

December 2005

# FLN



## DISPATCH

*Emerging Lessons From  
The Fire Learning Network*

**FIRE LEARNING NETWORK** A cooperative project of The Nature Conservancy, the USDA Forest Service, and the Dept. of the Interior, the network was created in 2002 to catalyze efforts to reduce hazardous fuels across the country. Part of the larger joint program *Restoring Fire-Adapted Ecosystems* that includes fire education and training components, the network operates at both local and national levels to overcome barriers to implementing ecologically appropriate fuels reduction and restoration projects.

<http://tncfire.org/usfln>

**THE NATURE CONSERVANCY FIRE INITIATIVE** This 17-person team is working to assess, abate and prevent fire-related threats to biodiversity conservation around the world. In the U.S., the Initiative is working with a variety of partners to promote ecologically appropriate fire management, develop and implement science-based planning tools and monitoring techniques, and further fire education and training efforts.

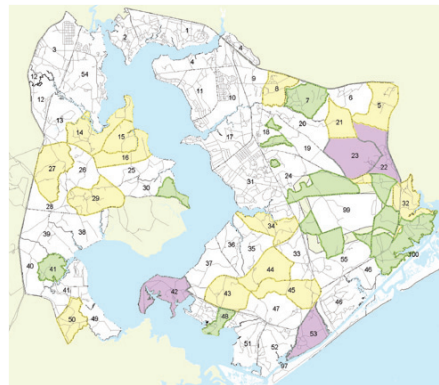
<http://nature.org/fire>



The Nature Conservancy  
SAVING THE LAST GREAT PLACES ON EARTH

Using GIS software and readily available spatial data, fire managers at Eglin Air Force Base in the Florida Panhandle developed a model that helped them make the best use of limited fire management resources and eliminate subjective bias in applying prescribed fire to that 464,000-acre landscape. The model uses a series of weighted criteria—such as time since last burn, and endangered species goals—to create maps of high-priority treatment locations. The Fire Learning Network catalyzed the successful transfer of this tool from Eglin to a Marine Corps base in North Carolina.

Kevin Hiers and James Furman gave a presentation about Eglin's model at the December 2003 Fire Learning Network workshop. Margit Bucher, a Nature Conservancy fire manager from North Carolina, was in the audience and immediately recognized that the model might



Output of Camp Lejeune's burn prioritization model. Burn units shown in yellow receive high priority for treatment, purple areas are secondary, and green areas indicate essential training range burns.

### MCB CAMP LEJEUNE BURN PRIORITIZATION MODEL CRITERIA

- Natural communities
- Threatened and endangered species
- Red-cockaded woodpecker clusters
- Longleaf pine plantations
- Red-cockaded woodpecker recruitment sites
- Time since last burn
- Presence of exceptionally high-quality habitat
- Mechanical tree and brush clearing operations

For more information about the model, contact Frances Railey, GIS Manager, Camp Lejeune at [raileyfb@lejeune.usmc.mil](mailto:raileyfb@lejeune.usmc.mil) or 910-451-9008.

be useful to some of her agency partners in eastern North Carolina. Ultimately, Daniel Becker, forest protection section chief at Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, invited Hiers and Furman to come up to North Carolina to help his staff develop their own version of the model. "We realized that this type of modeling is what we needed to allocate burning treatments using an ecosystem approach, across the landscape, while underscoring the relative need for fire among the various habitats making up the landscape" said Becker.

Due to ecological, operational and other differences, Camp Lejeune used a different set of weighting criteria in their model than did Eglin AFB. The result was a user-friendly, customizable tool that is helping Camp Lejeune managers determine where and when to burn to achieve the greatest overall ecological benefit.

According to Bucher, "Camp Lejeune loves the tool because they can run, modify and drive it to their needs. As an ecologist, I'm very impressed with the approach and Camp Lejeune's commitment to natural resources from all staff."

Several factors were instrumental to the success of this technology transfer effort. Perhaps most important was the fact that Camp Lejeune had a well-developed GIS database and skilled GIS staff. This allowed them to efficiently apply and even improve upon the concepts developed at Eglin AFB.

Becker presented the Camp Lejeune model at a November 2005 meeting sponsored by the **Southeastern Fire Learning Network**, and several other public lands managers in this region are interested in developing similar models.

### GET INVOLVED!

If you're interested in participating in a regional or national level meeting, or just learning more:

- Browse the FLN Web site  
<http://tncfire.org/usfln>
- Join and contribute to the FLN listserv  
[http://tncfire.org/training\\_listservs](http://tncfire.org/training_listservs)
- Contact TNC or agency leads:  
Lynn Decker, The Nature Conservancy Fire Initiative [ldecker@tnc.org](mailto:ldecker@tnc.org); 801-320-0524  
Anne Jeffery, Dept. of the Interior  
[anne\\_jeffery@nifc.blm.gov](mailto:anne_jeffery@nifc.blm.gov); 208-387-5458  
Sarah Robertson, US Forest Service  
[sarahrobertson@fs.fed.us](mailto:sarahrobertson@fs.fed.us); 208-387-5222