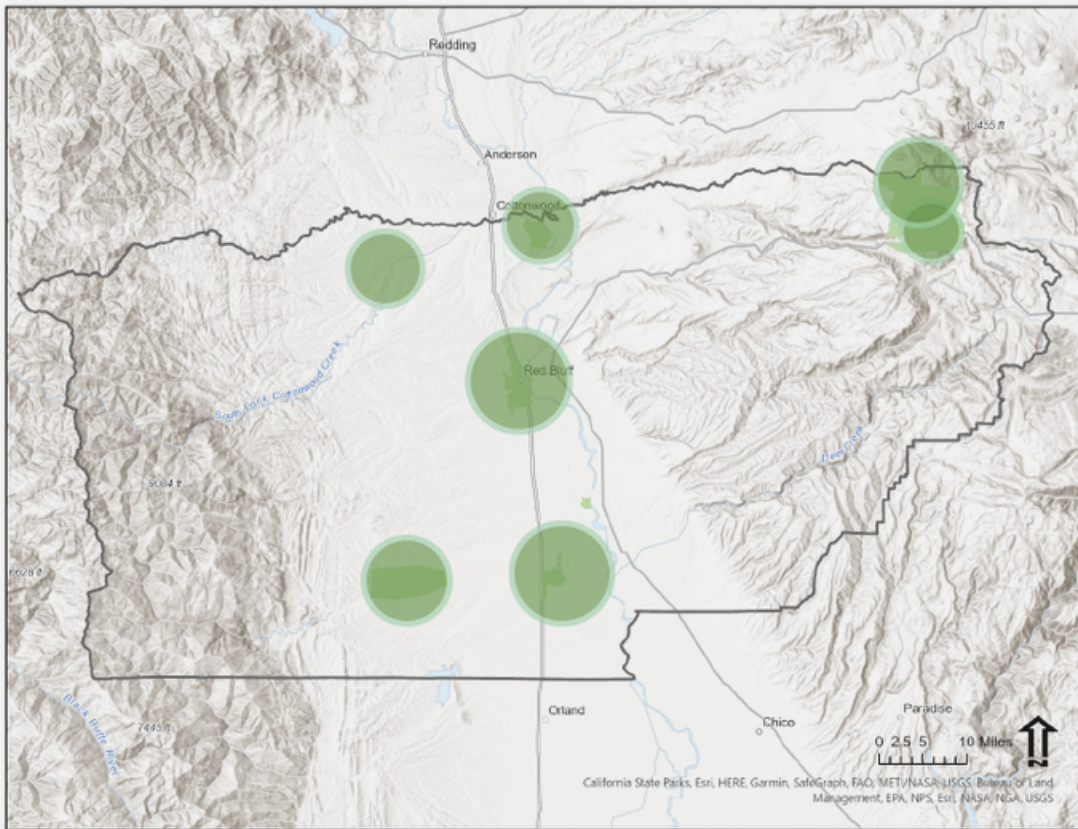


# BETTER FIRE FUTURES PROJECT

Across the country, fire-prone communities are recognizing the need to address wildfire resilience, but awareness is just the first step. Local action is key for changing fire outcomes, and local leaders need support with strategy development to facilitate that action. The Better Fire Futures Project helps communities determine where to begin, and how to take the “next right steps.”

In 2023, the Fire Adapted Communities Network (FAC Net) conducted the Better Fire Futures Project—a collaborative effort with research and community partners—to pilot two community-scale strategy tools designed to support local wildfire resilience. The project included virtual and in-person workshops for 30 communities, with a focus on Northern California. This report details the outcomes of the project and our vision for how FAC Net and our partners can leverage these tools to improve fire outcomes in the future.



Seven distinct communities in the Upper Sacramento Valley attended an in-person workshop in December where they designed fire adaptation strategies using the FAC Pathways Tool.

# BACKGROUND

When FAC Net was launched over a decade ago, many fewer communities were pursuing wildfire resilience work. FAC Net's original membership was made up of thought leaders and practitioners who were defining the field. As wildfire awareness has and continues to grow across the country, many more local leaders are coming to FAC Net wondering, "where should I start?" and "what are the most meaningful things my community can do to improve fire outcomes?"

# OUTCOMES

Funded by the California Regional Forest and Fire Capacity Program, Justin Brooks Fisher Foundation, and a cooperative agreement among The Nature Conservancy, USDA Forest Service and the Watershed Center, the Better Fire Futures Project responds directly to the needs of communities and local leaders by offering strategy development tools as well as guided facilitation support. Through this project we stewarded the development of actionable wildfire resilience strategies with 30 communities (10 of which are in California). These strategies included a variety of actions suited to local context and resources.

Project outputs included two methods for facilitating the [Wildfire Narratives tool](#) and transformed the beta Pathways Tool from an analog paper process into an easy-to-access [interactive online tool](#). For the Pathways Tool we also developed agenda, materials and facilitation processes for two versions of the workshops: an introductory/short session and a multi-day intensive workshop.

# ACTIVITIES

- National workshop piloting the Wildfire Narratives Tool: April 2023
- Partner meeting with the CA Fire Safe Council to explore how FAC Net tools could support County Coordinators: April 2023
- Development of the online FAC Pathways app: spring/summer 2023
- [Journal of Forestry Article](#) about the FAC Pathways Tool: October 2023
- Virtual strategy workshops for California communities: November 2023
- In-person multi-day workshop for Tehama County communities: December 2023

# APPROACH

We believe getting better fire outcomes requires multiple levels of action:

- 1) supporting local leaders and their partners to develop strategies that address their unique wildfire issues.
- 2) investing in intermediary groups to convene people, share learning and span boundaries.
- 3) developing and evolving programs, policy, investments and other system-scaled structures that enable change.