Fire Adapted Communities Pathways Tool
Facilitation Guide

Suggested Citation:

Acknowledgements: The authors would like to acknowledge the significant contributions of practitioners and research participants across the nation whose experience has contributed to the understanding of community fire adaptation. In particular, we are grateful to Emily Troisi for her substantial contributions to this work. We are also grateful to research collaborators who helped develop and research the archetypes expanded upon in this tool, including Matthew S. Carroll, Daniel R. Williams, Pamela Jakes, Catrin Edgeley and Amanda Stasiewicz.
The FAC Pathways Tool is designed to support fire adaptation across a range of local conditions. It is NOT intended to provide "answers" or limit how a community decides to take action. Use the results of the Tool to think carefully about actions that suit local conditions. Graphics from the Tool are not a checklist. You will need to work with partners within your community to carefully consider which practices and priorities are best suited to advance fire adaptation in your place.

Important Notes

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- Graphics from the Tool are not a checklist. You will need to work with partners within your community to carefully consider which practices and priorities are best suited to advance fire adaptation in your place.
- Identifying a specific community will allow you to make the most of the Tool.

Above: A Fire Adapted Communities Pathways graphic for the High Amenity/High Resource archetype.
Understanding Tool contents
The Tool is organized in seven sections. The first section, the Introduction, includes information on how to use the Tool, and walks participants through Steps 1 and 2 of the Tool. The following five sections of the Tool are specific to each archetype. Each archetype-specific section contains a list of practices, Worksheet and Action Guide for that archetype. Users will only have to print or reference the single section specific to their archetype.

The final section, Practices by Category, provides a master list of all practices contained within the Tool as well as a Worksheet and Action Guide for those who wish not to use the Archetype framework.

Print the introductory section of the Tool (pages 1-14) first. If your group is able to easily identify an archetype (discussed in detail in the following pages of this Facilitation Guide), the only additional printed material you will need is the section specific to your archetype. See page numbers below.

Page numbers are provided below as a reference for printing. We recommend completing the exercises in the Worksheet and Action Guide on paper.

Tool Sections

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Using the FAC Pathways Tool

The following pages provide suggestions and guidance about potential ways to engage partners in collective use of the FAC Pathways Tool. Remember that the purpose of the Tool is to facilitate tailored adaptation that reflects local conditions. The customized pathway you help the community create via this Tool will contain a range of practices that local people and partners can implement to improve fire outcomes.

Partners and Process

Think about who should be involved in using the FAC Pathways Tool. A community may wish to engage some of the people with whom they already work on fire issues. Both larger, more representative groups, and small groups can successfully complete this process; however, facilitation needs will vary depending on who is involved.

Set aside time to work through the process. Completing the FAC Pathways Tool effectively is likely to take between 3.5 and 6 hours. The following format may be useful:

- Meeting 1: Introduce the Fire Adapted Communities Pathways Tool and define your community (between 90 and 120 minutes)
- Meeting 2: Determine your archetype and review the suggested practices (between 45 and 120 minutes)
- Meeting 3: Complete the Worksheet and Action Guide (between 90 and 120 minutes)

Alternatively, the FAC Pathways Tool could be completed during the course of a full-day, in-person workshop.

Allow time for conversation and discussion. The process of working through the Tool can be as beneficial as the practices the Tool can help you identify.

Equity Matters

Be mindful as you define your community and select an archetype. Without a thoughtful approach, inequitable systems could be reinforced. Implicit bias, current programs and investments, and many other factors are likely shaping your perceptions. There are several things you can do to improve the outcomes of this process from an equity lens:

- Include the people in the community of interest in this process.
- Authentically build relationships and connections to many different people within the community.
- Get hyper local. Strip away formal socio-political boundaries and get to the relationship-driven community boundaries that identify who sees themselves as connected in this work.
- Consider how the practices you ultimately select do or do not meet the needs of all of the residents in your community and how this could be mitigated.
- Recognize the power of diversity.
- Approach this work from an asset-based perspective rather than a deficit one.
- Recognize how injustice and exclusionary policies may have impacted the communities you are working with and do not reinforce inequitable systems with this process.
Understanding the Tool iconography, graphics and terms
Icons are used throughout the Tool to help convey concepts and provide graphic organization. This includes a road graphic (shown below) to help users identify where they are in the process. Icons are used in Step 2 to help communities determine their archetype and in the Practices by Category list to note which archetype the practice is associated with.

The FAC Pathways Tool contains customized graphics for each community archetype. The graphics, while based on the original Fire Adapted Communities Graphic, contain a set of distinct practices that have corresponding descriptions and suggested resources selected specifically for that archetype.

Familiarize yourself with the graphics and vocabulary before facilitating a conversation with partners.
Sample Graphic and Practices Page
Each archetype has a customized graphic and list of practices. Below is an example of what you can expect for each individual archetype.

Commercial and Highly Developed

Importance
Some categories have a star icon indicating they are of particular importance for this archetype. The starred categories indicate topical areas typically associated with significant opportunity or concern for this archetype.

Category
The same categories of practices are present in every archetype. These categories are found in the inner teal portion of the graphics and are used as headers for the associated descriptions and resources.

Practices
Practices are customized for each archetype. Each practice also has a more complete description (located below the graphic in each archetype-specific section). Considerations, resources and/or case studies are provided in the descriptions as applicable.

Landscape Treatments

Fuel breaks: Consider managing vegetation in natural areas adjacent to the community, in/near public parks, and/or around utility transmission lines to create conditions which are not conducive to high intensity fire....

Case Study: Shaded Fuel Breaks (Austin, Texas)
Selecting and describing a community

The first step in using the Tool is to determine the community of interest. This step is essential. It may be tempting to gloss over this step, but conversations with community members about the social and geographic bounds of their community will reveal important insights for the rest of the Tool process.

Community

Community can be defined in many ways; the Tool provides users with considerations for selecting a community. It will be helpful if you can eventually identify your community using some geospatial boundaries. These boundaries may be formal (e.g., a fire district or county limits), informal (e.g., drainages, mile markers, or local landmarks), or loosely defined.

When selecting your community, don’t just focus on the communities where you know you can accomplish work. Think about your entire area; there may be multiple communities contained in that space. Focus on one community as you use the Tool.

Community is a matter of degree; collective wildfire adaptation is about building community and the associated capacity to work together. There may be some places where community is harder to identify, and others where a strong sense of community makes it easy to summarize shared values, practices or approaches. Use your knowledge of an area to determine what assets a community already has, and where to build capacity or connections that facilitate shared action.

Possible discussion questions for helping participants define a community include:

- Where do people see themselves as having a "shared fate" in terms of wildfire risk or management right now?
- At what scale do people agree that their individual actions affect wildfire risk or its management in the area?
- Where would you need to engage distinct populations with different messages or programs for advancing wildfire adaptation?

*If you find yourselves gravitating to formal community boundaries (such as a county or fire district), consider whether this boundary is the appropriate scale for local fire adaptation action and peoples' willingness to work together.*
Determining the Community Archetype

Determining the archetype from which you would like to begin working is an important part of the process. However, it can be difficult as not every community is an exact match for one of the five provided archetypes. There are certainly more archetypes than those provided, so don't let difficulty in this step derail your process. **The goal is to select an archetype which is the closest match, not necessarily a perfect match.**

Archetypes

- If you can't come to consensus on which archetype is an initial starting point for your community, you may wish to use the alternative archetype selection options provided in Appendix A. **NOTE:** These options are being further evaluated to see if they are appropriate for inclusion in the Tool. They are provided as a courtesy, and may not work for everyone. If you are still unable to make an archetype selection, you can use the Practices by Category List and its included Worksheet and Action Guide.

- If you use the Practices by Category List and its included Worksheet and Action Guide, please note that this will take more time and will require more work from those completing the Tool than using an archetype.

- Focus on the characteristics **that do** reflect your community. If a few characteristics don’t fit, but important ones do, you can pay less attention to those characteristics which are not a perfect match. Selection of a guiding archetype provides suggested adaptation practices. Participants can evaluate other practices, as well as add their own, as part of the process.

- If participants are having a hard time selecting between two archetypes, you may find it helpful to review both graphics prior to making your initial selection.

Possible discussion and clarifying questions when selecting an archetype include:

- What characteristics best reflect this community?
- How is your community changing? Is a new archetype emerging?
- Which characteristics are most essential to the local people who live in your community? These are likely the most critical indicators to use in making this first choice.
- What are the defining characteristics that set this community apart from other nearby communities?
More about Archetypes (Appendix A)

The Tool provides three options (one in the main Tool and two in an appendix) to help facilitate the archetype selection process. All three options (including the method that is in the Tool itself) are presented in Appendix A as a courtesy. You may find that one method works better for you than the others.

The options are described briefly below.

**List Option**

This option is identical to the information presented in the main body of the Tool. Communities are advised to read all of the archetype descriptions and, after considering them in their entirety, select the archetype which is the best match for the community they identified in Step 1 of the Tool.

The list option may work well for people who want to consider the big picture, desire a minimum amount of instructions or decision process, or those who like to “go with their gut.”

**Group Option**

This option presents archetype characteristics in three broad groups: People, Place, and Interaction. Communities are advised to read all of the archetype characteristics in each group and select the archetype that is the best match for the community they identified in Step 1 of the Tool. At the end of the exercise, communities are prompted to review the archetype they selected for each group (people, place, and interaction) and then use those results to determine which archetype is the best match for their community.

This option may work well for people who want to compare archetype characteristics, those who would like a more structured process, and those who may not be comfortable making judgements based on broad categories.

**Tabular Option**

This option allows users to rate the fit of each archetype characteristic for the community they identified in Step 1 of the Tool. At the end of the exercise, communities are prompted to tally the scores for each archetype. Prompting questions then help participants reason through which option is the best match for their community.

The tabular option may work well for people who want to weigh each characteristic independently, who are willing to invest the time into individual scoring, and who like a more quantitative process.
Practices by Category List

If you are unable to come to an agreement on community archetype or feel that none of the archetypes match your community closely enough, you can use the Worksheet and Action Guide located at the end of the Practices by Category List.

Some groups may wish to review the Practices by Category List in addition to their archetype-specific list.

💡 At the beginning of the Practices by Category List is a navigation graphic. This will allow you to hyperlink to specific categories. At the end of each category section, in the lower right-hand corner of the page, is another hyperlink ("Return to Index") which will return you to the Practices by Category front page.

💡 If you choose to use the Practices by Category List as the foundation for your Worksheet and Action Guide, be prepared to invest considerable time working through the list of practices.

💡 If you choose to use the Practices by Category List to complete your Worksheet, participants are asked to select three to five practices from each category that are particularly "well-suited" to their community. These can be practices that communities are already using, practices they believe would be impactful or useful to them, or any other practice which they would like to explore. In the Action Guide step, participants will be asked to evaluate the feasibility and impact of these practices.

💡 It may be easier for you, particularly when facilitating a group, to focus on a few categories at a time. For example, you may want to spend time reviewing Wildfire Response and Recovery in one meeting, while talking through Resident Mitigation and Community Engagement at another meeting.

💡 If, after working through several categories, you find yourself gravitating to one archetype, it may make sense to review the archetype descriptions again and see if you are able to work directly from that archetype graphic and practices list.
Completing the Pathways Worksheet and Action Guide

After the completion of the Worksheet and Action Guide, participants should have a more clear understanding of which practices are impactful, feasible, and strategic in their community. The discussions which occur throughout the Worksheet and Action Guide process are AS IMPORTANT, if not MORE IMPORTANT, than the completed Worksheet and Action Guide.

Completing the Worksheet

The worksheet is not intended to provide a step-by-step plan or concrete prioritized actions for your community's fire adaptation. The worksheet helps you consider assets, needs, and opportunities.

Possible discussion questions related to the worksheet include:
- What makes a category of fire adaptation practices important to your community?
- How do you define impact?
- How are you determining what adaptation practices are feasible in your community?
- What non-monetary resources and assets do you have?

Completing the Action Guide

Facilitators should review the entire Action Guide prior to having participants complete the grid. Note the way the quadrants are characterized (High Impact/High Feasibility, Low Impact/High Feasibility, Low Impact/Low Feasibility, and High Impact/Low Feasibility).

There is no "scale" on this grid. Practices are placed relative to each other. It may be easiest to start with your most impactful practice or your most feasible practice and work from there.

Don't worry about being too exact or precise. It is more important that practices are generally in the correct quadrant.

Discussion questions for each quadrant are located in the Action Guide.
For More Information

The Fire Adapted Communities Pathways Tool is part of a suite of tools designed to support community-based fire adaptation. This Tool represents the first step in a larger project that will ultimately include a web-based portal for practitioners.

This Tool has been tested by members of the Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network but more testing is underway. For instance, three different methods to help communities select their archetype have been developed (see Appendix A).

If you, or your community, would like to participate in the testing and development process, please fill out this short form. Limited support may be available to pilot the Fire Adapted Communities Pathways Tool in your area.

Additional information, graphics, and more are available at www.fireadaptednetwork.org.

To share the results of your worksheet and action plan, email info@fireadaptednetwork.org. Your worksheet and action plan will be kept confidential; they can be of great help to practitioners, policymakers and researchers in the monitoring or design of programs and partnerships designed to help communities adapt to wildfire.

To learn more about the research involved in the creation of this Tool, email tpaveglio@uidaho.edu