



# FAC Learning Network Webinar Summary

## Learning Exchanges

### Connecting to Build Capacity and Spread Innovation

The Fire Adapted Communities (FAC) Learning Network held a webinar exploring learning exchanges hosted by Network members. The webinar featured presenters from the Fire Learning Network, and three different communities within the FAC Learning Network.

#### Prescribed Fire: TREX

Lenya Quinn-Davidson from the FAC Learning Network and Jeremy Bailey of the Fire Learning Network (FLN) presented on the FLN's prescribed fire training exchange (TREX) program. This program brings together participants from across the country to build fire qualifications while also increasing local capacity to implement projects on the ground. The trainings are typically structured as two-week, intensive events that emphasize a broad range of skills, including working the fire line, media engagement, and fire effects, as well as leadership and collaboration. Trainings are organized as fire incidents, complete with incident management teams, and participants act as both trainers and trainees. TREX helps increase capacity at multiple levels: the program builds capacity for local implementation, creates new regional networks of qualified burners and helps foster national networks of practitioners.



#### "From the Chat Box: Participant Insights"

"We often bring in other local and statewide fire districts to assist on our burns. We get the extra personnel and in exchange provide training opportunities and positions to complete PTBs. No money is exchanged, but we fill their gas tanks for the ride home and offer to assist them in their future burns."

Above: Firefighters during a TREX event in Nebraska, 2013. Ben Wheeler, Pheasants Forever.

#### FACE Fire

Justice Jones of the Austin Fire Department and Jerry McAdams of the Boise Fire Department gave a presentation on a new program modeled after a [learning exchange](#) that their departments implemented in 2015. The goal of the new effort, called "FACE Fire," is to accelerate learning in municipal fire departments that have a need to implement FAC practices.

This will be a joint initiative with the International Association of Fire Chiefs and the FAC Learning Network. The presentation focused on the importance of informal interactions in strengthening personal bonds. The effort also highlights the need to support departments in their wildlands work. Departments have an opportunity in places where the wildland urban interface connects with their jurisdiction. By acting as proponents for mitigation and FAC outreach, departments can reach citizens.

#### Pacific Northwest Roadshow

Annie Schmidt of the Chumstick Wildfire Stewardship Coalition presented on a new type of learning exchange being put together by Network members from Oregon and Washington. The idea is to have a FAC "roadshow" that includes three site visits wherein visitors will put on some type of formal training for the hosts. Hosts, visitors and the host region will all derive value from the exchanges. Exchange participants will develop overarching objectives for the program, as well as objectives for each individual visit and visitor-led training.

The plan is to launch the program in spring 2016. Each host will be responsible for designing the exchange to meet their local training needs; possible themes include home ignition zone training, Ready, Set, Go! training and tools and techniques for FAC outreach.



## Lessons Learned

The three presentations shared some common lessons learned about hosting and planning a quality learning exchange.

**1. Be clear in the purpose and objectives of your learning exchange.** Having clear objectives will help you get the most out of your time together. It will help participants understand why they are there, and what they should be getting out of your program.

**2. Maximize the value of being face-to-face.** Webinars and phone calls are great, but since your exchange is happening in person, take all the time you can to really maximize the benefits of being face-to-face. Hands-on activities and quality discussion time can help build lasting relationships. Plan meals together and use the time to help build trust and camaraderie.

**3. Diversity is a good thing.** Some learning exchanges may be focused on fire professionals, look for ways to include more people with different backgrounds and expertise.

**4. Maximize local knowledge and benefit.** Since your learning exchange is taking place in a community, take the time to understand how the broader community could benefit from the exchange, as well as how local knowledge could contribute to the depth of your program. Also try to emphasize lessons that participants can take back to their own communities.

**5. Involve the media.** Many people shy away from involving the media for fear of bad press. However, taking the time to educate your local media about FAC concepts, prescribed fire or whatever your exchange subject is could help you in the future when you want to convey a message to the broader community.

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*The Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network is supported by Promoting Ecosystem Resilience and Fire Adapted Communities Together, a cooperative agreement between The Nature Conservancy, USDA Forest Service and agencies of the Department of the Interior through a subaward to the Watershed Research and Training Center.*

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**6. Everyone is a teacher.** Whether participants are experienced fire professionals or new trainees, it's important to promote the idea that everyone has something to learn and something to teach. As the host or leader you may have some great learning to share, however your participants will also have valuable experiences that are beneficial to other participants.



Above: Filming during the Boise-Austin FD exchange in Austin, Texas. Wendy Fulks, TNC.

## Resources

For more information about the Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network, visit the website at [www.facnetwork.org](http://www.facnetwork.org) or email [info@facnetwork.org](mailto:info@facnetwork.org).

### 1. Fire Department Learning Exchange:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rKVGilpxnnA>

2. **TREX Information:** <https://www.conservationgateway.org/ConservationPractices/FireLandscapes/HabitatProtectionandRestoration/Training/TrainingExchanges/Pages/fire-training-exchanges.aspx>

### 3. Webinar Recordings:

Part 1: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wpN6susyNu0>

Part 2: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cj3OTCWLGYY>

Part 3: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AxPAP3vUhl>