



A view of Forks of Salmon, showing the effects of the 2008 and 2013 wildfires, taken by Thomas Dunklin.

## The Western Klamath Restoration Partnership (WKRP)

seeks to build trust and a shared vision for restoring fire resilience at the landscape scale. The past century of fire exclusion has severely impacted water supplies, forest health, communities, cultural resources, and threatened species throughout the Klamath Mountains and beyond.

This Partnership has allowed diverse stakeholders to come together to accomplish work by identifying Zones of Agreement where all parties agree upslope restoration needs to occur. Together, we created a plan for restoring fire resilience at the landscape scale, founded upon Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) and practices and concepts outlined in the National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy.

This plan incorporates ecological, economic, social and cultural values spatially across a 1.2 million acre landscape to determine where restoration treatments would yield the most beneficial results with the least amount of impacts. WKRP is a collaborative land and fire management effort between Tribal, Federal, and Non-Governmental (NGO) stakeholders in the Western Klamath Mountains of Northern California. It is based on 20 years of collaborative work between diverse partners, ultimately forming the WKRP in 2013.



Some of the many WKRP participants, photo taken on a WKRP field trip.



Local 2014 TREX participants.

## Shared Values

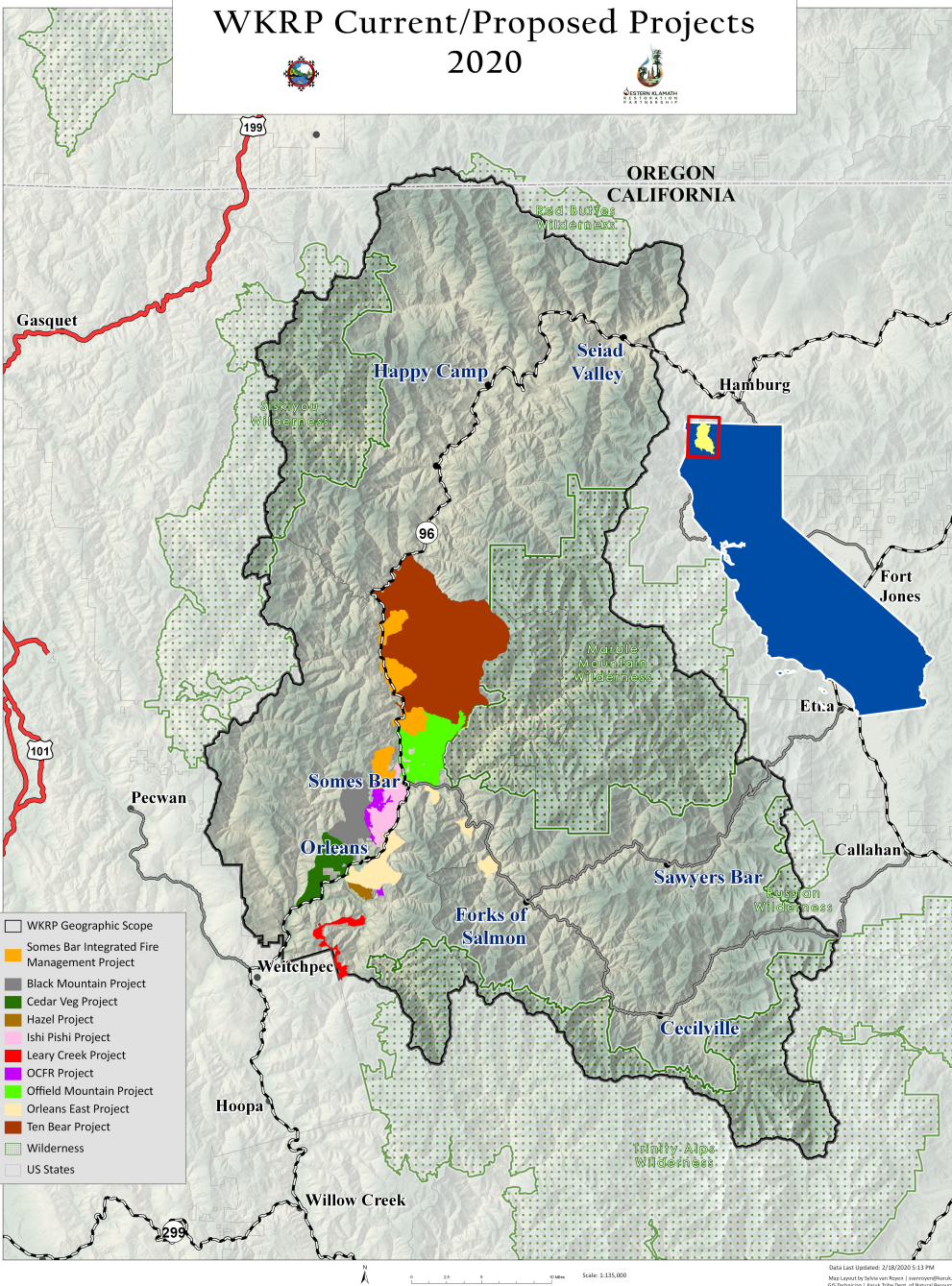
- ◆ Fire adapted communities
- ◆ Restored fire regimes
- ◆ Healthy river systems
- ◆ Resilient bio-diverse forests/plants and animals
- ◆ Sustainable local economies
- ◆ Cultural and community vitality

## WKRP Quick Facts

- ◆ Total project area is **1.2 million acres**
- ◆ Occurring within the **ancestral territory of the Karuk Tribe** and the **Six Rivers** and **Klamath National Forests**
- ◆ More than **40,000 acres** addressed in Pilot Projects in **Orleans/Somes Bar, Happy Camp, and Salmon River**
- ◆ More than **1,000 acres** treated through Prescribed Fire Training Exchange (**TREX**) events
- ◆ More than **200 people**, local area residents and fire professionals trained through TREX and other capacity building efforts

# WKRP Current/Proposed Projects

2020



**"Never since the last Ice Age have the forests of the Western Klamath Mountains experienced less fire than in the past century,"**

**Carl Skinner, PSW Research Station, USFS, retired.**

After a century of fire exclusion and even-aged forest management, forests in the Western Klamath Mountains are in serious need of ecological restoration treatments to restore fire process and function. Restoring fire processes can create resilient landscapes, providing integral resources and services to ecosystems and communities. These include improved water quality and yield, healthy streams and aquatic populations, increased wildlife and plant diversity, cultural revitalization and a reliable supply of forest products. Local tribes and the general public depend on our landscape for a variety of social, economic and ecological factors. Treatments proposed by the WKRP will produce sustainable beneficial outcomes, creating forests and communities that are more resilient to stressors, which range from recent extreme wildfires and invasive species infestations, to climate change and drought. With more than 90% of the 1.2 million acre WKRP area in publicly owned national forest lands, there is an opportunity to collaboratively pursue significant large-scale ecological forest restoration. The Western Klamath Mountains historically experienced fires on average every 3 to 15 years. The landscape today tells a story of the traditional human/fire relationships of our past – and can guide future fire management strategies. The Karuk Tribe has refined these strategies over thousands of years to maximize diversity, resiliency, and resource production. The WKRP seeks to restore these practices, enhanced by western science, in order to restore and maintain these critical ecosystem processes.

**As a Cohesive Strategy demonstration project,** we are providing a rare example of how to build local capacity for implementing prescribed fire at larger scales. The vision of the National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy is to safely and effectively extinguish fire when needed; use fire where allowable; manage our natural resources; and as a nation, learn to live with wildland fire. As Tom Harbour, retired national director of fire and aviation for the USFS, says: *"The outcome of the cohesive strategy effort is more than a set of documents. It is a commitment to the doctrine 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."*

**WESTERN KLAMATH RESTORATION PARTNERSHIP**

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**Scaling Up Good Fire to the Landscape Scale:** WKRP has initiated a series of pilot projects to reintroduce fire processes safely to over 40,000 acres in the communities of Orleans, Somes Bar, Happy Camp and Salmon River. (see map above)

