



Feather River College and Agency Partners Plan Prescribed Fire Training

For Immediate Release
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Nineteen professionals from multiple fire agencies met at Feather River College to plan prescribed fire training in Northern California and the Plumas County region. Building upon the newly approved Feather River College bachelor's degree in Ecosystem Restoration and Applied Fire Management, leaders from several local, state, and federal agencies met to plan an approach for prescribed fire training based upon existing partnerships, available resources, training needs, and potential opportunities. The ultimate goal is to coordinate training and develop joint opportunities as the profession of prescribed fire management develops as a widely used strategy in the prevention of future catastrophic wildfires. Involvement from FRC serves as a nexus for training and engagement with the bachelor's degree when the first cohort of students begins in the Fall 2024 semester.

Lead by Lenya Quinn-Davidson, Director of University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources Fire Network, FRC faculty met with leaders from Plumas National Forest, Cal Fire, Watershed Resource Training Center, Plumas Fire Safe Council, Chico State University Ecological Reserve, other agencies, and local California certified burn bosses. The goal was to develop collaborative training strategies and professional standards for the four major entities involved with prescribed fire: federal, state, private, and indigenous groups.

Using a hub-and-spoke analogy, centralized training objectives require further development while spokes will distribute professional training across Northern California involving the various agencies mentioned above. Attendees specified that the need for a central, large physical training center may not be the best approach. The hub and spokes are not necessarily physical locations, rather they are knowledge and trainings that can be dispersed for the largest impact on developing a trained workforce dedicated to safe, professional prescribed fires as a prevention tool and forest health model.

Lenya Quinn-Davidson stated that several excellent training models exist such as Training Exchange Programs (TREX) programs, Cal Fire training, National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG), and US Forest Service continuing education. While there will certainly be overlap between these trainings, the goal is to incorporate partnerships to decentralize professional training and certification, ranging from professionals in the fire suppression field, to local and state agencies, and private land owners that hold burn boss certification.

The new FRC bachelor's degree in Ecosystem Restoration and Applied Fire Management has several outcomes including: safely planning for and using prescribed fire as restoration and management tool; earning federal and state burn boss and certifications for various skills related to wildland fire; planning

and executing effective reforestation work as well as forest and fuels management; and planning and executing effective riparian restoration work. These goals match with the training needs described by federal agencies, state resources, local communities, and including private enterprises. Serving the high Sierra ecosystem, the unique FRC degree is not available anywhere in California, connecting indigenous management techniques, ecosystem restoration, and professional standards specifically to the Sierra Nevada environment.

Dr. Kevin Trutna, Feather River College Superintendent/President commented, “Bringing together this many diverse partners on campus shows the immediate need for trained individuals across all of California and the importance of training professionals in utilizing prescribed fire as a forest management tool.” FRC will continue to partner with private individuals, state, federal, local and indigenous communities to finalize the curriculum for the bachelor’s degree. “Everyone in attendance agreed that the future of the Sierra Nevada relies upon all agencies and educational institutions putting every effort forward to prevent future catastrophic destruction and restore watersheds from recent megafires,” added Dr. Trutna.

Multiple Fire Agencies Meet at Feather River College to Discuss Prescribed Fire Training Needs (left to right)

Bill Jacks, Local Prescribed Fire Practitioner and advocate

Eli Goodsell, CSU Chico - Ecological Reserves Director

Jaime Gamboa, US Forest Service - Deputy Director of Fire and Aviation Management

Jonathan Pangburn, CalFire Lassen-Modoc Forester



About Feather River College

Feather River College (FRC) is located in the beautiful Sierra Nevada mountain range in Quincy, California. It is a small, rural public community college offering traditional courses in transfer programs, career and technical training, basic skills, general education, as well as specialized programs in equine studies, outdoor recreation leadership, and fish hatchery management. The only California community college to offer a bachelor's degree in Equine and Ranch Management, and recently approved for a new bachelor's degree in Ecosystem Restoration and Applied Fire Management, FRC also features a variety of other unique programs and degrees. FRC offers intimate class sizes so students receive individual attention from faculty and staff to enhance their education. FRC is changing the way people think of a typical college experience by utilizing "the million acre classroom" surrounding campus. On top of offering unique programs, competitive athletics, and student housing; Feather River College is a leader in environmentally sustainable practices, including managing the on-campus forest. Academically, FRC ranks at the top for transfer, graduation, and retention rates among small California community colleges. For further information, visit www.frc.edu.