

DECLARATION STATEMENT
by
Texas Parks and Wildlife Department

MISSION

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department's (TPWD) mission is to manage and conserve the natural and cultural resources of Texas and to provide hunting, fishing and outdoor recreation opportunities for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations.

INTERESTS

TPWD's interest in participating in the longleaf pine restoration partnership and *America's Longleaf Restoration Initiative* is to encourage restoration, enhancement and conservation of longleaf pine ecosystems on lands we control and on private lands when landowners request longleaf habitat technical guidance. Properly managed longleaf pine stands benefit game species such as eastern wild turkey and bobwhite quail as well as federal and state listed species such as red-cockaded woodpecker and Bachman's sparrow. In addition, the grassland savannahs of the longleaf pine ecosystem contain a very diverse mix of native grasses, forbs and herbaceous plants that are in decline across the landscape. These ecologically rich and aesthetically pleasing forests provide a wide array of outdoor recreational opportunities. For these reasons, TPWD is committed to assisting the partnership's longleaf conservation, restoration and enhancement activities as outlined in the section below.

CONTRIBUTIONS AND ACTIVITIES

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

1. **Regional Mapping** – TPWD will assist in providing the partnership with GIS data to help determine historic range, known longleaf sites and identify potential sites for restoration in Texas.
2. **Outreach and Education** – TPWD recently participated in two cooperative longleaf pine field days for private landowners and resource professionals. More outreach is planned for both groups in the form of jointly developed longleaf pine resource materials and "Train the Trainer" workshops for Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Texas Forest Service (TFS), TPWD and forest management consultants.
3. **Partnerships** – TPWD is actively engaging in ongoing collaborative efforts with the Texas/Louisiana Longleaf Pine Task force (task force), TFS, NRCS, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Forest Service, Department of Defense, National Wild Turkey Federation, Stephen F. Austin State University, Texas A&M University and The Nature Conservancy on longleaf pine restoration and conservation. The task force is a growing and evolving group with more entities becoming involved with each meeting. TPWD will continue to develop new partnerships as appropriate and meaningful.
4. **Restoration** – TPWD provides free technical assistance for private landowners wishing to restore longleaf pine forests.
5. **Financial Assistance** – TPWD has provided almost \$800,000 in financial assistance to 37 landowners restoring longleaf pine on 18,487 acres through our Landowner Incentive Program. Agency personnel are currently working on four projects that will restore an additional 1,146 acres, and are seeking funding sources where available to provide assistance to others as well.

SIGNATORY



Carter Smith, Executive Director
Texas Parks and Wildlife Department

7 February 2011

Date