

Karuk Tribe

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Recent accomplishments in this landscape include the establishment of the Western Klamath Restoration Partnership (WGRP), 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 WGRP 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 (WGRP) 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 WGRP. "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 WGRP 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 WGRP. 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 WGRP 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 WGRP 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/>

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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