presents unique challenges for coordinating FAC activities. Since joining the FAC Learning Network, fire, land management, and regulatory agencies have strengthened partnerships by formalizing the role each plays in creating a Fire Adapted Community. The association of 15 organizations, called the Tahoe Fire and Fuels Team, recently completed the Multi-Jurisdictional Fuel Reduction and Wildfire Prevention Strategy. This strategy creates a framework for information exchange, resource sharing, and coordinated education and outreach across jurisdictional boundaries.



Until 2011, a non-profit organization provided substantial support to Lake Tahoe communities working to reduce fire risk. When the non-profit went bankrupt, it left communities without support and financial assistance. The Tahoe Fire and Fuels Team is focused on rebuilding support functions for the public, and increasing their involvement in basin-wide decision making processes. Key to rebuilding is a project to review the factors that lead to a neighborhood's continued success, difficulty, or eventual disinterest. The process will identify the organizational strategies that the Tahoe Fire and Fuels Team will promote in the future.

Failure gains value when participating in a learning network. Lake Tahoe organizations have shared their successes and challenges, and in turn have learned from others throughout the nation. Methods for sharing and collaborating are being adapted from the national program for use in regional networks. Participation in the FAC Network has helped build a culture where organizations are encouraged to take calculated risks that can lead to important breakthroughs and innovations in becoming fire adapted.

Wildfire is inevitable in the Lake Tahoe Basin, but catastrophic fire is preventable. Through FAC programs, the character of the community and the landscape is gradually shifting to become more fire-adapted. To continue the transition, the team is striving for an effective partnership of agencies and the public that can be sustained without the need for outside funding.

To provide cost-effective maintenance of fuels reduction treatments, Basin agencies seek to increase the use of prescribed fire, especially on private and local government land. The land is often adjacent to homes and businesses, and the understory burns are technically difficult to implement. Increased burning will be facilitated by: exchanging resources, knowledge, and training to build the skill base in the Basin; increasing structure and landscaping ignition resistance to allow understory fire to be safely applied nearby; and developing agreements and processes for burns that span federal, state, local and private ownerships.

COMMUNITIES

working in **Lake Tahoe Basin**—Washoe and Douglas Counties in **Nevada** and El Dorado and Placer Counties in **California**



Actions from community work days to information tables at block parties, and from chipper days to conducting prescribed burns, are being offered to help communities prepare to live safely in a landscape with inevitable wildfires.

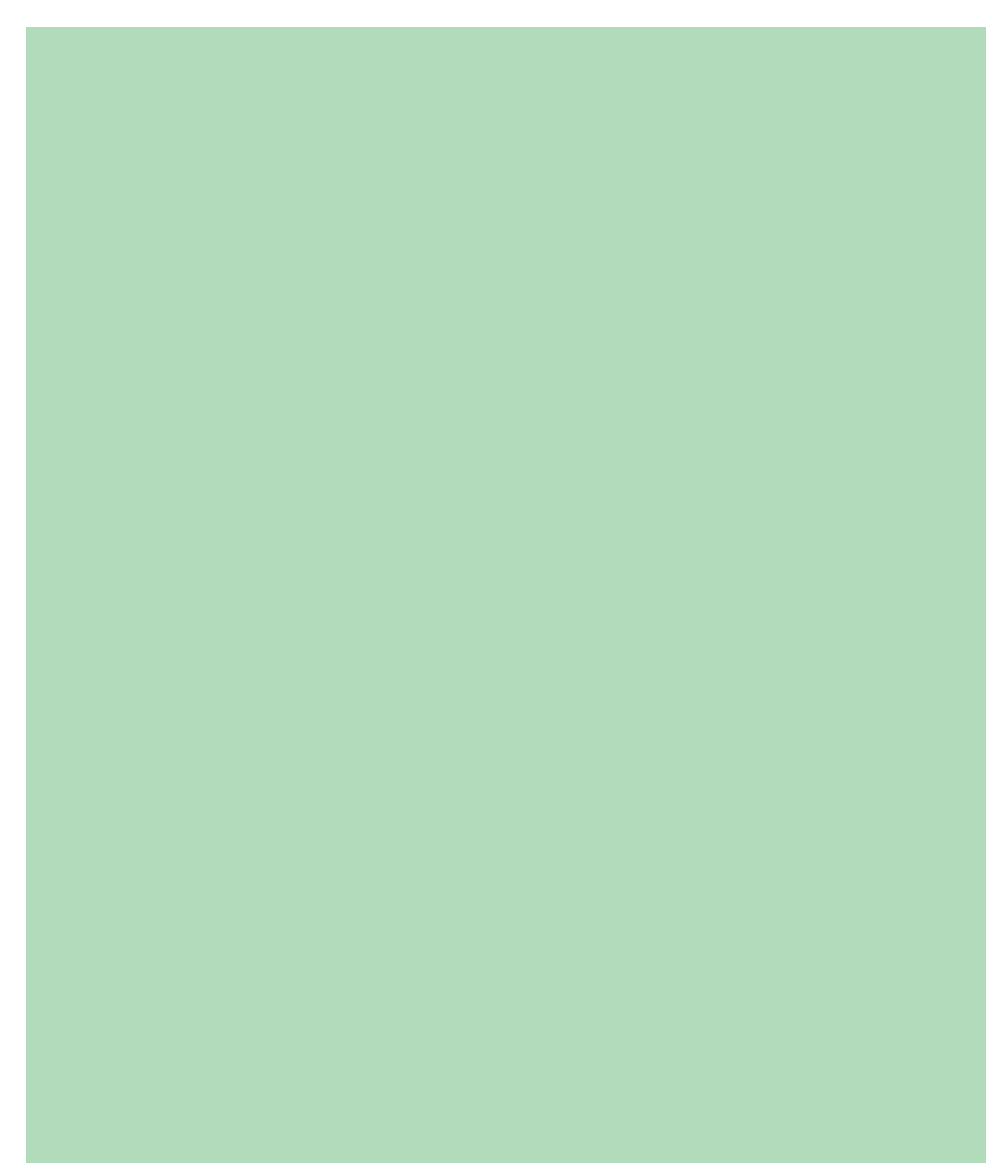
Photos: Tahoe Douglas FPD (far left), North Lake Tahoe FPD (others)



<http://FACNetwork.org>

Key Partners

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
California State Parks
California Tahoe Conservancy
City of South Lake Tahoe Fire Department
Fallen Leaf Lake Fire Department
Fire Public Information Team
Lake Valley Fire Protection District
Meeks Bay Fire Protection District
Nevada Division of Forestry
Nevada Division of State Lands
Nevada Network of Fire Adapted Communities
Nevada Tahoe Conservation District
North Lake Tahoe Fire Protection District
Tahoe Douglas Fire Protection District
Tahoe Fire and Fuels Team
Tahoe Regional Planning Agency
University of Nevada—Cooperative Extension
USDA Forest Service—Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit



South Tahoe High School students help show off the Ember House, an activity for kids to learn about how embers catch houses on fire.

Photo: Tahoe Fire and Fuels Team

Public Information Working Groups Create Wildfire Awareness

Excerpts from a post on the Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network blog—to read the whole post, go to <http://facnetwork.org/public-information-working-groups-create-wildfire-awareness/>

To deliver coordinated messaging to the residents and visitors of the Lake Tahoe Basin, local organizations formed the Fire Public Information Team (Fire PIT). This standing working group consists of public information and education staff from local fire departments, regulatory agencies, state forestry agencies, the Forest Service, and Cooperative Extensions in both Nevada and California. The goal of the Fire PIT is to proactively inform and educate the public on how to protect lives, communities, property and the exceptional natural resources of Lake Tahoe. Team products include annual wildfire awareness events, coordinated media releases and outreach campaigns.

Annual Wildfire Awareness Events

The Fire PIT has been promoting Wildfire Awareness Weeks (or Months) since 2010. Volunteers and staff from more than 20 organizations have collaborated to host outreach events, and conduct a media campaign to promote different aspects of fire adapted communities.

Each year, the Fire PIT chooses a theme that will inspire actions to reduce wildfire risk to homes and communities. Themes have focused on defensible space, ember preparedness and community involvement. Planners also give presentations on wildfire awareness to 6th graders during the same period. In the last five years, over 60 events have been held, reaching more than 6,500 participants.

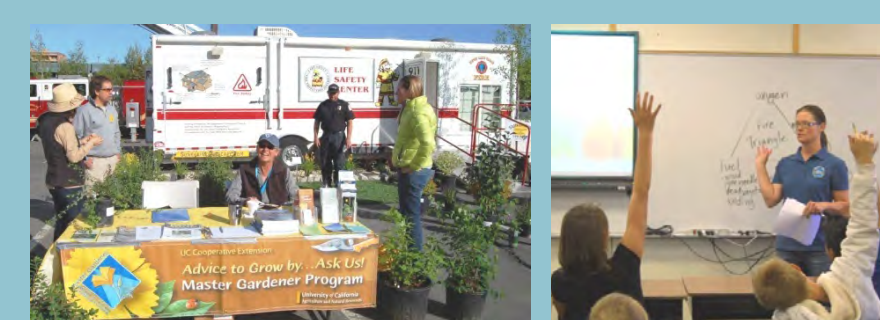
Promotion and Education Campaigns

The Fire PIT holds coordinated media campaigns, with publications, TV and radio appearances, radio and newspaper public service announcements, direct mail, banners and posters. All promotions direct residents to the Living with Fire in the Lake Tahoe Basin website maintained by the University of Nevada Cooperative Extension (UNCE). Outreach materials developed by UNCE are used by all basin agencies to deliver a consistent message on fire adapted community principles.

Coordinated Media Releases

The Fire PIT develops monthly themed press releases that are shared widely on individual organizations' social media.

Recently, collaboration has expanded in the form of joint messaging on prescribed fires. More than



University of California Master Gardeners (left) talk about fire resistant landscaping at a wildfire awareness month kick-off event, and Tahoe Resource Conservation District staff members (right) explain the fire triangle to 6th graders at South Tahoe Middle School.

Photos: Tahoe Fire and Fuels

10 agencies conduct burns in the Lake Tahoe Basin, making it difficult for the community to know who's burning where, and when. To address this, the Fire PIT acts as a clearing-house for prescribed fire information. Weekly press releases provide details on the location and plan for all prescribed fire activities in the Lake Tahoe Basin, across all land ownerships and jurisdictions.

A standing working group of education and public information staff in the Lake Tahoe basin has facilitated interagency cooperation, and has strengthened communication and support between agencies and the public. By working together to synthesize wildfire mitigation, information and education efforts, teams like the Fire PIT can help protect and create healthy, vibrant fire adapted communities.

More Information

For another blog post from this partnership, "Fire Department Crews Work with Community," go to <http://facnetwork.org/fire-department-community-work-together-create-defensible-space/>

For more about the **Tahoe Fire and Fuels Team**, visit their website:

<http://tahoefft.org>

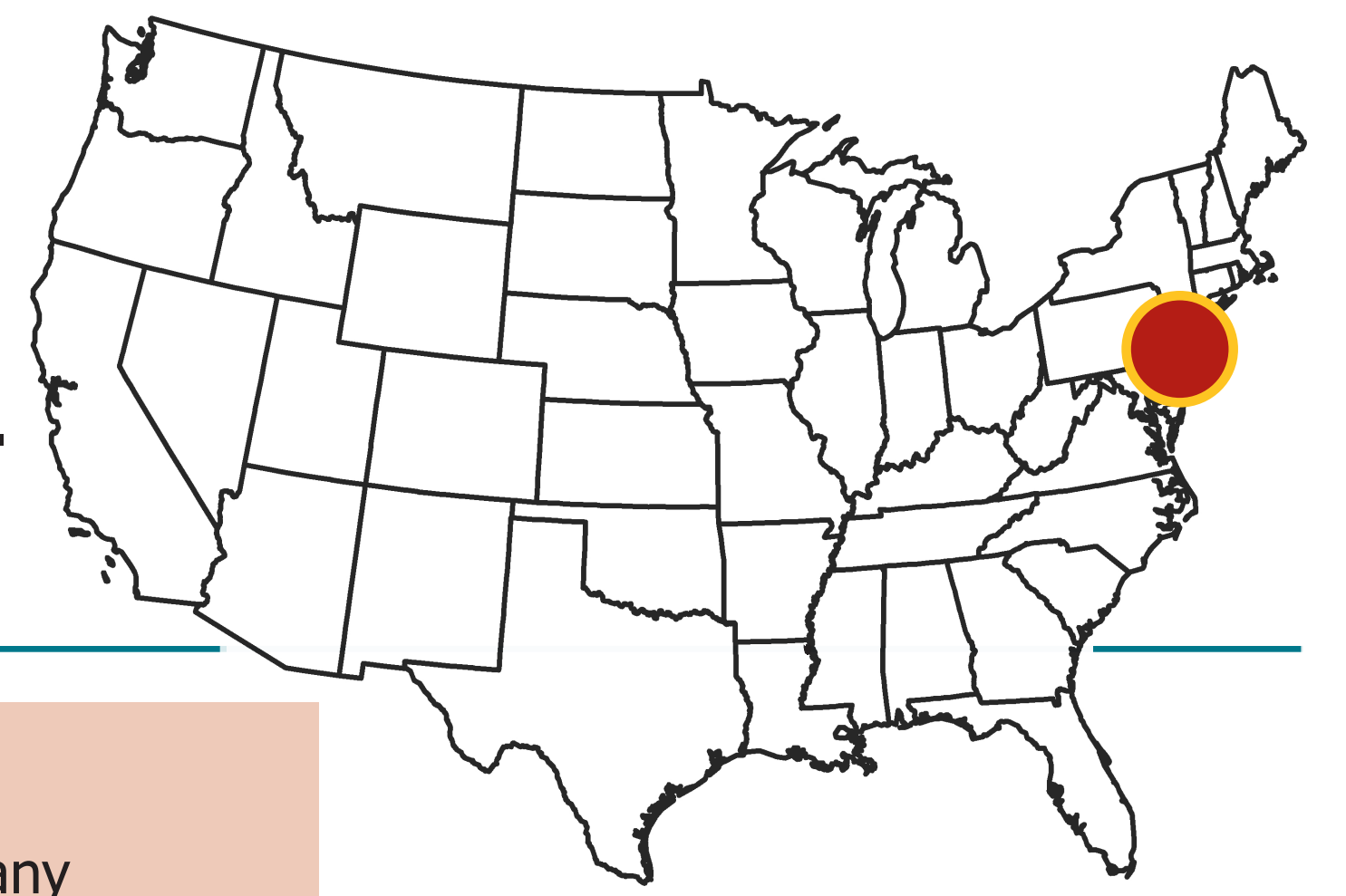
The Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network is supported by Promoting Ecosystem Resilience and Fire Adapted Communities Together (PERFACT), a cooperative agreement between The Nature Conservancy, the USDA Forest Service and agencies of the Department of the Interior. For more information, contact Nick Goulette (nickg@hayfork.net).



An equal opportunity provider. v. 21 May 15

Mercer County Soil Conservation District

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Barnegat Township is “ground zero” for wildland-urban interface (WUI) in New Jersey, as it is located in the heart of the New Jersey Pine Barrens, an extremely flammable ecosystem. The area has become popular with retirees, who are mainly new to the area and have little or no understanding of their fire risk.

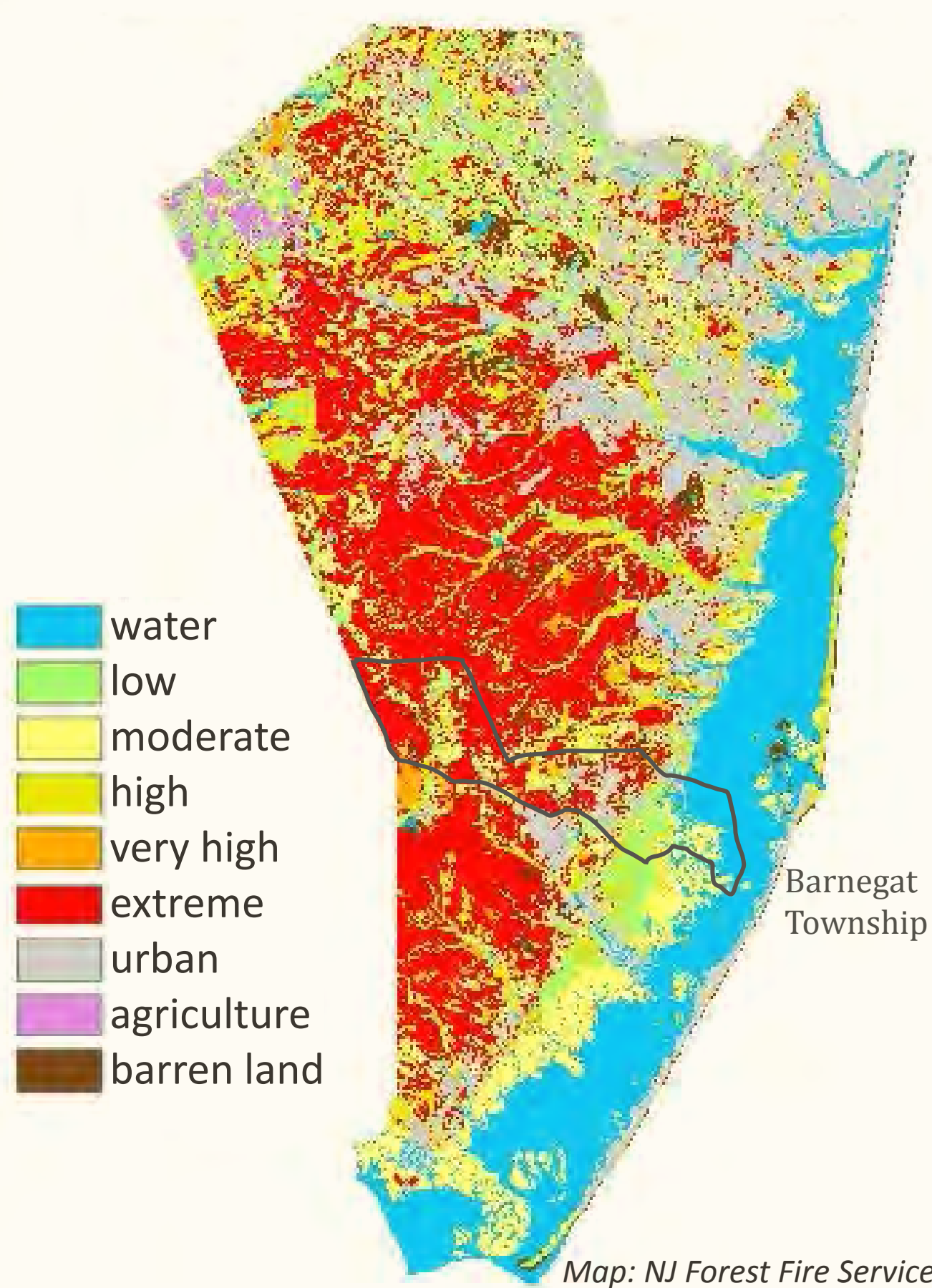
Our fire adapted communities work has been at two scales. At the local level, the Barnegat Fire Company has been conducting workshops with Barnegat Township communities to keep them informed of the risk reduction efforts being made. Two Firewise Communities—Horizons and Mirage—have talented, motivated liaisons that keep their communities informed and productive in reducing risk through mechanical fuel reduction projects. They have also begun spreading the FAC word to other WUI communities in Barnegat Township and beyond. Our top priorities in Barnegat Township are to continue to promote Firewise and Ready, Set, Go! in the most vulnerable neighborhoods, and to create additional evacuation routes for one of our largest WUI communities.

At the state level we are working with the environmental community to promote wildland fire resiliency through the Sustainable Jersey Program. This involves developing a suite of emergency preparedness actions tied to the Sustainable Jersey Program. To reduce their risk and be certified as “sustainable” under that program, communities implement wildfire preparedness programs and other actions. These may include the Firewise and Ready, Set, Go! programs, developing Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPPs) and Community Forestry Management Plans, and instituting a Fire Safe Council to coordinate efforts at the municipal level. We have worked with Sustainable Jersey to define this suite of emergency preparedness actions, and have drafted a model municipal ordinance that municipalities can adapt to initiate their own Fire Safe Councils.

Being part of the FAC Learning Network has been very beneficial for Barnegat. We have learned about the value and potential for Fire Safe Councils at both the local and statewide levels, and as a result hope to form and support as many local councils as are needed to benefit New Jersey’s WUI residents.

Our long-term goals are to create a network of fire resilient municipalities using existing fire prevention and mitigation programs, and to coordinate those efforts through a statewide Fire Safe Council that trains local members and targets funding to motivated and educated councils where the prevention efforts provide the best return on investment. In this way we hope to bring additional state and federal resources to New Jersey’s FAC efforts.

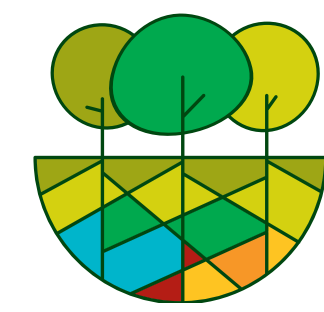
Wildfire Fuel Hazard for Ocean County



Map: In Ocean County there are 56 retirement communities, with a total of 125,000 residents. Of these, five communities (with 7,400 people) are in Barnegat Township.

Key Partners

Barnegat Fire Company
Barnegat Township
Horizons at Barnegat
Mirage at Barnegat
New Jersey Forest Fire Service
New Jersey Forest Service
Sustainable Jersey



**FIRE ADAPTED
COMMUNITIES
LEARNING NETWORK**

<http://FACNetwork.org>

COMMUNITIES

working in
**Barnegat Township,
New Jersey**

Top: The 2007 Warren Grove Wildfire burned behind businesses on County Route 72 in Barnegat Township.

Photo: NJ Forest Fire Service/Kevin Burke

Bottom: Wildfire burned right to the brink of the mobile home community of Brighton at Barnegat. The FAC Learning Network has led to new relationships with residents and the owner of the community, with an emphasis on the Firewise and Ready, Set, Go! programs and on wildfire resiliency.

Photo: NJ Forest Fire Service

From Uninformed and Apprehensive to Prepared for Wildfire—Eight Observations

Excerpts from a post on the Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network blog—for the whole post (including some background on the fire-adapted pine barrens ecosystems in this area) go to <http://facnetwork.org/becoming-fire-adapted-evolutionary-process-pine-barrens/>

1. **People are smart** and quick to apply wildfire messages to their personal lives and their community.
2. **Keep the message simple and be patient.** People will ask the questions that need to be asked as they become better informed.
3. People become smarter and make the **right decisions when they are properly informed.**
4. **Technical and financial assistance is available**, and being informed allows residents and communities to better access these resources.
5. **Better informed** residents and communities can **drive the allocation of additional resources.**
6. As a wildfire leader and conveyor of technical assistance we are not the bus driver in this process but the gondola driver, using the resources at hand to **guide informed residents where THEY wish to go.**
7. The importance of **identification and reliance on a local leader** cannot be overemphasized. Once that key person is identified, the single biggest hurdle is cleared.
8. Becoming organized and **having a plan makes people feel they are in control** of their lives. This is a universal need that will drive the fire adaptation process.



March 2010 Paramount Fire in Barnegat Township.

Photo: © Brian Gabriel,
Ocean County Fire Coordinator



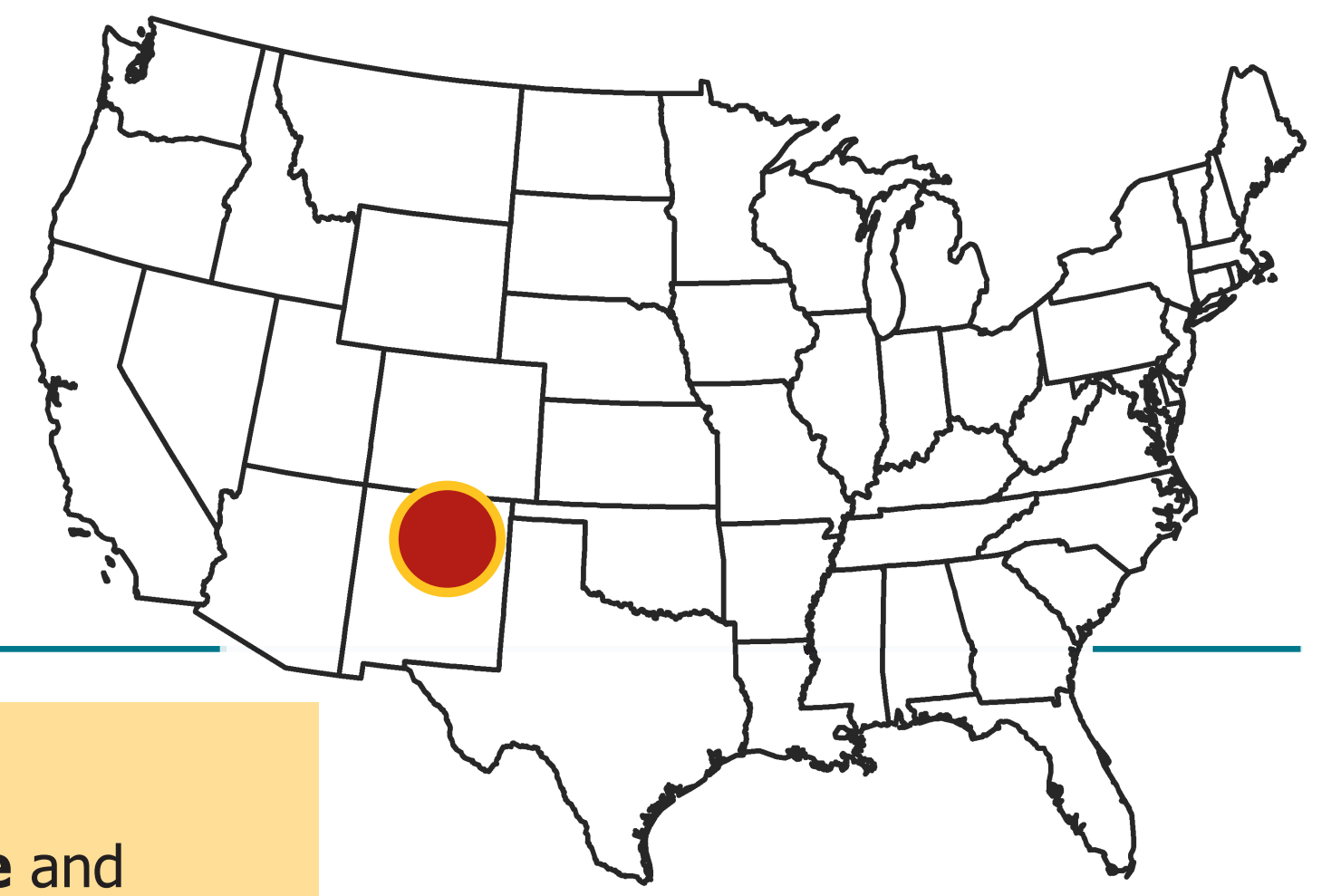
The Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network is supported by Promoting Ecosystem Resilience and Fire Adapted Communities Together (PERFACT), a cooperative agreement between The Nature Conservancy, the USDA Forest Service and agencies of the Department of the Interior. For more information, contact Nick Goulette (nickg@hayfork.net).



An equal opportunity provider. v. 18 May 15

Forest Guild

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Public and stakeholder engagement is a high priority for this partnership, as is building capacity to implement projects that support fire adapted communities in northern New Mexico. In 2014 we made tremendous strides on both fronts.

The Forest Guild joined the New Mexico Wildland Urban Interface Summit planning team in the spring and helped plan the three-day event around the theme of fire adapted communities. The summit drew more than 110 people from around the state. Throughout the year, the FACLN continued to work with the City of Santa Fe FAC Coalition and the budding Wildfire Network. The Nature Conservancy invested in local FAC efforts to expand impact by convening two peer learning workshops in the Rio Grande Water Fund region. In October, the first workshop brought together participants from northern New Mexico and a FAC leader from southwest Colorado to bring a fresh outside perspective.

Other outreach efforts have included:

- overhauling the www.fireadaptednewmexico.org website based on feedback from FAC partners;
- discussing FAC issues on the local radio program Radio Café;
- giving FAC presentations at the Southwest Fire Science Consortium Forest Resiliency conference—interviews here resulted in three articles in major media outlets mentioning FAC concepts—and “Wildland Smoke in the Air—What Does it Mean to ME?” workshop;
- presenting the webinar “Working Across Fence Lines: Multi-jurisdictional Planning and Prescribed Fire” that shared experiences from two Forest Guild projects in northern New Mexico.

In addition, in a project that combined outreach and implementation, 55 rural youth worked in eight crews across six districts on three national forests on fire adapted communities and conservation projects like fuels reduction and prescribed fire line construction.

To expand and leverage FAC Learning Network investments, the Guild secured three new funding sources in 2014. A three-year FAC-targeted implementation project supported by the Forest Service Collaborative Forest Restoration Program will restore forests and improve watershed conditions across 350-450 acres in the Rio Trampas watershed. Implementation of the new FAC self-assessment tool is part of this project and is already underway. A home risk reduction grant from the New Mexico Association of Counties will be used to implement actions recommended in the 2013 McKinley County CWPP; this cost-share grant will help 30-40 homeowners reduce their risk. And FAC partner Fire Service Support is working on a project for the New Mexico Association of Counties that will expand the tablet-based home-site risk assessment program in Santa Fe County into the high-risk community of Turquoise Trail by training volunteer firefighters to do assessments.

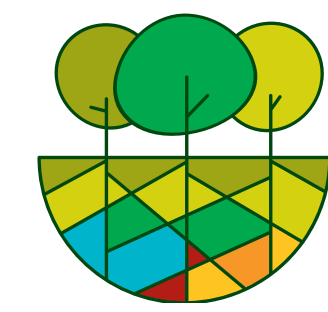


The Prescribed Fire Training Exchange helped build local capacity while treating fuels on 255 acres near Black Lake.
Photo: NMSLO/Mark Meyers

COMMUNITIES

working in **Santa Fe and McKinley Counties** in New Mexico

and the communities of Angel Fire, Black Lake, Breadsprings, Dixon, La Cueva, Penasco, Santa Fe, Timber Lake Ranches



FIRE ADAPTED COMMUNITIES
LEARNING NETWORK

<http://FACNetwork.org>



Kids gather around a matchstick “forest fire” demonstration at an Earth Day outreach event in Santa Fe.
Photo: Forest Guild



The Prescribed Fire Training Exchange held in the fall of 2014 combined training, treatments and outreach—as when a local reporter conducted a video interview with the NM State Lands Forester during ignitions.
Photo: NMSF/Mary Stuever

Key Partners

Angel Fire—Fire Department
Black Lake—Fire Department
Chris’s Tree Service
City of Santa Fe—Fire Department
Fire Services Support, LLC
La Cueva Road
McKinley County
New Mexico Association of Counties
New Mexico State Forestry
New Mexico State Land Office
Santa Fe County
Santa Fe County Commissioners
The Nature Conservancy—New Mexico
USDA Forest Service—Santa Fe National Forest (Pecos/Las Vegas Ranger District)

Working Toward FAC: Cross-Training the Workforce

Excerpt from a post on the Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network blog—to read the post, go to <http://facnetwork.org/cooperative-burning/>

On the Ruidoso WUI Interagency Fuel Reduction and Prescribed Fire Implementation Project, local firefighters assist the Lincoln NF on prescribed burns. The project reduces the fuel loading in the WUI, provides training, promotes the use of controlled burning, and improves interagency coordination. Working with personnel from different agencies builds camaraderie and improves communication on wildfire incidents—and with the additional resources, the Forest can take advantage of good burn days when it otherwise would have insufficient personnel.

“Some guys in our department don’t have any wildland experience, this is a great way to expose them to it since structure fires are so different.”

Working Toward FAC: Burning on Private Land

Excerpts from a post on the Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network blog—see the whole post at <http://facnetwork.org/forest-guild-completes-first-controlled-burn-on-private-land-in-la-cueva-new-mexico/>

In early 2015 the Forest Guild completed its first pile burn on private land in Santa Fe County, treating 6.5 acres that had been thinned the previous spring. The objectives of the project—supported in part by Scaling-up to Promote Ecosystem Restoration (SPER)—were to reduce wildfire risk and improve forest health. The community of La Cueva was selected due to its high risk rating in the county’s CWPP and its proximity to densely forested national forest land.

In New Mexico, counties manage burning on private land, so standards and practices vary between counties. In Santa Fe County, there was no precedent for a project like this—ordinarily, landowners are allowed to burn just one pile at a time. This would not be practical for 6.5 acres, so the Guild and Fire Service Support wrote a burn plan and worked with the County Fire Marshall to obtain a permit.

Broadcast burning experience in Black Lake in 2013-2014 helped us call on volunteers and partners, including the City of Santa Fe Wildland Division, for assistance. The City engaged, even though the site is outside their jurisdiction, because they recognized that this community posed a risk to the City’s municipal watershed. They also knew that this would be a valuable training opportunity for their firefighters.

The two days of burning were successful, and burn objectives were met. The stage is now set to complete the remaining piles in La Cueva next season. More work is still needed in this community, and other high-risk communities ringing the southern Sangre de Cristo Mountains also need management attention. We will leverage the lessons learned from this project as we continue to work with the County on our wildland fire challenges.



Pile burning in La Cueva: with snow on the ground and 8 degree temperatures, landowners ignited the first pile of the day.
Photo: Forest Guild

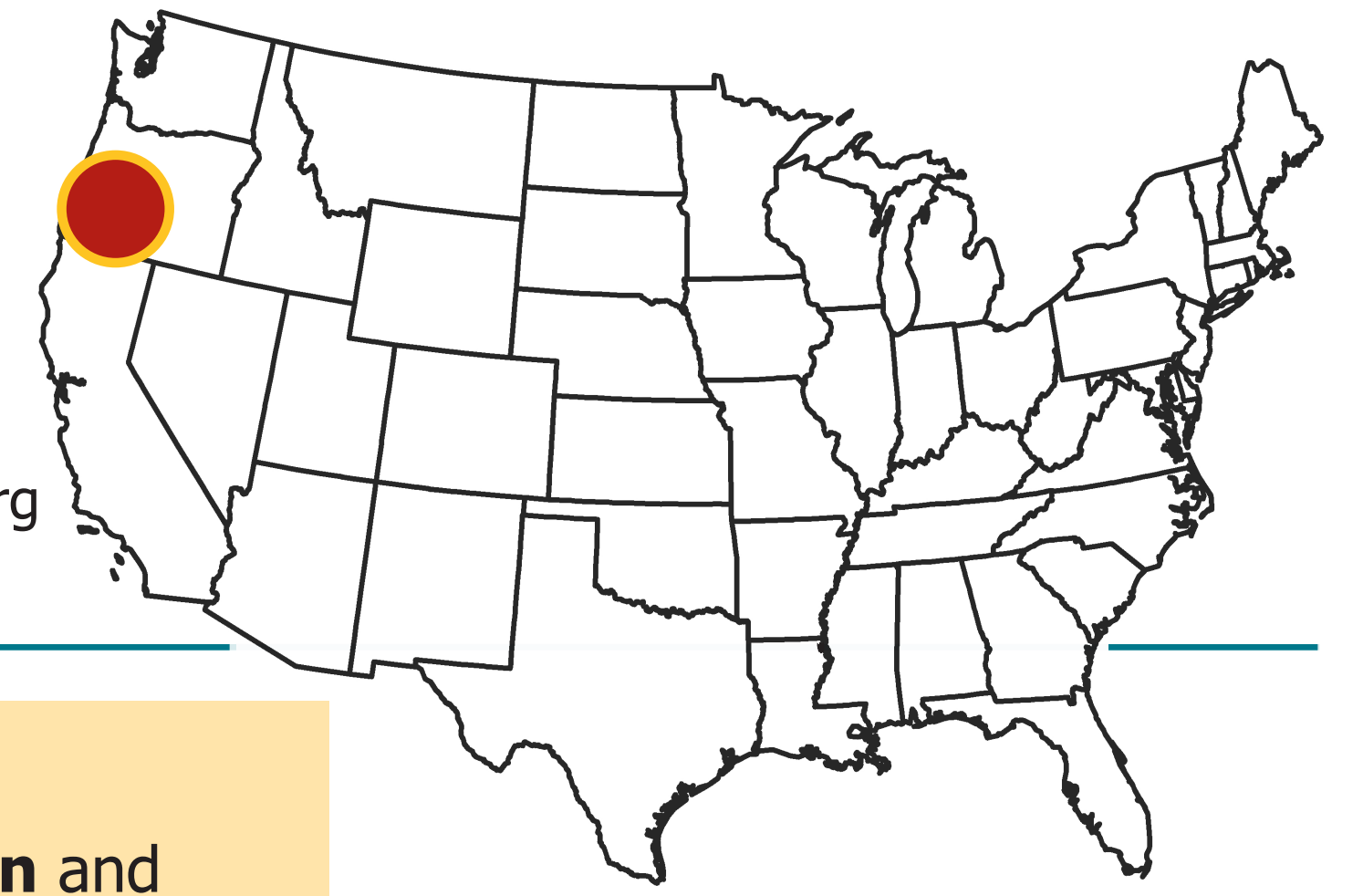
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An equal opportunity provider. v. 18 May 15

Southern Oregon Forest Restoration Collaborative

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www.sofrc.org



The Southern Oregon Forest Restoration Collaborative (SOFRC) works to build support and strategies for cohesive forest restoration across the dry forests of southwest Oregon. Our goal is to create resilient forests and communities, support coordinated forest planning, and maintain a vibrant forest management and utilization infrastructure. While our focus is on federal lands, the checkerboard landscape of the region encourages an all-lands approach to achieve integrated forest restoration goals.

Our recently-completed Illinois Valley Timber Sustainability Assessment identified an available, cost-effective, restoration-based federal timber supply that helped leverage state and national investments to enable the retooling and reopening of a local mill, which will provide 70 jobs to the rural community. The assessment worked within current federal forest management guidelines and land allocations, and received support from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service in its effort to conserve northern spotted owl habitat.

Working in the context of the Western Action Plan of the National Wildfire Cohesive Strategy, SOFRC is working with two counties to complete county-based integrated fire plans. This process encourages coordination in local efforts to integrate the three Cohesive Strategy goals—resilient forests, fire adapted communities and coordinated wildfire planning and suppression activity. Integrated risk assessments are key to the county plans, and will help determine priority needs and opportunities across the region. The year 2015 will be a benchmark for vetting the plans for community and agency support, and for advancing associated action plans.

SOFRC has also completed a climate adaptation action plan for the Rogue Basin. The plan will help guide forest restoration planning and implementation, given the expectation of shifting precipitation patterns and increased wildfire activity. It will also help inform discussions of the expected impacts of climate change in the region.

COMMUNITIES working in Jackson and Josephine Counties, Oregon

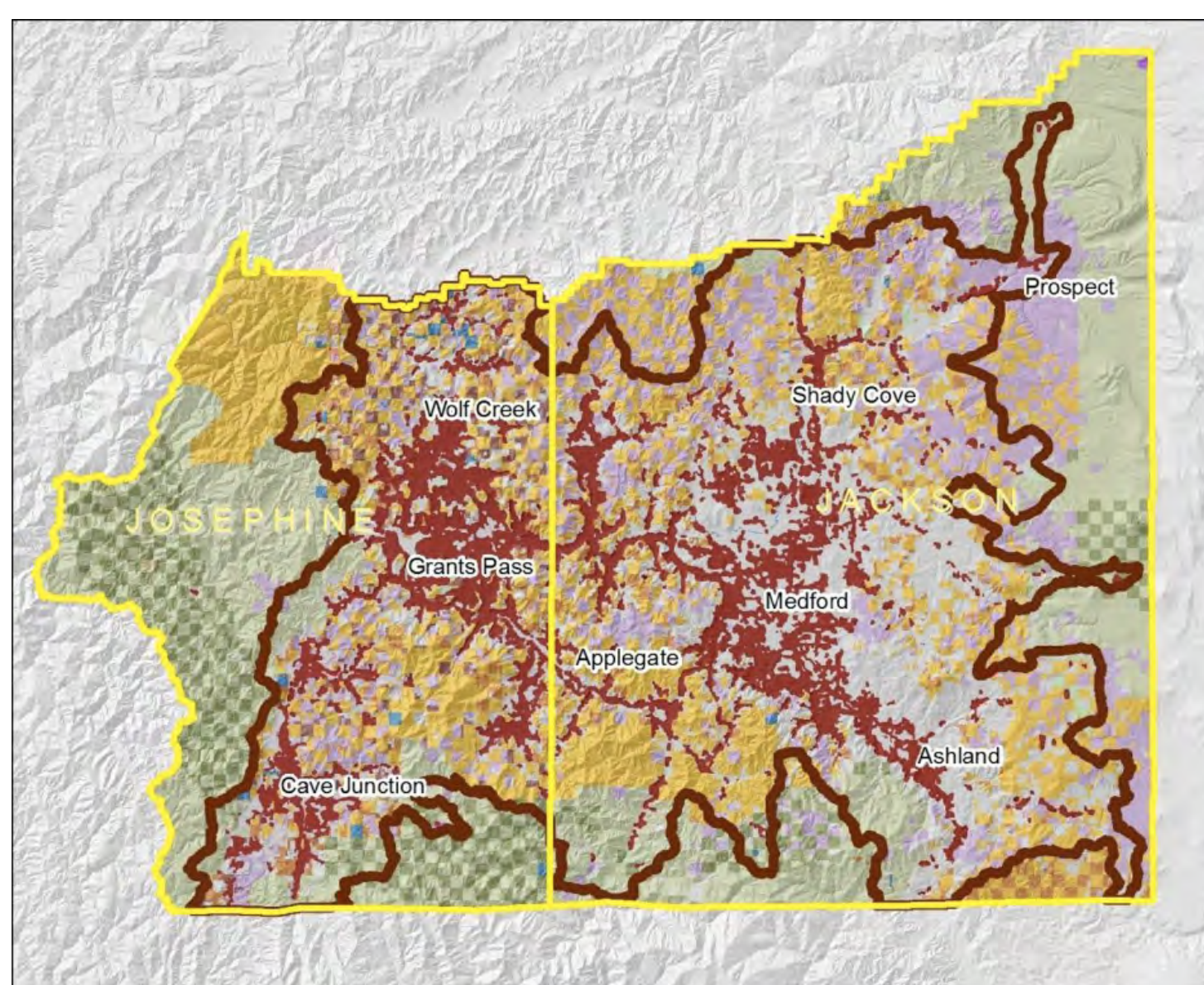


About 15 miles east of Ashland, a plume rises from the Oregon Gulch Fire, which burned about 35,000 acres in summer 2014.

Photo: George McKinley

Cohesive Forest Restoration Strategy for the Rogue Basin

The Illinois Valley Assessment (below) was key to the developing cohesive strategy for the 2.9 million acres of the Rogue Basin. The strategy will identify and prioritize 50,000 acres of project areas to promote resilient landscapes, diverse habitats, fire-adapted human communities, and a predictable flow of economic benefits and other ecosystem services—and will be integral to updating the Jackson and Josephine County Fire Plans and will inform regional CWPPs.



- Legend**
- County Boundaries
 - WUI (County Fire Plans)
 - At-Risk Communities
- Ownership**
- BLM PD
 - BLM OC
 - Other Federal
 - County
 - NPS
 - Private (Industrial)
 - Private (Non-Industrial)
 - State
 - USFS
 - USFS OC

A map of Josephine and Jackson Counties (outlined in yellow) shows the extent of WUI (outlined in red) within the counties. Also evident is the large area occupied by communities considered at risk from wildfire (red areas); these include Grants Pass in Josephine County and Ashland and Medford in Jackson County. In the background, the checkerboard pattern of ownership can be seen
Map: SOFRC



Students in grades 6 and 7 cleared brush near their school as part of their learning—and doing—about becoming better adapted to fire.

Photo: SOFRC

Recent Highlight: Wildfire Preparations Go to School

One of the 65 Firewise grants for community projects awarded by the National Fire Protection Association in 2015 (with support from State Farm) went to the Southern Oregon Forest Restoration Collaborative and Applegate Fire District. They used the grant to help middle-school students at Ruch School make their school—and their community—better prepared for fire.

The students learned how to identify some common risks and about the three home ignition zones. Then they pulled on their gloves and did some work, planting fire resistant vegetation and trimming ladder fuels to improve their school's defensible space, and putting up signs to explain the defensible space zones.

Students also assessed their own homes' risks, and nominated a property in the community to receive mitigation attention as part of May 2 National Wildfire Community Preparedness Day activities.

More about this project was in the local paper: <http://www.mailtribune.com/article/20150421/NEWS/150429930/0/>

KEY RESTORATION PRINCIPLES

- Management recommendations based on historic fire return intervals and site productivity
- Reliance on a fine-grained approach for our fine-grained landscape
- Use of both fire and mechanical harvest to achieve and maintain ecological and economic goals
- Support for fire adapted community efforts
- Advocate long-term viability of critical habitats and species
- Highlight economic benefits and planning and implementation efficiencies of restoration



FIRE ADAPTED COMMUNITIES
LEARNING NETWORK

<http://FACNetwork.org>

Key Partners

- Applegate Fire District
- Bureau of Land Management—Medford District
- City of Ashland
- City of Grants Pass
- Jackson County
- Jackson County Fire District 3
- Josephine County
- Lomakatsi Restoration Project
- Oregon Department of Forestry
- Oregon State University—Extension Service
- The Nature Conservancy
- U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
- USDA Forest Service—Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest

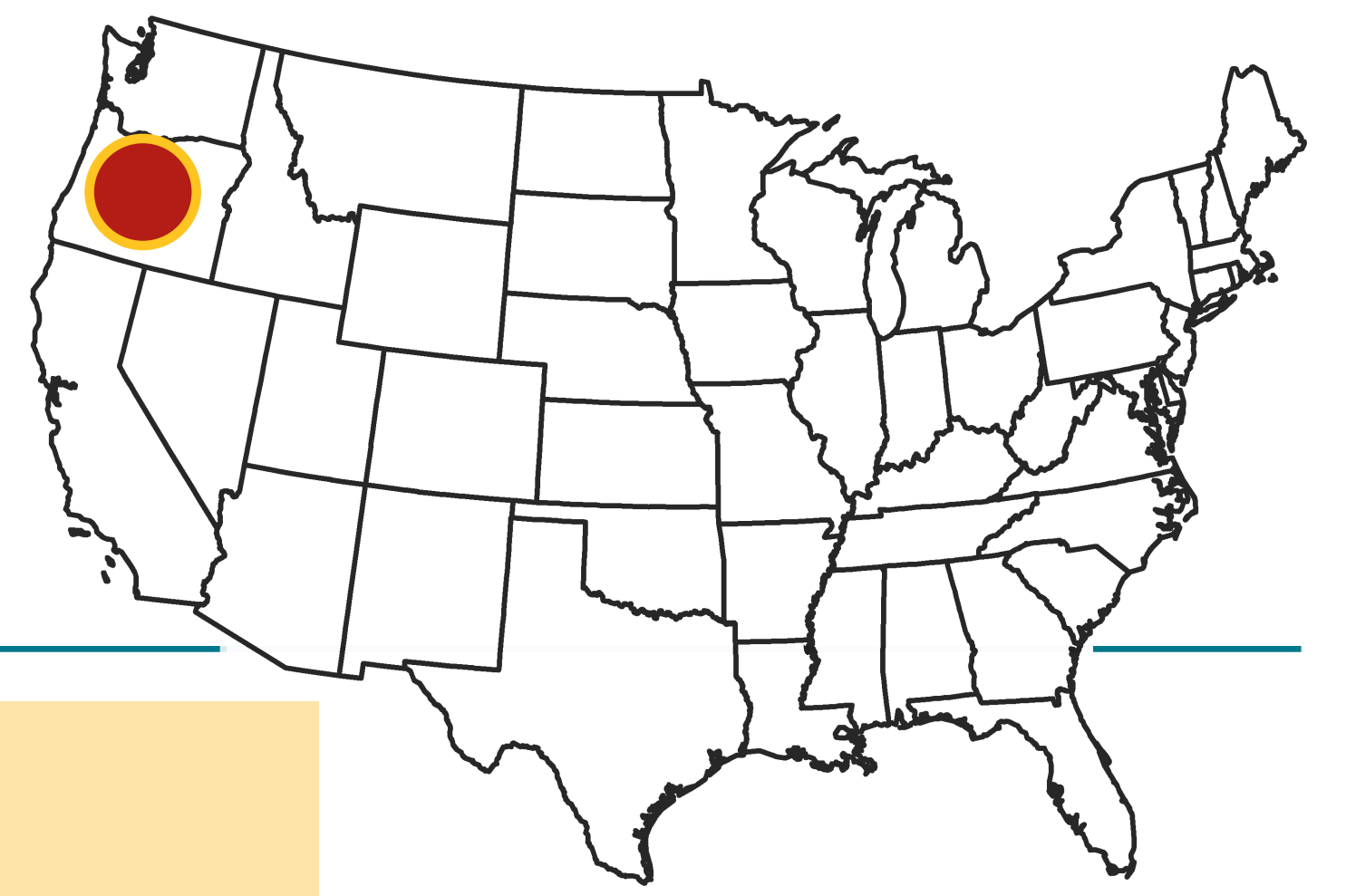


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Project Wildfire

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Project Wildfire's flagship program, FireFree, experienced a surge in participation in its spring 2015 event, shattering the previous record. Residents delivered almost 38,000 cubic yards of debris to local sites in preparation for the fire season—the most debris collected in the 16-year history of the FireFree events. Some residents even used bicycles to deliver debris to local transfer stations.

The Citizen's Fire Academy, a pilot program from the Oregon State University Extension Service, is helping to build local capacity in Deschutes County. Project Wildfire has been supporting this effort by aiding in the planning and facilitation of the curriculum. Residents who are enrolled in this program can act as liaisons for their neighborhood or formally volunteer with local agencies. Graduates have used the knowledge gained in the academy to accomplish fuel reduction.

Many local Firewise stakeholders met at a Firewise Networking Day. This event produced great synergy among neighborhood “spark plugs”—highly-engaged community members—that will lead to improved communication between Firewise communities and those working toward this recognition.

The Forest Service and The Nature Conservancy planned and hosted a prescribed fire training exchange (TRES) in Deschutes County this spring. The TRES increased the conversation locally about prescribed fire and the need for forest restoration, and furthered the conversation around smoke management. An outreach campaign was developed with collaborating partners, and was disseminated through a variety of media, including TV, radio and print.

The amount of knowledge that the FAC Learning Network has generated for Deschutes County is more than Project Wildfire could have hoped for. Ideas for CWPP revisions, how to document home assessments, a successful networking day agenda, and other guides developed by FAC partners and shared through the network have given Project Wildfire motivation to implement similar ideas in Deschutes County. Project Wildfire is hoping to capitalize on the open communication within the network to increase awareness of fire adapted community concepts in the county. There are already some local residents working towards becoming more fire adapted without being aware of it. Being able to give those efforts a name, and to support them with ideas shared in the FAC Learning Network will provide lasting benefits in Deschutes County.



Lack of a vehicle for hauling yard debris was not an insurmountable barrier for the motivated residents who prepared for fire season by taking part in the spring 2015 FireFree event. *Photos: Susie Maniscalco*

COMMUNITIES

working in **Deschutes County, Oregon** including 7 CWPP areas—Bend, East & West Deschutes County, La Pine, Redmond, Sisters, Sunriver, Upper Deschutes River Coalition

and 16 Firewise Communities—Aspen Lakes, Awbrey Glen, Caldera Springs, Cascade Meadows Ranch, Crosswater, Deschutes River Woods, Fall River Estates, Ponderosa Pines, Rimrock West, River Meadows, Spring River, Sunriver, Sunset View Estates, The Ridge at Eagle Crest, Tollgate, Wild River



Community members discuss critical wildfire issues during a World Café session at the November 2014 Firewise Networking Day. *Photo: Alison Green*



Outreach Lessons from the Two Bulls Fire

Excerpts from a post on the Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network blog—to read the whole post, go to <http://facnetwork.org/fac-outreach-two-bulls-fire/>

In June 2014, the Two Bulls Fire burned just west of Bend, Oregon. The fire had a high level of interest because of the large run it made on the first day that caused many communities to be evacuated (as well as at least one wedding, see photo).

Because of the high interest in the fire, Deschutes County fire officials and partners decided early on to be proactive in their

communications about the fire. Recognizing the urgent need for accurate and timely information due to the number of people being impacted by evacuations and smoke, cooperating agencies came together to establish a Joint Information Center (JIC) so messages could be sent out in a coordinated fashion.

As an important part of the communications effort, staffers at the JIC took social and web based media to a new level. They used Facebook, a blog and Twitter to provide information about firefighting activities, evacuations, air quality, closures, the investigation and more. Social media was well received: within a week, the Facebook page had more than 10,000 likes, the Twitter

account had 750 followers, and the blog had 26,000 page views.

The fire provided a teachable moment as well. Partners also aired a documentary and held a panel discussion to help people understand wildland-urban interface fires, wildfire risks to the community, and ways to reduce risks to personal property. And Project Wildfire issued a press release shortly after the fire began, summarizing actions people could take to protect their homes from ember intrusion and flames. Its messages were timely and to the point—for example, it asked four questions (Are your gutters and roof valleys free from debris like pine needles and leaves? Do your shrubs and weeds provide a path of fuel for fire to reach your trees or home? What can catch fire on your deck or patio or near your fence? Is your woodpile near your home or other combustible vegetation?) and gave concrete advice about what people could do right then to help protect their homes. (There is a link to this press release in the blog.)



More publicity than expected: A wedding photo with the wildfire in the background went viral on the internet. *Photo: Josh Newton, via Facebook*



<http://FACNetwork.org>

Key Partners

Bend Fire Department
Brooks Resources
Brown & Brown Insurance
Bureau of Land Management
Deschutes Collaborative Forest Project
Deschutes County—Board of Commissioners, Community Development, Emergency Manager, County Forester
Deschutes River Woods
Deschutes Rural Fire Protection District #2
International Association of Fire Chiefs
National Fire Protection Association
North Rim HOA
Oregon Department of Forestry
Oregon State University—Extension
Ponderosa Pines Property Owners Association
Rimrock West HOA
River Meadows HOA
Shevlin Commons
Singletree Enterprises LLC
Sisters Fire Department
Sunriver HOA
Sunset View Estates HOA
The Highlands at Broken Top
The Nature Conservancy
Tollgate HOA
Upper Deschutes River Coalition
USDA Forest Service
Western Region Cohesive Strategy—Chair, Committee Coordinator

For more about **Project Wildfire**, visit <http://www.projectwildfire.org/>

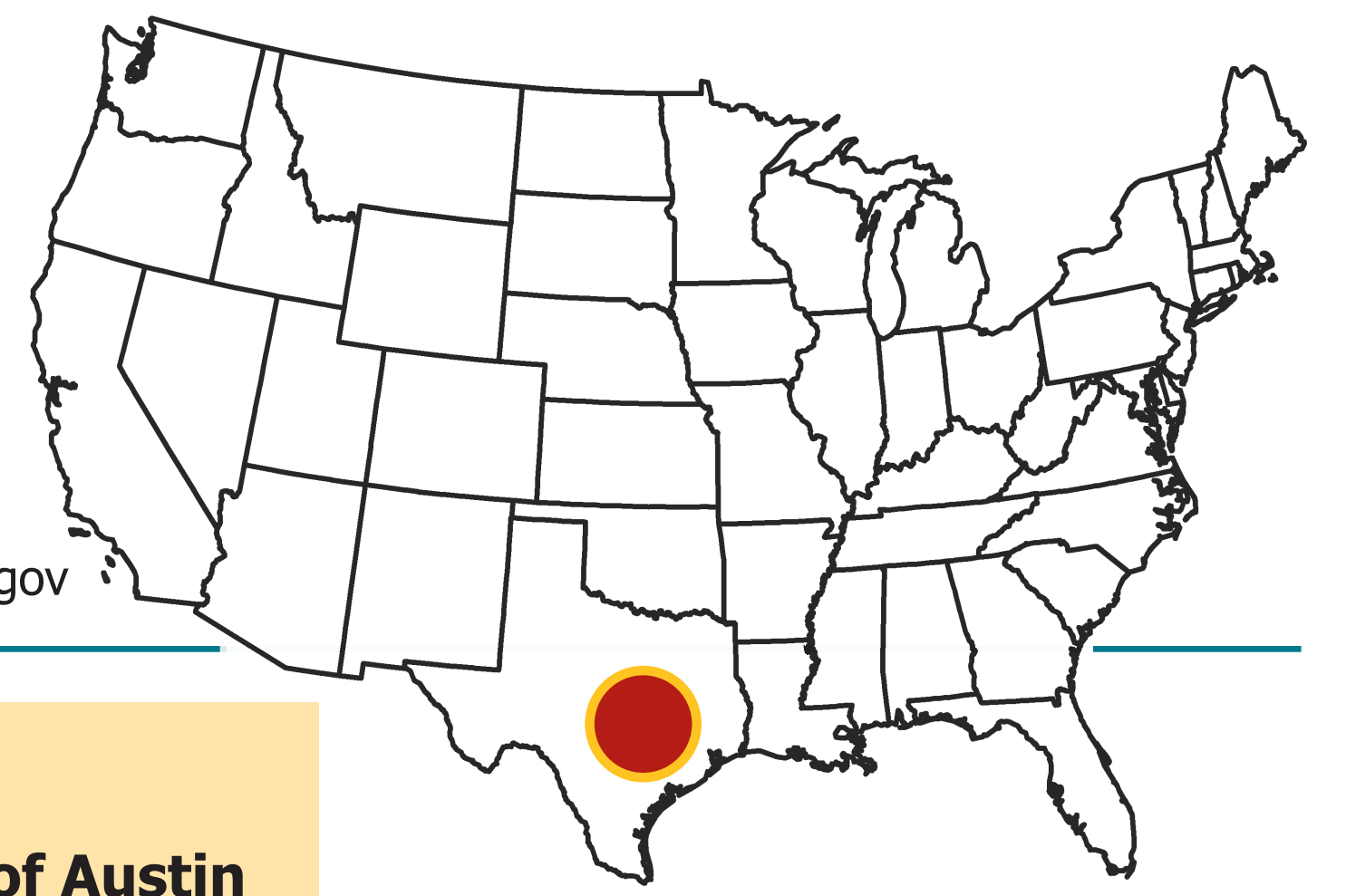
The Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network is supported by Promoting Ecosystem Resilience and Fire Adapted Communities Together (PERFACT), a cooperative agreement between The Nature Conservancy, the USDA Forest Service and agencies of the Department of the Interior. For more information, contact Nick Goulette (nickg@hayfork.net).



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Austin Travis County Wildfire Cooperative

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COMMUNITIES

working in the **City of Austin** and 21 communities at risk in **Travis County, Texas**



<http://FACNetwork.org>

In September 2013, before joining the FAC Learning Network, the City of Austin hosted the state's first Fire Adapted Communities Symposium in an effort to build buy-in and consensus around the FAC concept. The workshop provided a common operating picture of how cooperators could leverage the concept into action.

The most critical action identified was the completion of the Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) for an area that only recently realized that wildfire was a part of their new reality. The plan development and review process lasted almost two years as the Austin Travis County Wildfire Coalition—a multijurisdictional taskforce—worked to find common ground in a novel environment. The plan was unanimously approved by the Austin City Council and Travis County Commissioners Court along with the Texas A&M Forest Service in November 2014.

On adoption of the plan, a CWPP taskforce member from the city Watershed Protection Department said that they are “passionate about serving the community and are excited that, together, we can accomplish collaboration in a way that has never been done before.” Her comment also reflected how fire and water interests have aligned for a common purpose, with transparency and commitment to find areas of agreement. In the end, there was much more agreement than had been imagined possible—the 940-page plan reflects a cultural shift that started with apprehension and ended with cohesion. The CWPP will be leveraged to implement a local cohesive strategy that connects to the FAC Learning Network by sharing lessons learned and embracing innovations.

Building on this monumental effort, the City of Austin's Fire Department has several other key FAC goals:

- Leverage the CWPP taskforce into a permanent standing wildfire cooperative, whose focus will be implementing the Cohesive Strategy at the local level using the newly adopted CWPP as the springboard.
- Engage the public by effecting a cultural shift from feeling at risk to becoming empowered to act. During the CWPP recognition ceremony and subsequent workshop, the overarching theme was an interest from communities at risk across Travis county to recognize their role in wildfire preparedness. Austin Fire Department hopes to accomplish a cultural shift by sharing with others what we have learned: that wildfire is everyone's fight—and that fight starts with understanding your role.

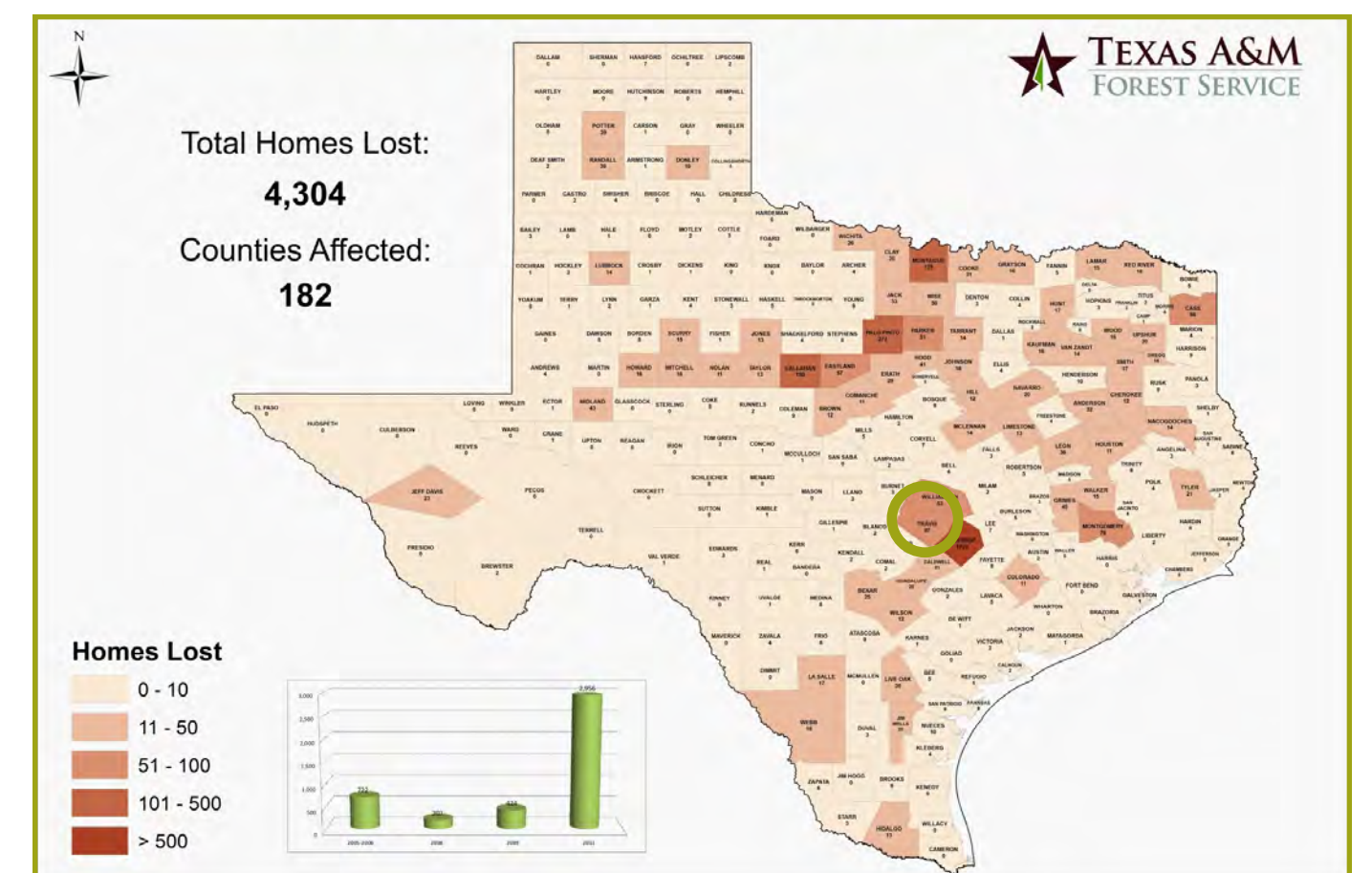
Future FAC efforts will include the integration of WUI considerations into land management planning, development of a local prescribed fire network that includes organizations with prescribed burning responsibilities to ensure coordination across the county, pre-incident planning for both communities and natural areas, and the development of a functional evacuation model.

Being a part of the FAC Learning Network is facilitating benchmarking with other communities at risk, increasing exposure to novel research and subject matter experts, and providing a better understanding of the power of collaboration. The Austin Fire Department hopes to learn from the successes and challenges that other communities have experienced, and to develop a model for wildfire preparedness that other large municipalities and counties can use to rapidly implement a local cohesive strategy.

Wildfire is everyone's fight—and that fight starts with understanding your role.

Key Partners

- Travis County—
Office of Emergency Management
Transportation and Natural Resources
- City of Austin—
Austin Water Utility
Fire Department
Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management
Planning and Development Review Department
Watershed Protection
- Capital Area Fire Chiefs Association
Small Cities Alliance of Travis County
Texas A&M Forest Service



Homes Lost to Wildfires, 2005-2011: Travis County (circled) lost 97 homes to wildfire over this time period. Its neighbor to the southeast, Bastrop County, lost 1,726 homes. The 2011 wildfire season was particularly destructive in Texas, with 2,956 homes lost across the state (see graph).

Highlight: Austin-Boise Learning Exchange

Excerpts from a post on the Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network blog—to read the whole post, go to <http://facnetwork.org/fire-departments-conduct-fac-exchange/>

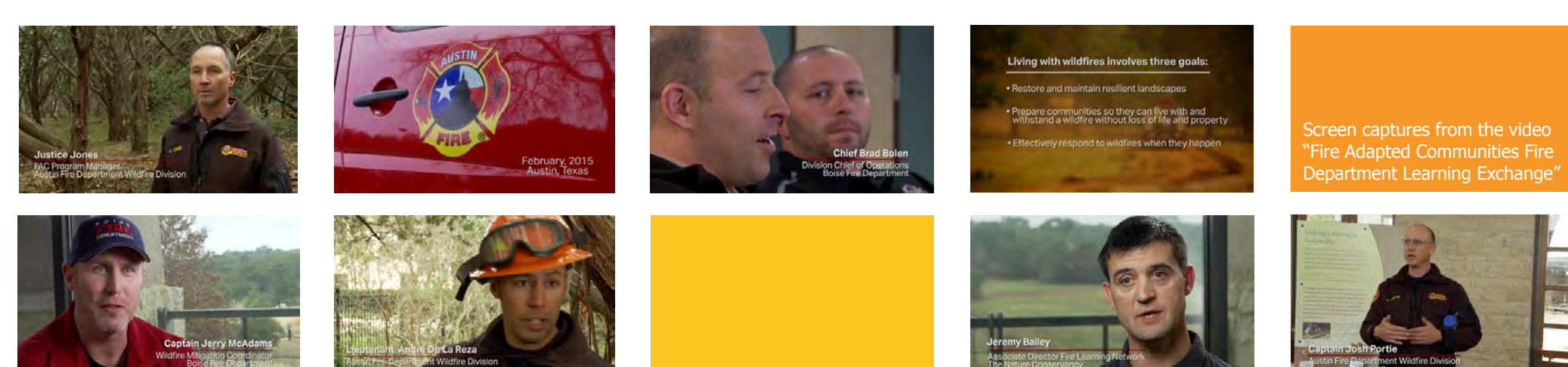
Austin Fire Department Wildfire Mitigation Program Manager Justice Jones first met Captain Jerry McAdams of the Boise Fire Department at the 2013 NFPA Backyards and Beyond Conference. Then at the 2014 FAC Learning Network workshop they discovered that large municipalities from different geographies can face similar WUI challenges. So it was at that workshop that they hatched the idea of conducting some on-site learning exchanges to enhance both departments' programs, and to generate some best practices and lessons learned that could help other municipal fire departments.

The first exchange took place in February 2015, in Texas. They visited and discussed fuels treatments, including an area where prescribed fire is regularly used for both ecosystem restoration and community protection, and toured a Firewise neighborhood. Discussion topics included Ready, Set, Go! outreach and preparedness,

enhancement of fire department response, evacuation planning, threatened and endangered species issues, invasive plants and how mitigation efforts can enhance the effectiveness of first responders.

Time and time again conversations turned to collaboration and the need to break down barriers within fire departments, across city departments, and among outside stakeholder organizations. Fire department wildfire mitigation staff have a unique opportunity to bring homeowners, large land managers and other stakeholders together to help them coordinate efforts.

Lessons from this exchange were collected in a video (see box below), and in a "FAC Notes from the Field" available at <http://www.conservationgateway.org/ConservationPractices/FireLandscapes/fac/facnet/Pages/FACNotes-Austin-Boise-Feb2015.aspx>



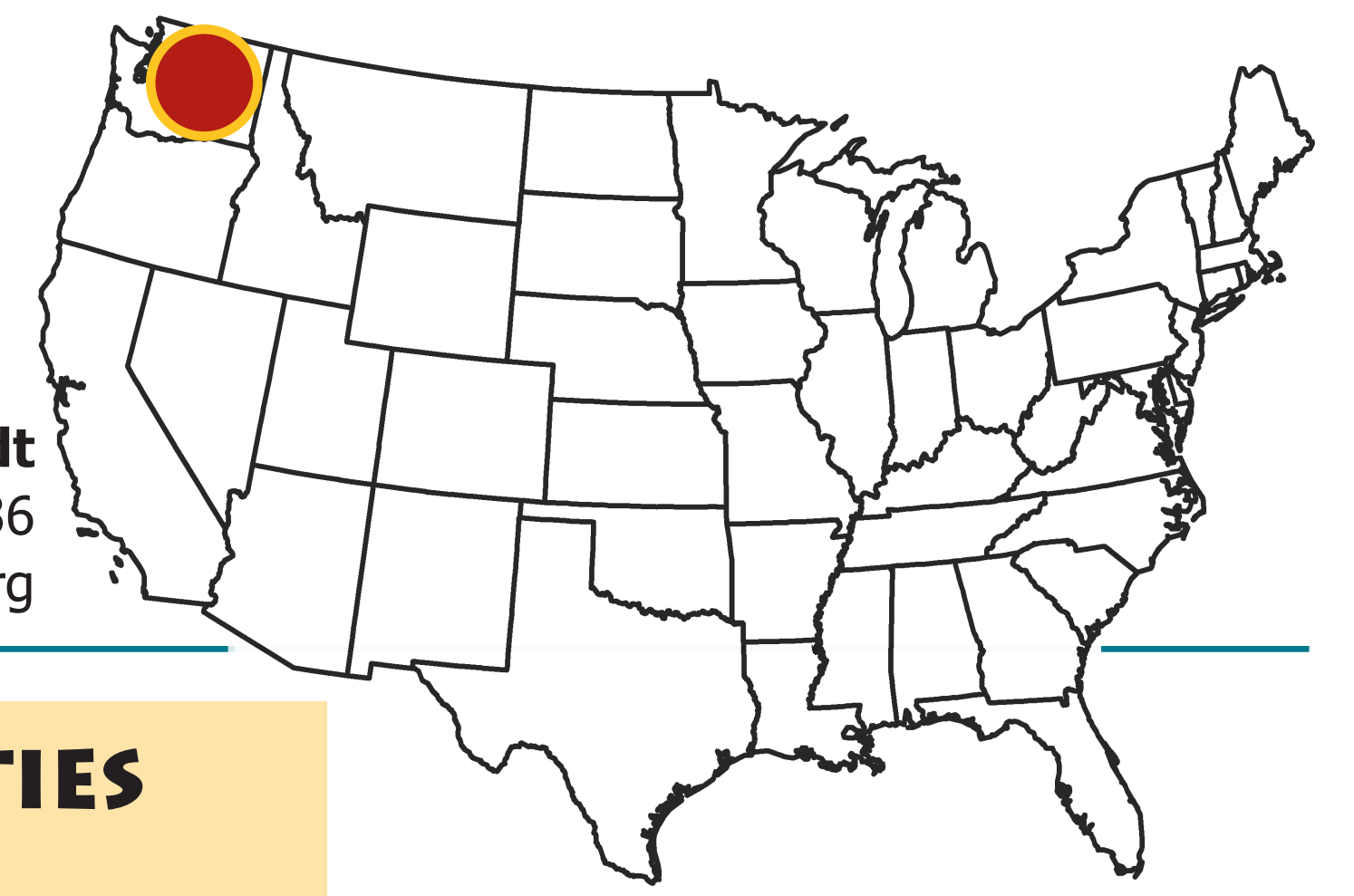
The Fire Adapted Communities video filmed during the Austin-Boise exchange is at <http://facnetwork.org/new-fac-learning-network-video/>

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CHUMSTICK WILDFIRE STEWARDSHIP COALITION

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No summer has illustrated the need for resilient and prepared communities better than 2014. Throughout the state of Washington, more residents were on some level of evacuation notice than at any other time in the past 20 years. More structures—over 320 homes—were lost than in any previous Washington wildfire. Many people did not know what to do in the event of an evacuation or how to prepare their homes for wildfire. Businesses in eastern Washington were heavily impacted by highway closures. These events confirmed the need to develop evacuation and pre-attack plans to prepare our community for future wildfire incidents. CWSC will be working with local and Fire Learning Network partners to develop these plans.

In response to the 2014 fires, CWSC took action by creating an “After the Fire Toolkit.” This toolkit enables information on post-fire impacts to be disseminated during an incident, rather than later when the “teachable moment” afforded by the fire has closed. A National Weather Service representative distributed the trifold brochure from the toolkit at the first public meeting during the Mills Canyon fire. The willingness of the Washington Incident Management Team to create space for this important messaging was critical to its successful distribution. Post-fire impacts were highlighted in news releases from the incident, and the incident management team used parts of the social media element of the tool. In addition, “After the Fire” door hangers were given to the local fire district for distribution.

By participating in the FAC Learning Network, our communities and organizations have the ability to join forces, link resources and learn from the experiences of our network partners—all invaluable opportunities. We believe that mutual learning is critical to healthy collaboration and we strive to incorporate a strong learning component into all of our activities. As communities begin to adapt and respond to fire—and by changing the way we view fire—we have a chance to share lessons learned with communities across the nation. Lessons learned by others across the country benefit our programs, organizational capacity and constituency; our own lessons shared broaden the impact of the CWSC beyond the Chumstick.

In 2015 we are working to:

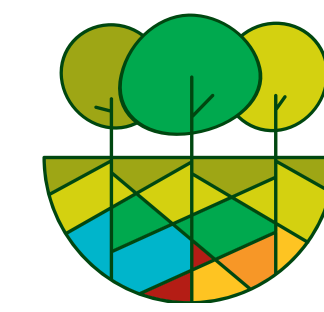
- Enhance community resiliency through a series of wildfire preparedness workshops and meetings with a wide array of local and regional stakeholders;
- Collaborate with stakeholders during on-the-ground fuel reduction and forest restoration work; and
- Coordinate biomass utilization projects and regional wildfire education.



Treatment demonstration projects to prepare for wildfires and a toolkit of resources to mitigate wildfire after-effects are among the projects helping make north-central Washington more resilient to wildfire.
Photo: Andrew Holm

COMMUNITIES

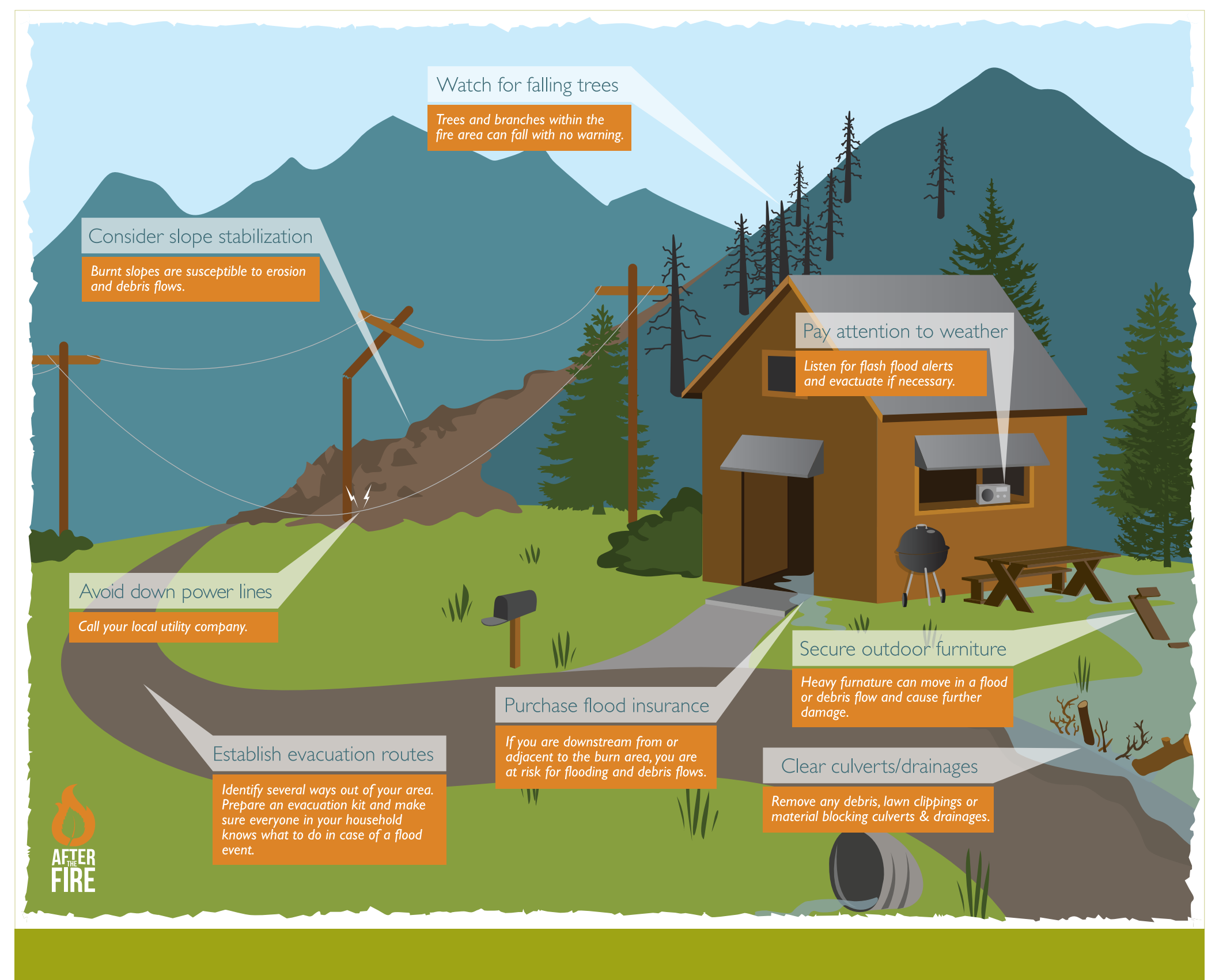
working in **Leavenworth, Plain and Yakima, Washington**



FIRE ADAPTED COMMUNITIES
LEARNING NETWORK

KEY PARTNERS

- | | |
|---|--|
| American Red Cross—Apple Valley Chapter | Leavenworth Chamber of Commerce National Weather Service |
| Bavarian Village Business Association | South Central Washington Resource & Conservation District |
| Cascade School District | USDA Forest Service—Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest |
| Cascadia Conservation District | Washington State Department of Natural Resources |
| Central Washington Interagency Communication Center | Washington State University—Extension Forestry |
| Chelan County Fire District 3 | Wenatchee Valley Humane Society and local residents & landowners |
| Chelan County—Department of Emergency Management, Public Utility District, Public Works, Sherriff | |
| City of Leavenworth | |



COMMUNITY PREPAREDNESS: #MAKEKITMONDAY

Excerpts from a post on the Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network blog—to read the whole post, go to <http://facnetwork.org/makeakitmonday-facilitating-emergency-preparedness/>

We all know we need a “go kit” and yet few of us have them! Prior to this exercise, I will admit that I didn’t. So the Chumstick Wildfire Stewardship Coalition has been assembling a “go bag.” Dubbing it **#makeakitmonday**, each Monday we focus on a new component and add it to our bag. Those following along at home via social media are (hopefully) doing the same. The order of the kit components was, in part, designed to spread out the cost of kit assembly over a number of weeks.

So, what has worked? The best responses (according to our Facebook Insights) have been the posts about bags (and the #makeakitmonday concept), flashlights and radios. Common to all of the best performing posts were real

Emergency preparedness can be overwhelming. The goal of #makeakitmonday was to break down the process into concrete and manageable steps.

pictures (not stock photographs) and a more thorough discussion of the items in question. Our posts fall short of reviews and we have tried to avoid making recommendations—different items will work for different families and individuals, and we are certainly not the experts on flashlights or radios! That said, the level of engagement has been best when the posts have been real people, talking about real items.

#makeakitmonday is also incorporated into our National Community Preparedness Day project, funded through NFPA and State Farm.

Residents of this area will be able to pick up their own “go bag,” provided they agree to fill it, and then receive small kit components at Wildfire Preparedness events.

Next year, we would like to see more local organizations participating (e.g., have the hospital talk about first aid kits, the Humane Society talk about pet preparedness, etc.) in order to take advantage of the expertise in the community. It would also be fun to see more communities participating—Firewise of Southwest Colorado has been a great partner.

MORE INFORMATION

For more about the **Chumstick Wildfire Stewardship Coalition**, see <http://www.chumstickcoalition.org/>

To download & use the **After the Fire** toolkit, go to <http://afterthefirewa.org/>

For more from the **Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network**, visit <http://FACNetwork.org>

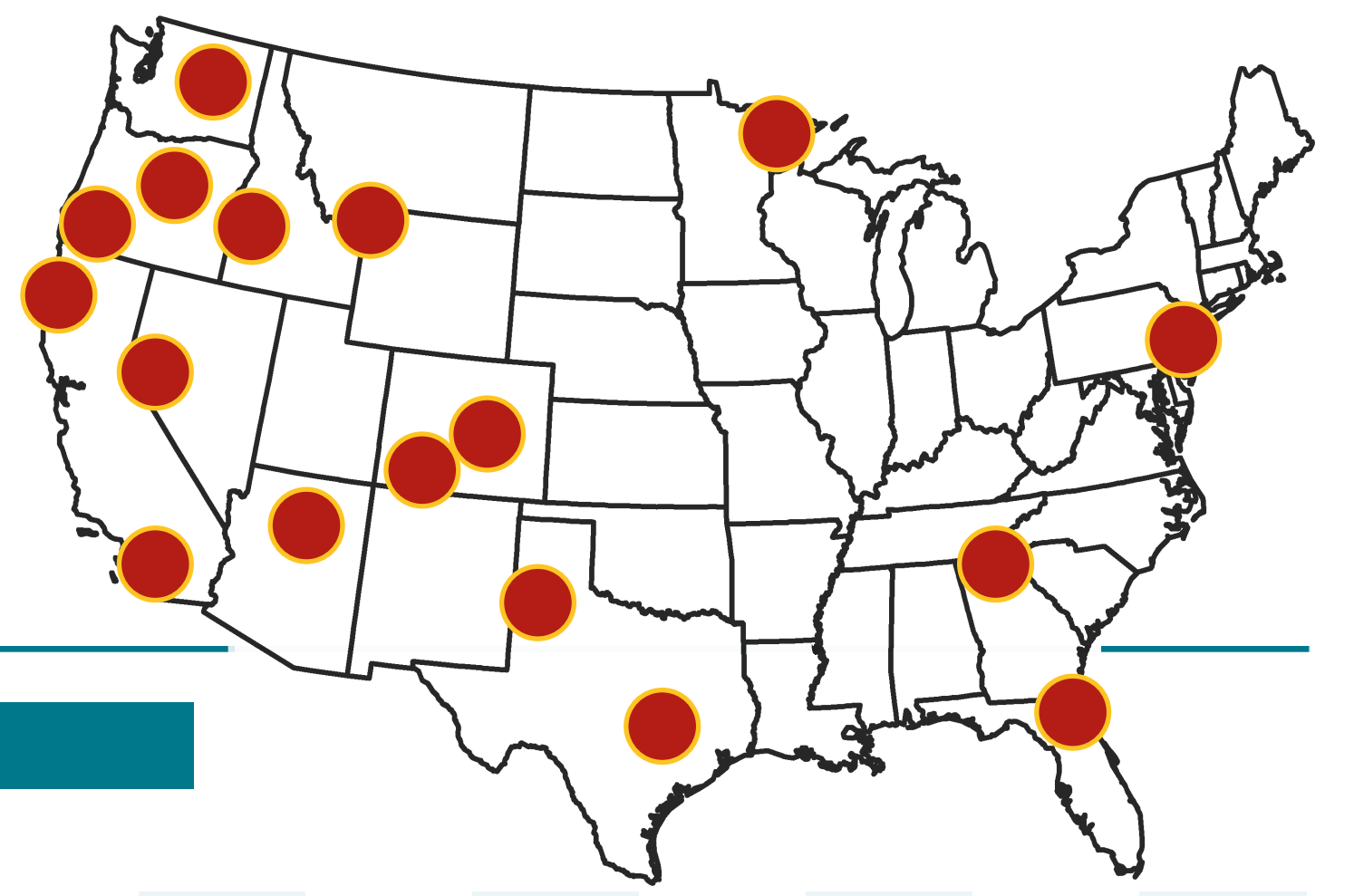
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Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network

Skills & Expertise Matrix

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Skills and areas of expertise of the 17 organizations that are leading local and regional efforts of the Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network.

Key:
S = stable
E = expanding
N = new
* = special expertise

	Austin Fire Department	Boise Fire Department	CA Fire Safe Council	Chestatee/Chattahoochee RC&D Council	Chumstick Wildfire Stewardship Coalition	Coalition for the Upper South Platte	Dovetail Partners	FireWise Council of Southwest Colorado	Florida Forest Service	The Forest Guild	Greater Flagstaff Forest Partnership	Island Park Sustainable Fire Community	Karuk Tribe	Mercer County Soil Conservation District	Project Wildfire	Southern Oregon Forest Restoration Collaborative	Tahoe Fire & Fuels Team
WILDFIRE HAZARD AND RESPONSE																	
WUI training for fire departments	E	E	S				E	E	S		S		E	S			S
wildfire evacuation plan	N	N	N				N		S		S	N	S	E	S	N	S
community preplanning and use of ICS	N	E	E			E	N		S*	S	S		E	E		N	S*
local area incident management team	E	E	N			E	E		S		S	E	E	E			
cross-trained local crews	N	E	E			N	E		E	E	S	E	E	E			S
mutual aid agreements	S	E	S				E		E	S	S	S	E*	S	S		S
COMMUNITY VALUES AT RISK (Non-Residential)																	
risk mapping	N	N	N			S	E	S	S	S*	S	E	E	S	E	S	
watershed management	N		S			S		E	S	S*	N	S	E	S		S	S
community assessments	E	N	E	E	E	S	N	E	E	S	S	N	E	S	E	S	E
RESIDENTIAL VALUES AT RISK																	
home ignition zone assessments & apps	E*	N	E	E	E	S	N	E	E	S*	S			S	E	S	S
engagement with HOAs	S	S	E	E	S	S	N	S*	E	S	S	E		E	E	N	S
PLANS AND REGULATIONS																	
CWPPs	N	E	S	S	S	E	S	S*	S*	S	S	S	S	E*	S	S	E
hazard mitigation action plan	S	E	S			S	E	S	S		S	N	S	N	S	S	S
CCRs, codes, ordinances	E	E	S								S*			E	E	N	S
comp plans/ other plans	E	N	S						E		S		E	S		S	S
MITIGATION & RISK REDUCTION																	
Ready, Set, Go!	E	E	E			S	N/E		E					E	E	N	N
Firewise	S	S	S*	E	S*	S	E	S	E	N	S	E	S	E	E	N	
Fire Safe Councils			S*		S*		N				S		S	E		N	
chipping program		S		E		S	E	S*		S				S	S		S
awareness day/ week	N	N	E	E	N	S	N	S*	E	E	S	N	S	S	S		S
trainings	E	E	S	S	N	S	E	S	S	S*	S	N	E	E	E		S
prescribed fire & smoke	E			E		E	S/E		E	S	S		E	N	E	N	S*
other fuel management	N	S	S			E	S/E		E	S	S	N	E	S*	S	N	S*
RESOURCES																	
local WUI tax or fee											N*		N	S			
vegetation disposal	E			S		E	N	E		N	S			S	S*		S
grant & funding directory			S*	S	S*		N			S		N		S	S		
dedicated FAC staff	S	S		E		E	E					N	E	S		S	S
PUBLIC OUTREACH AND INPUT																	
FAC regional workshops	E	N	E	S	E		E	E	E	E	N		N	S	S	E	N
community / public meetings	N	E	E	E	E	S	E	S	S	S	S		S	E	S	E	E
public demos / learning sites	E	E		S		S	N	S	E	S	N	E	E	E	S		S
FAC brochures	N	E		E			N	N	N	N	N	N		S	E	N	E*
PSAs, videos	N	N		S			N	E			N		E	E			
FAC website / blog	N	N		E		E	N		N	S	N	N	N	S	E	N	
social media	E	E		E	E	E	E	S	S	S	E	N	E	S	E	N	E
outreach plan	N	N		N			N/E	E				E		E	S	E	N
volunteer groups, citizen coalition	N	N		E		E	N/E	S*		N		E	S	E	E*		N
PARTNERS																	
FAC LN self-assessment tool	N	N		N		E	N	N	N	N	N	N	N		N	E	N
FAC steering committee	E	E		E		S	N		N		N					S	N
partner learning exchanges	E	N		E		E	N/E			N	N	N	E	S			
state partnerships	E	E	S	S	S	S	N		E	S	S	E	N	E	S	S	
regional partnerships	N	E	S	S			N/E	E	E	S	S	E	E	E	S	S	E*
national partnerships	N	E	S	S	S		N/E				E	E	E	E	S	S	

<http://FACNetwork.org>



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