



# Fire Learning Network Notes from the Field

## Big Creek Prescribed Burn

Hayfork, California  
April, 2015

**The Watershed Center**—in partnership with the Weaverville Fire Department and Firestorm—recently completed 70 acres of prescribed burning in the Big Creek Watershed in Hayfork. The team of 19 executed a successful burn on private lands, accomplishing fire restoration in an area vital to the community.

**The burn was part** of the Big Creek Burn Plan, a community wildfire plan with an all-lands focus. It spans 1,237 acres, and has been in progress since 2012. Partners in the project include CALFIRE, the Watershed Center, the Bureau of Land Management, the Hayfork Waterworks District and various private landowners.

**The Plan’s vision** is an integrated approach that provides a cohesive prescribed burning effort, maximizing benefit to the community while building local partnerships and promoting a culture of prescribed fire. This project has been a significant success for fire adaptation and preparedness in the community because it involves burn programs on private and public lands.



The Big Creek Burn—seen here from a distance—was one of several burns in the Big Creek Burn Plan supported by Scaling-up to Promote Ecosystem Resiliency.

All photos: WRTC/Piper McDaniel

**Big Creek** is the municipal watershed for the community Hayfork, so the recently-completed burn will provide a multitude of benefits including increased fire protection for the landowner, development of a fuel break for the community, and protection of an essential source of community water. It will also replenish the landscape and improve watershed health and resilience. Says burn manager Dave Jaramillo from the Watershed Center, “It’s not that common to have multi-agency landowner burn plans. What’s interesting about it is that it’s an all lands approach—the effort doesn’t stop with property lines, so we’re all supporting each other.”

**Organizing landscape** management with a multitude of partners is complicated, but it offers a benefits as well. “It’s about building relationships,” Jaramillo says, “We’re all in this together.”



The Fire Learning Network and Scaling-up to Promoted Ecosystem Resiliency (SPER) are part of *Promoting Ecosystem Resilience and Fire Adapted Communities Together (PERFACT)*, a cooperative agreement between The Nature Conservancy, USDA Forest Service and agencies of the Department of the Interior.

### Participating Organizations

- Firestorm Wildland Fire Suppression, Inc.
- Watershed Research & Training Center
- Weaverville Volunteer Fire Department
- with the Forest Service as a contingency resource

**Success, like this burn,** takes the community another step closer to a resilient forest, and links partners and community members alike. “It’s all part of a larger vision,” Jaramillo says. “This is a multi-landowner burn plan that goes over jurisdictional boundaries and everyone is in support of it.”

Below, from left: Jim Wills of Firestorm leading the crew on pre-burn scouting of the Big Creek site; Watershed Center staff member Marie Buell, ready to get things done.



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