



THE LONGLEAF LEADER



LONGLEAF FOR
THE LONG RUN

VOLUME IX- ISSUE 2

SUMMER 2016

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TABLE OF CONTENTS



President’s Message.....2
 Upcoming Events4
 Letters from the Inbox5
 Green Side Up6
 New Opportunities for Burning Trees.....9
 Understory Plant Spotlight.....11
 Northern Bobwhite12
LANDOWNER CORNER14

REGIONAL UPDATES19
 While You’re in the Grass Stage29
ARTS & LITERATURE30
 Longleaf Destinations32
PEOPLE36
SUPPORT THE ALLIANCE39

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ADVERTISING Carol Denhof 678.595.6405 – editor@longleafalliance.org
COVER Georgia Forestry Commission- Wheeler County Unit and Orianne Society Burn Team working in partnership with Reese and Reese Thompson to burn the Thompson family property in Wheeler County, GA.
 Photo by Jeremy Roberts | Conservation Media; LLC.

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BY ROBERT ABERNETHY, THE LONGLEAF ALLIANCE



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Longleaf for the Long Run

In April, I found myself sitting on the tailgate of a pickup eating pork rinds and drinking a beer with a friend. Actually, my friend had a Scotch, I had the beer. The sun was setting behind us, and we were waiting for a pair of red-cockaded woodpeckers (RCWs) to return to their roost cavities. The cavities were constructed inserts that my friend had placed in his longleaf several years ago.

As we sat on the tailgate, I looked around and literally, as far as I could see in all directions were beautiful, open, longleaf pine woods. Over half of the woods had been burned this year and the rest would be burned in the early summer or next year. The groundcover of wiregrass and other forbs was diverse and greening up nicely following the burns. As we sat and listened to the South Georgia day begin to shut down, we saw an eastern kingbird and brown-headed nuthatches in the canopy. We saw blue grosbeaks in an adjacent wheat field and a fox squirrel running through the burn. We heard indigo buntings and bobwhite calling continuously across the forest and a lone red-tailed hawk screaming off to the east.

Just a minute or two before sunset, three RCWs showed up and put on quite the show, calling and feeding high in the canopy and pecking around their holes. A few minutes later, two disappeared into their holes, and the third headed off to the east where there was another cluster of constructed cavities.

Chuck-will's-widows and a great horned owl tuned up as we drove back to the house for dinner.

That evening in the woods summarized for me what The Longleaf Alliance is all about. Of course, we are about the tree and learning more about planting it and growing it, profitably. But we are also about so much more; we are about the forest, which includes the wiregrass and the wildflowers as well as the fox squirrels, bobwhite and the RCWs. We are about helping landowners achieve their visions and goals of a productive and profitable forest while providing homes and habitat for a unique suite of plants and animals that is found nowhere else on earth.

Most landowners that invest in "longleaf for the long run" value the financial return from straw and timber but they also do it for the many intangible returns, such as hunting, spending time with the family or sitting on a tailgate in the setting sun and watching RCW's come home to roost.

Rhett Johnson once told me, "You can invest your savings in many ways. You can put your money in the bank or into land and longleaf. You can walk your land with a shotgun and a bird dog in the fall and derive a great deal of enjoyment while the trees are growing. But the last time I checked, if you took your dog and your shotgun into the bank and asked to see your money, they would lock you up." Longleaf is an investment you can enjoy every day as it grows in value.

The Longleaf Alliance is in it for the long run. Thank you all for your support and your vision. I hope you have a wonderful summer!

**Our professional staff can assist you in your turn-key
Silvicultural Programs:**

PRESCRIPTIONS

FERTILIZATION • TREE PLANTING

HERBICIDE APPLICATIONS

(including Site Prep, Release and Herbaceous Weed Control)



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Florida
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Texas/Louisiana
Jon Lunsford: (936) 433-5460

Georgia/ East Tennessee
John Wood: (706) 224-4240

Virginia
Doug Pond: (804) 241-8118
Brendan Schnell: (804) 356-6547

North Alabama/Mississippi
Dean Gillespie: (334) 322-7849

North Carolina
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President
robert@longleafalliance.org

Ad Platt
Vice President of Operations
ad@longleafalliance.org

Anne Rilling
Vice President of Business
anne@longleafalliance.org

Lynnsey Basala
Development Director
lynnsey@longleafalliance.org

Ryan Bollinger
Local Implementation Team Consul
ryan_b@longleafalliance.org

Karen Zilliox Brown
*Technical Assistance & Training
Specialist*
karen@longleafalliance.org

Vernon Compton
GCPEP Director
vernon@longleafalliance.org

Carol Denhof
Understory & Media Coordinator
carol@longleafalliance.org

Bobby Franklin
SoLoACE Partnership Coordinator
bobby@longleafalliance.org

Ryan Mitchell
*Outreach & Technical Assistance
Coordinator*
ryan@longleafalliance.org

Brian Schumann
Ecosystem Support Team Member
brian@longleafalliance.org

Randy Tate
*Ft. Stewart/Altamaha Longleaf
Restoration Partnership Coordinator*
randy@longleafalliance.org

Mike Thompson
Ecosystem Support Team Supervisor
mike@longleafalliance.org

Donna Vassallo
Ecosystem Support Team Member
donna@longleafalliance.org

Casey White
Administrative Assistant
office@longleafalliance.org

Bob Wilken
Fire Specialist
bob@longleafalliance.org

2016 | Calender

Alabama Prescribed Fire Council Meeting

Auburn, Alabama
September 1, 2016

Gopher Tortoise Field Day

Wehle Nature Center
Midway, Alabama
September 7, 2016

Gopher Tortoise Field Day

Solon Dixon Forestry Education Center
Andalusia, Alabama
September 21, 2016

Georgia Prescribed Fire Council Meeting

Tifton, Georgia
September 29, 2016

Longleaf Academy: Understory 201

Yemassee, South Carolina
October 4-6, 2016

11th Biennial Longleaf Conference

*Growing a Legacy –
A Working Forest for the Long Run*
Savannah, Georgia
November 1-4, 2016

Longleaf Academy: F-201 Fire & Longleaf

Withlacoochee Training Center
Brooksville, Florida
November 29-December 1, 2016

For more information about events please visit The Longleaf Alliance website (www.longleafalliance.org).

SUMMER 2016 MANAGEMENT CHECKLIST

- Secure soil samples for selected longleaf restoration sites.
- Spray invasive species such as: kudzu, cogongrass, bermudagrass, Japanese climbing fern, bahiagrass, and fescue.
- Inspect new longleaf plantings and plan future treatments if problems are noted.
- Mow or spray problematic species such as: crabgrass, coffee weed, partridge pea, hairy indigo, and other emergent weeds.
- Order longleaf seedlings and native grass seed for upcoming planting season.
- Burn wiregrass and native groundcover to maximize fall seed production and viability.
- Count cones on mature longleaf.
- Burn mature longleaf stands to prepare seedbed for natural regeneration.

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Q&A



Redheaded pine sawfly larvae on a young longleaf pine. Photo by Mark Hainds.

Q. Dear Longleaf Alliance,
Something is eating my longleaf seedlings! It's a worm about an inch long with a red head, an off-white body, and six rows of black spots. What is it, and what can I do?

Worried in South Carolina

Dear Worried,

A. The “worm” eating your longleaf pine seedlings is the larvae of the redheaded pine sawfly. It's one of several pine sawflies in the genus *Neodiprion* native to the South. The caterpillar larvae is the immature stage of a housefly-sized wasp. Occasional outbreaks can occur, but usually no more often than every 6 to 10 years. Redheaded pine sawfly is capable of

producing 3 or more generations in a year, but in most cases you only see one generation. Planted pines on former agricultural fields seem to see more infestations. In most cases, you don't need to do anything except when repeated defoliations occur. Herbicide applications to reduce hardwood competition during site preparation and periodic use of prescribed fire to reduce hardwood encroachment can help reduce pine sawfly infestations. If repeated defoliations are occurring in grass stage stands, consult your local County Extension Agent or Insect & Disease Specialist with your State Forestry Agency for control recommendations. As a rule, pine sawfly outbreaks tend to be very sporadic and localized. Spraying insecticides to control them is rarely needed.

The Longleaf Alliance

GREEN SIDE UP

Fire spreads through longleaf flatwoods in East Bay, Eglin Air Force Base, FL. Photo by Karen Zilliox Brown.

By Karen Zilliox Brown, The Longleaf Alliance

LIGHTNING SEASON

There is the familiar rumble. It's off in the distance. The skies look dark, like a thick curtain of gray, dark purple and deep blue. Next comes a bright flash. A loud crack of thunder now. A quick look at the radar shows the line of thunderstorms marching closer. It's summertime, and thunderstorms have returned to the Southland. Areas near the coast see the fronts set up off shore, the boundary between the warm, relatively dry air off the land battling the incoming seabreeze carrying Gulf or Atlantic moisture. As the boundary pushes onto land, the fallout comes in the form of impressive lightning shows, boisterous thunder, and buckets of rain. Inland, summer storms may not always be accompanied by notable precipitation. Those pre-frontal, early season lightning storms were, and still are, frequent and important fire starters.

We think about fire practices in the southeast in terms of seasons: dormant and growing seasons usually. As land managers, and humans, we tend to force complex systems into simple, convenient categories. Consider that there has been another, underlying season driving fire regimes across grassland ecosystems, like the longleaf-wiregrass and longleaf-bluestem landscapes. Some call it the lightning season, the transitional season, the build-up, the foresummer. Others simply refer to the fire season. It's the time observed in the late spring, for most of the longleaf range, prior to the regular and predictable rainy summer season. But the characteristics that make it prone to more naturally ignited fires, more than any other time of year, have to do with more than simple precipitation totals, or any other single variable.

Seasonal drought, increasing solar radiation, low relative humidity, warming temperatures, and winds all must factor into that calibration. Fine fuels are also available at this time with fuel moistures not yet up to growing season levels. The transitional season is a season marked by catching-up by the flora. Perennial C4 grasses, cured pine needles, even select hardwood litter, coupled with low soil moisture enhance the ability for a fire to spread. The probability of lightning ignitions increases during this period, providing the ignition that once facilitated landscape-scale fires, burning for days, across savannahs, uplands, and even into and across embedded wetlands.

Prescribed fires, in general, occur outside of this season. This season is one fire planners are cautious of burning during, due to it coinciding with longleaf candling, one of the fire-resilient tree's few periods of vulnerability. And that is imperative to note here; bud scorch during this time can be fatal to growing longleaf, depending on the extent and severity. Fires intentionally set for management purposes must be conscientious of the tree's natural biological processes.

However, across the landscape, and across the centuries, suggestions abound that these were the fires that shaped the ecosystem. Fires during this transitional season played a major role in developing the fire-adapted grasses and complement of species, whose presence we highlight as a marker of a restored longleaf ecosystem. In a Florida study, over 17 years, the largest wildfires occurred during this lightning season. In another, in Louisiana, 75% of all lightning strikes occurred in June, July, and August, but the month with the most lightning-caused

ignitions was May. Again, this would be expected to the casual weather observer. While the mid-summer thunderstorm pattern is well established, these are almost always rain-producing storms. Any ignition is swiftly put out and usually undetected. Lightning strikes that occur in the March to May

period are less common, relatively speaking, but are also less likely to have accompanying, fire-suppressing precipitation, leading to a more significant fire spread and fire effects.

Not surprisingly, lightning strikes most commonly affected the tallest trees in the stands. A mature longleaf pine, more resistant to nearly every other threat than its competitors, will most often succumb to a lightning strike, or subsequent invasion or insult, than any other natural cause. As Rhett Johnson likes to say, if you stood in the same place in the South for 400 or so years, you'd eventually be struck too. Single-tree or multiple-tree mortality from lightning strikes leave behind the standing snag of a longleaf for many years, providing unique habitat to beneficial insect populations, and snag-nesting and foraging birds. Once their needles shed, and the trees eventually fall, the canopy gap left behind creates an opportunity for young longleaf germinants to

release and take advantage of the available resources: sunlight, nutrients, and hydration.

Mimicking such an effect through silvicultural practices also provides an opening for natural longleaf regeneration. Such a technique, of deliberate gap enlargement or creation, is best done in stands maintained by frequent fire, preferably transition or growing season burning. Doing so in a fire-suppressed, woody and well-developed midstory would only encourage



Lightning scar on a live tree. Lightning strikes are a leading cause of mortality of mature longleaf pines, but many can survive a strike and be observed in mature stands. Photo by Karen Zilliox Brown.



Pitcher plants (Sarracenia spp.) emerge after spring fire on a seepage slope in Blackwater River State Forest, Santa Rosa County, FL. While this was prescribed, fires late in the dormant season may mimic lightning fires and their effects on landscapes. Photo by Karen Zilliox Brown.

competition of hardwood species and see a decline in the understory diversity, and thus be counter-productive to the objectives of enhancing diversity and natural stand dynamics.

For fire managers, the concept of seasonality has typically been thought of in terms of single variables: precipitation, usually, or even by calendar dates that fail to adapt to fluid climate indicators of plant community functions. Fires during the transitional season, the lightning season, may have been the most important for driving fire-adapted vegetation characteristics; fires at this time of year still hold the potential for maintaining and unearthing rare and endemic communities of pyrogenic plants and encouraging the habitats they form. The challenge today is burning closer to the natural edge, optimizing fire response in the longleaf ecosystem while minimizing pine mortality. As is always the objective, but when one looks around, the rewards are many.

SUGGESTED READING:

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NEW OPPORTUNITIES

FOR BURNING DUFF TREES

Few things have been as nerve-wracking in my career as learning how to reintroduce fire to old-growth longleaf pine. The accumulation of organic material, mostly bark, around the base of old trees was over 30 cm on many old longleaf on Sprewell Bluff when I began burning that tract 15 years ago. Walking on this deep duff layer felt like walking on a mattress. It was going to take years to reduce those fuels safely. Fifteen years later I can tell you I'm only halfway to reaching this goal! Every time I prepared to light a torch in Sprewell's ancient green cathedral a voice in my head whispered, "You screw this up, and you will kill a forest that was born two centuries before you were." A duff fire is a frightening thing to a land manager; it can burn for days or a week, slowly girdling the tree and usually resulting in mortality.

My prescription for most of this journey has been very conservative, so much so that it brings occasional laughter when I call for a burn permit – 'good luck getting it to burn' they'd say as the last of the thunder rumbled – burn within 24 hours of at least an inch of rain. Despite the chuckles, those mountains have always burned well, sometimes too well, but waiting for these conditions meant I only had a handful of burn days available during our season. I've learned a lot since then. I've learned that the first burn is the toughest; that's when you have to get it right. Later burns can be more forgiving, but even those need to be conducted within a day or two after a big rain. I've learned that prolonged steady wind after a burn can be bad, keeping duff fires alive even under somewhat wet conditions.

A few years ago I started experimenting with a moisture meter. It's a fairly cheap (\$150-500) and simple device generally used to measure moisture in hay or sawn lumber. I repurposed it for measuring duff moisture. It is far simpler than the other products I've occasionally seen on the market that are designed for measuring duff moisture, and it gives

A moisture meter has proven a very effective tool in predicting the occurrence of duff fires. This tree on Pine Mountain in Georgia has just been burned. With duff moisture in the high 80s the duff was far too wet to sustain a fire, and the old giant lives on after experiencing its first fire in nearly a century. Photo by Nathan Klaus.



instant results. This gadget features two metal probes that measure electrical conductance through any substance and gives results that are converted to a percentage scale. Moisture makes duff a better conductor of electricity, so wetter conditions give a higher value.

I started measuring moisture in the duff around old trees -- at sites that we burned without causing a duff fire and at sites where we pushed our luck a little too far and ignited duff on some trees. After several years of experimenting I have found the magic number: the lower threshold where duff fires begin to happen. For my moisture meter (a Delmhorst™ BD-2100WCS) the number is about 75-78%. Above that, you are probably going to be OK, above 85%, and you are in great shape. Duff moistures below 75% I don't dare to burn, small

{continued on page 10}



Sustained winds immediately after a duff burn can keep smoldering duff going, even under somewhat moist conditions. Photo by Nathan Klaus.

patches of burning duff begin to appear at values around 75%. The amazing thing is that these conditions aren't limited to just a few days after a big rain, at least not always. The accumulation of repeated small rain events sometimes works just as well. A big rainfall followed by extended cloudy conditions can lengthen favorable conditions for a week or more, especially during cool weather. I have suddenly discovered I have at least five times more burn days than I previously thought. Better yet, many of these are days that result in much hotter fires, allowing me to achieve some modest ecological goals,

such as mid-story reduction while simultaneously keeping the duff from burning. The moisture meter has also saved me from making a few mistakes during times when I was convinced that conditions were wet enough. The best part is that the moisture meter removes the guesswork; I now have concrete numbers on which to base my decision, and this is information I can send

relatively inexperienced people such as a fire crew member or a landowner to collect.

A few pointers on using a moisture meter to measure duff. First, rake back the litter and gently push the probes into the top layer of duff, don't compact the duff as this will skew the readings upward. Second, you've got to measure moisture levels beneath several trees. A good guideline is to take readings beneath at least ten trees, as there is a lot of variation in how fast duff dries out. Measure duff moisture on several aspects, especially on the south side of big trees, since these locations are likely to dry out fast. Finally, take several readings on each tree as you dig down through the duff to mineral soil. It's not uncommon to have a wet layer on top with a dry layer below. If you are planning to burn, you need all the duff moisture readings to be above 80-85% throughout.

If you are going to burn old trees, do yourself a favor and purchase a moisture meter. The price is probably less than the timber value of one of your old trees, and far less than what you will spend on a single burn. If you know someone who also burns old growth, please share this article with them. There just aren't many old giants left. As longleaf continues to gain recognition and new tracts begin the long journey toward restoration, the use of a simple moisture meter can take the guesswork out of the daunting task of reintroducing fire into these awe-inspiring forests.

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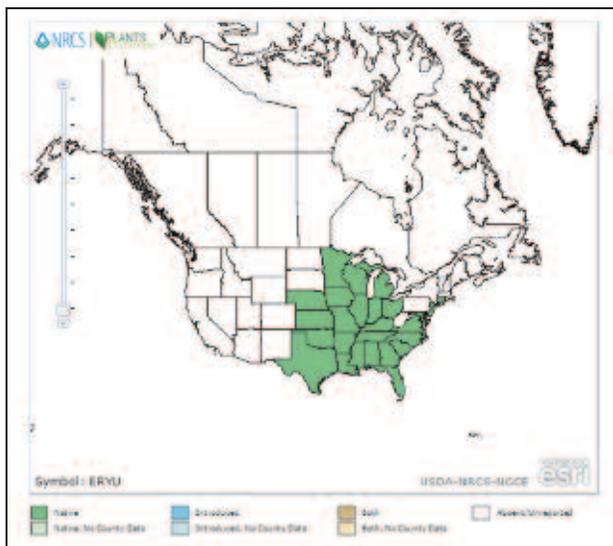
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GROWER OF CONTAINERIZED LONGLEAF PINE SEEDLINGS
WhitfieldPineSeedlings.com

By Carol Denhof, *The Longleaf Alliance*

PLANT SPOTLIGHT

ERYNGIUM YUCCIFOLIUM MICHAUX RATTLESNAKE MASTER



Map showing distribution of rattlesnake master. USDA PLANTS Database.



Rattlesnake master flowering stems. By Crazytwoknobs (Own work) (CC BY 3.0 (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/>)), via Wikimedia Commons

Description

This perennial plant is a member of the carrot family (Apiaceae) that includes, in addition to carrots, Queen Anne's lace and a variety of herbs such as cilantro, dill, and fennel. Rattlesnake master gets its name from the resemblance of its spiny leaves to those of the yucca plant. The lower leaves of this plant can reach up to 27 inches long and are quite stiff with bristly spines that run along the margin. Each plant typically has one stem that is branched. The flowering structures, which are reminiscent of spiny golf balls, are arranged terminally on the branched stems. Flowering occurs all summer, from June-August.

Distribution & Habitat

Rattlesnake master is a wide ranging species. It can be found growing in a variety of well-drained soils from our pineywoods here in the Southeastern United States to the prairies of the Midwest.

Wildlife Uses

Rattlesnake master is an excellent nectar plant for native bees and other pollinators. Other pollinators may include predatory wasps that help in reducing herbivory from pests such as crickets and katydids.

Other common species

If not in bloom, this plant could possibly be confused with our native yucca (*Yucca filamentosa*) but its leaves are generally smaller and not as stiff as the yucca. There is another species of *Eryngium* that is also called rattlesnake master (*E. aquaticum*.) This species is found in wetland habitats and has blue flowers instead of white like the *E. yuccifolium*.

Commercial Availability

Rattlesnake master is widely available from commercial sources. For an extensive list of suppliers and to learn more about propagating the plant, visit the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center website www.wildflower.org.

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USDA, NRCS. 2016. The PLANTS Database (<http://plants.usda.gov>, 9 May 2016). National Plant Data Team, Greensboro, NC 27401-4901 USA.

By: Reggie Thackston and Theron M. Terbune, PhD

NORTHERN BOBWHITES BIOLOGICALLY BUILT FOR RAPID RESTORATION

Longleaf and bobwhites share much in common. Both have been greatly diminished over the last century by basically the same reasons – landscape-scale change in land use, especially intensified agriculture and forestry practices coupled with the reduction in frequent prescribed fire. Since the 1990s the conservation community has targeted both longleaf and bobwhites as a restoration priority because of the benefits to a broad suite of species and a biodiversity rich ecosystem. However, one aspect where longleaf and bobwhites are quite different is the time required for restoration. It has been rightly said that it take a 100 years to grow a 100 year-old longleaf forest, and it may take much longer than that to functionally restore an intact longleaf system. Bobwhites on the other hand are biologically equipped to respond quickly to positive habitat restoration. Let's take a short look at the attributes that make bobwhites built for rapid restoration.

The “invasion” process begins in the spring when coveys break up and disperse for the breeding season. Although bobwhites are not generally considered great dispersers, the spring break-up process facilitates bobwhites finding and occupying newly developed usable space and aides in maintaining genetic diversity in those landscapes where

bobwhites already occur. Research shows dispersal movements of quail are typically less than 1 mile but can range up to 60+ miles (as documented in some western states of their range) with an average dispersal of about a quarter of a mile in high quality habitat. Thus, for bobwhites to quickly occupy newly developed habitats there must be a source population relatively close by to fuel restoration. Across the South, and especially the Southeast Coastal Plain, bobwhites do still occur although at low densities, perhaps 1 bird to 20 to 40 acres. Even at these low densities bobwhites can respond when enough habitat is created to support a population increase. Additionally, Tall Timbers research has shown that in areas where bobwhites have been extirpated, translocations of wild quail into newly developed habitats can facilitate or expedite the increase and ultimately result in successful restoration.

Under ideal habitat conditions and favorable weather bobwhite abundance can increase by 50% or more in a single year. For example, a renovated property in the right landscape starting with a fall density of 4 coveys or ~48 birds on a 1,000 acres (1 bird/20 acres) could feasibly be at 30+ coveys or 365+ birds (about 1 bird/3 acres) in 5 years! What makes this rate of increase possible? Bobwhites are tenacious

breeders and prolific nesters. In the South they may begin nesting as early as April and continue into early October. Both juvenile and adult hens nest with an average clutch size of 12-14 eggs and an incubation period of 23 days. The chicks are



*Bobwhite quail in flight.
Photo by Dale Spartas.*



precocial, meaning they arrive “ready to go,” leaving the nest within a couple hours and by 14 days of age are capable of flight. In quality habitats about 20% of hens will bring off a second brood and, a few may even attempt a triple brood, although uncommon. Additionally, bobwhite males are “politically correct” individuals such that they help raise the chicks and about 20% of males even incubate a nest thereby freeing up the hen to potentially bring off another brood.

With this kind of productivity one might ask why we aren’t like the children of Israel in the Exodus – plagued with quail! Oh how we wish it were so, but the fact is bobwhites live hard and die young. Their high reproductive rate is counterbalanced by a high mortality rate where about 80% die each year. In fact, it’s commonly said that: “the one thing bobwhites are really good at doing, is dying!” They are at the bottom of the food chain and dozens of critters eat them and/or their eggs. However, the bobwhite’s ability to respond to newly developed or restored habitats more quickly than their predators is akin to a longleaf in the grass stage. That is, their high reproductive rate gets them ahead of the predator population in occupying

the newly developed space like a longleaf during the rocket stage shooting above the competition and beyond fire’s reach. Quail biologists have labeled this population response to habitat restoration the “new ground” effect. But eventually the predator population catches up and the quail population drops to a level lower than that initial population response.

Tall Timbers has proven across hundreds of thousands of acres that through science based management, habitat can be tweaked to enable bobwhite survival to exceed mortality and grow a population, or at least equal annual mortality for sustainability. Within longleaf and other forested systems thinning and frequent burning to establish and sustain a balance of grass/forb/shrub ground cover, managing fallow openings to enhance brood range, supplemental feeding and predator control can collectively be used to grow and maintain bobwhites at healthy and huntable numbers. Having bobwhites around to help herald the spring and hunt in the fall and winter won’t speed up longleaf restoration but it sure can make the time pass quickly and make the restoration process even more enjoyable!

CONSERVATION AND SUCCESSIONAL PLANNING For Longleaf Forests

By Katherine Eddins, Georgia-Alabama Land Trust

Privately owned longleaf habitat in Georgia. Photo by Carol Denhof.

As executive director of Georgia-Alabama Land Trust, I spend a great deal of time with landowners who are working through long term planning issues with the goal of sustaining their longleaf pine ecosystems, and associated rural land uses, such as farming and more traditional type forest management. It is challenging to restore the longleaf forest ecosystem and otherwise maintain a healthy pine plantation or farm. Once in place, the next challenge is careful and thoughtful planning to sustain it for future generations. Planning is vital to a long term longleaf pine forests and related rural land uses. Hopefully, this article will spur family conversation and planning around longleaf and other land resources.

In preparation for this article, I spoke with Allen Olson, an Albany Georgia-based attorney specializing in farm and successional planning law and Jack Sawyer, an Atlanta-based estate attorney. Allen says, "The most important thing any farmer or forest landowner needs is a will." According to Allen, many landowners have wills prepared when they have their first

child, and never update them. Most forest and farm owners don't have simple liquid assets like cash, stocks and bonds. Their asset holdings tend to be complicated and require more careful planning. Having a regular review and update of the will is critical to sustain a forest or farm type business. Jack Sawyer suggests that in cases where estate taxes are a major issues, landowners consider using trusts as part of the plan. There are many trust varieties, including charitable remainder trust and charitable lead trust. The lead trust provides for an income stream for a charity during the landowners lifetime, with the assets being passed to the landowner's beneficiaries at death; the remainder trust provides an income stream for the landowner during lifetime with the asset going to a charity at death.

Family limited partnerships are another key planning tool. Family limited partnerships are used to move farm and forest assets from one generation to another while keeping management structure stable. Typically the parents/older generations serve as general partners and remain as the primary manager of the partnership and its assets. The

children/younger generation have an economic interest in the partnership but lack management and control. They generally lack the ability to sell their interest outside of the immediate family. Family limited partnerships can help to ameliorate estate tax and probate related issues, allowing a seamless transition from one generation to the next and easing the burdens and delays of probate and estate taxes.

Another popular tool is the conservation easement. A conservation easement is a voluntary agreement between a landowner and a land trust, such as Georgia-Alabama Land Trust, designed to protect the conservation values of land, while at the same time allowing for rural uses. A conservation easement is a contract that runs with the land, so if the land is sold or otherwise transferred, the new owner is obligated to comply with the easement terms. The conservation easement can provide for significant income, estate and property tax savings. For example, with the income tax savings, landowners can generate cash liquidity and use this to further their management plan and budget objectives, such as purchasing more land, purchasing life insurance, or paying off debt.

Conservation easements have become more popular over time for a variety of landowners, from major crop and forest producers such as Gulf States and Plum Creek, to small multi-generational farm and forest land owners. To date, the Georgia-Alabama Land Trust has worked with landowners to

protect approximately 325,000 acres. According to the Land Trust Alliance, a national land conservation organization, the 1,100 + members of the land trust community nationwide have worked with landowners to protect over 50 million acres of land (2010 Land Trust Census).

A recent conservation easement example is a Covington County, Alabama property owned by Jim and Debra Flournoy. With the help of the Longleaf Alliance, the Flournoys are restoring longleaf to Jim's old family farmstead. To ensure this legacy continues, the Flournoys recently protected the land with a conservation easement with the Georgia-Alabama Land Trust, conserving the longleaf forest and associated gopher tortoise habitat. Another personal longleaf example is a property in Cherokee County, Alabama. My sister, Ellen Beidler and I protected a 520 acre montane longleaf forest with a conservation easement. While protecting the forest, fields and water resources, we reserved rural uses, such

as the right to build two homes, manage the forest with best management and standard silvicultural practices, manage and expand food plots, and do all things recreational, such as hunting.

If you have further questions about these tools or planning issues, please feel free to contact me and be sure to attend the Friday sessions at our 2016 Conference, where we will share successful approaches from some of the most experienced professionals in this arena.



Jim Flournoy discovering a gopher tortoise burrow on his property in Covington County, AL. Photo by Larry Wills.

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RESTORING LONGLEAF AT LITTLE CREEK WOODS

By Bob Reid and Betsy Clark



UF/IFAS Photo by Tyler Jones

My wife Betsy and I have a vision for Little Creek Woods, our 1200-acre property in northwest Walton County, Florida. A vision we like to think extends at least 300 years into the future.

I tell folks our journey as serious longleaf landowners began in 2000 when we bought the first of several contiguous tracts of timberland. But it actually started many years before when

my dad, a University of Georgia Forestry School graduate, “introduced” me to the longleaf pine on our family farm in rural Carroll County, Georgia.

Our farm, where I grew up, was at the edge of the longleaf’s natural range, but we had a few relict and misshapen specimens, gnarled by years of winter ice storms. Dad’s great respect for this magnificent tree infected me deeply and has guided our efforts to restore the longleaf pine and the ecosystem it dominates.

When I was a high school senior Dad took me to UGA to show me around the campus. Some of the same Forestry School professors he’d had were still on the faculty, and it was an easy decision for me to “study forestry.” So, I signed-up.

Unfortunately, Dad died during my freshman year and, after wallowing around a bit, I finally graduated with a Bachelor’s degree in zoology. But each of my college summers I spent out West with the US Forest Service, fighting forest fires. Forestry was in my blood, and fire was in my heart!

This first tract Betsy and I bought included about sixty acres of natural 50-year-old longleaf, but it was mostly hidden in 20’ tall yaupon holly and other brush. Fire had been excluded from the tract, and re-introducing fire was one of the first obligations we had. In the process, we learned, to our great luck, that because this tract had never been farmed the original groundcover plants (wiregrass and associates) were still there.

Since that first purchase, we have slowly increased the acreage of Little Creek Woods by adding adjacent tracts as they became available and resources permitted. (I should point out that I do have steady income as an Air Force retiree, and most of our land purchases have been tax-deferred exchanges for land I owned elsewhere, including my share of the Reid family farm and other properties we’ve acquired over the years. Little Creek Woods is not yet a source of income for us.)

Longleaf had been planted by the previous owner on much of the first tract we bought, but most of the land we’ve added

since then was paper company land that had been planted to off-site loblolly and slash pines. Old stumps and broken turpentine pots confirm this was originally all longleaf, and that's what we aim to restore. Our nutrient-poor, deep sandy soils are not suited to other pine species.

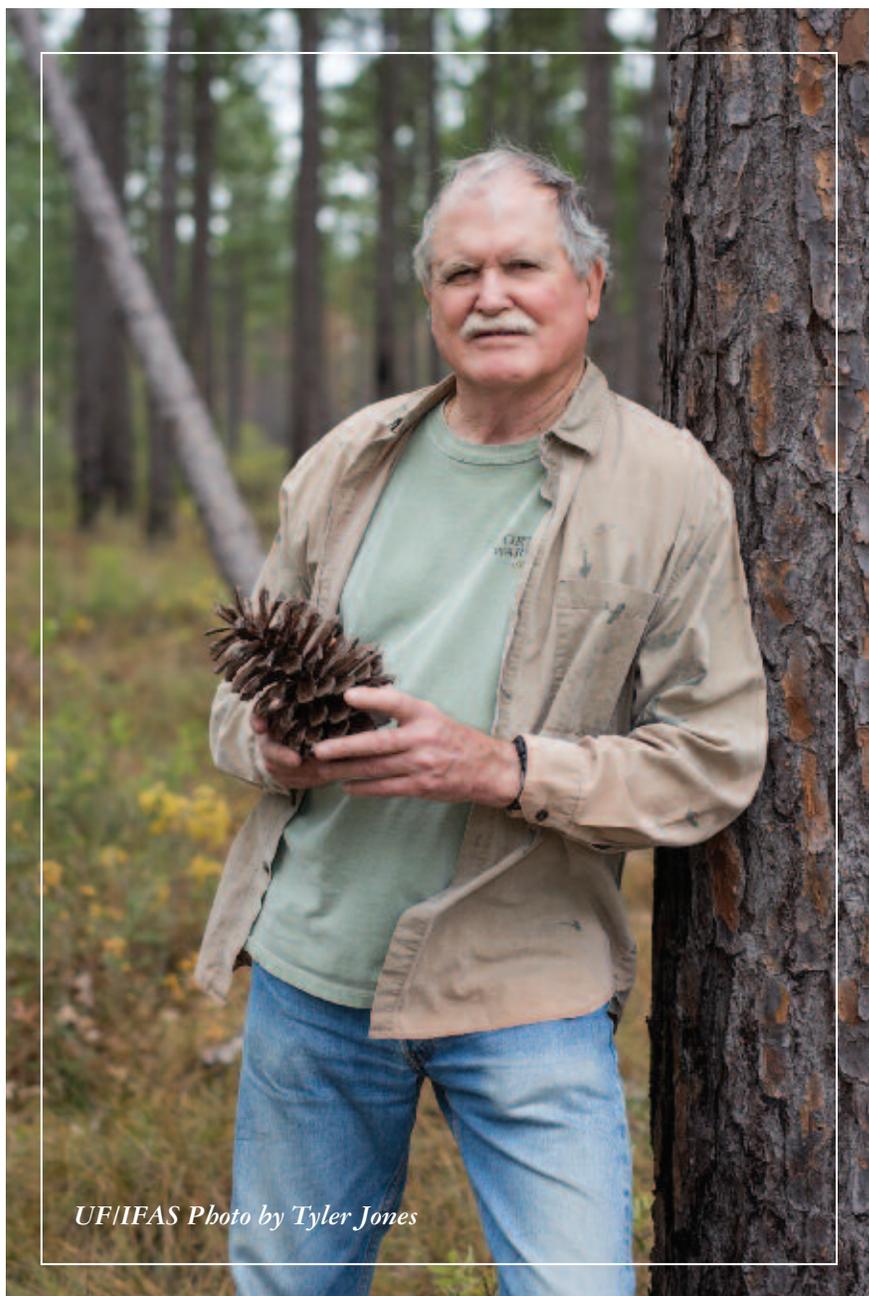
Prescribed fire is our primary tool in this restoration. We also harvest and propagate wiregrass and other species from our sites that still have original groundcover. Some of the off-site pine tracts are doing ok and will be carried to maturity before conversion to longleaf, while others are being clearcut and replanted now. (Some loblolly tracts were so moribund that the pines had to be given away and were cleared in a fuel-wood chipping operation.)

We have experimented a bit with novel ideas regarding longleaf restoration. During years with heavy seed drop, we have successfully transplanted tiny seedlings from fire breaks to understocked areas with just a hand trowel. Mark Hains, in conjunction with Auburn's School of Forestry, is six years into a comparative growth study of longleaf, slash, and loblolly pines planted together on a bare sand ridge site. And this summer we are working with Carol Denhof and Karen Brown on a test of wiregrass seed viability produced on identical sites but burned at different times during the growing season.

Some parts of Little Creek Woods are not suitable for longleaf, and on those, we are working with nature to maintain appropriate habitats. These include fire-excluded hardwood groves, creek bottoms with majestic slash pines and pitcher plants, a small pond with bass and bream, and a few food plots inset with white oaks and bordered with crabapples.

We have already cleared and replanted several hundred acres to longleaf pine, and have restored the wiregrass groundcover on much of it. Little Creek Woods was recognized as the "2003 Stewardship Forest of the Year" by Florida Forest Service and has hosted tours by gopher tortoise, wildflower, butterfly, birding, and other nature-oriented organizations. Our gopher tortoise population is especially notable.

The most important and labor-intensive part of this whole



UF/IFAS Photo by Tyler Jones

initiative is FIRE. Properly applied, prescribed fire is the main consideration in the management of longleaf pine, and it's our most active management tool. We could not maintain a longleaf pine forest without periodic fire.

And, something else, we couldn't do it alone!

Anyone accepting the challenge of longleaf restoration will quickly learn you can't do it by yourself. You must have help. Probably the single most important helper a forest landowner can have is a competent consulting forester who knows how the system works. In our case, this has been the highly experienced Auburn forester, Ken Oser. Also important is direct contact with university extension services and government agencies

that can assist in technical advice, cost shares, fire line establishment, control of invasive species, and the like.

Developing good relationships with adjacent landowners is also important, not only to ensure they know that what you are doing won't harm their interests, but to possibly encourage them to do a little longleaf restoration themselves. It also lets them know that when you do a prescribed burn, by reducing the likelihood of wildfire, you are benefiting them too.

This brings me back to the issue of fire in the woods itself. All of us grew up with Smokey Bear looking over our shoulder. For many years, fire in the woods was something to avoid at all costs. I was personally involved as "Smokey's assistant," working for the US Forest Service as a wildland firefighter for several summers in Idaho and Montana, and it's taken a while for me to realize how wrong we were. Fire in the woods is both beneficial and inevitable, and it's better if done under our control and on our terms.

At Little Creek Woods we burn on average 200 to 300 acres each year. I'm a certified burner and direct all our burns myself. --Betsy thinks I'm part pyromaniac, and that may be one of the

requirements for successful longleaf pine restoration. There is no way to bring back and maintain the longleaf pine ecosystem without fire.

But, the overarching challenge we face now is, how do we keep this bit of restored Nature going when we are gone. Neither Betsy nor I nor any of you reading this today will be here 100 years from now. But this piece of land will still be out there in Walton County, holding the world together. We are but transitory caretakers of the land.

So, what are we to do? Our children love the place, but all are tied-up with their own lives. None of them has the time, experience, or resources to properly manage what we have put together at Little Creek Woods. How do we ensure our 300-year vision is realized?

And we aren't the only landowners facing this primary challenge to durable longleaf restoration. Longleaf forest ownership succession is an issue that needs serious discussion now.



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News from the Longleaf Partnership Council

By Troy Ettel, Longleaf Partnership Council Chair



Earlier this year, I was asked by the America's Longleaf Restoration Initiative's (ALRI's) Communication Team to answer a number of questions about where the Initiative stands and what is ahead. The following are my reflections as I headed into my year as Longleaf Partnership Council (LPC) Chair, and as the Initiative entered into its seventh year.

• Tell us about ALRI and what the Initiative is hoping to accomplish?

The ALRI is perhaps the best example of a collaborative, landscape scale conservation initiative in North America. The Initiative's scope is broad (nine states and an historic range that exceeds 90 million acres) with a support network represented by 33 public and private partners from state and federal agencies and NGOs. With threats increasing and ecosystem loss accelerating – urbanization, fire suppression, climate change, incompatible forestry practices, etc. – we have to set bold goals at system scale. Increasing the amount of longleaf pine forest from 3.3 million to 8 million acres, which ALRI is committed to doing, is just that type of goal.

• How did you get involved with the ALRI?

My first day with The Nature Conservancy in October 2011 coincided with one of the first LPC meetings. The Conservancy played a key role from the very beginning in the development of ALRI's Range wide Conservation Plan for Longleaf Pine and created my position as Longleaf Pine Whole System Director as a commitment to the vision and Initiative.

• As the current Chair for the LPC, what has been your most rewarding experience?

I would characterize the first years of the Initiative as growth and exploration. Now, the Initiative has matured and we are in position to look back with a clearer understanding of what restoration at this scale is going to take. Looking forward now, there seems to be a willingness to challenge ourselves and determine what is required to reach 8 million acres. I am encouraged by the continued commitment to our goal as well as the open discussion around what more we must do.

• What do you want people to know about longleaf and its importance to the Southeastern United States?

Like the Rocky Mountains, Great Plains, and the North Woods, Longleaf Pine is an iconic American landscape. As a highly valuable wood, it fueled this country's economic growth, built the great American cities, and time after time has sustained human culture from the First Americans to present. Today, the longleaf pine forest makes me think of Shel Silverstein's beautiful children's story, *The Giving Tree*. The ecosystem has given until there is little left to give. Now we must give back not just for the sake of longleaf itself but

because there can be little doubt that the success and vitality of our own human communities rely upon healthy natural systems that sustain us in so many ways.

• How can the general public support longleaf restoration efforts?

We need strong voices and unequivocal support for the protection and management of natural places like longleaf pine. Hunters, anglers, hikers, photographers, etc. – the entire public that enjoys outdoor recreation needs to speak out. Even those that are not avid outdoor recreationists need to show support for the protection of natural areas for the clear water, wood, and other benefits they provide our developed communities.

• How will longleaf restoration benefit communities, animals and plants in the Southeast?

There are currently 30 Federally-listed species associated with longleaf pine ecosystems and approximately 40 additional species under review for listing. Proper management and restoration of longleaf pine forests will provide habitat for listed species and likely prevent the need to place additional species on the Endangered Species List. For many landowners, avoiding the listing of a species with proactive actions is an important economic consideration to avoid potential regulatory restrictions.

Benefits to people might be categorized in two ways: things taken from the forest and the services it provides. Longleaf forests produce valuable products like pine straw and lumber.

The wood is stronger and denser than other southern pines making it more suitable for structural lumber. It produces straight poles. Its resistance when compared to most other southern pines to catastrophic environmental effects such as wind damage, wildfire, drought, and insect outbreaks can also provide a risk reduction strategy for landowners. In addition, longleaf pine forests that are well-managed provide exceptional recreational opportunities. If burned regularly, they provide a means to control catastrophic wildfire and can thus protect adjacent or embedded human development. Some research is suggesting that well-managed longleaf provides more water that can be used for other purposes. The benefits for all residents, both human and nonhuman are there. Many we are just beginning to quantify.

• How would you describe longleaf to someone who is unfamiliar with the ecosystem?

A longleaf pine forest is really a grassland with trees scattered throughout it. The trees are only a part of the story – it’s the grasses and forbs that complete it. Visit a longleaf pine forest in the fall and witness the exquisite eruption of wildflowers, or find a pitcher plant bog embedded within a longleaf pine forest. But, longleaf pine is so vast, with such variation that, depending on where you are in the range, it defies a single descriptor. Some places it grows in dry deep sandhills, and other places in moist flatwoods. Variety would be the single word that best describes longleaf pine.

LOCAL IMPLEMENTATION TEAMS WITHIN THE HISTORICAL RANGE OF LONGLEAF PINE



Important Restoration Work in the Talladega Mountains

By Alex Varner, *The Nature Conservancy*



Prescribed fire in mountain longleaf habitat. Photo by Alex Varner.

May 15th was the last day for our seasonal prescribed fire crew for the Talladega-Mountain Longleaf Conservation Partnership (TMLCP). The crew consisted of three Student Conservation Association (SCA) interns and one crew leader. This was the first seasonal crew dedicated to the TMLCP, and they stayed very busy. From February to May, the crew (frequently including myself and a couple of other staff in the Birmingham office) assisted on over 37,328 acres of prescribed fire across the TMLCP landscape. We were able to assist a diverse group of partners including: Georgia Department of Natural Resources, US Fish and Wildlife Service, National Park Service, US Forest Service, The Nature Conservancy of Georgia and Alabama, and private landowners. A wide range of ecologically important habitats were helped throughout this fire season. These burns were conducted throughout the season and included a good mixture of dormant and growing season fires. The crew also was able to plant around 6500 longleaf seedlings on private property. The Partnership also assisted with red-cockaded woodpecker (RCW) conservation work on the Oakmulgee District of the Talladega National Forest. This work was important in protecting the habitat of the largest population of RCWs in the state. The fire crew assisted in timber stand improvement on national forest lands as well. Thanks go out to the crew leader, Rachel Granberg, who was an SCA intern for our coastal plain crew last year and did a great job moving into a leadership position just one year later. We wouldn't have had such a

successful fire season without the cooperation of our partners and the generous help provided by the National Fish and Wildlife Federation.

Apalachicola Regional Stewardship Alliance (ARSA) Update Longleaf and Invasive Species

By Brian Pelc, *The Nature Conservancy*



Cogon grass being treated on the Apalachicola National Forest by a member of The Nature Conservancy's Stewardship team. Public and private lands between the Ochlocknee and Apalachicola Rivers will be prioritized for funding in an effort to create a cogon spread-free zone reducing the risk of further spread through increased seed viability. Photo by Brian Pelc.

Cogon grass (*Imperata cylindrica*) is an invasive weed throughout Florida, spreading along roadsides and into timber stands. Cogon is a particular threat to longleaf pine ecosystems because it grows fast; it is very competitive, and burns much hotter than native understory plants.

While cogon is listed among the top ten worst weeds in the world, this nasty character does have one Achilles heel that local land managers in the ARSA region plan to take advantage of: cogon's light and fluffy seeds have very low viability. Because nearly all of Florida's cogon populations are genetic clones and this species cannot self-pollinate, cogon will be limited to vegetative spread until the genetically distinct Alabama population makes its way east into the sunshine state.

ARSA's Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area Committee has analyzed the known occurrences of cogon grass within the LIT boundary and determined that the 30-mile wide area between the Ochlocknee and Apalachicola Rivers has greatly limited the westward spread of this non-native grass and the handful of infestations could be targeted for regular management on both public and private lands, effectively creating a "spread-free zone" and potentially stalling the collision between the Florida and Alabama populations.

By using state and federal funds intended to assist private land owners with cogon infestations, ARSA members will prioritize populations within the "spread-free zone" for annual herbicide treatments for the next several years until infestations are small enough for landowners to manage them independently. Meanwhile, public land managers will focus on their infestations in the Apalachicola National Forest and Tate's Hell State Forest, which cover about half of the target area.

Highlights from the Chattahoochee Fall Line

By LuAnn Craighton, *The Nature Conservancy*



Longleaf 101 Academy students, Forestry & Wildlife Field Day morning Tuskegee National Forest. Photo by LuAnn Craighton.



presentation session at the Chattahoochee Fall Line WMA. Photo by Shelby Alavekios.

In March, The Longleaf Alliance taught a Longleaf 101 Academy at Tuskegee University in Tuskegee, Alabama with field excursions to Tuskegee National Forest. Faculty at Tuskegee University and staff from Tuskegee National Forest provided strong local support and participants experienced a great opportunity to learn more about “all things longleaf.” Staff representing NRCS, Alabama Wildlife Federation,

Alabama Forestry Commission, private landowners, U.S. Army Corp of Engineers, Alabama DCNR, Macon County Schools, Tuskegee University, U.S. Forest Service, and The Nature Conservancy attended the Academy.

During April, the Talbot County Chamber of Commerce, Georgia Forestry Commission, Georgia Department of Natural Resources and Chattahoochee Fall Line Conservation Partnership collaborated to host a Forestry & Wildlife Field Day on the recently established Chattahoochee Fall Line Wildlife Management Area (CFL WMA). This 11,000- acre property is co-owned and co-managed by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources and The Nature Conservancy. The management focus on the CFL WMA is longleaf restoration and management coupled with new outdoor recreation opportunities for the region. Eighty participants enjoyed a robust day of diverse presentations and field tours. Ad Platt, from The Longleaf Alliance, presented a program on The Economics of Longleaf and the field tour highlighted gopher tortoise ecology along with The Nature Conservancy burn team discussing a first entry prescribed burn in a fire-suppressed longleaf stand.

Two Demonstration Groundcover Restoration Plots Planted at Moody Forest

By Randy Tate, *The Longleaf Alliance*



Chuck Martin (TNC) and Brannon Knight (Orianne Society) planted native groundcover seed with a Grasslander™ seed drill. Photo by Carol Denhof.

Staff from The Orianne Society, the Longleaf Alliance, and The Nature Conservancy planted two longleaf ecosystem groundcover restoration plots at Moody Forest Natural Area in Baxley, GA, on March 28 of this year. The two, 2.5-acre plots, will be used to demonstrate restoration techniques, encourage other groundcover restoration efforts and help to emphasize the importance of native groundcover to longleaf ecosystem restoration and management. Given the importance of fire in longleaf ecosystems, anyone who has burned in longleaf pine knows how much easier it is to get the right fire if there is good native groundcover.

Native groundcover is also especially good for all the native wildlife in longleaf ecosystems. From wild turkey and quail, to Bachman’s sparrow and red-cockaded woodpeckers, many species use native groundcover for food and habitat. Gopher tortoise particularly benefit from the fresh, nutritious shoots of native groundcover re-sprouting post-fire.

The two plots are in different parts of Moody Forest and were planted in slightly different ways. In one, bulk seed was collected with a flail vac pulled by a tractor and then planted with a Grasslander™ seed drill. The second plot was treated similarly, but hand collected pollinator seeds were added. The pollinator seeds were collected by staff and volunteers from Moody Forest over the last year, seeking to capture species that flower throughout the growing season. The pollinator seeds were hand planted.

Each plot was formerly a pasture and had been prepared with herbicide applications in summer 2015, to eliminate any non-native species. Both plots were also burned in late winter to remove any standing dead material and provide a clean bed for the native seed planting.

Moody Forest Natural Area is jointly owned and managed by The Nature Conservancy and the GA Department of Natural Resources. The two groundcover restoration demonstration plots are funded through the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation’s Longleaf Stewardship Fund.

2016 A Record Start for the GCPEP Ecosystem Support Team

By Vernon Compton, *The Longleaf Alliance*



Prescribed fire on the Perdido River Water Management Area. Photo by Northwest Florida Water Management District or NFWFMD.

Increasing the amount of prescribed fire is a top priority of the GCPEP partners in northwest Florida and south Alabama. To assist in reaching a sustainable rotation in the landscape, the partners envisioned a fire strike team that would provide much-needed staff and equipment support. In 2004, that team, the Ecosystem Support Team (EST), was created. Since that time the team has assisted public and private landowners in burning over 550,000 acres. The start of 2016, though, has been the best start of a year that the EST has ever had working with landowners. To date in 2016, the team has worked with partners on 62 fires on 59,623 acres. On larger burns and those more complicated such as urban/wildland interface areas, GCPEP Partners and the EST often work together. This collaboration increases effectiveness and efficiency. One such prescribed fire that occurred in February 2016 was on the Perdido River Water Management Area managed by the Northwest Florida Water Management District. Steve Brown, West Region Lands Manager with the Northwest Florida Water Management District, highlights the importance of the collaboration that occurs in the GCPEP landscape by saying “There really is no way we

could pull-off a burn like this without the help and assistance of our partners and the EST. We’ve conducted a number of large, aerial GCPEP burns now, and I can honestly say there is no group I am more comfortable burning with than the EST and our GCPEP partners.” In addition to prescribed fire support, the EST also assists with invasive species control, mechanical treatments, rare species recovery efforts, ecological and fire effects monitoring, and fire training classes. The increased collaboration in the GCPEP landscape has led to many conservation successes, especially evident concerning priority objectives such as prescribed fire.

Joint Chiefs’ Landscape Restoration Partnership Targets Longleaf Health in Louisiana SGA

Dan Weber, The Nature Conservancy, WLEP Coordinator



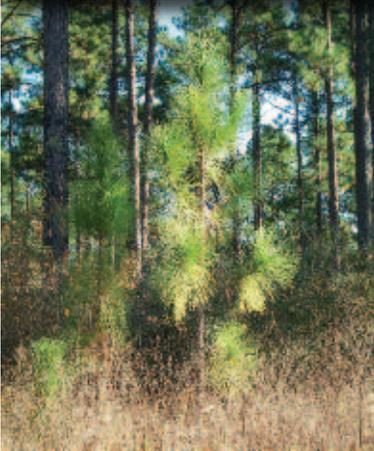
A prescribed burn on private longleaf pine stands in the Fort Polk/Kisatchie National Forest SGA. Photo by Matt Pardue.

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and the U.S. Forest Service are investing \$7 million in 11 new projects and \$33 million in existing projects through the Joint Chiefs’ Landscape Restoration Partnership to improve the health and resiliency of forest ecosystems where public and private lands meet. In Louisiana, the Longleaf Pine Partnership Project will implement cross-boundary restoration to expand the continuity, health, and resiliency of the longleaf pine ecosystem on the Kisatchie National Forest, U.S. Department of Defense, and private lands, and will reduce the threat of wildfire to local communities and provide water quality protection. The Longleaf Implementation Team, known locally as the West-Central Louisiana Ecosystem Partnership (WLEP) played a key role in securing the award demonstrating that a local coalition consisting of the U.S. Forest Service and U.S. Department of Defense, Fort Polk and Joint Readiness Training Center, state and federal wildlife agencies, conservation NGOs and others was in place and working collaboratively to restore longleaf pine and other native

ecosystems within a six-parish area anchored by Fort Polk and the Kisatchie NF. A total of \$232,742 will be available in fiscal year 2016 for stewardship and cost share activities on federal and private lands, with the three-year project total approaching \$2 million.

De Soto-Camp Shelby LIT Update

By *Becky Stowe, The Nature Conservancy*



Longleaf in the DeSoto National Forest. Photo by Becky Stowe.

Over \$9.9 million has been awarded for the “Habitat Restoration Federal Lands Program Phase I” through the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation as part of Gulf oil spill restoration. The recipients will include Grand Bay National Wildlife Refuge, Gulf Islands National Seashore, and the De Soto National Forest. These funds are for invasive species removal, forest thinning, and prescribed burns, leading to over 30,000 acres of restoration, most of which will be within the longleaf pine ecosystem.

North Carolina Sandhills Longleaf Pine Project Update

By *Jesse Wimberley, Sandhills Area Land Trust*



Demonstration burn during the private landowner field day. Photo by Stephanie Wagner.

The NC Sandhills Longleaf Pine Project has continued to gain momentum since the February 11th rollout of the first Prescribed Burn Association (PBA) in North Carolina. Shortly after the PBA kickoff, the North Carolina (NC) Forest Service set up a Prescribed Burner training specifically to meet the demand for private landowners who were ready to become certified burners. Since the PBA Steering Committee had its first meeting in March, the PBA been able to help six landowners accomplish their certification burns to become NC Certified Burners.

As part of the project’s role to raise awareness about the importance of fire in the longleaf ecosystem, we hosted two educational events in April. The first event reached out to youth and the larger community through a “Fire and Longleaf” program and tour conducted for forty Girl Scouts and families on one of the Sandhills Area Land Trust’s properties.

The second event reached out to private longleaf pine landowners through a field day at a restored longleaf pine farm. This day-long, informal event was attended by over forty landowners representing seven Sandhills counties and

highlighted speakers and partners from several related agencies. The agenda focused on demonstrations and discussions on everything longleaf, including planting, pine straw raking, beetle management, mid-story removal, quail/turkey management, and prescribed burning. One of the local fire departments unveiled their new brush truck to be available for landowners, and the National Wild Turkey Federation had their new burn trailer for PBA members on site.

Landowners were able to participate in an actual burn, which included both pre-burn planning and post-burn de-briefing. This field day represents the culmination of a nine-month process of moving a cohort of landowners from interest in burning to actual participation on a burn. This hands-on field day format will play a vital role in helping landowners gain the skills, confidence, and experience they need to begin using prescribed fire as part of their management.

Okefenokee/Osceola Local Implementation Team (O2LIT) News

By Hunter Bowman, *The Nature Conservancy*



A prescribed fire equipment display, part of the Fire Adapted Communities and Fire Learning Networks Annual Workshop. Photo by the FAC Learning Network.

After announcing his retirement at the quarterly meeting in January, Alan Dozier stepped down as the O2LIT coordinator and was succeeded by Hunter Bowman, a Nature Conservancy employee from Savannah, Georgia.

The O2LIT “stole the spotlight” at the Longleaf Partnership Council (LPC) and National Fish and Wildlife Foundation/ Southern Company partners meeting, held at the Sea Palms Resort on Saint Simons Island, Georgia, where the team delivered a presentation on its activities during the LIT spotlight portion of the LPC. Just a few days later, The Nature Conservancy’s Jobcorp burn team, based in the Osceola National Forest, was featured on a discussion panel. They spoke on the merits of the program in which underserved youth serve as additional boots on the ground for prescribed fire operations throughout the O2.

Towards the end of April, the Florida Forest Service, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, the US Forest Service, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, and the Baker County community of Taylor, partnered to put on the Fire Adapted Communities and Fire Learning Networks Annual Workshop. This event was a tremendous success and brought together firefighters and communities from across the country.

Ocala Longleaf Pine Local Implementation Team (OLIT) Private Lands Results and a Sandhill Restoration Workshop

By Cheryl Millett, *The Nature Conservancy*



Sandhill restoration workshop. Photo by Cheryl Millett.

The results are in from the first private landowner incentive program conducted by the Florida Forest Service as part of the Ocala LIT. Controlled burning, 655 acres of longleaf planting, native understory establishment, invasive plant control, and improvements were completed on 19 properties. Agreements are being signed right now to continue this program through 2017, so stay tuned to the Ocala LIT email list to be alerted when that opens.

The Southern Fire Exchange held a Sandhill Restoration Workshop at the Ordway-Swisher Biological Station in Melrose for 30 participants, and it filled quickly. It began with discussions indoors about the latest research, including dealing with duff fires in long-unburned longleaf and an introduction to the Ocala LIT, and continued with a field tour to look at issues and approaches to dealing with them in sandhills. If you have a chance to attend one of these workshops, do!

Sandhills Longleaf Pine Conservation Partnership (SLPCP) The SLPCP Unveils Prescribed Burn Trailer and New Coordinator

By Susan Griggs, Natural Resources Conservation Service



The SLPCP Prescribed Burn Trailer was unveiled last fall, and utilized on eight landowner prescribed burns during the 2015-16 winter burn season. Photo Credit ©2016 Susan Griggs.

In April 2016 The SLPCP welcomed Charles Babb (retired NRCS) as the SLPCP new coordinator. Photo Credit ©2016 Susan Griggs.

The SLPCP unveiled its prescribed fire rental trailer at their 2015 fall field day. The trailer is stocked with enough tools and safety gear to carry out a traditional prescribed fire. Many landowners within the SLPCP have prescribed fire and smoke management training but lack the resources to purchase all of the equipment needed to safely equip themselves to conduct a burn.

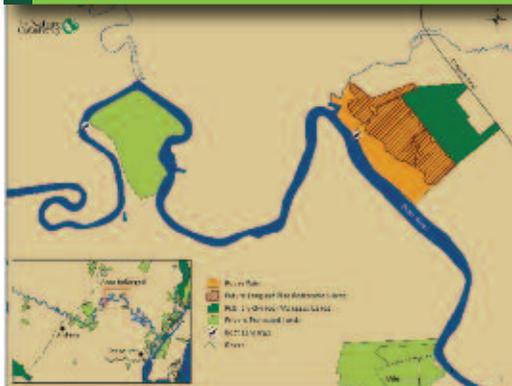
Funding for the trailer was provided through the Partnership's third NFWF grant and contains drip torches, fire rakes, water pumps, two-way radios, and other safety equipment. The trailer was used to assist eight landowners conduct burns during the 2015-2016 winter season.

The new SLPCP Coordinator, retired NRCS District Conservationist Charles Babb joined us on April 4th. Babb brings nearly 36 years' experience with NRCS to the

partnership and has spent the past 32 years working within the SLPCP focus area. Since the inception of the Longleaf Initiative, Babb has worked with over 200 private landowners to establish and manage over 10,000 acres of longleaf pine. His knowledge of the local landowners, soils, and longleaf ecosystems will be a great asset to the partnership.

Conservation Partners Secure Rocky Point Community Forest in Georgetown County, SC

By Maria Whitehead, South Carolina Chapter of The Nature Conservancy



Map showing location of Rocky Point Community Forest.

In December 2015, a unique conservation partnership including The Nature Conservancy, Winyah Rivers Foundation, Open Space Institute and Georgetown County acquired the 462-acre Rocky Point property along the Black River in Georgetown County. Along with 200 adjacent acres already owned by Georgetown County, the property will be developed into coastal SC's first public-use community forest.

Many Georgetown County residents remember Sunday picnics and fishing trips at the Rocky Point property which International Paper and Georgetown County maintained as a public-use park for almost 70 years before the property was sold along with most of IP's land holdings in 2007.

The Rocky Point Community Forest will be managed to restore longleaf pine forest and protect mature tidal forested freshwater wetlands and mature upland hardwood bluff forest while providing unique recreational and educational

opportunities for the local community. Timber products during and after longleaf restoration will help to finance the ongoing management and maintenance needs on the property.

The size, location, and diverse forest communities on the property make it an ideal outdoor classroom and demonstration area for local environmental education initiatives, colleges and universities, and private landowners. The park will also provide passive recreation with trails for hiking and biking, the picnic area, and a boat landing.

With support by Bunnelle Foundation and the National Fish & Wildlife Foundation Longleaf Stewardship Fund, The Sewee Longleaf Conservation Cooperative and the Rocky Point Community Forest Steering Committee will collaborate on the development of a community forest management plan that addresses forest restoration, education, and public recreation for this unique property.

SoLoACE Longleaf Partnership Update

By Bobby Franklin, *The Longleaf Alliance*

Spring has arrived in the South Lowcountry and ACE Basin. We are drying out, but many areas in the region are still wet. This and a shortage of tree planters contributed to some later planting of longleaf seedlings than we'd like to see. Most landowners didn't see planting completed until the first two weeks in March. The wet weather also caused delays in prescribed burning. As I write this, the pine flatwoods are drying out, and most land managers didn't let turkey season get in the way of completing a lot of April burning that continued into May. The SoLoACE Longleaf Partnership has been busy as well, providing technical assistance with landowner concerns. Of interest, has been several calls about longleaf seedling needle defoliation that turned out to be caused by pine sawfly larvae. This can occur on occasion and does not usually cause pine mortality. This year, the culprit is the loblolly pine sawfly. The Partnership is continuing its efforts to promote prescribed burning and will host a one day prescribed burning workshop at the Webb Wildlife Center in Hampton County on June 2. The program is especially for landowners who want to learn to burn their forest land. We will look at the long-term results of burning at different times of the year and different frequencies. Weather permitting, there will also be an actual prescribed burn during the workshop. Also, the Partnership will be sponsoring a Longleaf Understory Academy October 4-6 at Nemours Wildlife Foundation in Beaufort County. Please refer to The Longleaf Alliance website for updates and any additional information.

SoLoACE Longleaf Partnership would not exist without the cooperation & teamwork from the following partners: The Longleaf Alliance, Beaufort Open Land Trust, Clemson University, Ducks Unlimited, The Hitchcock Woods, International Paper Company, Lowcountry Open Land Trust, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, National Wild Turkey Federation, Natural Resources Conservation Service, The Nature Conservancy, Nemours Wildlife Foundation, South Carolina Audubon Society, South Carolina Department of Natural Resources, South Carolina Forestry Commission, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, U.S. Forest Service, Savannah River Forest Station.

Texas Longleaf Implementation Team (TLIT) Update

By Kent Evans, *TLIT Coordinator*



Inside the Houston law offices of Texas Attorney, Mike Howard, Mike Howard, describing land management plans with the TLIT. videography team. Photo by Bob Stobaugh, NRCS. TLIT.

The Texas LIT will release new website features this fall including "landowner stories." These video stories feature East Texas land owners committed to restoring the longleaf pine/fire ecosystem. Texas NRCS videographer Bob Stobaugh was assisted by NRCS State Forester, Mike Oliver, and Mary Webb-Marek. The TLIT coordinator and the NRCS team started inside the Houston office of G2 Partners' Senior VP, Trey Whitley. Trey talked about his recently acquired land where he is restoring loblolly plantations to longleaf. The Whitley family harvested loblolly, planted longleaf and burned the tract twice in 3 years. They are passionate about restoring the native

understory and associated wildlife. Trey and his three sons share a love of natural resources and monitoring wildlife response to the changing conditions on their land. The team also met attorney Mike Howard in his office in the historic "Heights" neighborhood of Houston. Mike's offices are graced with longleaf pine wood, much of which he has personally salvaged from an old Texas coastal structure then repurposed into furnishings. After the office interview, Mike led the team to his Sabine County longleaf property which he has been restoring for eight years. Mike tells his story of buying cut over, former industry land, doing site prep, and then planting new stands to longleaf. Mike does his own burning with family and friends on a two-year rotation. Responses of quail, turkey and Bachman's Sparrow are monitored by Texas Parks/Wildlife biologists, Cliff Shackelford, and Rusty Wood.

Update on Longleaf Pine Restoration Efforts in Virginia

By Brian van Eerden, *The Nature Conservancy*



Prescribed fire in 8-yr. old planted longleaf stand in Raccoon Creek Pinelands project area of Virginia. Photo by B. Clontz.

Virginia's accomplishments with longleaf pine reforestation and pine savanna habitat maintenance set a new standard in 2015 with landmark results both for longleaf seedling planting and prescribed burning. During the year, a total of 1,155 acres of longleaf pine were planted, statewide. Much (616 acres) of this total was established on two State Natural Area Preserves (NAPs) managed by the VA Department of Conservation and Recreation (VDCR). One of these, South Quay Sandhills NAP is a 3,586-acre property supporting the only remaining natural longleaf pine stand in the state, where the majority of Virginia's few (<200) mature native longleaf pines persist. Historically distributed across over 1 million acres in the southeast corner of the state, longleaf pine currently occupies about 5,000 acres – nearly all of which has been established over the last ten years. The Virginia Longleaf Pine Cooperators, comprised of 10 public agencies, private conservation groups, and private landowners, are working to restore longleaf and fire-maintained southern pine savanna habitat in eight priority conservation areas encompassing 125,000 acres within the historic

longleaf range. South Quay Sandhills NAP is situated in the "Chowan Sand Banks" priority area, which includes acreage in North Carolina. About 350,000 of the longleaf seedlings planted in Virginia in 2015 were grown from local, northern-source seed collected from parent trees at South Quay Sandhills. An 8-year provenance study recently conducted by the VA Department of Forestry (VDOF) strongly suggests that these "native" longleaf seedlings demonstrate greater overall fitness (survival and early growth) compared to more southerly sourced seedlings growing near the northern range limit of longleaf. 2015 seedling production and planting efforts were financially supported through grants from the Arbor Day Foundation, Norfolk Southern Foundation, the U.S. Forest Service and various other private foundations.

Prescribed burns during 2015 and through May 2016 were completed on over 6,500 acres, the majority within Virginia's longleaf priority areas. Most burns were conducted through a collaborative interagency fire team comprised of staff from VDCR, Virginia Department of Game & Inland Fisheries (VDGIF), VDOF, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and The Nature Conservancy (TNC). AmeriCorps Volunteers and other seasonal fire crews also supported prescribed burning efforts during this period. Burning has been at the center of Virginia's successful recovery of a red-cockaded woodpecker (RCW) population at TNC's 3,200-acre Piney Grove Preserve – the most northerly location for this federally endangered species. At the brink of extinction in Virginia in 1999, RCWs are now expanding their range from Piney Grove Preserve onto the adjacent state Big Woods Wildlife Management Area managed by VDGIF. A new RCW population was established in Virginia in October 2015 at Great Dismal Swamp National Wildlife Refuge through the introduction of juvenile birds from Carolina Sandhills National Wildlife Refuge in South Carolina.

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation awarded its first Longleaf Stewardship Fund (LSF) Grant in Virginia to VDOF in April 2016. LSF funds will be used over the next two years to: 1) support longleaf seedling production, planting and prescribed burning on public land; and, 2) build greater interest in both federal- and state-funded longleaf pine and prescribed burning cost-sharing opportunities available to private landowners in Virginia. A longleaf pine workshop held in Franklin, Virginia in May 2016 and co-sponsored by Virginia and North Carolina Cooperative Extension, VDOF and the NC Forest Service (with funding from US Forest Service) attracted 86 participants including a mix of private landowners, academics, consultants, forest and wildlife managers, and state and federal agency representatives. Investments in this workshop, as well as other outreach efforts by the Virginia Longleaf Cooperators are critical to finding and cultivating private landowner longleaf pine champions.

While you're in the

By Anne Rilling, *The Longleaf Alliance*

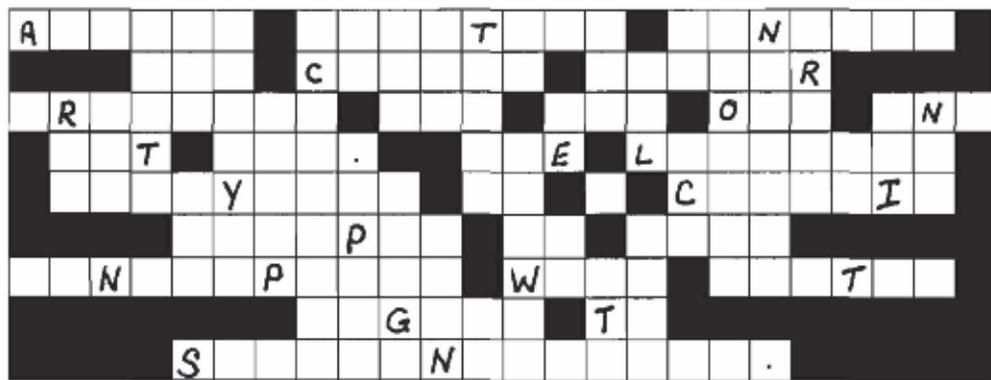
Grass stage...

"Grass Stage" is a section just for kids and/or kids-at-heart. Longleaf forest management is a long-term endeavor and in order to keep the longleaf pine ecosystem in longleaf, the next generation must get engaged or else all of the hard work, restoration, and protection currently going on will be for naught. We hope you share "Grass Stage" with your "next generation" longleaf enthusiast.

Lesson Twenty: It is hard to believe that in as little as 100 years ago, the South changed from an endless longleaf pine forest to a sea of stumps as far as the eye could see. Use Lesson Twenty found on our website (www.longleafalliance.org/next-generation) to fill in the blanks and find the answers in the puzzle. Answers can be found below the picture/ at the bottom of the page.

Fallen Phrases Instructions:

A fallen phrase is a puzzle in which a sentence is listed, and all of the letters that go into a particular column are listed below that column. The challenge of the puzzle is to 'unscramble' the sentences to reveal the original sentences. Hint: there are two sentences!



E

X N W O E

H D T P I E R S A L N A

T U O C T A L A I B E L O M O R D

O O C S Y S C I M A O E E U O O Y G S A F

G A U T M A M E S N S N C N T H L N T T A C

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A R C O S I P T E O M A D I T I T U U R R L D

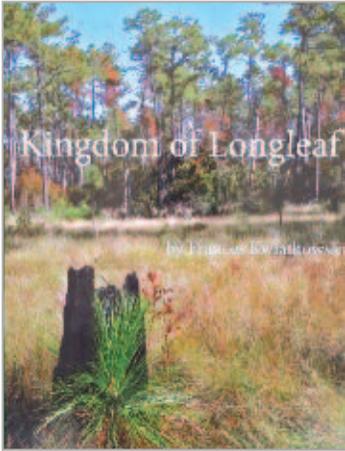
P E E S N U U T I M E T W I T I V B E T S I N D

Answer
 Around nineteen hundred the common timber practice was cut out and get out. The longleaf ecosystem is a classic example of over consumption with little regard to sustainability.

LITERARY REVIEW

By Carol Denhof, *The Longleaf Alliance**Kingdom of Longleaf*

by Frances Kwiatkowski / Copyright 2015. ISBN 9780692590607



"Once upon a time, in a land of water and fire, a kingdom grew. The kingdom was a majestic forest, full of air and light, wiregrass and wildflowers, and the music of the wind in the crowns of the trees- Longleaf pines. The kingdom was home to many wild creatures and plants, some of which lived nowhere else on earth, and some of whom created complex symbiotic relationships with

each other and with the landscape itself. Long ago, the forest was so immense that it touched the shores of two seas and covered almost 100 million acres...but that was once upon a time...".

This text, taken from the first page of Frances Kwiatkowski's book *Kingdom of Longleaf*, prepares the reader for an exploration of the wonders of the longleaf ecosystem. The story of the longleaf forest is told alphabetically through poetry and photographs that illustrate some of the important elements of this ecosystem. From butterflies and bison to indigo snakes and wiregrass, information is given that will shed light on the role each organism plays in this system.

This delightful book is an advanced children's book and is targeted to children between the ages of 8-13. It is meant to introduce young readers to an amazing, beautiful, and fragile ecosystem- one as rich with biodiversity and fascinating species as the rain forest, yet which is practically in their own backyards.

Frances Kwiatkowski grew up in rural Georgia within the range of the Longleaf pines. She now lives near Athens, Georgia with her husband, kids, dogs, cats, and horses. Her early loves of books, nature, and trees grew into *Kingdom of Longleaf*.

For more information about the book and to purchase a copy, visit the book's website at <http://kingdomoflongleaf.weebly.com>

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LONGLEAF ART SPOTLIGHT



About the Artist:

The current ceramic sculpture by Gayle Fichtinger is informed by the micro/macro worlds found in eastern forests and Chinese scholar stones. She invents landscapes by assembling split wood and tree stump pieces to serve as models then sculpts them in realistic detail. Surfaces become fields of texture through mark making, and the terracotta clay is fired without glaze for its color and to be closer to its natural state. In the gallery space, she sets up landscape environments using sculptural groupings. Her work is meant for contemplation.

Ceramic sculptor Gayle Fichtinger is a Professor of Foundation Studies at Savannah College of Art and Design, Savannah, Georgia since 2006. Previously she held the position of the studio foundations coordinator in the art department at Plymouth State University, Plymouth, New Hampshire, where she taught drawing and design.

Before coming to PSU in 2000, she worked for fifteen years as a full-time studio artist continuously exhibiting ceramic sculpture in solo and group exhibitions throughout the United States. Her works are included in numerous private collections as well as the collections of the Tucson Museum of Art, Arizona State University Art Museum, Danforth Museum of Art, Erie Art Museum, Racine Art Museum, DeCordova Museum, and the Czech Ceramic Design Agency. Articles and reviews of her work have been published in *Ceramics: Art and Perception*, *Ceramics Monthly*, *American Craft*, and *The Boston Globe*. Her work has recently been included in Marvin Sweet's book, *The Yixing Effect: Echoes of the Chinese Scholar* published by the Foreign Languages Press, Beijing, China, 2006.

Longleaf seedlings ready to be planted on Big Thicket National Preserve. Photo by Sean Dixon-Sullivan.

Longleaf Destinations

by Sean Dixon-Sullivan

East Texas

Texas may be on the western fringe of the longleaf range, yet it is very much at the heart of the longleaf saga, from its history of logging to its present and future restoration.

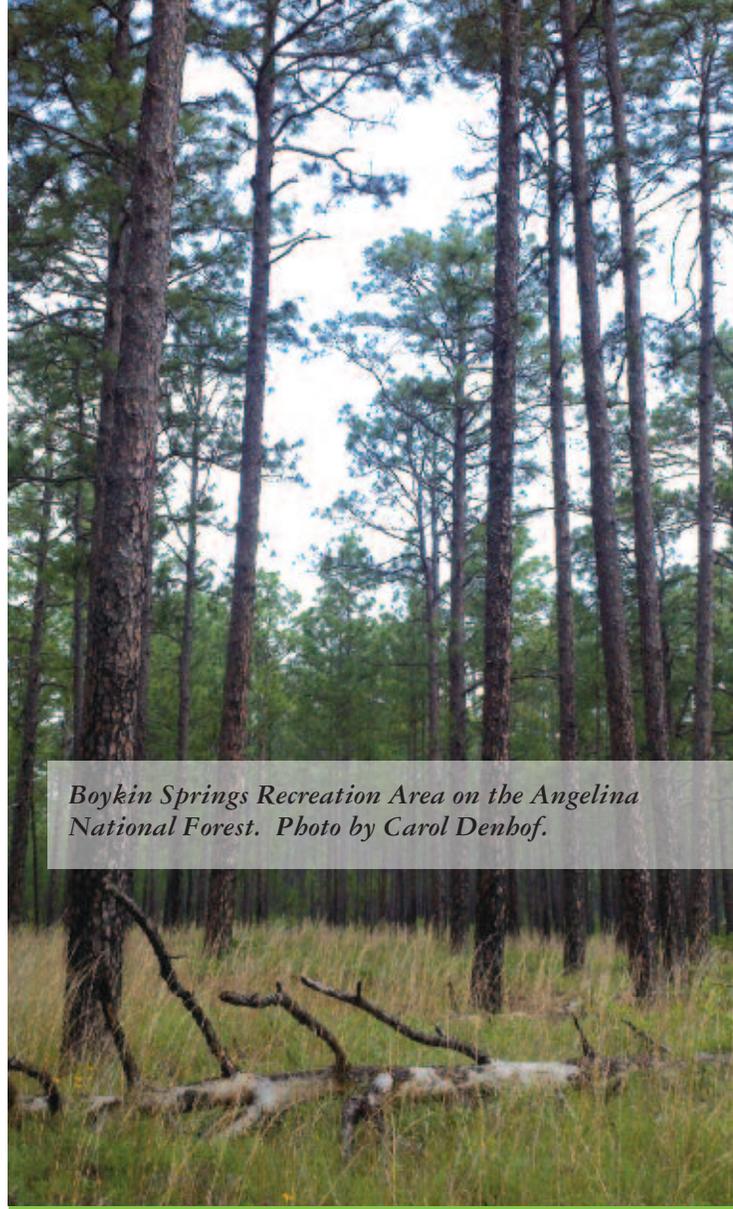
Longleaf forests once covered 2.9 million acres in Texas, before the state's logging boom in the 1880s. A century later, only 45 thousand acres remained. Fortunately in recent years, through various federal, state and private initiatives, Texans are restoring their remnant forests and planting anew. The U.S. Forest Service (USFS) manages 25 thousand acres of existing longleaf among its four National Forests and plans to restore 250 thousand more. The National Park Service (NPS) has 15 to 20 thousand potential acres at Big Thicket National Preserve, where it has been planting hundreds of thousands of longleaf seedlings.

With its restoration projects, historic sites, and some old-growth forests, Texas has all the hallmarks of a Longleaf Destination. Lovers of longleaf won't be disappointed with a tour through this "Forest Trail" region, where "history and culture come naturally."

An ideal starting point would be Lufkin, home of the Forest Service headquarters and the Museum of East Texas. Most of all, the Forestry Museum is worth a visit. It displays the lives of loggers, their machinery and methods, and the significance of their labors: the felling of pines enabled the rising of Texas. Longleaf built the state's furniture and homes, its railroad ties and containers, its ships, its chemicals, and paper. And when oil finally surpassed timber as Texas' largest industry, longleaf built the rigs for that too. Overall the Forestry Museum proudly tells the story of state-building through this crucial industry, still worth \$20 billion per recent year. Any consideration of longleaf ecology, however, demands a trip into the Forests.

South from Lufkin is Angelina National Forest, which includes Boykin Springs Recreation Area. It is a beautiful and quiet enclave for camping, fishing, and swimming. Historic sites abound, such as the iconic structures of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), as well as the gravestone of Boykin himself, a freed slave who was granted the property after

Park Ranger giving tour of the Big Thicket National Preserve. Photo by Sean Dixon-Sullivan.



Boykin Springs Recreation Area on the Angelina National Forest. Photo by Carol Denbof.

fighting for Texas Independence. Boykin Springs is also an ideal home base for exploring the mature longleaf forests that cover the surrounding hillsides. To the north and west are ridges with scenic vistas, old growth longleaf, and managed red-cockaded woodpecker clusters. To the south is a 2.5-mile trail to Old Aldridge. Once a thriving sawmill community, it was abandoned in 1920 after clearcutting practices depleted nearby timber and left a barren, eroding landscape. In the mid-30s, it was replanted by the Civilian Conservation Corps (just before they built the Rec Area at Boykin Springs). Now the ruins of Old Aldridge have been reclaimed by second-growth forest.

Boykin Springs is part of a larger longleaf initiative known as Longleaf Ridge Conservation Area. The Ridge stretches 27 miles from Angelina to Sabine National Forests and encompasses 230 thousand acres, half within the two National Forests and half private lands in between. Each year throughout the ten-year project (2011 to 2021) the USFS restores new longleaf sections in the National Forests, which

then serve as demonstration sites for collaboration on private lands, such as preserves of The Nature Conservancy and timber plantations of the Campbell Group. Another collaborator is the Southern Company, who will convert the byproducts of restoration (slash from thinning and midstory reduction) into energy at their biomass gasification plants.

In addition to Boykin Springs, other sites to visit in the area include the recreation and camping areas at Sandy Creek and Caney Creek, as well as Bouton Lake, which (along with Boykin Springs) is a stop on the Great Texas Coast Birding Trail. For the dedicated longleaf seeker, the Trail Between the Lakes is a 28-mile hike that traverses much of the Ridge.

Worthy of a side-trip one hour west is Big Thicket National Preserve, a bastion of biological diversity where prairies, pinelands, and bayous converge. In the preserve's Big Sandy Creek Unit, along Lily Road north of Dallardsville, is an old growth longleaf forest. Here NPS personnel have been experimenting with various understory treatments (namely fire, herbicide, and mastication) and their effects on natural longleaf

regeneration. A few miles west along Lily Road is the “Centennial Forest” where volunteers planted 100,000 longleaf seedlings in early 2016 in honor of the National Park Service's 100th anniversary.

Just north of the Big Sandy Creek Unit is the Alabama-Coushatta Reservation, where the tribes first settled in 1780. Around Lake Tombigbee are peaceful campgrounds, rental cabins, and the occasional longleaf. The first weekend in June the Reservation hosts a Native American dance competition.

Aside from Lufkin and the campgrounds mentioned, several towns throughout the longleaf tour offer further amenities.

Just south of Angelina National Forest is Jasper, Butterfly Capital of Texas, and west towards the Big Thicket is Woodville, home of the Heritage Museum. Both towns provide multiple options for lodging and dining. Farther west towards Sam Houston National Forest (another longleaf location) is the larger town of Livingston and the campgrounds of Lake Livingston State Park. The Park's loblolly forests lie mostly in ruins following the hurricanes of 2005 and 2008, the droughts of 2009 and 2011, and the concurrent pine beetle infestations—a stern reminder of the need to restore hardy longleaf.

SOURCES From the U.S. Forest Service:

Longleaf Ridge Conservation Area, pdf:

<http://www.fs.fed.us/restoration/documents/cflrp/2011Proposals/Region8/NFTexas/TXCFLRPFeb152011Part1.pdf>

Background:

<http://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/texas/landmanagement/resourcemanagement/?cid=stelprdb5318738>

On the Big Thicket:

<https://npsot.org/wp/houston/2016/01/12/plant-a-longleaf-pine-centennial-forest-at-the-big-thicket-national-preserve/>

The Texas Forest Trail:

<http://texasforesttrail.com/plan-your-adventure/themes/open-spaces-and-wildlife>



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Dr. Parker proudly displays his 25 years designation as a certified TREE Farm landowner with the author, Tim Albritton. Photo by Sarah Albritton.

PEOPLE

IN MEMORY OF DR. ROBERT PARKER



By Tim Albritton, Natural Resources Conservation Service

Reprinted with permission from Alabama's TREASURED Forests magazine, a publication of the Alabama Forestry Commission.

Doctor Robert Parker passed away in March of 2016. It is difficult to know where to begin in describing Dr. Parker; he was much more than one of Auburn University's gifted veterinarians. He wore many hats and had many titles and affiliations. He was a husband, father, grandfather, retired veterinarian, a veteran, a member of many boards and committees, a TREASURE Forest landowner, a wooden bowl artist, and what he considered most important – a devoted follower of Jesus Christ. What I knew best about him was his love for God's creation and especially his TREASURE Forest.

Dr. Parker did love his property in south Elmore County. The fact that his farm was a certified TREASURE Forest and a Tree Farm attest to his work ethic. His diligent care for God's creation was publicly recognized when his property was named as a Helene Mosley Memorial TREASURE Forest Award winner in 2005 and as the Alabama State Tree Farmer of the Year in 2013.

The good doctor worked the land, wanting every acre to produce something worthwhile. He hated to see some invasive plant such as privet take up valuable space. He once wrote a paper for me to pass out on a forestry tour. In Dr. Parker's Privet Control Notes, he said, "Don't be overwhelmed with the task – start small and just be consistent." He practiced what he preached; he was consistent and a good steward of the land.

In many ways Dr. Parker was a modern-day Renaissance Man. He bought a portable sawmill to cut his own lumber. He tried his hand at making knives. He planted wildflowers. He

built his own cabin and installed his own solar power electric system. He even made his own rustic furniture. Along the way, Dr. Parker decided to make bowls out of different kinds of wood. He did it the old fashioned way – chopping them by hand with a woodworking tool called an adze.

My home in Elmore County is between Dr. Parker's farm and his home in Coosada. I remember the time he called me on his way home from the farm, "Hey Tim, I have a log I want you to look at and see if you can tell me what it is." He was eager to start a new bowl and he wanted to show me the latest log he was working on. He would say, "There's bowl in there and I need to get it out." And soon that log would turn into a beautiful bowl.

Dr. Parker loved the Lord. Out of a desire to leave a legacy of faith, he recorded a message and asked that it be played at his funeral. I was deeply moved listening to his voice at his own funeral. One statement he made I will never forget ... "People are more important than things." He loved people and he showed it by his giving and kind spirit. I was the recipient of his kindness as were many other people. My wife and I cherish one of the bowls he gave us – even more now that he is gone.

I expect to see my friend in heaven someday, but I will sure miss him until then. In the meantime, I intend to love people and help others in need as he did, in the hope that I may leave a legacy half as good as that of a truly good man – Doctor Robert Parker.

By Julie Moore, US Fish & Wildlife Service

LONGLEAF CELEBRATED IN VIRGINIA



Planting longleaf at the James Madison Building in Richmond, VA. Photo by John Campbell/VA Department of Forestry.



First Lady Dorothy McAuliffe addressing the group at the Virginia Arbor Day and Garden Day event. Photo by John Campbell/VA Department of Forestry.

Longleaf Alliance Board Member Julie Moore recently represented The Longleaf Alliance during an event celebrating Virginia Arbor Day and Garden Day, April 29, 2016, in Richmond, Virginia. She made brief comments about the work of the Alliance, the ecological and financial value of longleaf, and its place in the forests of the future.

The highlight of the day was the planting of longleaf pine by Virginia's First Lady, Dorothy McAuliffe at the James Madison Building in Richmond. The comments below were made by the First Lady during the event.

"I'm First Lady Dorothy McAuliffe, and I'm excited to be here at the James Madison Building this morning for our joint celebration of Arbor Day and Garden Day in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

We've gathered here to honor the natural beauty found in all areas of Virginia. Our rich and diverse landscape is home to hundreds of tree species and thousands of plant species.

We have many billions of trees in Virginia that help clean our air and water, and provide habitats for many species of wildlife and birds growing on roughly 16 million acres of forestland.

How do I know we have tens of billions of trees? Well, according to our forest inventory analysis, we have more than 2 billion maple trees alone, which is just one species.

Despite these large numbers, there are some species that have far less trees than our maples. One of these is the longleaf pine.

Believe it or not, there are only about 200 mature longleaf pine trees left in Virginia – meaning that, for all intents and purposes, longleaf pine is virtually extinct. A generous supply of longleaf pine existed when the first English colonists arrived in Jamestown 409 years ago. As the Jamestown colonists began to cut trees to build their homes and the fort, they found that

the longleaf pine trees contained a valuable resource beyond the timber – pitch and tar. These two items are of great importance for naval stores and were soon exported to England. The extraction of pitch and tar marked the beginning of the demise of longleaf forests.

The logging of these tall, straight, and strong trees for use as ships' masts and poles also contributed to the decline. Because sustainable forestry was not being practiced, longleaf trees were often removed and not replanted. Forest regeneration was also greatly impacted by destructive foraging of feral hogs, which thrived on the carbohydrate-rich roots of longleaf seedlings.

Known as the "tree that built Tidewater," longleaf pine once covered more than 1 million acres of the Virginia landscape – primarily south and east of the James River. Think about this for a moment! We have gone from more than 1 million ACRES – that's several hundred million trees – of longleaf pine all the way down to just 200 individual trees – NOT 200 acres, 200 TREES!

There are SO many benefits we receive from restoring longleaf pine ecosystems – from economic to ecological to aesthetic. In addition to timber and pine straw which provide a financial return to landowners, longleaf pine provides critical habitat for numerous threatened and endangered plant and animal species, including the red-cockaded woodpecker.

We are fortunate that a number of state and federal government agencies, along with important stakeholder organizations such as The Longleaf Alliance and The Nature Conservancy are working tirelessly to restore longleaf pine to our ecosystem. I'd like to personally thank all of these organizations, as well as private landowners and other individuals who are working so hard on these efforts."

Instagram

Photo  Contest

#RestoreLongleaf

To enter, simply follow these instructions:

1. Follow @Longleaf_Alliance on Instagram
2. Instagram a photo associated with Longleaf Ecosystem Restoration
3. Use the hashtag #RestoreLongleaf
4. Tag @Longleaf_Alliance in your photo

Awards will be given out at The Longleaf Alliance's Biennial Conference in Savannah November 2, 2016.
Contest ends Friday September 30, 2016 at Midnight.

Per Instagram rules, we must mention this contest is in no way sponsored, administered, or associated with Instagram, Inc. By entering, entrants confirm they are 13+ years of age, release Instagram of responsibility, and agree to Instagram's term of use. By submitting an entry, you are allowing The Longleaf Alliance to use the images with full credit to the entrant in future publications or materials to promote longleaf restoration.

South Carolina Tree Farm

Stewardship of the Land...



South Carolina's Tree Farm program consists of a community of individuals and families representing over one million acres of private forestland in the Palmetto State. Tree Farmers are joined by their desire for excellence in forest stewardship. They share a commitment: to protect watersheds and wildlife habitat, to conserve soil and provide recreation for their neighbors and produce the wood our state and nation needs to grow. Won't you join us?

We offer great educational events such as our Nov. 2 Forest Owners Program on Longleaf Pine Management -- to be held in conjunction with the SC Forestry Association's convention at the Isle of Palms, SC. Coordinator is Walt McPhail, 2012 National Tree Farmer of the Year (864/288-7618 or TreeVetSC@aol.com).

For more information: SC Tree Farm, P O Box 211173, Columbia, SC 29221
803/798-4170, treefarm@sforestry.org or GSabin@sforestry.org

Gifting the Longleaf Pine

*Retirement, Speaker
Gifts, Merit Awards.
For Any Lover
of the Longleaf Pine.*



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2016 Conference Sponsorship Opportunities

We cannot host the Biennial Conference without your support! With that said, The Alliance is working diligently to structure the 2016 conference agenda, secure sponsorships, recruit speakers, print marketing material and plan event logistics.

This will be the best and largest longleaf event in 2016. There are many opportunities to promote your organization. How can we best help connect you with the 2016 conference audience?

MORE INCENTIVES & ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FOR 2016 CONFERENCE SPONSORS: This easy-to-read table highlights the various giving levels and incentives available on-site November 1-4, in addition to other added benefits throughout the year! For more information about becoming a sponsor or for special requests, contact Lynnsey Basala at lynnsey@longleafalliance.org or 314-288-5654.

	\$10,000	\$5,000	\$2,500	\$1,000	\$200
Longleaf Leader					
2 page interview in Winter Edition					
Listing in Annual Report in Winter Edition	X	X	X	X	X
Ad in 4 issues	1/4 Page	1/2 Page	1/4 Page	1/8 Page	1/16 Page
Receive electronic version for internal company use	X	X	X	X	X
Quarterly issues	X	X	X	X	X
Biennial Conference					
Invitation(s) to The Pinelands Society/Board Social	1	1			
Meal, Drink, Art Exhibit/Reception, Awards Banquet, Celebration or Field Tour Sponsor (premium logo placement provided at these events; exclusivity guaranteed by SIBA+ sponsors)	Art Exhibit or Celebration Sponsor	Meal or Field Tour Sponsor	Break Sponsor (\$1,000/box)	Hospitality Room Sponsor	
Logo on Research & Conference Tour(s) displayed in hierarchy	X	X	X	X	X
Complimentary registration	1	1	1		
Complimentary Exhibit Space	X	X	X	X	
Media					
Feature in Alliance Database					
Press release acknowledging company's significant contribution	X				
Graphic for company use	X	X	X		
Check presentation, if requested	X				
Company logo on website (displayed in hierarchy)	X	X	X	X	
LLA Programs & Services					
Allow main property sign (moderate size voucher(s) to be given)	X	X	X		
Electronic banner placed at every Academy and LLA workshop, includes company logo and recognition on site (restrictions may apply but is not enforceable)	X	X	X		

Reach a wider audience by joining these already committed Longleaf Alliance supporting partners



Welcome to Our Newest Supporters!

Martha Glover
Brewer Lands, LLC
Moore Farms Botanical Garden, LLC
Pasley River Farms, Inc.
Wood Lane Farm, LLC
Caroline Causey
Women of Woodside, Inc
Jo Ann Crystal
Regan Phillips

Hunter Bowman
Laura Bosworth
Kameron Tatum
Irons Hilltop LLC
Shawn Riordan
Gail Westcot
Ronald Smith
Timothy Bates
Drew Arnold

Leslie Baker Jr
E.H. Hardy
Patricia Foye
Steve Friedman
Jon Brater
William Langford
Victor Rosenfeld
Mark Stokes
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Richard & Barbara Hagerty
Bear Creek Plantation
Jimmy Cleveland
Christian Preziosi
Rodney McKay
Liza Berdnik
Cliff Martin
Carolyn & Nicky Cohen
South Carolina Tree Farm

Growing a Legacy: A Working Forest for the Long Run



*11th Biennial Longleaf Conference
November 1-4, 2016
Savannah Marriott Riverfront
Savannah, GA*

Visit www.longleafalliance.org/events/11th-biennial-longleaf-conference for more information and to register.



11th Biennial Longleaf Conference

Historic Riverfront in Savannah, GA

November 1 – 4, 2016

REGISTRATION FORM

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____

Organization: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City, State Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

Email Address: _____

Dietary or ADA requests: _____

Please circle your options according to your membership status and payment date.
The EARLY FEE period ends on September 26, 2016. After that, REGULAR FEES should be selected.

Individual Attendee Full Conference Registration Types	Early Fees	Regular Fees
Full LLA Member Fee (includes your choice of field tours 1 & 2 below)	\$365	\$415
Full LLA Non-Member Fee (includes your choice of field tours 1 & 2 below)	\$465	\$515
Full Conference Student Fee (includes your choice of field tours 1 & 2 below)	\$95	\$95
You may only choose one tour included in the full conference fee because both tours take place at the same time on November 3rd.		
GA Field Tour 1, Thur. Nov. 3, 2016 (includes a tour & post-tour dinner party)	Included above*	Included above*
SC Field Tour 2, Thur. Nov. 3, 2016 (includes a tour & post-tour dinner party)	Included above*	Included above*
Individual Attendee Partial Conference Registration Types	Early Fees	Regular Fees
Companion/Spouse (includes conference breakfasts, lunches, and social events, no tours)	\$135	\$145
Single Day Fee, November 2, 2016 (includes conference sessions & Poster Social)	\$125	\$135
Single Day Fee, November 3, 2016. You may only choose one tour because they both take place at the same time on November 3rd.		
GA Field Tour 1, Thur. Nov. 3, 2016 (includes a tour & post-tour dinner party)	\$117	\$127
SC Field Tour 2, Thur. Nov. 3, 2016 (includes a tour & post-tour dinner party)	\$114	\$124
Single Day Fee, October 24, 2014 (includes continental breakfast and morning sessions)	\$55	\$65
You May Purchase Additional Passes for Any of These Activities	Early Fees	Regular Fees
Wednesday, November 2nd Luncheon	\$35	\$35
Wednesday, November 2nd Evening Poster Reception	\$40	\$40
GA Field Tour 1, Thur. Nov. 3, 2016 (tour only, no dinner party)	\$75	\$75
SC Field Tour 2, Thur. Nov. 3, 2016 (tour only, no dinner party)	\$75	\$75
Thursday, November 3rd Evening Post-Tour dinner party	\$45	\$45
Exhibitor Options (includes conference breakfasts, lunches, and social events, no tours)	Early Fees	Regular Fees
Commercial Exhibit space	\$500	\$500
Exhibit Additional Space for Commercial Organization	\$200	\$200
Non-Profit Organization Exhibit space	\$250	\$250
Exhibit Additional Space for Non-Profit or Educational Organization	\$100	\$100
LLA Nursery Member Exhibit Space	No charge	N/A

Enter Your Total Registration Fee Due from the choices you circled above: \$ _____

Your Preferred Payment Method:

_____ Check payable to "NCSU" Mail check to: NCSU-FEOP, Campus Box 8008, Raleigh, NC 27695

_____ Mastercard, Amex, Discover, or Visa (For security reasons do not put credit card information on this form. A member of the NCSU staff will call you at the number you listed above to receive the credit card information at that time.)

