



TELE CASE STUDY

Island Park Sustainable Fire Community

24 wildfire risk
evaluations done

45 tons of slash
collected

4 demonstration lots
set up

TELE (tools for engaging landowners effectively) is an approach and planning methodology that emphasizes understanding landowners' perspectives and interests and tailoring outreach messages to be more persuasive. TELE case studies showcase projects that have used the TELE methodology to engage more landowners in land stewardship and conservation. TELE is a project of the Sustaining Family Forests Initiative.

TOOLS FOR ENGAGING LANDOWNERS EFFECTIVELY



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STEP 1: SET OBJECTIVES

Introduction

The Island Park Sustainable Fire Community (“IPSFC”) is a collaborative group that is committed to helping Island Park residents prepare for and minimize the consequences of wildfires. Partners include:

- USDA Forest Service,
- Idaho Department of Lands,
- The Nature Conservancy,
- Idaho Bureau of Homeland Security,
- High Country RC&D,
- Fire Adapted Communities network,
- Fire Learning Network,
- Farm Bureau Insurance,
- Fremont County, and
- City of Island Park.

On January 22-23, 2014 representatives from IPSFC attended a TELE workshop in Idaho, where they worked with TELE experts and team members to develop a communications plan for reaching the people of Island Park.

The IPSFC identified several goals they hope to achieve through targeted marketing:

1. By 2024, 80% of the community will have implemented critical actions that make them safe from wildfire.
2. By 2024, 50% of public lands adjacent to developments will be treated and/or scheduled for treatment to create a fuel buffer zone.
3. By 2024, 50% of the properties will have safe firefighter access and have adequate evacuation options (that allow people to get out and to get firefighters in).
4. By 2030, 30% of vegetative landscape in the vicinity of developments will be more resilient to insect epidemics and wildfire.

STEP 2: DEFINE YOUR AUDIENCE

The IPSFC identified three separate audiences within Island Park with which they would like to work and communicate. These three audiences include full-time residents, summer seasonal residents, and property managers. Tactics used to raise awareness about wildfires in Island Park and to provide information that may minimize risk differ slightly depending on the exact audience.

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STEP 3: PROFILE YOUR AUDIENCE

Audience	Approach and Considerations	Barriers to Action
<i>Full-Time Residents</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Generally well-educated, mostly retired, financially stable, and enjoy outdoor recreation and the peace, quiet, and seclusion that Island Park has to offer.• Will take responsibility when enough information is conveyed because they care about the Island Park community.• Convey a message that places a high value on the natural landscape and the community.• Convey a message that encourages these residents to take responsibility for their own property.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Although full-time residents are generally well educated and financially stable, still these residents may be deterred by the perceived cost of doing work on their land.2. Residents may feel hesitant due to the perceived effort required.3. There is a lack of good information coupled with the belief that actions they take will not really minimize their risk.
<i>Summer Seasonal Residents</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Generally well-educated, financially stable, and enjoy the outdoor recreation and the peace, quiet, and seclusion that Island Park has to offer.• Care about the Island park community.• Can likely be convinced to feel responsible and empowered to take action.• Convey a message that places a high value on the landscape and community of Island Park.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. IPSFC will likely face the same barriers that are anticipated when dealing with full-time residents.
		<ol style="list-style-type: none">2. Because summer seasonals are not in Island Park year-round, it may be difficult to engage in face-to-face conversations with these residents.
<i>Property Managers</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Includes both individuals and companies that manage property for absentee landowners.• Live in and work in Island Park.• Likely place a high value on the natural landscape and the Island Park sense of community.• Capacity to take action depends on their understanding of the actions that need to be taken as well as their ability and willingness to convey this message accurately and eloquently to their clients.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Managers must obtain their clients' permission and funds to carry out actions in order to mitigate risk to the properties they oversee.

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STEP 4: CLARIFY YOUR MESSAGE

The message conveyed to property owners is one of empowerment rather than fear. A postcard to advertise free fire risk evaluations is a great example of the IPSFC message: the mailing's front side says "Help Protect Your Property and the Island Park Community". This message plays on Island Park residents', both permanent and seasonal, emotional connection to the community and their personal safety. Other written materials used similar messages and tone.



STEP 5: CHANNELS AND MATERIALS

The IPSFC has hired an Outreach Representative to implement a multifaceted outreach campaign and to work with staff to monitor the program's success. The IPSFC is utilizing a few main outreach strategies to convey their message:

- Face-to-face, low key education via door-to-door campaigns and at community meetings;
- Newspaper, TV, and radio content;
- Demonstration projects;
- Distribution of relevant WUI and Firewise guidelines in the mail;
- And postcards and brochures advertising free fire risk evaluations.

STEP 6: EVALUATION

IPSFC completed their first summer of door-to-door outreach from May-September 2014. They have created a map of all the property owners contacted. So far:

- 87 property owners requested a free risk evaluations;
- 24 evaluations have been completed;
- 25 evaluations are scheduled;
- 170 piles of slash (~45 tons) were collected from two targeted subdivisions over a 4-day period in September; and
- 4 demonstration lots have been set-up in the two-targeted subdivisions.