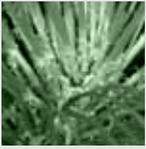




AMERICA'S LONGLEAF

A Restoration Initiative for the
Southern Longleaf Pine Forest





Longleaf Forests

The open, fragrant longleaf “piney woods” are as much a part of Southern culture and history as cornbread. These iconic forests built our fledgling nation and sustained its growth with an abundant supply of prized timber and naval stores. Longleaf has been reduced to only 3 percent of its once vast extent due to clearing for agriculture and development or conversion to plantations of other pines.

These remaining longleaf forests still offer extraordinary benefits, providing highly valuable timber and habitat for bobwhite quail, wild turkey and deer. More resistant to hurricanes, droughts, and some pests than other pines, longleaf is a good option for climate change adaption.



An Ecological Treasure

The fire-dependent longleaf pine ecosystem is one of the most ecologically diverse in the world and is home to some of the most rare and unique plants and animals on the continent:

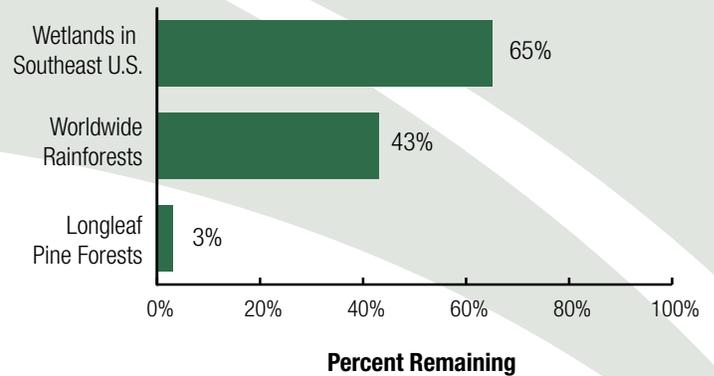
- ▷ Nearly 900 plant species are found in longleaf forests, and nowhere else in the world.
- ▷ 29 federally-listed threatened or endangered species are part of the longleaf ecosystem, including the Red-cockaded Woodpecker, Gopher Tortoise and American Chaffseed.



America’s Longleaf Restoration Initiative

Launched in 2009, the America’s Longleaf Restoration Initiative is a collaborative effort involving many diverse partners. Building upon past efforts to restore longleaf, significant conservation activities are underway across the nine states in longleaf range. This partnership is guided by a Conservation Plan that takes a landscape level approach and pursues restoration on both public and private land.

Loss of Longleaf Pine Forests compared to other threatened ecosystems.



“Fire in longleaf pine forests is like rain in a rainforest”

—Larry Earley,

Looking for Longleaf: The Fall and Rise of an American Forest

Longleaf requires active management including periodic prescribed burning.





The Imperative

Longleaf forests once covered over 90 million acres from Virginia to Texas but now less than 3.4 million acres remain. Faced with the near demise of this ecosystem, the forestry, wildlife and biodiversity conservation communities from the grassroots levels to those in the most senior positions recognized that more strategic restoration was needed—and needed soon—while the window of opportunity remained open.

The vision of the *America's Longleaf Restoration Initiative* is to sustain functional, viable longleaf pine ecosystems with the full spectrum of ecological, economic and social values achieved through a voluntary partnership of concerned, motivated organizations and individuals.

As a working forest, longleaf offers compatible opportunities for timber production, game management, and biodiversity conservation.



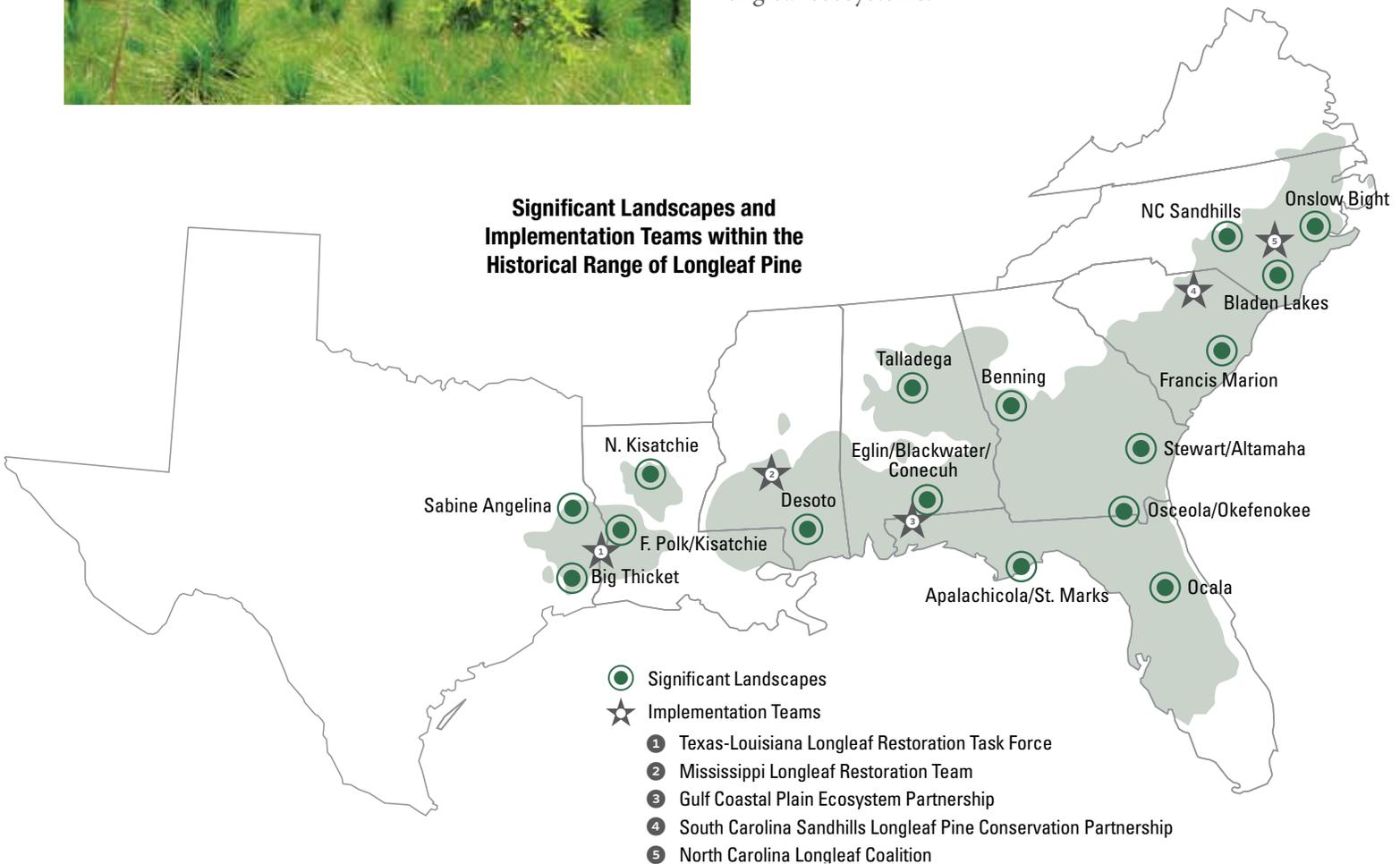
Range-wide Conservation Plan

Developed by more than 100 professionals representing many disciplines and organizations, the Conservation Plan serves as a range-wide framework and catalyst for action. The Conservation Plan boldly calls for an increase in longleaf over 15 years from 3.4 to 8.0 million acres, with more than half of this acreage targeted in Significant Landscapes and Sites.

Within this overall goal, the Conservation Plan calls for:

- ▷ **Maintaining** existing longleaf ecosystems in good condition;
- ▷ **Improving** longleaf acres missing significant components of understory communities and fire regimes; and
- ▷ **Restoring** longleaf pine forests to suitable sites currently in other forest types or land classifications.

Reaching these objectives will depend upon strategic coordination of science-based conservation actions among many partners and stakeholders, with the goal of ensuring long-term sustainability and resiliency of the diverse longleaf ecosystems.





Conservation Action

Goals of the Conservation Plan are being accomplished through voluntary collaborative efforts of organizations participating in the America's Longleaf Restoration Initiative as well as other efforts to restore longleaf across the range. Regional strategies and related actions for restoring longleaf on both public and private lands include utilizing traditional and emerging markets, increasing fire management and linking to climate change policy.

In June 2010, the Departments of Agriculture, Defense and Interior formalized their commitment to the America's Longleaf Restoration Initiative goal of restoring 8 million acres. This landmark agreement also established a committee to coordinate formally federal leadership and resources.

Ultimately, success will require the engagement of state agencies and many conservation partners to achieve these restoration goals. The following organizations are involved nationally, regionally, and locally or on implementation teams. Many additional partners are expected join the effort.

All partners are invited to be listed here in the brochure reprint of July 2011.

We welcome your involvement and support. For more information, please visit www.americaslongleaf.net or contact our regional coordinator: Glen Gaines | ggaines@fs.fed.us



Implementation Teams

Leading many of the on-the-ground efforts, state and local implementation teams operate at various scales. Their tasks include:

- ▷ Convening a multi-stakeholder effort to support longleaf pine restoration;
- ▷ Developing maps and information as well as providing a forum for developing priorities for restoration; and
- ▷ Identifying and following through with landowners and managers to fund, implement, and evaluate restoration projects.