

America's Longleaf Restoration Initiative
Declaration Statement by The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation

Mission

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF), established by Congress in 1984, is an international leader in developing public and private funding to protect wildlife and natural resources. In 26 years, NFWF has funded 3,700 organizations and leveraged \$490 million in federal funds into \$1.6 billion for conservation. The achievement of clear, measurable results is central to our work. We bring together diverse stake-holders—from industry to Congress to local leaders—to accomplish positive outcomes.

Interests

NFWF's interest in participating in the partnership and America's Longleaf Restoration Initiative is born out of its 10- year commitment to investing in the restoration and protection of the ecosystem. Since 2003, NFWF and the Southern Company have provided more than \$7.1 million through 35 grants to 18 different groups and agencies, which have been leveraged by more than \$37.9 million to promote and advance the conservation of the longleaf pine ecosystem and its associated plant and wildlife species, as well as its significant economic and social values. As a result of these commitments, the goals of the *America's Longleaf* initiative align directly with NFWF's goals to reestablish the ecosystem by supporting well-coordinated conservation initiatives within a science-based ecosystem restoration framework. NFWF is particularly interested in the effort to establish a common set of region-wide metrics to measure our collective conservation progress and to help guide future restoration investments. Furthermore, the goal of expanding technical assistance to landowners in priority areas matches our interests to see that adequate assistance is provided so that the suite of incentive programs are fully utilized to stimulate and expand private landowner stewardship. Finally, NFWF is inspired daily by the creativity and commitment of our partners working on the restoration of the longleaf ecosystem and we view America's Longleaf's goals to expand communications, education and outreach as a critical part of the transfer of these important stories that have the power to strengthen and inspire conservation across the historic longleaf range.

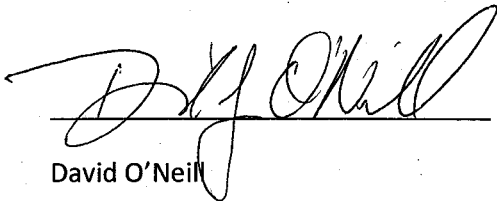
Contributions and Activities

- **Investing in Longleaf Restoration through the Southern Company Longleaf Legacy Program.** In partnership with the Southern Company, the NFWF will seek to continue to provide critically important grant funding to federal, state and local governments, academic institutions and non-profit organizations to advance targeted goals of the longleaf conservation plan in the states of Georgia, Florida, Alabama, and Mississippi. Over time, NFWF will seek to grow these grant funds and align these investments with the emerging strategic and science-based approach to conservation outlined in America's Longleaf initiative. These funds will continue to restore thousands of acres of the Longleaf ecosystem on public and private lands in support of the

restoration goal defined in the Conservation Plan, while building the critical foundation and capacity that is needed to accelerate the restoration and protection of longleaf and its associated wildlife species and ecosystem values.

- **Convening Stakeholders and Sharing Information.** NFWF and the Southern Company will continue to convene its annual Partners conference and its associated training/networking opportunities to share emerging trends, exchange lessons learned and new methods and technologies, and to promote coordination across the longleaf ecosystem. This annual gathering brings together government agencies, academia, non-profit organizations and business leaders to explore efforts to restore the Longleaf ecosystem and the wildlife that depends on it. In the future, these meetings could be used as another forum in which to examine and promote the goals and objectives of the America's Longleaf Conservation Plan.
- **Engaging Private Philanthropy and Corporate Partners.** NFWF will work with the leaders of America's Longleaf to convene and inform other philanthropic entities and corporations as to the benefits of investing in the restoration and protection of the Longleaf ecosystem. Specifically, over the next two years, we will seek to engage private foundations and corporate leaders in discussions around the restoration and protection of the historic longleaf pine ecosystem and explore their interest in supporting these important activities and leveraging private funds with government efforts to accomplish shared restoration and protection outcomes.

SIGNATORY



David O'Neil
Director, Eastern Partnership Office
National Fish and Wildlife Foundation

8-29-11

Date