Brett Holt: [00:04](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/91wW6GLjPG49O0C1ia3woU5_HgtrigNsZdOCBAe56rdWT1fozrQcxoE8Vkvr7abjMC54EYh8faRbBInxn66GSLD_euo?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=4.2) I’m Brett Holt and this is the FEMA podcast.

Brett Holt: [00:11](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/91wW6GLjPG49O0C1ia3woU5_HgtrigNsZdOCBAe56rdWT1fozrQcxoE8Vkvr7abjMC54EYh8faRbBInxn66GSLD_euo?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=11.74) As always a warm welcome to you and thank you for listening to the FEMA podcast. We're glad you're able to join us today. May is Wildfire Awareness Month. It's an opportunity for many communities to host events that allow homeowners and business owners to live more safely with wildfire, helping to connect and support communities striving to live more safely with wildfire is the Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network. FEMA has supported the network as an affiliate member since 2015. Recognizing that though there are ecological, geographic and political differences in the country, there are similarities and approaches that must be shared to help our communities become fire adapted. In April of this year, the network hosted their annual workshop in Ashland, Oregon. Ashland is home to Southern Oregon University and the Oregon Shakespeare Festival and is an ideal spot for a wildfire workshop because of the proactive work from Ashland Fire and Rescue and local neighborhood groups to address wildfire risk in the surrounding areas and address smoke issues from fires all over Southern Oregon and Northern California. The workshop brings network members from around the country to share best practices, learn from their hosting community and identify future opportunities. So, why is this learning network important and how can a community benefit from their participation? We sat down with several wildfire practitioners during this year's workshop to find answers to these questions

Michelle Medley-Daniel: [01:37](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/91wW6GLjPG49O0C1ia3woU5_HgtrigNsZdOCBAe56rdWT1fozrQcxoE8Vkvr7abjMC54EYh8faRbBInxn66GSLD_euo?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=97.27) At the really local level sometimes people need inspiration and support, so if you have a network of practitioner partners who you can call and say, wow, I tried to do this thing. It really didn't work how I thought it was going to. Do you have any advice?

Brett Holt: [01:50](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/91wW6GLjPG49O0C1ia3woU5_HgtrigNsZdOCBAe56rdWT1fozrQcxoE8Vkvr7abjMC54EYh8faRbBInxn66GSLD_euo?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=110.26) This is Michelle Medley-Daniel director of the Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network. She has been working with the network since it started in 2013 and has been instrumental in facilitating its growth. She also works for the Watershed Center in Hayfork, California. In partnership with the Nature Conservancy, the Watershed Center is responsible for managing the network. We had the opportunity to sit down with her and Ashland to learn more about the origins and the work of the Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network.

Michelle Medley-Daniel: [02:19](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/91wW6GLjPG49O0C1ia3woU5_HgtrigNsZdOCBAe56rdWT1fozrQcxoE8Vkvr7abjMC54EYh8faRbBInxn66GSLD_euo?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=139.33) Yeah. So there's an interesting connection between the cohesive strategy and the origin of the network actually as well. So the watershed center was involved with the western region cohesive strategy and sort of forming the western regions plans, early on. And part of the project we did for that was actually a survey of communities across the West. Over 600 people responded to our survey. So we really learned a lot about what kinds of programs people were accessing to support their adaptation work. We learned about the kinds of ways they were imagining what living with fire could mean. One of the findings we had from that was that people were really separated and segmented. So because a lot of the programs that support funding for this work are grant programs that are competitive, There was really a negative incentive built in for people to share with each other about what they were doing.

Michelle Medley-Daniel: [03:07](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/91wW6GLjPG49O0C1ia3woU5_HgtrigNsZdOCBAe56rdWT1fozrQcxoE8Vkvr7abjMC54EYh8faRbBInxn66GSLD_euo?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=187.97) They Kind of wanted to hoard their great ideas. There was no venue that was actually convening people. And we realized that practitioners were often really isolated, sometimes the only person in their whole community that was trying to work on these issues and trying to convene partners. And at the same time we had been involved in the Fire Learning Network, which is the sister network to FAC-Net. And that network is run by the Nature Conservancy as well. We've been involved in that for about 10 years and we said, you know what if we applied this learning network concept and really built a community of practitioners to fire adapted communities as a concept, and so we were able to launch in 2013 people were really excited about figuring out if this would really help kind of finish the puzzle in terms of having practitioners that we're trying to look at the whole picture

Brett Holt: [03:55](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/91wW6GLjPG49O0C1ia3woU5_HgtrigNsZdOCBAe56rdWT1fozrQcxoE8Vkvr7abjMC54EYh8faRbBInxn66GSLD_euo?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=235.4) Before we go too far down the road, you may wonder what is fire adaptation or what is it fire adapted community. You may have heard about Firewise USA or Ready Set Go, but how is fire adaptation different or the same? Michelle explains,

Michelle Medley-Daniel: [04:10](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/91wW6GLjPG49O0C1ia3woU5_HgtrigNsZdOCBAe56rdWT1fozrQcxoE8Vkvr7abjMC54EYh8faRbBInxn66GSLD_euo?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=250.49) This is one of my favorite topics because I think that it gets really misconstrued a lot of the time or it's open to a lot of interpretation and I like to take a really broad view of what that means. I think sometimes people think about fire adapted communities as just the homes or just about evacuating people during an incident and making sure that houses don't burn. I really like to think about fire adaptation as learning to live with fire. And so to me that really includes figuring out how our landscapes are going to work, how our community economies are going to work with fire and covers a broad spectrum of both practices in terms of actual resilience and figuring out how you're going to build connections in your community.

Brett Holt: [04:50](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/91wW6GLjPG49O0C1ia3woU5_HgtrigNsZdOCBAe56rdWT1fozrQcxoE8Vkvr7abjMC54EYh8faRbBInxn66GSLD_euo?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=290.12) Since 2013, the network has grown from a group of eight to 24 core member communities and a number of state networks.

Michelle Medley-Daniel: [04:58](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/91wW6GLjPG49O0C1ia3woU5_HgtrigNsZdOCBAe56rdWT1fozrQcxoE8Vkvr7abjMC54EYh8faRbBInxn66GSLD_euo?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=298.08) When we kicked off in Boise, we had eight different communities present. In terms of sorting those out where they would be, we really wanted to look at diversity of geographic location. And in a way that's different from FLN the fire learning network, our sister network. We also wanted to really have a different representation of the kinds of community organizations or institutions. And so we really deliberately selected a lot of nonprofit partners RC and D partners, uh, tribes and fire departments. The first eight members, I don't know that I can name them all right off the top of my head. But we had, we definitely had Frank Riley from Georgia. We wanted to make sure the southeast was included. Sometimes I think people think about wildfire as a western issue and we really wanted to make sure that we were addressing issues across the entire US.

Michelle Medley-Daniel: [05:43](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/91wW6GLjPG49O0C1ia3woU5_HgtrigNsZdOCBAe56rdWT1fozrQcxoE8Vkvr7abjMC54EYh8faRbBInxn66GSLD_euo?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=343.57) We also over time added New Jersey. I believe that a Minnesota, our partners in Ely, Minnesota, we're part of the first cohort. Um, one of our amazing opportunities was actually to work with, Leavenworth Washington and the Chumstick wildfire coalition and over time that really led to expanding work. So we started out with eight communities. Some of those communities really wanted to stay local and really focus on improving resilience in their own location. They were really inspired by what they were hearing from other network members about the range of things they could actually work on. And so they've really been continuing to focus on building that resiliency within their own place. And there were some other communities that thought, wow, the way we can really contribute to this effort is by expanding our scope and really thinking about our opportunities for impacting the system, not just at the local scale, which they also are doing, but also at the state, regional and national scales.

Michelle Medley-Daniel: [06:37](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/91wW6GLjPG49O0C1ia3woU5_HgtrigNsZdOCBAe56rdWT1fozrQcxoE8Vkvr7abjMC54EYh8faRbBInxn66GSLD_euo?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=397.58) We also added state networks and we have partners now that are working on kind of kindred efforts. And so all of this has emerged as a way to build more of a constellation. I remember after the meeting in Boise, my head was swimming with all of the content we had gathered from people. And I realized that our job as the staff and conveners of this network was to deeply learn about the work of all of our members. We could come in and a totally alternative approach and tell people, well these are the things you need to do. This is what works. But that's really antithetical to the whole idea of fire adapted communities. It has to spring from within the place. It has to be tailored to what the resources and assets are of the place. And so we really took the first whole year just learning about what people were doing and understanding their mental model of the issues and what they were doing to address them.

Michelle Medley-Daniel: [07:26](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/91wW6GLjPG49O0C1ia3woU5_HgtrigNsZdOCBAe56rdWT1fozrQcxoE8Vkvr7abjMC54EYh8faRbBInxn66GSLD_euo?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=446.84) And over time we have expanded to do more coaching now. Now that we've spent five or six years with some of these members, we have a deep understanding of what they're doing, who their partners are locally, the kinds of things they think are ripe opportunities in their place. We've developed a lot of tools to help do strategic planning and help them identify real opportunities to make a difference. And so over time, our work with, with communities has really evolved. But we spent, um, and I think the foundational principle of those first couple of years was really just understanding that these people are the people who are shaping fire adapted communities. These are the experts. These are the people who are on the frontline of defining a new way to live with fire.

Brett Holt: 08:06 As mentioned earlier, this year's annual workshop was held in Ashland, Oregon. Michelle took the time to describe why they hold workshops and what Ashland has to offer for the one this year.

Michelle Medley-Daniel: [08:20](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/91wW6GLjPG49O0C1ia3woU5_HgtrigNsZdOCBAe56rdWT1fozrQcxoE8Vkvr7abjMC54EYh8faRbBInxn66GSLD_euo?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=500.99) Our annual workshop is the crown jewel of our work I think. It's certainly something that we spend a lot of time and effort designing every year. And it's something that we've heard from members over time as honestly some of the most valuable work they do all year. Our workshops are typically a week long. They consist of a lot of interactive work. We ask a lot of people at these workshops. The point of that is to really deepen and strengthen our relationships. Better understand what our practices actually are. Ask really hard questions about what's going on in our context and that larger scale and start to sort of set a new trajectory. So over the past six years as we've held an annual workshop, each year we've gone around to different locations across the network and we've really been able to understand different things from their strengths. So this year in Ashland, I think one of the themes and really amazing assets that they've brought to the network is the amazing leadership that their city and their fire department have had in this work. And I really just appreciate that approach of traveling the workshop around so that we can learn about kind of the best that that location has to offer. The workshop functions both as a touchstone, I think to set our direction at the national level for the network. It also is a touchstone for our members and what their priorities are going to be. And it really rejuvenates people.

Brett Holt: [09:38](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/91wW6GLjPG49O0C1ia3woU5_HgtrigNsZdOCBAe56rdWT1fozrQcxoE8Vkvr7abjMC54EYh8faRbBInxn66GSLD_euo?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=578.03) The network doesn't just work by chance. Deliberate facilitation through many different techniques is essential for the network to function. Michelle explains the various tools they use to encourage learning growth and information exchange.

Michelle Medley-Daniel: [09:50](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/91wW6GLjPG49O0C1ia3woU5_HgtrigNsZdOCBAe56rdWT1fozrQcxoE8Vkvr7abjMC54EYh8faRbBInxn66GSLD_euo?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=590.37) So we have a number of different systems that support member connections and exchange. Um, if we start with our staff, we have something called liaisons. So every single member has an appointed staff person whose job it is to coach those people to provide support. We help add capacity if we need to. We often help people design convenings. We learn about their work and try to champion that work. We help do the net weaving, which is really the critical part of a network. So if you want to get gains, um, and really transfer practice, you have to know who in this network knows things that other people need to know. So our job is to kind of be a Rolodex and really understand what it is that's, that's happening for people, what people's backgrounds are. This goes from understanding just the kind of general fact practices people are undertaking to even understanding their soft skills.

Michelle Medley-Daniel: [10:39](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/91wW6GLjPG49O0C1ia3woU5_HgtrigNsZdOCBAe56rdWT1fozrQcxoE8Vkvr7abjMC54EYh8faRbBInxn66GSLD_euo?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=639.42) So if we learn that somebody is a photographer, that's a really useful piece of information that we can use to connect to another member. Then we also have an opportunity for people to self-select around all of that. And that's called Podio, which is our virtual learning platform. It's kind of like social media, but it's in a closed kind of environment. People can share their documents, they can ask questions. People often go onto Podio and say, has anyone ever tried to run an evacuation drill? And you'll get six or seven people that respond with their experience doing that. So it's an opportunity to really get kind of immediate feedback from a selection of peers across the country. But one of the really important points about that is that it's asynchronous. So we don't have to actually have the same five minutes available in the day, which can be really hard with these practitioners. So I think having a virtual platform has really been key to helping people find that extra few minutes to make a connection, even if it happens over time.

Brett Holt: [11:34](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/91wW6GLjPG49O0C1ia3woU5_HgtrigNsZdOCBAe56rdWT1fozrQcxoE8Vkvr7abjMC54EYh8faRbBInxn66GSLD_euo?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=694.75) A unique tool to facilitate growth for the network or the learning exchanges. These are opportunities for communities to visit one another and learn firsthand how they live with wildfire.

Michelle Medley-Daniel: [11:45](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/91wW6GLjPG49O0C1ia3woU5_HgtrigNsZdOCBAe56rdWT1fozrQcxoE8Vkvr7abjMC54EYh8faRbBInxn66GSLD_euo?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=705.13) The learning exchanges or one of the favorite things among our suite of offerings for members. And I think that's because you really can't underestimate the value interpersonal relationships being in a person's place really can't be substituted and seeing their partners, understanding the relationships that they have, in their, in their location is really invaluable to picking up on those things that really make or break a program.

Brett Holt: [12:09](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/91wW6GLjPG49O0C1ia3woU5_HgtrigNsZdOCBAe56rdWT1fozrQcxoE8Vkvr7abjMC54EYh8faRbBInxn66GSLD_euo?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=729.82) We wanted to hear directly from those network members that both contribute and are impacted from the learning network. We sat down with Ali Lurch and Chris Chambers with Ashland Fire and Rrescue to hear their accounts about how Ashland benefits from the network.

Chris Chambers: [12:23](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/91wW6GLjPG49O0C1ia3woU5_HgtrigNsZdOCBAe56rdWT1fozrQcxoE8Vkvr7abjMC54EYh8faRbBInxn66GSLD_euo?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=743.59) I'm Chris Chambers, Wildfire Division Chief for Ashland Fire and Rescue and I've been working for the city for 17 years

Ali Lurch: [12:30](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/91wW6GLjPG49O0C1ia3woU5_HgtrigNsZdOCBAe56rdWT1fozrQcxoE8Vkvr7abjMC54EYh8faRbBInxn66GSLD_euo?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=750.85) and I'm Ali Lurch Fire Adapted Communities Coordinator for Ashland Fire and Rescue. And I've been working with the city for four years.

Brett Holt: [12:38](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/91wW6GLjPG49O0C1ia3woU5_HgtrigNsZdOCBAe56rdWT1fozrQcxoE8Vkvr7abjMC54EYh8faRbBInxn66GSLD_euo?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=758.92) Chris and Ali talked to us about their learning exchanges with the Greater Flagstaff Forest Partnership and Washington Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network. All are members of the National Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network.

Chris Chambers: [12:51](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/91wW6GLjPG49O0C1ia3woU5_HgtrigNsZdOCBAe56rdWT1fozrQcxoE8Vkvr7abjMC54EYh8faRbBInxn66GSLD_euo?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=771.54) In Flagstaff one of the first FAC-net meetings that I went to, which was in Colorado Springs, I met somebody from their fire department there who was doing similar work that I was doing, which is unusual for a municipal fire department to be involved in forestry. So we hit it off right away, like, Hey, what kind of treatments are you doing? And Flagstaff was really diving head long into doing forest management and out of necessity to protect their community and their watershed. And so we immediately established the similarities between Ashland and Flagstaff and realized that we really had common cause to work together. And so we've done learning exchanges where Flagstaff folks have come to Ashland and Alison and I both went down to Flagstaff and did tours. Also looking at their Firewise communities program and we have two similar programs. So we have a lot of a lot of commonalities with Flagstaff and we've been able to share a lot of information and strategies back and forth.

Ali Lurch: [13:49](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/91wW6GLjPG49O0C1ia3woU5_HgtrigNsZdOCBAe56rdWT1fozrQcxoE8Vkvr7abjMC54EYh8faRbBInxn66GSLD_euo?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=829.14) One of the things that Flagstaff had that we were looking for was they had an ordinance in place already for defensible space creation within their city, which was for existing lots. When we hear about codes and ordinances we’re always very intrigued to see how people are using them, whether it's just an enforcement or an education-based approach. And so we really focused in on that too on our exchanges. The Pacific Northwest FAC core members have a really close relationship not just because we like each other, but it's also because we really do have similar landscapes and issues. We had a three-part learning exchange where we went from Leavenworth or north-central Washington, Bend, and then to Ashland. But one of the things that WA- FAC is really excelling in is talking about post fire recovery and resiliency and long-term planning.

Ali Lurch: [14:48](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/91wW6GLjPG49O0C1ia3woU5_HgtrigNsZdOCBAe56rdWT1fozrQcxoE8Vkvr7abjMC54EYh8faRbBInxn66GSLD_euo?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=888.87) And as well as for businesses and organizations. And it just really wasn't something that we were, we were doing yet in the city of Ashland. They were leading the way and having those hard conversations, putting together workshops, bringing people together. And so I was able to attend a long-term recovery and business resiliency workshop that was hosted by Hillary Lundgren and Alison Green. I was able to bring a member of our chamber of Commerce to that workshop as well. And basically that started, that just opened all the doors of a lot of the conversations and work that we've been having with our task force.

Brett Holt: [15:31](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/91wW6GLjPG49O0C1ia3woU5_HgtrigNsZdOCBAe56rdWT1fozrQcxoE8Vkvr7abjMC54EYh8faRbBInxn66GSLD_euo?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=931) Chris continues to discuss the benefits of being part of the Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network.

Chris Chambers: [15:36](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/91wW6GLjPG49O0C1ia3woU5_HgtrigNsZdOCBAe56rdWT1fozrQcxoE8Vkvr7abjMC54EYh8faRbBInxn66GSLD_euo?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=936.39) For me, the benefit of the network is learning from other people's mistakes and their opportunities, challenges and accomplishments as well. We're all really in the same boat together, whether we're working in Florida, somewhere in Texas, upper Midwest or anywhere in the western United States where wildfire is an issue and there's so much that we have in common. Yes, there are some differences in those places, but the way that we approach our programs and the people that we're working with and for is so similar that it really, really makes sense for us to learn from our peers and be able to run things by them and say, hey, how did this work for you? Or was it worth going down this path? And then, you know, some people will write back and say, no, don't do that. So, having that peer to peer learning is really really important.

Chris Chambers: [16:29](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/91wW6GLjPG49O0C1ia3woU5_HgtrigNsZdOCBAe56rdWT1fozrQcxoE8Vkvr7abjMC54EYh8faRbBInxn66GSLD_euo?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=989.76) And it's just nice to have a support network out there to know that you're, you're not alone in this. It gets to be stressful business sometimes because we know the consequences of this work are extreme loss of private property and or loss of lives. And we see that happening around us. And it's nice to know that when you can pick up the phone and talk to somebody that you know and say, hey, gosh, I heard something really bad happened in your state, or maybe even in your community. And I just wanted to check and see how it's going.

Brett Holt: [17:00](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/91wW6GLjPG49O0C1ia3woU5_HgtrigNsZdOCBAe56rdWT1fozrQcxoE8Vkvr7abjMC54EYh8faRbBInxn66GSLD_euo?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=1020.29) Ali mentioned they're learning exchange with WA-FAC or the Washington Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network. WA-FAC is a state level network that is part of the Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network. Exchanges between communities and state organizations is fostered through the learning network. We sat down with Hillary Lungren with the Washington Fire Adapted Communities Learning network to learn more about her organization and the value of the learning exchange with Ashland.

Hillary Lungren: [17:26](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/91wW6GLjPG49O0C1ia3woU5_HgtrigNsZdOCBAe56rdWT1fozrQcxoE8Vkvr7abjMC54EYh8faRbBInxn66GSLD_euo?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=1046.24) I'm Hillary Lungren and I work for the Washington Resource Conservation and Development Council. It's a small nonprofit based out of Yakima, Washington. I'm the director of the Washington Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network and I work with a group of practitioners from across Washington who are focused on preparing their communities for wildfire and helping them recover after a wildfire. When we develop these learning exchanges we are co-developing the learning objectives together. We're co developing the agenda together but you really never know what the outcomes are going to be and those little nuggets that other communities are going to take back. What Ashland took back was more about business resiliency. And so there are chamber members through this learning exchanges. The chamber members really connected with the role that they can play in their community. And they were trying to find like, okay, there is this business continuity planning piece of, of what we can help our business community do.

Hillary Lungren: [18:27](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/91wW6GLjPG49O0C1ia3woU5_HgtrigNsZdOCBAe56rdWT1fozrQcxoE8Vkvr7abjMC54EYh8faRbBInxn66GSLD_euo?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=1107.09) But then they realized that there's a bigger issue such as smoke. And so they really kind of expanded on that idea of how to work with businesses, not just as a very like how do we keep your operations running from day to day, but let's talk about what the real impacts are. The economic impacts of smoke are, what it means to tourists coming to Ashland and how do we better prepare our whole community of Ashland for smoke. And so they've taken a large role in that. I think that there are pieces that aren't even on folks radar. And really understanding your role in fire preparedness is a big step. And it takes a visionary person to understand what that means for your community.

Brett Holt: [19:11](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/91wW6GLjPG49O0C1ia3woU5_HgtrigNsZdOCBAe56rdWT1fozrQcxoE8Vkvr7abjMC54EYh8faRbBInxn66GSLD_euo?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=1151.78) The learning exchanges such as those explained by Ali, Chris and Hillary are critical to advancing wildfire resilience. Michelle also tells us about other successes she's seen through the years.

Michelle Medley-Daniel: [19:23](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/91wW6GLjPG49O0C1ia3woU5_HgtrigNsZdOCBAe56rdWT1fozrQcxoE8Vkvr7abjMC54EYh8faRbBInxn66GSLD_euo?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=1163.33) So there's, there's hundreds of examples where members have influenced each other's work, giving each other ideas, um, things as large as transferring the, the whole idea of business resilience, which has been a huge one in the Pacific northwest and thinking about trying to really work on post fire recovery, which was definitely a huge wake up call to everyone. When the fires in Washington happened in consecutive years of 2014 and 15. I think the entire network looked northwest and thought, okay, we really need to start thinking about how we're not just working before the fire. So that's been a huge impact in terms of framing the issue for our network. And I am so thankful to the folks in Washington who have been able to share all of the trials that they've gone through of having to, to deal with the impacts without having done a lot of preplanning in some cases.

Michelle Medley-Daniel: [20:12](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/91wW6GLjPG49O0C1ia3woU5_HgtrigNsZdOCBAe56rdWT1fozrQcxoE8Vkvr7abjMC54EYh8faRbBInxn66GSLD_euo?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=1212.44) And so I think people are really trying to learn from that and think about how can we front load a different method that might reduce the pain on the back end because we know we can't stop all fire so we have to figure out how we're more prepared, how our communities are actually resilient and not just count on being able to eliminate impacts through mitigation. So I think about what Bill Brash in New Jersey has done. He came to the network early on with almost really nothing going on in his community. They had the Ready, Set Go program and they had passion and interest but they didn't have a lot of infrastructure, they didn't have a lot of programs going and he has taken so many ideas from across the country and implemented them. He now has a neighborhood ambassadors program. He's been using prescribed fire. He's created opportunities to convene at the state level in his, in his area to really help change what's possible. And he is so generous and crediting the network with giving him the inspiration and the support to actually make all of that possible. So I think his story is a very interesting one of, you know, coming with ideas and interest but without actually having implemented the practices and now six years later he is doing amazing things and continues to help push the envelope on what's possible.

Brett Holt: [21:28](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/91wW6GLjPG49O0C1ia3woU5_HgtrigNsZdOCBAe56rdWT1fozrQcxoE8Vkvr7abjMC54EYh8faRbBInxn66GSLD_euo?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=1288.55) Perhaps you are thinking, how do I learn more about the fire adapted communities learning network or how can I get involved?

Michelle Medley-Daniel: [21:35](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/91wW6GLjPG49O0C1ia3woU5_HgtrigNsZdOCBAe56rdWT1fozrQcxoE8Vkvr7abjMC54EYh8faRbBInxn66GSLD_euo?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=1295.08) We have a wonderful opportunity for all communities out there. So we have this core network, but we also realized if we stopped at 24 communities we would not be having the impact we're trying to have at all. So we developed something called the Affiliate Network, which is an opportunity for any practitioner out there across the US to self-select and say, I really need to share what I'm doing and learn from other practitioners who are trying to live with fire. So you can go to our website, which is fireadaptednetwork.org and sign up for a profile. There you can share the activities that you're doing, get connected with other practitioners and we do have staff support for those folks. They also have a Podio space where they're able to connect, share their insights, ask their questions. We do a lot of net weaving between the affiliate network and mentorship between the core network and affiliates to really help make sure that we're doing capacity building for those folks as well. We also put out a lot of information just to the general world, so we have social media channels, we have an amazing blog where people share their stories and the intent of that is to really say maybe you're just interested in the content and you don't want to commit to sharing your work or to being part of an actual learning network. We still want that information to be out in the world and so we have some ways that people can just follow us if they don't want to do the two way communication.

Brett Holt: [22:53](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/91wW6GLjPG49O0C1ia3woU5_HgtrigNsZdOCBAe56rdWT1fozrQcxoE8Vkvr7abjMC54EYh8faRbBInxn66GSLD_euo?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=1373.22) Thank you to Michelle Medley, Daniel, Ali Lurch, Chris Chambers and Hillary Lungren for taking the time to sit down with us. You can visit fireadaptednetwork.org to learn more about the Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network. We want to leave you with this artistic expression about the Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network and what it means. Pablo Beimler, a community outreach coordinator with the Hawaii Wildfire Management Organization and a member of the learning network closes with these poetry slam words.

Pable Beimler: [23:23](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/91wW6GLjPG49O0C1ia3woU5_HgtrigNsZdOCBAe56rdWT1fozrQcxoE8Vkvr7abjMC54EYh8faRbBInxn66GSLD_euo?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=1403.26) Smoke Billowing. Lungs at capacity. The realities of climate catastrophies. Spark need for cool new breezes. Mentalities to challenge status quo thinking. Smoke continues building but new lines of thinking, cut breaks of containment. Come together. We take aim at the base of the flame, kept away from window panes as kids play amongst crisp silhouettes of mountain tops protected by community, connecting fire adapted communities in which all have firefighting abilities, planners, farmers, preachers, teachers, resiliency requires all community features to play a role.

Brett Holt: [24:10](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/91wW6GLjPG49O0C1ia3woU5_HgtrigNsZdOCBAe56rdWT1fozrQcxoE8Vkvr7abjMC54EYh8faRbBInxn66GSLD_euo?loadFrom=SharedLink&ts=1450.33) We've linked to this episode on our Fema Facebook page and we invite you to join in the conversation and the comments you have, ideas for future topics. Send us an email@fema-podcastatfemadotdhs.gov if you'd like to learn more about this episode or other topics, visit fema.gov forward slash podcast.