

Kittitas Fire Adapted Communities Coalition Workshop Report

Prepared for the Kittitas Fire Adapted Communities Coalition

by:

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This report summarizes outcomes and themes that emerged during two workshops co-designed by university facilitators and members of the Kittitas Fire Adapted Communities Coalition (hereafter KFACC). The primary purposes of the first workshop convened on October 4, 2019, concerned: (1) Developing KFACC member consensus about the priority strategies the organization will prioritize during the next two years; and (2) exploring actionable next steps and tasks for making progress on the priority strategies offered by the group.

University facilitators reflected on discussions and outcomes from the first workshop with a subset of KFACC members to propose three more specific goals for a second workshop convened on Nov. 15th, 2019. The primary purposes of that second workshop were as follows: (1) Identify a range of communities and corresponding adaption projects for future funding opportunities; (2) explore opportunities and challenges influencing area communities capacity to partner on adaption projects; and (3) to explore how systematic description of community context may help influence the design of specific community adaptation projects tailored to unique communities.

The following sections of this report will outline the various stages and preliminary outcomes that emerged from each of the workshops. This includes preliminary themes and examples emerging from the various activities prompted among KFACC members during the facilitated exercises. We outline some preliminary recommendations and insights designed to help KFACC members plan and discuss the future of the organization. We also provide a shortened executive summary of key themes and final recommendations in as a separate section at the end of this report (see page 16).

Workshop 1 results: Organizational priorities and influences on specific tasks

Facilitators reviewed the 2019 Annual Work Plan for KFACC, existing lists of KFACC projects and outcomes from initial facilitated workshops that led to the genesis of the organization. Facilitators and KFACC members decided that discussion and facilitated prioritization of focal strategies outlined in the Annual Work Plan were a good place to start given that the large number of strategies outlined were likely beyond the capacity of the organization to achieve in the next two years. As such, facilitators designed and administered a preliminary survey asking KFACC members to rank the annual work plan strategies within each of the three primary program areas outlined by the group (i.e. Fire Adapted Communities; Landscape Resiliency; and Wildfire Response and First Responder Safety). Results from that initial ranking are presented in a later section below. 18 KFACC members attended the first workshop convened on October 4, 2019.

Initial discussion of organizational strengths, influences and opportunities

Facilitators split KFACC participants into three stratified groups comprised of diverse representation across members (i.e. federal, state, or local agency representation, fire managers, residents or those who primarily engage with residents). Each group was asked to brainstorm: (1) KFACC successes and reasons for those successes; (2) organizational strengths and ways to capitalize on momentum gained by the organization (see workshop materials or associated PowerPoint facilitation guides provided to KFACC members for the full progression of activities). Each group reported findings to other workshop participants. Salient themes emerging from this exercise included:

1. KFACC has **facilitated unity and regular coordination among diverse entities and organizations operating in the county**. That coordination has resulted in a more cohesive narrative promoted by organizational members to their own agencies, local governments or members of broader publics and has resulted in greater success in grant funding or project implementation.
2. Participants listed a number of completed or ongoing projects as successes that helped perpetuate continued investment of time and relationships among KFACC members, including the Mapseed portal for resident outreach and data collection, educational videos, the Community Wildfire Protection Plan update, collaborative fuel reduction projects and joint grant applications across agencies/organizations. Participants noted that **the diversity of knowledge and expertise represented by the KFACC group influenced the success of these projects**. Similarly, KFACC diversity perpetuated interest to meet because various members could learn about or gather feedback on a variety of adaptation efforts occurring in the county.
3. Participants agreed that **a paid, dedicated coordinator position was of particular importance to existing and ongoing KFACC successes**. They indicated that such a position needed to be made permanent to facilitate continued organization and engagement of participants. Other salient influences included existing relationships, capacities and trust established in the region through the Tapash Sustainable Forest Collaborative, recent large wildfires in the region and the desire to provide consistent

messaging among agencies to reduce confusion among various audiences (e.g. local government officials, state or federal policymakers, diverse resident communities).

4. Discussions about ways to capitalize on KFACC strengths revealed a predominant perception that **the organization is at or nearing a critical evolution point**. That is, while KFACC was highly valued for the development of shared purpose it created, members also wanted to explore how they could start to interface with or influence a broader network of tangible projects, organizations or collective decisions about fire and land management. This theme resonated throughout various components of the workshop.
5. Other common strategies articulated by participants as ways to capitalize on KFACC progress included developing methods and practices that would help assess outcomes associated with KFACC projects and link them into **a more coherent narrative articulating the unique impact of the organization**. For instance, respondents discussed exploring avenues for evaluating the best communication channels for continued media engagement and exploration of the ways those messages are linked to tangible outcomes (e.g. additional establishment of defensible space, support for fuel breaks, designation of homeowners association (HOA) standards or committees for wildfire risk management). They also discussed engaging a broader array of interests as representatives in KFACC, including local businesses, HOAs, irrigation districts, additional fire districts and local government officials such as city council members.

Prioritizing annual work plan tasks

Results from the pre-workshop survey of KFACC members are presented in Tables 1-3 and Figure 1 below. Facilitators received 21 responses to the survey, and results were presented to participants at the first workshop for further discussion and subsequent prioritization exercises (the latter of which are described below).

Developing outreach activities or messaging and defining the audience to receive targeted adaptation messages were ranked as the highest priorities in the Fire Adapted Communities area by survey respondents, followed by *promoting defensible space and home hardening* (See Table 1 for full list). *Promoting resources for post wildfire risk and updating the CWPP* were ranked the lowest in the area.

Table 1. Fire Adapted Communities strategy survey rankings, where lower average scores indicate a higher overall ranking by respondents.

Strategies	Average	SD
Develop outreach activities/messaging	2.1	1.1
Define the audience and targeted messages	2.7	1.7
Promote defensible space and home hardening	2.8	1.2
Plan for new grant sources and funding	3.6	1.5

Encourage Firewise USA/home assessments	4.9	1.5
Promote resources for post wildfire risks	5.4	1.4
Update CWPP	6.4	1.1

Survey respondents indicated that *developing a prioritized list of fuel reduction treatments* and *developing landscape prescriptions across ownerships* were the highest priorities in the Landscape Resiliency area, followed by *removal of barriers for private lands treatment* (See Table 2 for full list). *Cultivating a local Burned Area Emergency Response team* was ranked lowest by survey participants.

Table 2. Landscape Resiliency strategy rankings, where lower average scores indicate a higher overall ranking by respondents.

Strategies	Average	SD
Develop a prioritized list of fuel reduction treatments	1.9	1.7
Develop landscape prescriptions across ownerships	3.4	1.7
Removal of barriers for private lands treatment	3.4	1.1
Coordinate private fuels treatments with NEPA landscapes	3.6	1.5
Promote education opportunities and projects around prescribed fire	4.6	1.7
Research alternative methods of slash disposal and vegetation management	4.9	2.1
Cultivate a local Burned Area Emergency Response team	6.3	0.7

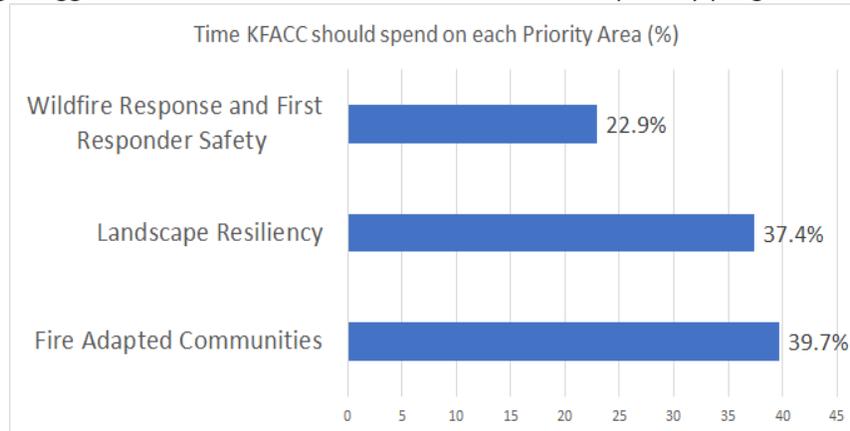
Developing cross-boundary “pre-fire” response plans and agreements ranked as the highest strategy in the Wildfire Response and First Responder Safety area among survey respondents. *Encouraging training opportunities across fire district or departmental boundaries* emerged as the second highest priority ranking. *Investing in essential infrastructure* rated the lowest among survey respondents.

Table 3. Wildfire Response and First Responder Safety strategy rankings, where lower average scores indicate a higher overall ranking by respondents.

Strategies	Average	SD
Develop cross-boundary “pre-fire” response plans and agreements	2.6	1.9
Encourage training opportunities across fire district/department boundaries	3.0	1.6
Complete and distribute Emergency Preparedness/Evacuation Video	3.1	1.7
Enhance communication during fire response	3.7	1.0
Assist Emergency First Responders with emergency response	4.2	1.8
Invest in essential infrastructure	4.4	1.5

Finally, survey respondents allocated the amount of time (0-100%) the organization should spend on each of the three program priority areas (See Figure 1). The Fire Adapted Communities area received the highest average allocation of KFACC time (39.7%), followed closely by the Landscape Resiliency area (37.4%). The Wildfire Response and First Responder Safety category received the lowest average allocation of time among survey respondents (22.9%).

Figure 1. Average suggested allocation of KFACC time toward three priority program areas.



Facilitators led workshop participants through a series of tasks designed to advance consideration about the strategies in each priority area and discuss final prioritizations moving forward. Those steps included completion of the following tasks: (1) having each participant “map” strategies within each priority area on a wall graph where the y-axis represented increasing importance of the strategy for advancing fire adaptation and the x-axis represented the feasibility of progress during the next two years (see workshop materials for wall graph); (2) having each participant describe their reasons for each ranking to other members of the group;

and (3) having each participant allocate three final priority votes among the strategies within that priority area. Groups completed these tasks for each of the three priority areas and then shared their findings with other groups to compare prioritizations.

Results of the prioritization effort revealed relatively high consistency among the top priorities in the Fire Adapted Communities area. The top two priorities that emerged across groups were:

1. Defining the audience for and targeted messages surrounding fire adaptation

Participants indicated that understanding how to best engage with diverse populations of residential landowners or craft KFACT position statements that could influence decision-makers at different governmental levels (i.e. county commissioners, state policymakers, agency decisionmakers) were key next steps that could lead to expanded KFACT presence. Likewise, identification of audience characteristics, and uncertainty about how best to tailor opportunities for collaborative fire adaptation across populations were viewed by participants as a primary barrier to more tangible adaptation outcomes.

2. Planning for new funding

Workshop participants indicated that planning for new funding was a priority because it was necessary to sustain or expand the coordinator position that KFACT members identified earlier as a critical need. They noted that funding is needed to continue outreach, mitigation or messaging efforts as there is currently no sustainable mechanism for funding such initiatives at a local level. Therefore, pursuit of new funding encompassed three primary efforts: (1) application for existing mitigation grants to continue projects; (2) providing stop-gap funding for the coordinator position and; (3) communicating priorities for new funding authorities at the state or federal level that would help advance organizations such as KFACT.

Results from the Landscape Resiliency prioritization were less consistent across groups due to varying interpretations of priorities or overlap between priorities. For instance, participants split their priorities among various strategies associated with fuels treatments, including coordinating private fuels treatment with NEPA processes, developing landscape prescriptions across ownerships and developing a prioritized list of fuels treatments. Further discussion across groups led to agreement on two top priorities as follows:

1. Develop a prioritized list of fuels treatments

Participants felt that this priority could help to encompass elements of landscape prescriptions that cross ownerships and include coordination of fuels treatment with NEPA ready landscapes without being constrained by those other priorities. Instead, participants felt that KFACT members could coordinate existing datasets and potential treatments across organizations represented by KFACT to produce their own weightings for different treatment options. For instance, participants indicated that the organization should develop a weighting system for evaluating shaded fuel break locations on private lands, or to provide input on existing prioritization schemes developed by agencies. Such prioritizations could include and complement existing lists of treatment options associated with priority landscapes (e.g.

Department of Natural Resources 20-Year Forest Health Strategic Plan) or federal projects (e.g. Joint Chiefs projects).

2. Removal of barriers for private treatment

Participants in all groups indicated a high level of agreement for this priority. They indicated that significant forest management was needed on the expanding number of forested residential properties at risk from wildfire or in proximity to public lands in Kittitas county. However, access to consulting foresters, completion of forest plans, cost of forest management, and the increasing number of seasonal, second or commuting residential landowners were large barriers to completing more fuels treatment on private lands, even with cost-share funding available. It is important to note that this priority also relates heavily to the Fire Adapted Communities priority area.

There also was relatively high levels of agreement among groups with regard to the Wildfire Response and First Responder Safety area. Participants across groups articulated how KFACC roles in response and safety area should be more complimentary or supportive of existing fire service initiatives. In that respect they felt that KFACC could help facilitate or augment fire response in directed ways associated with private landowners and residents. Additional discussion across groups revealed the following two top priorities:

1. Develop cross-boundary “pre fire” response plans.

Participants indicated that KFACC could help engage private landowner groups in mitigations or planning that facilitated effective fire response when necessary. This might include evacuation planning, roadway fuels reduction and access that would increase efficiency and decrease complexity of fire response. Likewise, this priority was seen as complementary to priorities about consistent messaging and outreach to Kittitas county residents, including those that engender support for mitigation through reduction of risk to firefighters.

2. Enhance communication during fire response

Participants selected this priority because they felt it encompassed the highly rated strategy of “completing an emergency preparedness/Evacuation video.” They felt that KFACC could help assist with messaging and engage with public information officers to prepare communities and residents to increase efficiencies or short-term needs during fire events (e.g. shelter locations, coordinated messaging, updates). This included finding ways to promote and enhance programs such as Ready, Set, Go!

Developing action items and tasks for KFACC projects

The final set of tasks for the first workshop concerned the development of the most important tasks for advancing progress on the priority actions described in the previous section. Facilitators assigned participants into a second set of stratified groups to diversify interaction among KFACC members during various activities comprising the workshop.

Participants generally struggled more with the development of concrete steps associated with larger priority goals. Discussion among group members indicated key issues or

understandings that the KFACC group could potentially spend additional time clarifying as base positions. They also took different tactics for outlining progress on the tasks. For instance, participants indicated that various agencies already had existing datasets of past fuels reduction treatments and prioritized future treatments. Comparison across these datasets was needed. Others indicated that such databases could not necessarily be compared due to different authorities, policies, and targets associated with various landowners. Concerning Fire Adapted Communities, participants disagreed over the sequence of needed activities. Some prioritized developing and pushing out more messaging surrounding mitigation and wildfire management using existing guidance, while others felt a more information and effort should be spent on understanding the various audience values, needs and capacities to better “tailor” collaborations surrounding adaptation. Each of these examples illustrates the need for KFACC to **select a few priority areas and focus on creating a set of achievable steps for making reasoned decisions about organizational progress**. Those steps likely need to include small, but manageable projects to advance larger goals. We provide examples of such recommendations at the end of the executive summary section below, while the following section outlines the primary tasks developed by the groups during the workshop:

Fire Adapted Communities Strategy 1: Define audiences, messages

Participants discussion identified a need to **better characterize existing communities within Kittitas County** as a primary next step for advancement of KFACC goals. That meant learning about and better cataloguing the understandings, influences, capacities and potential incentives that might lead to differential adaptation options among diverse resident groups in the region. It also meant understanding municipal or fire district perspectives about KFACC roles as they also help influence fire adaptation initiatives. Participants indicated that better characterization would require developing or adopting particular attributes that help understand what communication modes, messages or partnership opportunities were best suited among different populations.

Better characterization of communities in Kittitas County could be paired with the **development of criteria for high-priority adaptation areas** to articulate an equitable and efficient administration of fire adaptation projects. Potential criteria could include relative measures of risk, but also acknowledge various partnership needs (e.g. funding, technical assistance, negotiation of environmental regulations) and underserved or particularly vulnerable populations (e.g. low income, minority, elderly).

The ultimate goal of the above steps was to better develop, administer and evaluate the results of tailored messaging or outreach across a range of populations in Kittitas County. Participants indicated that an experimental approach to outreach and engagement could provide tangible lessons and lasting partnerships in the region, but would likely require an iterative process requiring sustained funding and technical assistance.

Fire Adapted Communities Strategy 2: Plan for funding

Workshop participants identified a number of linked actions that could help the organization better plan for **specific funding needs that would be necessary to transition KFACC to a more long-term model of operation**. Those actions included:

1. Developing and maintaining a list of potential projects and prioritized funding needs that are ready to go when short-term funding opportunities arise.
2. Working with existing organizations (Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network, University extension, agency liaisons) to collect a more comprehensive list of existing funding sources and match these to KFACC needs. That list could articulate the sources and policy requirements associated with each funding source in order to better understand which KFACC partners may need to lead proposal applications.
3. Identify funding gaps for KFACC projects or other initiatives and articulate these to local and state government officials to help develop new funding sources.
4. Advocate the benefits of private landowner investment of fuel treatments and the diversity of options for partially funding such treatments.

Participants also provided a short list of immediate and longer-term funding needs, as such:

- Continuation and expansion of the KFACC coordinator role
- KFACC planning and project implementation
- Identifying attributes for characterizing communities (see strategy 1 above)
- Expanded education and outreach to homeowners.

Landscape Resiliency Strategy 1: Prioritize fuels treatment lists

Workshop groups were interested in creating a **comprehensive list of past and potential fuel treatments across landowners in Kittitas County as a starting point for future prioritization**. They felt that key steps in that progression included developing a team of KFACC representatives who could work with their respective organizations to aggregate such data. One key next step for KFACC concerned dedicated time to develop and agree upon a set of criteria for prioritizing fuels treatments. Such prioritization was likely to diverge from and expand upon existing agency prioritizations schemes by considering broader social and political considerations. However, those **criteria would require appropriate grounding and shared weighting by KFACC members to move forward**. Prioritization of shaded fuel breaks associated with fire districts were floated as one trial option to begin developing the KFACC prioritization scheme. Another highly supported suggestion was to digitize private forest treatment plans conducted by a KFACC member or other agencies to help provide data on treatments currently not represented in any accessible database.

Landscape Resiliency Strategy 2: Removal of barriers for private treatment

Participants outlined a research-oriented agenda for investigating and overcoming barriers to private fuels treatment in Kittitas County. That progression began with a **more**

thorough investigation of the primary barriers to treatment among different demographics and property owners in Kittitas County. Such exploration would include components such as physical ability, cost, landscape perceptions, or marketable biomass use but would also evaluate how forest practice regulations influences actions. Explorations of population-specific barriers would allow for negotiation and experimentation with how different sets of incentives could best overcome barriers for different private landowners, and eventually lead to pilot projects that could evaluate effectiveness of larger campaigns.

Wildfire Response and First Responder Safety strategy 1: Develop cross-boundary pre-fire plans

Participants felt that the most pressing need for this strategy was the development of **community fire response plans focusing on ingress/egress and efficient evacuation.** They advocated a defined sequence of next steps that included:

1. Researching and developing a template pre-fire plan for community use
2. Adapting that plan to Kittitas County using feedback from local fire professionals and emergency managers
3. Piloting the pre-fire plan with a subset of communities and use it to develop projects for coordinated projects such as roadside fuel treatments, widening of turnarounds, development or coordinated use of water sources, and signage.

A second priority discussed by participants links back to the comprehensive map of treated areas implicated in Landscape Resiliency Strategy 1. Participants felt that the development of the comprehensive treatment list and future priorities could help strategically plan fuels reduction projects and safety zones associated with fire response needs. Critical steps necessary for achieving that dataset included determining who would curate and maintain data associated with the comprehensive map and exploring more consistent protocols for data consistency across agencies.

Landscape Resiliency Strategy 2: Enhancing communications during fire response

Participants focused on **promoting the Everbridge notification system** as a means to ensure consistent communication among residents and agencies during fire events. They advocated a concerted, multi-mode communication campaign (e.g. social media, mailers, information magnets for homes, etc.) to advocate use of the system. Participants also felt this was a good issue for KFACC to champion collectively throughout their respective networks.

A more comprehensive and over-arching step suggested by participants was **consensus on a coordinated communication plan during wildfire.** Issues in need of discussion included who would have primary responsibility for pushing out information and effective triggers associated with actions to be communicated (e.g. evacuation levels, road closures, fire progression, etc.).

Workshop 2 results: Prioritizing community projects and tailored approaches

Facilitators reflected on salient themes from the first workshop when designing the second workshop. Participants were particularly interested in exploring audience analysis of diverse resident or landowner groups in Kittitas County, developing a pipeline of fire adaptation projects and the development of a comprehensive fuels treatment database. Therefore, activities in the second workshop focused on progress for these tasks. Facilitators coordinated with KFACC member Rose Shriner, who created a preliminary online [ArcGIS map](#) of fire adaptation projects in the region for discussion with the larger KFACC group. 16 KFACC members attended the second workshop convened on Nov. 15, 2019.

Mapping fuels treatment and fire adaptation

Participants felt the collective mapping of fire adaptation efforts and potential projects were a useful way to conceive of cross-boundary projects or efforts that could be leveraged across agencies/funding sources. They made a number of suggestions for building on the map created for the workshop, including:

1. Ensuring that the Cle Elum Ridge project encompassed all coordinated treatments, including those near Ronald.
2. Incorporating additional DNR fuels treatments, including shaded fuel breaks.
3. Incorporating Washington State Fish and Game treatments in the database represented (e.g. work in the Taneum region).
4. Finding a way to incorporate record or residential parcels that had received property consultations, plans or assessments from local fire districts or DNR. Such information could help understand patterns of mitigation adoption, effort or longitudinal change.
5. Longer-term plans might find a way to incorporate information from the residential map portal by illustrating self-reported residential mitigation not tied to formal outreach.

Brainstorming communities and fire adaptation projects

Facilitators asked each KFACC participant to brainstorm three categories of projects for advancing fire adaptation among human populations in Kittitas County, as follows:

- Existing projects for expansion/extension
- Efforts requiring partnerships of various organizations, agencies, or municipalities
- Places where less community adaptation had occurred

The intent behind the three categories described above was to generate a diverse range of potential projects and adaptation projects across the county. Individual participants then worked in groups to delineate the boundaries of each community implicated on wall maps of the county (see workshop pictures for progression) and eventually worked to prioritize their top projects in each category.

Workshop participants identified a broad range of communities across the county within the three categories. It is worth noting that the size and composition of these “communities”

varied greatly, with some featuring defined HOAs while others were larger areas with less formal incorporation. Please see associated pictures of the maps created by each group (shared with KFACC members) for additional context. These results suggest that one important next step for tailoring wildfire adaptation messaging or partnerships would entail **comprehensive mapping of communities (or lack of community) across the county**, and systematic documentation of the values and characteristics that would incentivize those residents to partner on wildfire adaptations.

Table 4 lists the highest priority communities and projects listed by groups for each category of projects and outlines some of the more common projects identified for those communities. While there was some diversity in brainstormed adaptation efforts across locations, common proposals for projects included fuels reduction/fuel breaks, development of ingress/egress, evacuation planning, and home hardening of defensible space outreach. Participants tended to prioritize communities in the “partnership” category that were larger regions and had already begun to coordinate across smaller populations. Participants also recognized that existing adaptation efforts had focused largely on specific regions of the county (Upper Kittitas, with a particular focus on Roslyn, Cle Elum and the Teanaway), while other areas had received less attention because existing relationships were not in place (e.g. Vantage, drainages northeast of Ellensburg and residents living near the base of the Taneum).

Table 4. Highly prioritized community adaptation projects across Kittitas County

Communities for existing project expansion/extension	Common projects outlined for community
Pine Loch Sun	Ingress/Egress and evacuation planning; fuels reduction throughout development and fuel break on highway; establishment of safety zones
Sky Meadows	Home hardening/retrofitting; evacuation planning and ingress/egress; overstory thinning
Lauderdale Lane	Ingress/egress through establishment of periodic road pull outs; development of fuel breaks; development of water sources for fire suppression
Highway 97 and Teanaway	Development of alternative ingress/egress for evacuation and fire response
Liberty	Evacuation planning and outreach on the Ready, Set, Go! program
Adaptation projects that require partnerships	Common projects outlined for community
South Cle Elum Ridge	Evacuation preparation; coordination for large fuel break incorporating efforts on private properties and roadsides
Upper Kittitas County	Home hardening or tightening of building standards; resident outreach and information about most effective incentives or private mitigation
Roslyn/Cle Elum Ridge	Evacuation planning due to limited ingress/egress; expanded prescribed burning; defensible space establishment

Less community adaptation had occurred	Common projects outlined for community
Reecer Creek/Snag Canyon	Fuels reduction and outreach about homeowner mitigation
Vantage/Auvil	Ready, Set, Go! and evacuation planning given ingress/egress; addressing transient populations and language barriers; secondary focus on fuels reduction
Lower Manastash	Fuels reduction; improved access to residential populations
Pine Loch Sun	Development of alternative ingress/egress; evacuation planning; fuels reduction and fuels break on highway; establishment of safety zones

Examining community characteristics

Workshop participants agreed to focus on the communities of **Pine Loch Sun** and **Woods and Steele** for later portions of the workshop. Later portions of the workshop were focused on cataloging specific elements of local social context in a given community and using the subsequent understanding to help plan tangible next steps most likely to advance wildfire adaptation among residents living in each community. Facilitators split workshop participants into two groups and provided them with an existing set of considerations for local social context that past research indicate often combine to influence capacity for collective action surrounding fire (Paveglio et al. 2012; 2015; 2018; 2019). Each team reported out to the other group. Table 5 summarizes major points of social context groups used to describe each community:

Table 5. Local context influencing the Pine Loch Sun and Woods and Steel communities

Adaptive capacity characteristic	Pine Loch Sun	Woods and Steele
Community organizations	Homeowner’s association	Trailside Homeowner’s association, community road association
Land use, building or fuels reduction standards	Some effort to conduct defensible space and sprinklers on newer construction, but a high proportion of legacy cabins with no standards	Newer construction with a mix of pre- and post WUI code. No fuel reduction standards.
Community fire organizations	Firewise community, but perhaps not as active as it could be	None in place
Diversity of people/skills in a locality	Some mechanical skills or ability to run equipment	An urban/city demographic that has technological skills, but less interest/ability in conducting fuels reduction work
Locals understanding of fire suppression responsibilities and limitations	Past fire experience (including recent evacuation) means they are more aware of limited response capacity in local conditions, but still not very high.	Expect city services for fire and risk reduction that are not present in the community

Perception and action related to forest health/aesthetics	Tied to interest in rural setting to ride ORVs, mature forest that allows for overstory and privacy. Access for motorized recreation on weekends is high. Less interested in cutting mature trees.	Largely unaware that their forest conditions are overstocked regrowth following harvest. Want thick forest so they do not have to see proximate neighbors and don't want to cut trees. Enjoy having wildlife habitat.
Local peoples' experience with wildfire	Evacuated in Jolly Mountain fire, but still mainly "Westsiders" with less direct experience.	Little experience and from areas with less fire or fire exclusion
Place and community attachment	Tied to ORV recreation culture, ability to have a cabin in the woods. Interaction between neighbors and through community lodge, beach club. Access to the Lake.	Revolves around the views, privacy and ability to live "isolated" in woods. Not as much resident interaction.
Local independence or distrust of government	Not necessarily distrustful of government, but they don't want their recreation access or local culture impinged on. They will go around gates to recreate and drive into evacuated areas to retrieve property.	Pretty open to government partnerships at state, federal and county levels
Local awareness of wildfire risk	Higher following Jolly Mountain fire, though a segment of second or seasonal homeowners are still largely unaware.	Largely unaware of fire risk due to lack of experience and exposure. It may not be their top priority
Local ability to reduce wildfire risk	Mixed ability, with some who could help conduct some limited fuels reduction or retrofitting. They may not want to, though.	Adjacency to public lands provides an avenue for mitigation, but local people won't be the ones conducting mitigations. They will need to hire out. Hands-off management.
Development patterns/landscape fragmentation	425 lots and 250 homes. Poor ingress/egress on snaking gravel roads in steep terrain. Average lot 1/3 acre.	1/2 acre to 1 and 1/2 acre lots with new construction. Roughly 70 parcels surrounding common area with down and dead timber and proximate to public lands. Shared well for water.
Local wood products or industry capacity	Larger timber, but residents don't want to cut it. Little in the way of local wood products industry. Small local mill.	Lacking given the small dbh of timber near community. Little in the way of local wood products industry. Small local mill.
Proximity and capacity of mill or other natural resource facilities/resources	Some capacity for chipping but small, closest large mill about 200 miles away.	Some capacity for chipping but small. closest large mill about 200 miles away.
Willingness/ability to pay for fire mitigation actions	Available capital to conduct work but residents don't see it as a high priority to pay for mitigation work.	Lots of available capital but low motivation or need to pay for mitigation.
Amenity migration	High amounts of seasonal or recreational users with high absenteeism and some turnover.	Predominantly amenity migration, high turnover.
Number of second/seasonal homeowners and turnover rate	High proportion of second or seasonal homeowners.	50%-75%

Community identity/collective action	People move to the area to recreate. Motorized sports are a big draw, as is a desire for less restrictions. Some capacity to work together or at least interact. Agreement on “rural, ORV lifestyle” means properties may have machines or other materials on property (potential additional fire risk).	Homeowners don’t know each other and may not want community/collective action.
Communication networks (e.g. formal and informal)	Tied to subgroups of users (e.g. boaters, dirt bikers, snowmobilers). HOA Facebook group and bulletin board provide some formal channels.	Primary, full-time homeowners may be a conduit and HOA has some ability to contact residents.
Presence of local champions	Firewise committee and HOA board	Full time resident couple who understands fire risk could be a conduit to others.
Risk reduction initiatives among agencies and locals	Some chipping, cost-share fuels reduction on properties and fuel breaks.	Small DNR project on common property.
Local firefighting capacity supported by community volunteerism	No local volunteers.	No local volunteers.

Finally, facilitators asked each group to spend the remaining time designing example next-steps for engaging local people in wildfire adaptation in each location given the context they articulated. They came up with the following examples in relatively short time, which provides preliminary indication that expanded, tailored efforts in different communities may be a viable option for future outreach:

1. **Woods and Steele:** Develop an interpretive trail in or near the community introducing elements of fire ecology and healthy forest conditions for that region. These efforts could make residents more supportive of fuels reduction to increase forest health and improve wildlife habitat. Using demonstration projects in common areas could help design fuels reduction that still provides for privacy among homeowners and pave the way for a community-wide stewardship plan. Additionally, the HOA for the group should help fund a paid position that provides contact for other residents and interfaces with professionals on fire risk or grant opportunities.
2. **Pine Loch Sun:** Begin addressing evacuation concerns in the community by framing outreach around “lessons from the Jolly Mountain Fire.” Engage existing Firewise effort to focus on evacuation preparation and understandings that some areas are less defensible. Conduct an evacuation drill on a day when other events are occurring in the region to demonstrate how limited road capacity is. Use the increased awareness to discuss longer-term development of additional ingress/egress or road widening.

Executive Summary and Recommendations

This executive summary succinctly outlines primary themes that emerged from the two KFACC workshops. We provide additional detail on themes or outcomes associated with each step of the workshops in the full report. The executive summary closes with some directed recommendations and conclusions about future planning for KFACC.

Workshop #1 key outcomes

Participants identified a number of important strengths and opportunities emerging from KFACC efforts to date:

- KFACC has **facilitated unity and regular coordination** among diverse entities and organizations operating in the county.
- The **diversity of knowledge and expertise represented** by the KFACC group influenced the success of these projects.
- Creating a **paid, dedicated coordinator position** is of particular importance to existing and ongoing KFACC successes.
- **KFACC is at or nearing a critical evolution point** regarding their collective identify and purpose.
- KFACC evolution will require a **more coherent narrative** that articulates the unique impact of the organization moving forward.

Participants engaged in a deliberative set of processes to prioritize two efforts under each area outlined in the KFACC strategic plan. Later steps encouraged them to identify feasible “next steps” to advance progress:

Fire Adapted Communities top priorities and next steps

1. **Defining the audience for and targeted messages surrounding fire adaptation** by exploring ways to engage with diverse populations of residential landowners. Key next steps included:
 - a. Better characterization of communities within Kittitas County
 - b. Development of criteria for high-priority adaptation areas
2. **Planning for new funding** to support a paid coordinator position and continue outreach, mitigation and messaging efforts. Actionable next steps included:
 - a. Working with existing organizations to collect a more comprehensive list of existing funding sources and match these to KFACC needs.
 - b. Articulate funding gaps for KFACC to local and state government officials to help develop new funding sources.
 - c. Advocate the benefits of private landowner investment of fuel treatments and the diversity of options for partially funding such treatments.

Landscape Resiliency top priorities and next steps

1. **Develop a prioritized list of fuels treatments** by aggregating existing datasets and desired treatments across organizations represented in KFACC. Actionable next steps included:
 - a. Developing agreed upon weighting schemes among KFACC members to better inform tradeoffs in any forest treatment prioritization process.
 - b. Digitize existing private forest treatment plans to identify treatments currently not represented in any accessible database.
2. **Removal of barriers for private treatment** by addressing barriers such as access to consulting foresters, completion of forest plans, cost of forest management, and the increasing number of seasonal, secondary or commuting residential landowners.
 - a. Conduct an in-depth **investigation of the primary barriers to treatment among different demographics and property owners in Kittitas County.**

Wildfire Response and First Responder Safety top priorities and next steps

1. **Develop cross-boundary “pre-fire” response plans** by engaging private landowner groups in mitigations or planning that facilitate effective fire response.
 - a. Researching and developing a template pre-fire plan for community adaptation
 - b. Adapting the template plan to Kittitas County using feedback from local fire professionals and emergency managers
 - c. Piloting the pre-fire plan with a subset of communities and use results to develop projects for coordinated projects such as roadside fuel treatments, widening of turnarounds, development or coordinated use of water sources, and signage.
2. **Enhance communication during fire response** through messaging to private landowners/residents and engagement with public information officers.
 - a. **Promote the Everbridge notification system** as a means to ensure consistent communication among residents and agencies during fire events.
 - b. Develop shared consensus between KFACC and other agencies on a **coordinated communication plan during wildfire.**

Workshop #2 key outcomes

Workshop two focused on identifying wildfire adaptation projects and the composition of human communities who comprise the audiences for those efforts. Participants followed a structured process to brainstorm and prioritize the following communities as the most important locations for new projects within three categories (see Table 4 in full report for top priorities and projects).

Broader results suggest that one important next step for tailoring wildfire adaptation messaging or partnerships would entail **comprehensive mapping of communities (or lack of area community) across the county, and systematic documentation by key informants of the values and characteristics that would incentivize those residents to partner on wildfire adaptations.**

Examining community characteristics

Workshop participants agreed to focus on the communities of **Pine Loch Sun** and **Woods and Steele** for later portions of the workshop. They used an existing theoretical framework (Paveglio et al. 2012; 2015; 2018; 2019) to catalog specific elements of local social context that might influence adaptation partnerships in each community (see Table 5 of full report for comparison). They then identified the following strategies as next steps for tailoring adaptation efforts to each community:

1. **Woods and Steele:**
 - a. **Develop an interpretive trail in or near the community** introducing elements of fire ecology and healthy forest conditions for that region.
 - b. **Use demonstration projects** in common areas.
 - c. **Advocate for a paid homeowners association position** that has primary responsibility for fire management.
2. **Pine Loch Sun:**
 - a. Design evacuation outreach as **“lessons from the Jolly Mountain Fire.”**
 - b. Engage existing **Firewise effort to focus on evacuation preparation**
 - c. **Conduct an evacuation drill** on a day when other events are occurring to demonstrate limited road capacity.

Final recommendations and conclusions

- **Use KFACC relationships strategically to influence member organization processes.** KFACC will continue to serve as an important avenue for relationship building and coordination among organizations managing wildfire conditions in the region. However, continued evolution of the group should recognize its strategic capacity to influence member organizations or agencies by illuminating needs for cooperative decision-making and support. That is, KFACC can serve as an important influence on individual agency or organizational priorities by **developing shared narratives about key initiatives or priorities for place-based management.** KFACC members should develop this capacity to help one another achieve broader goals through the strategic leverage of voices outside of their own agency/organization.
- **Recognize that KFACC messaging should extend in multiple directions.** KFACC has future potential to serve as a translator, coordinator and influencer at different scales of policy and management. To begin, **KFACC should serve as the primary organization collaborating with private landowners in the region and adapting broader strategies to the site-specific context of Kittitas County.** It should also communicate a desire to help aggregate landowner voices about fire management and respond to their needs with targeted efforts. Likewise, **KFACC members should communicate lessons and needs associated with their coordinated efforts to higher levels of government (e.g. county government, state**

legislators). One opportunity for future growth in this area might be the collaborative development of **KFACC position statements or priority actions**. Such position statements could respond to emerging strategies for fire management in the region or set the agenda for future strategies.

- **Take advantage of state and national initiatives relating to fire coordinators or pilot projects.** Washington State legislators are considering the establishment of wildfire coordinators throughout the state. KFACC should lobby to be a pilot for such a position given that the group is unique and more advanced than other efforts in the state. Likewise, KFACC should **promote the relationships, diverse representation and novelty of the group in order to trial balloon new projects or sources of funding** in the region.
- **Plan for small, manageable efforts that help fulfill larger purposes.** KFACC members struggled more when tasked with developing key sequences of steps that helped them achieve larger priorities. The group should **demarcate key times to develop and agree upon decision-processes or weightings that help move along key initiatives** (e.g. tailored message development for communities, priority weightings for fuels treatment projects). Lessons from projects in particular communities should be matched up or contrasted across the region in systematic ways to determine best practices for engaging diverse constituencies. In a related sense, KFACC members should develop potential monitoring protocols for long-term success or utility of their efforts (e.g. tool development, messaging, partnerships) to craft a **longitudinal narrative for how the organization serves a key role for continued fire adaptation**.
- **Remember that all data is incomplete and uncertainty is always present.** Good data is critical for making reasoned decisions, but the process for reasoning transforms any data into action. Discussions surrounding larger KFACC priorities revealed inconsistencies between datasets for fuel treatments or disagreement about the existence of data relating to forest conditions. KFACC should bring together the best available data but recognize that **KFACC member's local experience, networks, knowledge, and understanding of the area are among its best assets for making risk-informed decisions**. KFACC members should help ground-truth emerging or existing datasets from broader agencies or organizations and document the logic that helps inform county or agency prioritizations for the region.
- **Institutionalizing the involvement of professionals or politicians can help secure the long-term future of the organization.** KFACC members should use group support to establish formal agreements recognizing their participation as part of their job description/duties. Such mechanisms will help establish the longevity of KFACC by ensuring future participation by representatives. Likewise, the group should work with local municipalities and the county to establish KFACC as a formally recognized (though separate) affiliate of local government processes. KFACC could eventually be seen as an "official" advisory council that provides recommendation to various organizations/governments on wildfire-related issues.

KFACC represents a unique and emergent avenue for organizing wildfire adaptation at larger scales. It is a forerunner in what is likely to be a growing trend among regions facing increasing wildfire management challenges. Among the key tasks for the innovative and engaged group of individuals comprising KFACC is to recognize that coordinated efforts need to balance the need for specific, tailored actions against the flexible adaptation of top-down directorates or policies. That likely means developing processes that eventually transition KFACC into a dominant role as translators between different scales of management and the crafters of narratives about what fire adaptation should look on-the-ground.

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