

**DECLARATION STATEMENT**  
by  
**North Carolina Natural Heritage Program**  
**NC Department of Environment and Natural Resources**

**MISSION**

The North Carolina Natural Heritage Program (NC NHP) strives to provide a scientific basis for effective conservation by compiling information on rare species and natural communities in our state. These species include those plants and animals which are so rare or the natural communities which are so significant that they merit special consideration as land-use decisions are made. NHPs' data is shared with the public and partner agencies for planning, conservation, and management efforts.

**INTERESTS**

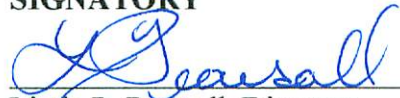
NC NHP's participation in the NC Long Leaf Coalition and America's Longleaf Restoration Initiative includes promoting the conservation and restoration of the longleaf pine ecosystem on public and private lands. Longleaf pine ecosystems contain some of North Carolina's richest species diversity, including numerous rare plants and animals. Therefore, conservation and restoration of the longleaf pine ecosystem will greatly benefit many other conservation targets and promote greater connectivity across the landscape. NC NHP is committed to the partnership and longleaf conservation as outlined in the section below.

**CONTRIBUTIONS AND ACTIVITIES**

We intended to participate in the partnership in the following ways:

1. **Participate in North Carolina's Longleaf Coalition.**—NC NHP works with North Carolina partners on guiding collaborative longleaf restoration and conservation efforts. As part of the Steering Committee, NC NHP will also provide guidance and support to the subcommittees working on GIS mapping, outreach and communication, economic growth and yield, and restoration and conservation on public and private lands.
2. **Provide Natural Heritage data.**—NC NHP will participate on NC Longleaf Coalition's GIS mapping subcommittee and provide data for mapping existing longleaf pine and identifying criteria and locations for longleaf pine restoration. This data has already been used at the regional level for refining longleaf range maps. NC NHP will also provide data of the managed conservation lands for use of the public lands subcommittee.

**SIGNATORY**

  
\_\_\_\_\_

Linda P. Pearsall, Director  
NC Natural Heritage Program  
NC Department of Environment and Natural Resources

2-22-11  
Date