



Less than five years after launch, America's Longleaf Restoration Initiative (ALRI) is achieving unprecedented restoration results across the longleaf range. With the leadership of a 33-member Longleaf Partnership Council, for the very first time all the essential pieces of the restoration puzzle—a Conservation Plan, State and Local Implementation Teams, a Federal Coordinating Committee, strong interest by landowners and both public and private sector support—have been assembled to reverse the decline of this iconic forest. After more than a century of steep longleaf losses, the coordinated efforts of many diverse partners have increased longleaf acres by 8% over the past decade to an estimated 4.4 million acres. With continued public and private support, ALRI and its partners are now focused on achieving ambitious goals for 2013-2015.

## I. CONSERVATION SUCCESSSES

### PARTNERSHIPS

ALRI has enhanced its boots-on-the-ground capabilities by increasing the number of Local Implementation Teams to 15, while State Coordination Teams have been established in all nine States within the longleaf pine range.

### RESTORATION SUPPORT

An impressively diversified base of support is now propelling longleaf restoration efforts. Increasing private sector support enabled the Longleaf Stewardship Fund, administered by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, to provide nearly \$6 million in 2012-2013 in restoration grants that were leveraged by \$10 million in non-federal matches.

Essential public funding is also continuing. For example, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, with Soil and Water Conservation District support, has assisted private landowners through its Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) in accomplishing restoration activities on 38,000 acres in FY 12. These landowners contributed \$1.35 million in matches to leverage \$6.6 million from EQIP.



### RECOGNITION

In 2011, the longleaf pine ecosystem was federally designated as one of five America's Great Outdoors landscapes. These landscapes serve as demonstration sites and models for better targeting resources to achieve greater restoration outcomes.

### OUTREACH AND EDUCATION

Numerous partners in ALRI provide technical assistance to landowners and support landowner capabilities, for example, to apply prescribed fire. With support from the USDA Forest Service, state forestry agencies play a major role in advising landowners, as does the US Fish and Wildlife Service through its Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program. Also, in 2010-2013, The Longleaf Alliance conducted or participated in over 124 longleaf-focused training academies and workshops.

## LAND STEWARDSHIP AND CONSERVATION

Among the several projects underway across the longleaf range, the State of Florida, a land trust partner and a private landowner are working together to protect nearly 21,000 acres east of Eglin Air Force Base. Supported by a \$1.75 million award from the Department of Defense's 2013 REPI Challenge, this effort will conserve longleaf pine habitat and at-risk species such as the gopher tortoise. And, on existing public lands, the USDA Forest Service is stepping up longleaf restoration efforts on multiple national forests, including over 100,000 acres of accelerated improvements on the Osceola and DeSoto National Forests utilizing the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program.

## II. PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

ALRI recently released its "Strategic Priorities and Actions 2013-2015" to guide future activities building upon current restoration success and enhancing the ability to expand restoration efforts. Priorities include:

- ▶ **Significantly increase acres established in longleaf pine ecosystems.** The States forecast increasing longleaf pine by 300,000 acres range-wide on public and private lands over three years.
- ▶ **Improve and maintain existing longleaf pine ecosystems, with emphasis on significantly increasing the acres of prescribed fire accomplished.** Along with increased prescribed fire, understory restoration and invasive species control will be advanced.
- ▶ **Enhance the ability to successfully implement restoration actions on the ground.** To take full advantage of any increase in financial support for establishment and prescribed fire, a commensurate increase in technical assistance for private landowners will be necessary.
- ▶ **Maintain and broaden the resource base.** Sustained support from both public and private sources is essential to achieving ALRI's restoration goals.

## III. HOW YOU CAN GET INVOLVED

- ▶ Attend a Longleaf Partnership Council meeting
- ▶ Get involved with and support State and/or Local Implementation Teams
- ▶ Participate in training opportunities and longleaf field days
- ▶ Advocate for continued support of longleaf protection and restoration programs, including prescribed fire
- ▶ Learn more about ALRI at [www.americaslongleaf.org](http://www.americaslongleaf.org)

