



Great Basin Fire Science Exchange – 2014 Annual Report **Reporting Period: 1 October 2013 to 30 September 2014**

Highlight – Syntheses and Field Workshops

The Great Basin Fire Science Exchange’s most noteworthy achievements for FY2014 were the publication and distribution of our first printed synthesis, “A Review of Fire Effects on Vegetation and Soils in the Great Basin Region: Response and Ecological Site Characteristics,” (Miller and others 2014), and completion of four field workshops throughout the Great Basin to test the pre-disturbance and post-fire treatment field guides we are funding. We distributed approximately 2,000 syntheses in 10 months; 1,500 directly requested through the mail and 500 in person at ten different events. The field workshop series was attended by 76 participants whose input greatly improved the treatment guide score sheets that will form the heart of the two upcoming field guides that should be published in FY2015. Involving managers in the information production process is something we hope to expand.

Academic Courses

Two new academic courses, Synthesizing Science and Fire Policy, were added to the University of Idaho’s fire and natural resources programs that include Great Basin content. Our Exchange now collaborates with the U. of Idaho on ten courses (6 online and 4 classroom) with an approximate total of 266 students. The U. of Idaho estimates that 116 of these students are practicing fire or natural resource professionals.

Webinars

Our webinar series included five webinars, 220 participants, and 395 video views. There is an emerging pattern for webinar attendance. Webinars about collaborations (Rangeland Fire Protection Associations, the Fire Exchanges) or about how to access or use information (the Land Treatment Digital Library, using weather data to improve the probability of successful revegetation) are less popular than are webinars about project results (i.e., patterns of understory growth three years post-treatment, livestock grazing effects, SageSTEP short-term results, etc.). Webinars on SageSTEP project results continue to generate the greatest interest:

two webinars each had over 100 attendees. Jim McIver’s webinar on SageSTEP short-term results has had 225 video views since it was posted in January.

Talks, Briefs, Conferences

Our initial event plan for FY2014 was to co-sponsor and give a talk at the Great Basin Consortium 3 Conference in Reno, NV; to co-host a special session on “Avoiding Post-Fire Conversion to Annual Grasses” and have an information booth at the Large Wildland Fires Conference in Missoula, MT; and to brief attendees of the Interpreting Indicators of Rangeland Health classes in Twin Falls, ID and Burns, OR. A suite of additional opportunities arose and we responded with contributed talks, briefings, and exhibits at six more conferences and meetings:

- Restoring the West Conference, Logan, UT (with the So. Rockies Fire Science Network)
- Gambel Oak meeting for land managers, Lehi, UT (with the So. Rockies Fire Science Network)
- Eastern Nevada Landscape Coalition and Piñon-Juniper Partnership Summer Conference, Reno, NV
- Science Coordination Meeting of agency leaders, Washington, D.C.
- University of Nevada Field Day, Reno, NV
- Healthy Hills Initiative Field Workshop on Medusahead, Ada County, ID

Our presence at all ten of these events resulted in project exposure to over 500 people and 54 additions to our list serve. The briefing in Washington, D.C. also provided important exposure to agency leaders who can convey the importance of Great Basin land science-management communication to our elected officials. See Table 1 for a list of activities and number of participants.

Table 1: Activities and Participation

Activity (conducted, hosted, organized, facilitated, sponsored, or produced)	Completed Activities	Estimated Total # Participants
Talks and Personal Briefings About The Exchange	5	264
Newsletters Produced	12	381
Fact Sheets and Handouts Produced	1	76
Tweets	53	427
Facebook Postings	29	45
Other Social Media	0	0
Blog Posts	0	0
Webinars	5	220
Podcasts	0	0
Guidelines or Guidebooks	0	0
Syntheses	2	1,500
Encyclopedia	0	0

Database	5	31
Conferences/Workshops	2	265
Conference or Symposia Presentation*	1	165
Poster Presentation*	4	24
Short Courses and Continuing Education Units	0	0
Academic Credit Courses	10	266
Bibliography or Annotated Bibliography	1	0
Video/Vimeo productions	0	0
Requests for Information, Assistance, or Referrals	6	15
Field Trip, Tour, Demonstration or Roadshow	4	76
Field Consultations and Expert Cadres	1	26
Training Sessions	0	0
Leadership Briefings	1	35

* # participants at the talk or poster not entire conference

Participation

In addition to exposure at conferences and meetings, participants are also finding out about us through their own searches. Recently Lori Sicafuse, with the UNR Evaluation Team, informed us that our Exchange has a high proportion of referrals from self-search versus direct referrals from other organizations, and commented that this was a “promising” development. And, of the 88 additional list serve members since last year (Table 2), 30 signed up on their own through our website or social media rather than through the coordinator or an event. Most of our list serve categories have retained stable numbers since last year (including the NOAA and Other categories which have now been combined), with the exception of state agencies, university faculty, NGO’s, BLM, FWS, and USFS, all of which have grown.

Table 2: Participation by Organization (from mailing list subscribers)

Organization	# Participants
Tribal Nations	9
States	32
Counties/Burroughs/Parishes	2
Cities and Local Communities	1
Regional Authorities	0
Private Landowner	1
Private Associations	0
Companies	6
Consultants	2
Foreign Organizations & Individuals	2
University and College Faculty or Researchers	73
University and College Students	7
Prescribed Fire Councils	0

Fire Learning Network and The Nature Conservancy	1
NGOs (not listed above)	26
Bureau of Indian Affairs	4
Bureau of Land Management	109
Fish and Wildlife Service	25
Forest Service (National Forests, Grasslands, State and Private Forestry)	53
Forest Service Research	9
Geological Survey	8
National Park Service	9
Natural Resources Conservation Service	16
US Bureau of Reclamation	0
NOAA and National Weather Service	2
ARS	5
NASA	1
Department of Defense including Coast Guard	0
United States Fire Administration	0
Other	22
Total	425

Partnerships

We continue to have strong partnerships with the Great Basin Consortium (Research and Management Partnership, Landscape Conservation Cooperative, Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit, Environmental Program, and the Restoration Initiative), the SageSTEP Project, BLM, USFS, USGS, NRCS, and the JFSP Fire Science Exchanges. Specialists with these entities contribute with webinar topics and presenters, website content, editing and distribution of publications, planning and organizing field workshops, and planning of future events and products. We are strengthening our partnerships with the Great Basin Native Seed Project and the Great Basin Society for Ecological Restoration, who will contribute to our webinar series in FY2015. And, we are improving our collaboration with the Nevada Network of Fire Adapted Communities as we plan to share each other's information on our respective websites as well as work together to increase the exchange of fuels management information with private landowners.

Challenges

The aforementioned priorities have been successful, but others are proving slower to come to fruition. Our Restoration Cadre helped develop our synthesis distribution list earlier this year, but has largely been inactive since. We have developed a plan to re-organize this network but its full implementation has yet to occur due to our time constraints while focusing on the above

priorities. This is something we will build on next year. In FY2014 we intended to improve our outreach to tribes. We have established important contacts and initiated discussions for inclusion of a tribal representative on our steering committee in FY2015. We also hoped to publish more syntheses by this time but completion dates for these projects were pushed into FY2015. Numerous factors have contributed to these delays, including: 1) authors' time constraints for production, 2) unexpected constraints on our own time to provide feedback and editing, 3) incorporating managers input in the process of score sheet development, and 4) deciding to create two separate field guides for pre- and post-disturbance treatment guidelines rather than one large guide.

Moving Forward

Next year we will continue to build upon our successes as well as make some changes. At the end of FY2014 the Steering Committee decided to change the last word of our name from "Delivery" to "Exchange." This better reflects the ongoing *discussion* of fire and fuels management issues that we hope to expand between managers and scientists in the Great Basin. We will also move to the new website template designed by the Joint Fire Science Program contractors. This should make it easier for our participants to access information, get their questions answered, or start discussions. We intend to gather input from the various needs assessment groups (WAFWA, LCC, Science Coordination), and combine it with our queries received directly from managers to create a list of priority management questions and potential information sources. The sought after knowledge and information may be incomplete but our intent is to direct managers to the best information sources available. As we see our webinar video views increase, our bibliography visits decline, and our managers comment that they don't have the time to use journals, it has become increasingly clear that paper and video *briefs* are more useful to managers. To address this, we plan to develop a series of topical briefs with 3-5 minute paired videos on management questions such as the trade-offs involved with seeding native and non-native species and with greenstripping intact sagebrush habitat to prevent catastrophic wildfire. We plan to hire part time support to assist with these tasks, as well as look for additional sources of funding to maintain that support for project development.