

Annual Report
July 2021–June 2022

Promoting Ecosystem Resilience and Fire Adapted Communities Together (PERFACT)

In compliance with Agreements No. 18-CA-11132543-039 and 21-CA-11132543-096

Submitted by:
The Nature Conservancy

Submitted to:
USDA Forest Service
August 15, 2022

A Partnership to Transform our Fire Future

The PERFACT partnership invests in people and place-based efforts to change relationships with fire, helping us foster shared responsibility for fire management and viable fire cultures in landscapes and communities across the country.

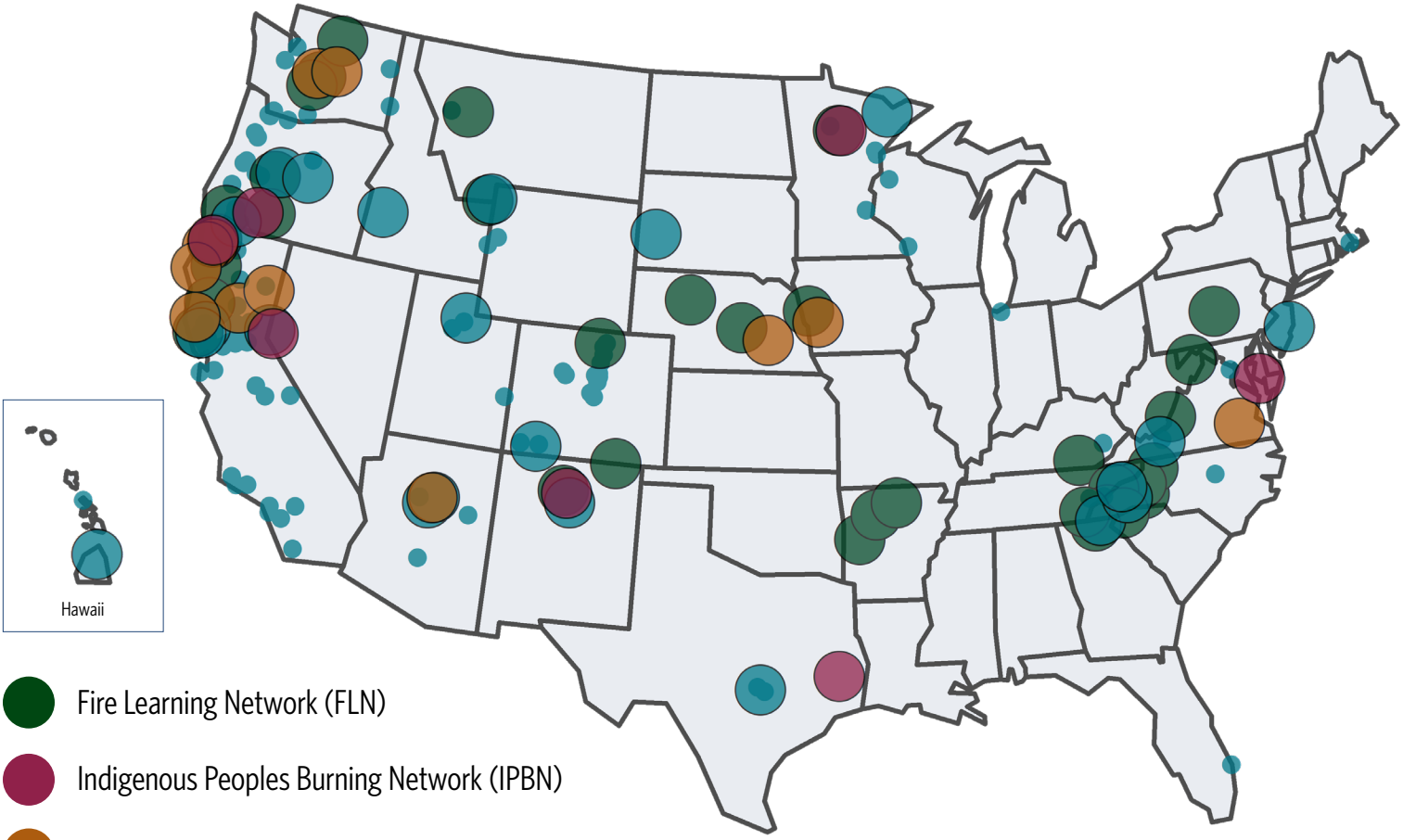
The partnership works through four interconnected Fire Networks—the Fire Learning Network (FLN), Prescribed Fire Training Exchanges (TREX) Coaches Network, Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network (FAC Net) and Indigenous Peoples Burning Network (IPBN)—to support practitioner action, deliver experiential training and learning opportunities, spread ideas and innovations, mentor emerging leaders and identify strategic leverage points and opportunities. Through these networks, the partnership enables local and regional action, and supports the transfer and scaling of those impacts.

Our partners in landscape and community efforts span a full range of affiliations—federal, state and local agencies; tribal governments and members; businesses and non-profit organizations; universities and researchers; and private landowners and engaged residents. Interests are equally varied, and this diversity has helped us build strong, resilient networks. Our investments in people and places have built sustainable capacity, social capital and a wildfire resilience movement. The work from these networks also informs the policy and funding environment to better support integrated fire management by connecting place-based leaders and their solutions with decision-makers.

This report captures highlights from the partnership's work over the course of the year ending June 30, 2022.

Cover photo: Burning at Piney Grove, Virginia, during the spring 2022 WTREX.
© Daniel White/TNC

The Reach of the Fire Networks



Fire Learning Network (FLN)

Indigenous Peoples Burning Network (IPBN)

Prescribed Fire Training Exchanges FY2022 (TREX)

Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network (FAC Net) and ● affiliates

37 states — where the Fire Networks support people and places

2,300 partners — engaged by Fire Networks across the country

14,500 practitioners — reached by newsletters, blog and social media channels

4,500 training opportunities — provided for fire practitioners through TREX & cooperative burns since 2008

147,740 acres of prescribed fire — applied to priority landscapes through TREX & cooperative burns since 2008

People-Centered Fire Solutions

The Fire Networks' approach to wildfire resilience is grounded in what Sarah McCaffrey, a respected and prolific social scientist in the wildfire space, offers—**fire** is a biophysical process, but **fire management** is a social one.

How you frame a challenge drives the solutions you develop to address it. If we always frame our wildland fire challenges around vegetation problems—for example, "our forests are out of whack"—that leads you to fuels management solutions, which **are** a critically important aspect of our fire issues.

But what if you frame the problem as "our culture of fire is broken"? That leads you to a more holistic solution set, where people are at the center. Where landscapes, communities and fire intersect.

The Fire Networks support people who are changing fire culture through their leadership and actions. From workforce development to shared governance, to all-hands all-lands implementation projects, our members and partners are leading the way to better fire futures across the U.S.

"Participating in the Fire Networks and learning from other network members has helped me navigate this work and has been an avenue of hope that keeps me inspired."

"Support for our statewide network has enabled us to serve as a vital hub for continuity and to help connect stakeholders with the knowledge, resources, and connections they need."

"The Fire Networks continue to be the glue that holds our diverse group of fire practitioners, planners and organizers together, allowing staff and key partners to respond real time to threats and opportunities."

Highlights from the Fire Networks 2021-2022

Investing in Local Capacity and Leadership

- DEVELOPING PRESCRIBED FIRE PRACTITIONERS
- BROADENING THE WORKFORCE
- DEVELOPING THE FULL RANGE OF CAPACITY FOR FIRE RESILIENCE
- GETTING THE RIGHT PEOPLE IN THE RIGHT PLACES

Fire Management That Reflects the Whole Community

- ACCESSIBILITY
- WOMEN IN FIRE
- EQUITABLE ENGAGEMENT WITH INDIGENOUS PEOPLE
- SUPPORTING CULTURAL BURNING

How We Work

- NETWORKS HELP PEOPLE GET THE WORK DONE
- CONNECTIONS MAKE LEARNING FROM OTHERS EASIER
- SPREADING SUCCESS

Many Paths to Resilience

- A NEW TOOL TO LIGHT THE WAY
- NO ONE NEED WALK ALONE

"Support from the Fire Networks allows us the inspiration, personnel time and brain space to test new and creative ideas for getting our work done."

Investing in Local Capacity and Leadership

The most essential thing we can do to move wildfire resilience forward is to invest in local leadership. Local leaders can then support and guide local partners as they determine priorities, implement projects and meet local needs.

It is also important to look at capacity broadly. It certainly means people who are well qualified to take on fire management, from fuels treatments and prescribed fire to suppression. But it also includes the skills needed to bring people together, to organize action, to communicate among partners and with the community at large. Wildfire resilience requires a full range of people with the skills needed before, during and after fire.



Shasta Valley RCD/Siskiyou PBA fire program manager Lyndsey Lascheck and Western Klamath Mountains FLN lead Will Harling deepened their experience with prescribed fire, and advanced their qualifications during the Butler Prescribed Burn. Lyndsey served as firing boss trainee and Will fulfilled his California burn boss trainee assignment on this burn. Will and Lyndsey are just two of the many people building their skills and connections to fire and advancing the good fire movement in the Klamath Mountains.

© Michael Max Hentz/MKWC

"Engage with the Fire Networks—you'll be exposed to and learn a lot from others across the country working on fire issues. FAC Net is my favorite group of people in the professional world. I can't recommend involvement with them enough."

- The Oregon FLN assisted the Klamath Tribes with developing a new fire management program, which the tribes are building with $6 million in state funds allocated for recovery after the Bootleg Fire. (See more about recovery from the fire in the TNC video "Through the Fire: Restoring Forest Resilience.")

- Through the Prescribed Fire Learning Group, the Fire Networks guided 80 people from 19 states and three countries in developing prescribed fire programs or projects. Over the course of eight peer-learning sessions they addressed enabling conditions, designing approaches to cooperative burning, agreements, qualifications, insurance, liability, Indigenous fire management, funding, sustainability and successional planning.

DEVELOPING PRESCRIBED FIRE PRACTITIONERS

The Fire Networks support community-based leaders who are creating new approaches to fire management and community resilience. Capacity is not something that can just be handed to a community. We invest in local leaders' professional development—offering tools, training and peer learning so capacity-building can be transformative and lasting.



The first Flagstaff TREX, held in November, was developed to help municipal firefighters and VFDs expand their prescribed fire experience. © Eric O'Connor



A member of the Forest Stewards Guild Youth Crew completes the gunning cut on a tree to be felled during chainsaw training. Two members of the Jemez Pueblo Natural Resource Department joined the cadre of the S-212 course, offering, among other things, an Indigenous perspective on the land management work the students are being trained to carry out. © Sam Berry/FSG







Three new burners wield a drip torch for the first time, at Butte County PBA and Plumas Underburn Collaborative trainings. Over the last year, the Watershed Research and Training Center provided 70 trainings to community-based burn groups across eight California counties, providing more than 1,600 training opportunities to private landowners, tribal members, students, nonprofit staff and others. © Erin Banwell/WRTC

BROADENING THE WORKFORCE

We need all hands on deck to meet our fire challenges, and we need to work across all lands.

The scale of wildland fire solutions requires growing the workforce beyond what any one agency or organization can do on its own. It involves bringing community members—not just professional fire workers—into the field.

Since 2008, our Prescribed Fire Training Exchanges (TREX) and cooperative burns have been providing experiential training that meets several needs—

- They offer fire practitioners opportunities to work across organizations and gain a more holistic perspective than typical trainings offer.
- They build local capacity for fire management by bringing in NGOs and VFDs, landowners and private contractors, students and researchers.
- And they implement treatments that support community and landscape objectives.



A Forest Stewards Guild staff member volunteered with the Southern Blue Ridge Burn Crew at DuPont State Recreational Forest in November 2021. This was the first fall burn in the region that Guild staff had been a part of. The SBR crew, managed by The Nature Conservancy, grew from an identified need for capacity within the SBR FLN and supports partner burns across a vast landscape.

© Shawn Swartz/FSG



FLN support of the Southern Blue Ridge FLN and Forest Stewards Guild and FAC Net support of the Chestatee-Chattahoochee RC&D helped move the needle on prescribed fire outreach in the Southern Blue Ridge region, particularly with private landowners through learn-and-burn workshops. The Guild reported that their work "inspired several other partners and organizations to host learn-and-burns across western North Carolina. We are now all starting to collaborate to put together more effective and efficient learning opportunities on public and private lands."

© Frank Riley /CCRC&D

Twelve TREX and cooperative burn events were delivered in the fall of 2021 and spring of 2022. To safely accommodate COVID mitigations, seven of these focused on training a cadre of local practitioners. These TREX held introductory sessions, then functioned as on-call burn teams over several weeks (or months), removing the need for (and risk from) group housing. As an added benefit, these events provided more opportunities for good burn windows.

On a foundation of experience and lessons learned through more than 120 TREX, the Fire Networks have explored and developed numerous other models that demonstrate what an all-hands all-lands prescribed fire workforce can look like and do.

From traveling seasonal crews in the Southern Blue Ridge region to the expansion of prescribed burn associations in California, to a growing pile burn collaborative on the Colorado Front Range, members of the Fire Networks are finding the right people, the right tools and the right fire for their places.





The Ember Alliance is nurturing a pile burning cooperative on the Colorado Front Range. Pile-building and -burning workshops provide experience for landowners to get fuel reduction work done without too much additional support or high-level resources. "In the scheme of fuels treatment, this landowner training is very efficient. Landowners are happy to have more control over their property and safety." This effort is expected to grow with continued FLN support. © Kristin Leger/TEA



FFT2 field day was held as part of the Northeast Washington TREX. © Kara Karboski/WA RC&D



Chainsaw training was co-hosted by FAC Net member Dovetail Partners in northern Minnesota. © Keith Vandervort/Timberjay Newspaper

DEVELOPING THE FULL RANGE OF CAPACITY FOR FIRE RESILIENCE

We think broadly about the kinds of skills and capacity needed to build and maintain wildfire resilience.

Capacity means providing training and professional development for people in many roles. It also means supporting organizations and institutions to house these roles, and making space for their leadership and different ways of working.

Wildfire Adapted Partnership has long recognized the need to have wildfire resilience champions on the ground, in neighborhoods. In 2018, because others were interested in the approach, they captured key parts of their Neighborhood Ambassador program in a toolkit. They now host workshops and provide ongoing mentorship to colleagues in other communities working to increase their capacity to effectively reach people where they live, providing essential information and inspiration.

This year the Tahoe Network of Fire Adapted Communities developed its "Tahoe Network Neighborhood Leader Handbook" and recruited, onboarded and trained more than 60 Neighborhood Leaders. Through FAC Net, Tahoe staff gleaned ideas, had access to others' program handbooks, and learned what has worked well elsewhere. The result is a program tailored to their community, created without reinventing the wheel.

"Communities need organizers—to bring people together, facilitate planning, respond to needs and envision new futures together."

Planning capacity is fundamental to effective work on the ground. FLNs have continued their long history of collaborative planning. For example, in Kentucky, the Central Appalachians FLN is supporting ecozone mapping—a process refined by use in numerous other FLN landscapes in the region—on the Cumberland Plateau and Cumberland Mountains. And in the West, FLNs have been critical partners in developing Potential Operational Delineations. In California, Western Klamath Mountains FLN leads have engaged in a regional effort to draft PODs for the 11-million-acre North Coast Resource Partnership. Farther north, FLN support has helped build on the work of the HB 1784 Pilot Project (begun in 2020) to use a PODs framework in an all-lands approach at several pilot site locations in central Washington.

The Northern Colorado Fireshed is the "connective tissue" that ties The Ember Alliance's engagement with disparate communities into a broader, strategic goal. That connection work takes time and energy—and a coordinator. The FLN enabled TEA to create that position and find the funding to support it.

The Fireshed landscape overlaps significantly with the Front Range of Colorado, one of the initial 10 priority landscapes identified by the Forest Service for investments through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. The coordination provided by this FLN is an important asset to this high-profile wildfire mitigation work.

Fire Networks members are at the forefront of developing an entirely new economic sector: wildfire resilience workers. This sector includes some traditional vocations—like fire service members, emergency management workers and fire fighters. But we also need local workforces that can support home hardening and mitigation, and planners who are well-versed in fire issues. And, often overlooked, communities need organizers—to bring people together, to facilitate learning and planning, and to build the most critical element of resilience: connections to others.



© Tiernan Doyle/WRTC



Virtually any planning or organizing project benefits from skilled facilitation. In June, FAC Net staff assisted network members in Lake County, California, by facilitating two days of activities and discussion to build cooperation and collaboration around fire adaptation work. More than 30 community leaders, federal and state agency and local nonprofit representatives shared information about community assets and partnerships, daylighted gaps in programming and communications, and worked together to build a joint vision for a strong, thriving andfire adapted Lake County.

© Magdalena Valderrama/SSCRA

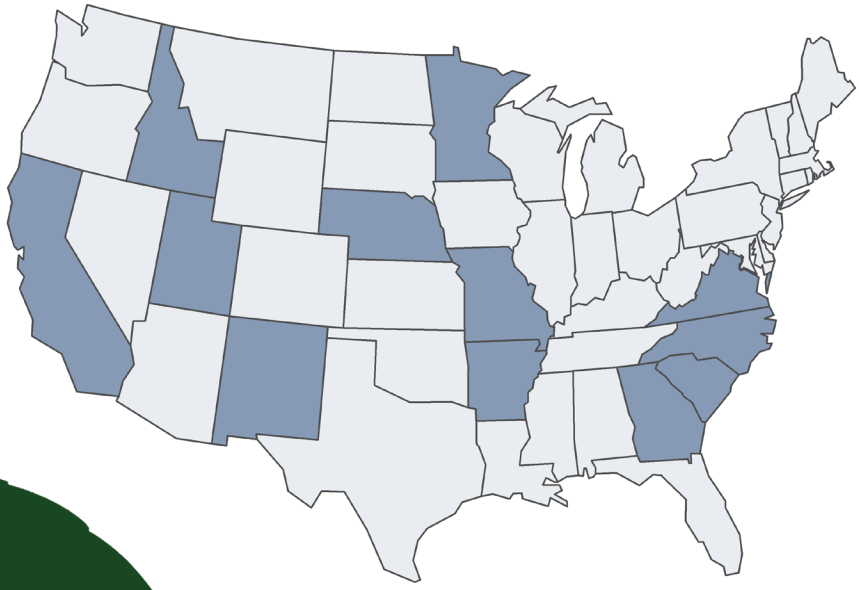
Refining our skills as on-the-ground practitioners is important, but our learning shouldn't be limited to managing the fire triangle. Mental health is a serious concern in the wildland fire profession, and not only among suppression personnel. The Wellbeing Learning Group provided skill-building and training centered on practitioner wellbeing to 30 participants from 11 states.

GETTING THE RIGHT PEOPLE IN THE RIGHT PLACES

Even with strengthened local work forces, fire management work can be episodic, requiring temporary surges in capacity to take advantage of burn windows or respond to events on the ground.

The Fire Networks' focus on innovation and learning, combined with the connections among hundreds of people working in fire management, have allowed us to develop and refine models for getting people to the places that need them. Not only does this support getting crucial work done, but we maintain a focus on learning and training through these assignments, making them valuable professional development opportunities.

New this year was a focus on recruiting and deploying personnel to serve as burn crew members, crew leaders and burn bosses on federal and Conservancy prescribed burns; these assignments also provided training opportunities for the personnel. This pilot effort to surge capacity into places and projects that needed additional personnel for a limited time demonstrated our team's ability to recruit, hire, deploy and manage key positions in a prescrbed fire workforce. From November through June, 45 short-term burn bosses, burn crew managers and burn crew members assisted with burning, burn unit prep and other work on 23 assignments in 12 states.



"Appreciate your work developing this exchange, which helps fill a critical need in our program as we lose crew members to the West."
Host unit, SC



On assignment in Minnesota, a crew member performs maintenance on chainsaws and other equipment on a non-burn day. © TNC

Fire Management That Reflects the Whole Community

Achieving better fire-related outcomes depends on a more diverse fire workforce and more equitable partnerships.

We work with our partners to improve our collective diversity, equity, inclusion and justice literacy and action. We provide tools to equip members with the skills needed to act more inclusively and to develop equitable partnerships with communities where they work, with special attention to people who have been marginalized or excluded.

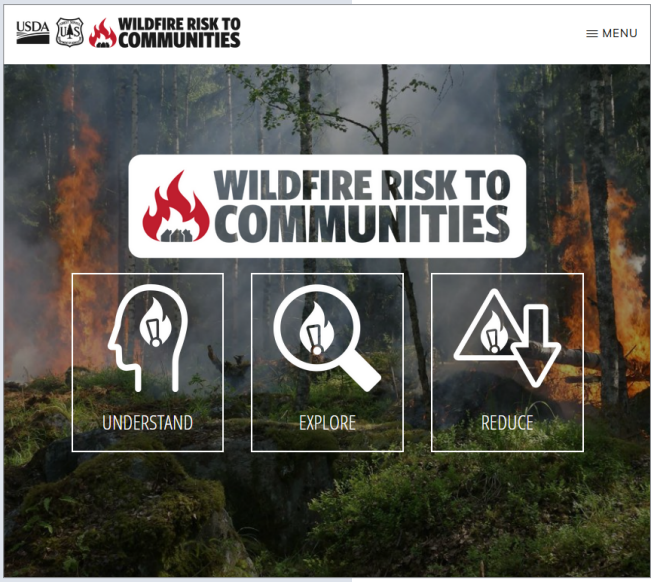
In the Oregon FLN, the Ashland TREX—which had focused on the city's immediate watershed—was expanded to the Rogue Basin TREX, an on-call event drawing participants from across the landscape.

This change significantly expanded the level of interest and participation in the planning team. Organizational participation included a new fire district, serious investment from state forestry and the new OSU Fire Program. Funding for tribal travel allowed organizers to recruit and register 16 tribal fire crew members from three tribal organizations. And the communications team developed an extensive plan for promoting narratives from diverse views about prescribed fire, including women, tribal members and Indigenous people, youth and Latinx. With this infrastructure and roster in place, the organizing team plans to run the Rogue Basin TREX in the fall.

ACCESSIBILITY

Some of our DEIJ work addresses concerns that are relevant across all sectors, rather than being fire-specific—for example, making sure resources are available in Spanish or events have accomodations for the hearing impaired.

FAC Net hosted an evacuation learning group in which 100 members and partners took part. Presentations included incorporating equity and inclusion in evacuation planning, as well as lessons learned from recent evacuations. FAC Net led by doing: sessions were designed to invite broad participation, and American Sign Language interpretation and closed-captioning were provided throughout.



FAC Net developed equity-focused content for the site www.wildfirerisk.org, including a database of resources, recommended language and resources, a written case study and a video case study to expand the materials hosted on the site. FAC Net also made equity-centered recommendations for the site as a whole.

WOMEN IN FIRE

Women are under-represented in the traditional fire fighting workforce. Through Prescribed Fire Training Exchanges and other efforts, women at all stages of their fire careers are being supported. Since 2016 (when we started tracking the genders of participants), 27% of those who take part in TREX have been women; this is roughly double the rate in the field at large. In 2016 we also hosted the first Women-in-Fire TREX, an extremely popular offering designed for people of all genders to support women in the wildland fire field.





After a two year pause due to COVID, the Women-in-Fire TREX (WTREX) returned this spring. The Heart of the Appalachians FLN landscape hosted 29 people for two weeks of burning, mentoring and exploring the role—and challenges—of women in the field. Among the guests at this year's WTREX was TNC CEO Jennifer Morris. Her visit gave participants a chance to talk about women in conservation leadership, and to bring the importance of fire management to the fore at TNC—including a story on the website, "Trailblazers: Women in Fire" and a letter from the CEO in *Nature Conservancy* magazine, which is distributed to 760,000 people. WTREX lead Lenya Quinn-Davidson also wrote an essay for the FAC Net blog, "Feeling the Power at WTREX."

© Daniel White/TNC



WTREX now has a public Facebook page (https://www.facebook.com/WomensTREX/), providing an opportunity for people to learn more about gender representation in the fire workforce and find easy access to upcoming training opportunities.

Beyond WTREX, the North America Fire team hired 18 female burn bosses, burn crew managers and burn crew members—40% of total hires—for short-term employment opportunities as part of our surge capacity pilot. Among these assignments was a burn boss posted to co-lead a diversity, equity and inclusion in fire workshop hosted by TNC in Missouri; this workshop was featured in the article "Lighting the Way" on the TNC website.

EQUITABLE ENGAGEMENT WITH INDIGENOUS PEOPLE

We won't achieve any vision for living better with fire without thoughtful and equitable engagement with all segments of communities. That requires elevating and listening to diverse voices. This is particularly true of Indigenous voices, who are often connected to a landscape by milennia of knowledge and cultural meaning.

The relationship between Western science and land management and Indigenous people and cultures brings with it centuries of history. The Fire Networks strive to engage with open minds and hearts, and with humility.

Three Beginners Working Groups and their graduates continue to support non-Indigenous natural resource managers who are interested in building equitable fire partnerships with tribes. The third cohort, which began its work this year, includes participants from Fire Networks in California, Minnesota, New Mexico, North Carolina, Oregon and Washington, as well as two participants from Canada's national park agency.

The Ember Alliance reported that participation in the second cohort was absolutely essential to their work in southwest Colorado, and led to potential cooperative work with two tribes in the region. They also reported a tangible outcome from their learning: a local partner came to see that its logo—a Native American in a headdress—was offensive, especially given that all Native Americans had been forcibly removed from the landscape they serve. The fire protection district is changing its logo as a result.

Collaboration is emerging between the Nause-Waiwash Band—one of the newer members of the IPBN—and TNC, Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge and the Maryland Department of Natural Resources. The Nause-Waiwash and the TNC burn boss from Maryland planned and completed two culturally significant burns this year in marshland near Chesapeake Bay, including one of 1,700 acres.

SUPPORTING CULTURAL BURNING

Through the Indigenous Peoples Burning Network and other efforts, we play a supporting role, as needed and invited, in returning cultural fire to the landscape.

Passage of AB642 in California in 2021 enabled cultural burning by California Native American tribes, tribal organizations and cultural fire practitioners. In response, several tribes and cultural practitioners have approached the IPBN for advice about building cultural fire programs. To meet this need, we designed a working group within the IPBN to provide peer-to-peer support for developing fire programs.

With the new legal status for cultural burning in the state, the Karuk Tribe and Cultural Fire Management Council (a Yurok NGO) hosted three demonstration burns and a special event for CAL FIRE leaders to highlight how cultural burning practices are different from mainstream prescribed burning. The tribe developed a sample agreement for a tribal landowner to use with a cultural fire practitioner.



Lighting a prescribed burn in a ceremonial location, June 2022. Smoke from a cultural burn is in the background. © Will Harling/MKWC

How We Work

Networks are a vehicle for transformative change.

Networks offer both individual, unique solutions and daylight common themes. They bring multiple perspectives together, weaving a rich set of solutions to intractable problems.

The Fire Networks—built on decades of concrete practice—are the premiere forum for advancing fire solutions at local, state and national scales.

NETWORKS HELP PEOPLE GET THE WORK DONE

It is the connections we make and nurture that both sustain and support practitioners. The benefits may be intangible, like the morale boost that comes from knowing that you can always call on someone who understands your situation. Or they can be very concrete, as when members call on each other to fill a position on a burn crew on short notice, or when relationships built with agencies or regulators provide a path from "no burning" to "yes."

"As we continue to expand and grow community-based prescribed fire across the state, we find ourselves modeling the PBA network off of the FLN and Fire Networks frameworks."

The Loup TREX this spring was challenged by severe drought conditions that limited the issuance of burn permits. One the second day of the event, burn permits were suspended over the entire fire district containing the planned units. Over the ensuing few days, participants continued non-fire training opportunities, while the organizers maintained communication with area fire chiefs and sought out opportunities to deliver safe and responsible fire. Due to the past reputation of the Loup TREX and the leadership cadre, nurtured through years of FLN participation, the organizers were able to carefully open doors to live fire.

Extensive blacklining was the first fire at the 2022 Loup TREX. By demonstrating responsible decision-making and a quality product, this provided a base for trust-building with land-owners and community members. By the end of the TREX, the crew completed two units, about 500 acres, of burning on privately owned mixed-grass prairie in central Nebraska.





© Ben Wheeler/Pheasants Forever

FireScape Mendocino reports that as a result of the FLN, they now have access to five FFT2 firefighters, staff with leadership training and a staff member able to draft burn plans. A burn boss is nearing certification as well. "Our participation in the burning with the Forest Service was significant, as it has demonstrated a level of trust between the two agencies." They intend to continue to leverage this relationship into larger planning and implementation projects.

CONNECTIONS MAKE LEARNING FROM OTHERS EASIER

Reading is a great way to learn. Mentoring or hands-on learning from others is better. And teaching others may be best of all.

What happens in the networks doesn't stay in the networks. Through toolkits, guides, blog posts, videos, webinars, mentoring and more, the networks share what they learn with the wildland fire resilience community at large.

Fire Adapted Colorado worked with the Washington State Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network on improving new member onboarding, and with Wildfire Adapted Partnership on providing neighborhood ambassador program workshops—helping members in California, Colorado and Hawaii build out their programs. "Having these networks of passionate practitioners keeps many of us going in this challenging field, and has directly led to cross-pollination as practitioners find valuable work and move between states."

The value of the Fire Networks comes down to the connections made and the learning opportunities provided.

The call-as-needed crew model developed in recent years by the Southern Blue Ridge FLN was shared with members of the Fire Networks through the Prescribed Fire Learning Group and other means. It has informed capacity-building through similar as-needed crews in other landscapes, including the Blackfoot Valley FLN, Central Appalachians FLN, Island Park/Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem FLN, Sand Plain Pines FLN and the Conservancy's North America Fire team.

In Idaho, the success of this shared crew model used by the Island Park FLN in partnership with the Caribou-Targhee NF led to requests for similar collaboration by three other forests in the state. Crews were sent to the Idaho Panhandle NF, where they assisted with 460 acres of burning, and an agreement has been established with the Boise NF.



Over the last decade, with encouragement from TNC and the Southern Blue Ridge FLN, a South Carolina water utility company has embraced prescribed fire as a conservation tool. This year, the Southern Blue Ridge Fire Crew hosted by the North Carolina chapter of The Nature Conservancy mentored 23 staff from Greenville Water and other South Carolina partners in the safe use of prescribed fire.

© Adam Warwick/TNC

SPREADING SUCCESS

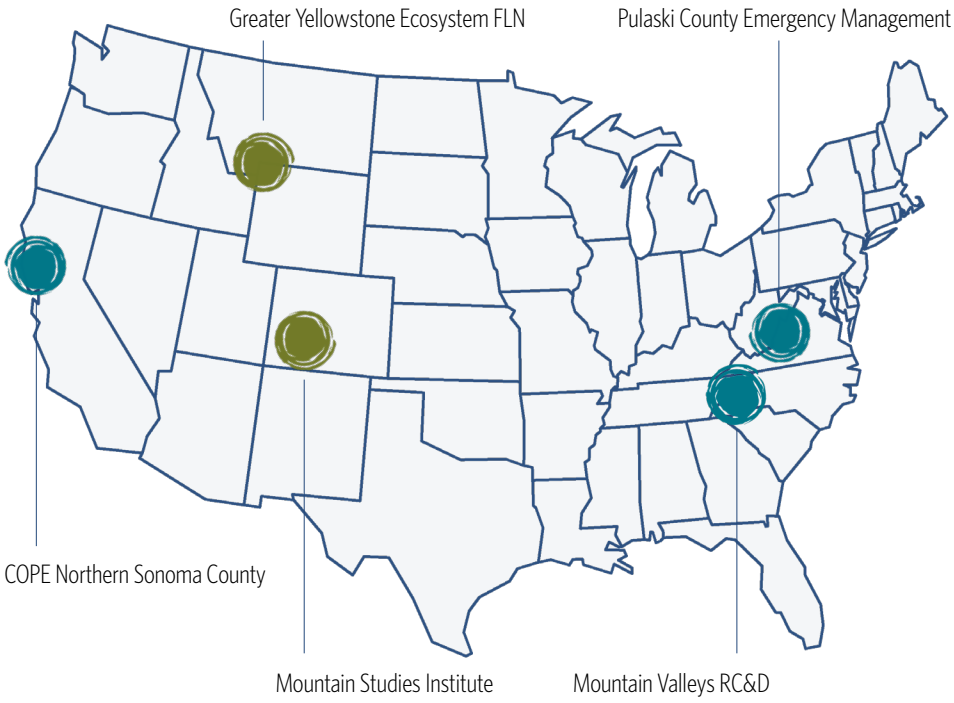
The networks themselves are growing—

FAC Net conducted an open call for additional core members this year, and selected three new member sites to join the network. New members—Mountain Valleys RC&D in North Carolina, Pulaski County Emergency Management in Virginia, and COPE Northern Sonoma County, California—were selected to add to the geographic and organizational diversity of the network.

Conversations began this spring with the Mountain Studies Institute in southwest Colorado, which will join the FLN in FY23. This new regional FLN will support partners that are centering wildland fire, including collaborative burning efforts like TREX, two CFLRP projects, the Rocky Mountain Restoration Initiative and local cross-boundary collaborations.

The FLN and FAC Net have been instrumental in helping the Island Park Sustainable Fire Community FLN launch the much broader Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem FLN.

"These networks are the primary way that I can stay up to speed on the industry and relay the latest from across the nation and beyond with Colorado practitioners and share from Colorado more broadly."





© Daniel White/TNC

Diversified funding has allowed us to expand our staff team and focus areas. Three private funders and a significant investment from the state of California are expanding our program reach and impact. These investments have allowed us to add two new staff members to the team--providing direct support to FAC practitioners in California as well as communications support with an emphasis on prescribed fire stories. Beyond additional staff capacity, private investments in DEIJ offerings, practitioner well-being and HEPA filter programs have been enabled this year. Our ability to diversify support for these critical components is a direct result of the investment this partnership has made in developing and demonstrating successful approaches to wildfire resilience.

SPREADING SUCCESS

The lessons, concepts and models that have come from the work of the Fire Networks and their members are spreading and being adopted more widely, extending the impact of our work.

Through conversation and first-hand experience, the Fire Networks were able to help the Hewlett Foundation shape its wildfire funding strategy, and shared insights with the field in the article "Reflections on Creating a Philanthropic Wildfire Strategy" by environment program fellow Jennee Kuang. "I was able to make two trips in October 2021 to Northern California for the Yurok and Klamath prescribed fire leaning exchanges (TREX). I had, at this point, spent many, many hours reading about and talking about fire—mostly perched in front of my screen in my Bay Area apartment. But I can't say I really knew what I was funding until some of my grantees showed me what fire meant within the place they call home. This was a powerful reminder of the need to prioritize getting to know and learning from the communities your work touches."



Loess Hills Cooperative Burn Week is a TREX-style event that since 2016 has been tailored to focus on local capacity-building in a unique multi-owner landform in western Iowa. It uses an IMT staffed by multiple agencies and organizations, and this year drew 91 participants from 36 different organizations who worked as a team bridging both land ownership and qualification standards.

This year the model has spread within the state. The Little Sioux Watershed Conservation Partnership held their first cooperative burn week in northwest Iowa, with coaching from the FLN lead who heads up the event in the Loess Hills. "It's great to see the Loess Hill model being adopted and implemented in other parts of the state to build fire capacity, expand training opportunities, and solidify more interagency relationships." © Jason Taylor/Bur Oak Land Trust

"The skills we continue to learn from the Fire Networks greatly contribute to the growing success of making fire more accessible to everyone, not just fire professionals, across California."



We facilitated five assignments for a wildland firefighter from South Africa who came to the U.S. to volunteer as a burn crew member, on a grant from her home country. She recently returned from working on a hotshot crew in Alaska and is now planning a WTREX in her home country.

© Daniel White/TNC

Many Paths to Resilience

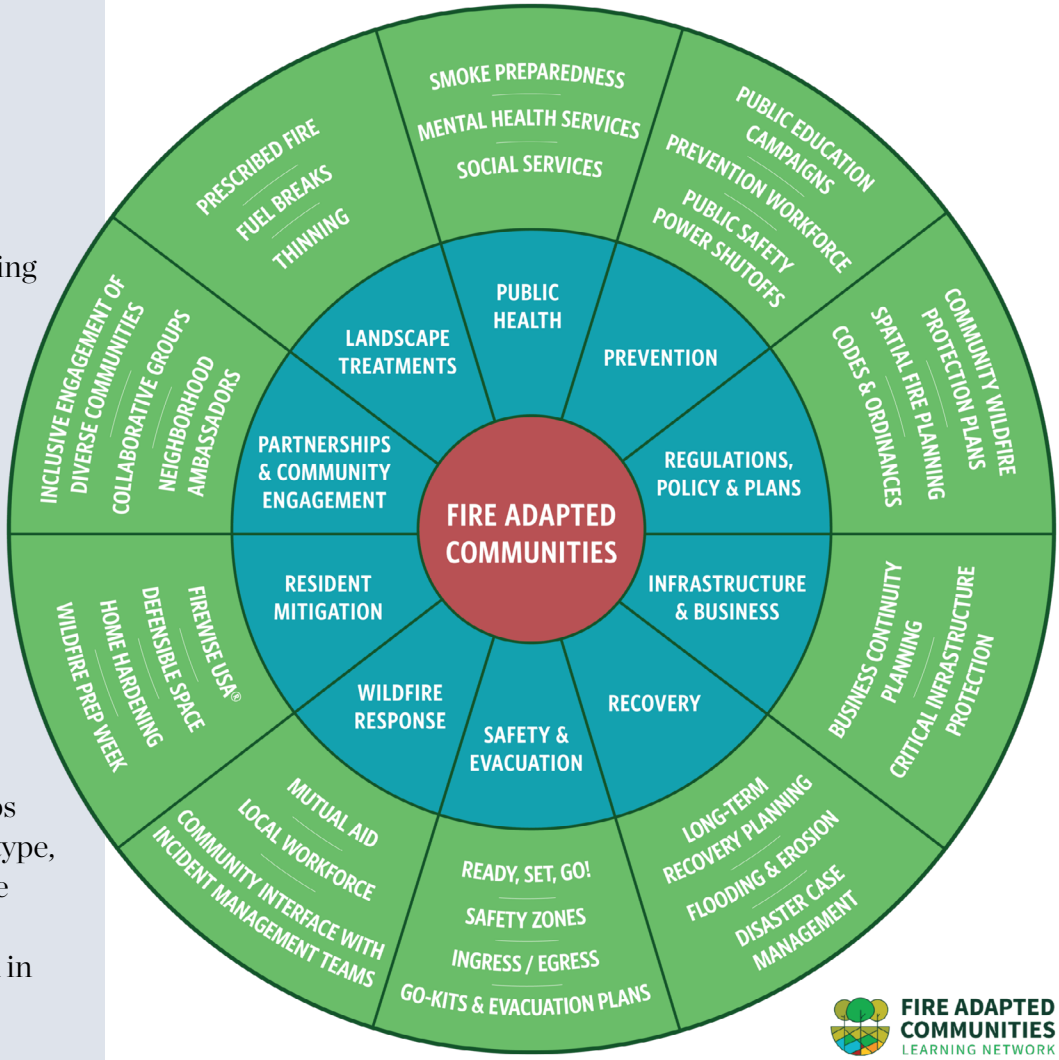
There is not a one-size-fits-all approach to wildfire resilience.

A NEW TOOL TO LIGHT THE WAY

Every community's journey to living better with fire is unique, and it changes through time.

"Where do we start, and where do we go from here?" can be daunting questions. FAC Net worked with Travis Paveglio—who approaches wildfire adaptation through the lens of "community archetypes"—to create a tool to support community leaders asking those questions. The Fire Adapted Communities Pathways Tool helps communities identify their archetype, which then helps them narrow the range of available FAC actions to those that are more likely to work in their situation.

For an overview of the new tool, see the FAC Net blog post "Introducing The Fire Adapted Communities Pathways Tool," which includes links to access the tool.



In 2019, FAC Net introduced the FAC actions wheel. Last year, based on user feedback, it was updated to include 10 areas of work, instead of the previous eight. The FAC Pathways Tool combines Dr. Paveglio's community archetypes work with different versions of the FAC wheel tailored for different social contexts.



Participants in the national FAC Net workshop in April beta-tested the new Pathways Tool. Their feedback resulted in the development of additional guidance to select an archetype that will be integrated into the web-based version of the Pathways Tool, currently in development and expected to launch in early 2023. © Tiernan Doyle/WRTC

NO ONE NEED WALK ALONE

From California to New Jersey, Washington to Georgia, our work empowers local people to navigate their own pathway toward a better relationship with fire.

We connect them with other people, and with programs, tools and ideas that they can adapt and use to help their communities live better with fire. We work with people over a period of years, making small, sustained investments as they tackle their challenges. And we learn from their work—carrying their lessons to other people and other places to advance change at larger scales.

We look forward to another challenging—and fruitful—year ahead, together.

"Our nation does not have a fire problem. It has many fire problems, and they require different strategies."
—Stephen Pyne









Tahoe Fire and Fuels Team received a 2022 Wildfire Mitigation Award. © IAFC; Flagstaff TREX crew at the Grand Canyon; Fire Adapted Montana network members visited the Rocky Mountain RD during a workshop. © Julia Berkey /Montana DNRC; Loess Hills Fire Partners. © Shelley Eisenhauer









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