



Fire Learning Network Notes from the Field

March 2012

FireScape Monterey Workshop #5 Action Planning

On March 13-14, participants in FireScape Monterey started their journey into action planning with a visit to a redwood cultural site. The Esselen tribe's spiritual leader, Thomas Little Bear Nason, gathered the group in a ceremonial circle, at which he presented the group with a ceremonial talking stick. Afterwards, the group continued its field trip to explore recent fuels treatment sites near Big Sur.

After the field trip, participants spent the afternoon working in small groups, bolstered by the customary large-group "peer assist" process that followed their presentations. In all, 30 stakeholders from 16 organizations made improvements to a set of strategies for

"By reintroducing an ancient traditional cultural practice called the "talking stick circle," we all as individuals can hold the talking stick in a circle and speak our beliefs and ideas about the process without interruption from others. This tradition has proven to be a powerful tool for FireScape Monterey members to bridge the many different perspectives into strategies and goals that take in all interests and concerns of the community."

Tom Little Bear Nason
Esselen Spiritual Leader

FireScape Monterey promotes protection of both life and property affected by wildfire and healthy resilient ecosystems through collaborative stewardship.

action that were generated from the group's earlier threats analysis. A key finding was that nearly all of the strategies are interconnected. For example, the strategy, "Create and maintain network of pre-attack access points, pathways and defensible space link-

FireScape Monterey Draft Strategies

- S.1. Fund residential retrofits.
- S.2. Develop "live fire" outreach program.
- S.3. Use controlled burning, and fire for resource benefit, along with fire suppression.
- S.4. Update fire management and wilderness management plans.
- S.5. Institutionalize shared pre-attack plans.
- S.6. Develop and implement Sudden Oak Death (SOD) management plan.
- S.7. Maintain riparian areas, wetlands and streams.
- S.8. Reintroduce indigenous fire practices where appropriate.
- S.9. Create and maintain network of pre-attack access points, pathways and defensible space linkages.
- S.10. Dozer operators and others establish best practices for local suppression activities.
- S.11. Develop sustainable labor source for maintaining trails, camp sites, and rehabilitating firelines.
- S.12. Protect culturally important resources.

ages” is closely tied to “Fund residential retrofits.” Both depend upon the success of a third strategy, “Develop a “live fire” outreach program.” The group also determined that it wants to pursue multiple approaches simultaneously in order to reach its vision.

On the second day of the workshop, participants used five local case studies to explore possible activities that could be implemented in the field to reach desired outcomes for all five of FireScape Monterey’s values. Maps, descriptions and photos of each case study area were provided by the core team. Among others, actions suggested by the participants for the case studies included designating neighborhood safety areas, establishing shaded fuel breaks along roads, maintaining trails, burying plastic water lines or replacing them with metal lines, grazing, controlled burning and finding local uses for accumulated dead wood from sudden oak death.

The next workshop, scheduled for April 24-25, will focus on benchmarking and monitoring.



Participating Agencies & Organizations

- Big Sur Land Trust
- CALFIRE
- California State Parks
- California Wilderness Project
- Coast Property Owners Association
- El Sur Ranch
- Esselen Tribe of Monterey County
- Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary
- Resource Conservation District of Monterey County
- Santa Lucia Conservancy
- Sierra Club—Ventana Chapter
- University of California at Davis
- University of California at Santa Cruz—Big Creek Preserve
- USDA Forest Service—Los Padres National Forest
- Ventana Wilderness Alliance



Above: Tom Little Bear Nason presents results from one of the breakout group’s work on the Cachagua Area case study. © Mary Huffman/TNC
 Left: Photo taken from the Prewitt Ridge fire break, used in the South Coast Ridge Road case study. © Mike Splain/Ventana Wilderness Alliance

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FireScape Monterey Values

- fire-adapted human communities
- healthy watersheds
- native biodiversity
- cultural resources
- aesthetic, natural and wilderness qualities of the northern Santa Lucia Mountains

The Fire Learning Network is supported by *Promoting Ecosystem Resiliency through Collaboration: Landscapes, Learning and Restoration*, a cooperative agreement between The Nature Conservancy, USDA Forest Service and agencies of the Department of the Interior. For more information about the FLN, contact Lynn Decker at ldecker@tnc.org or (801) 320-0524.



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