

AMERICA'S LONGLEAF RESTORATION INITIATIVE

# 2018 RANGE-WIDE ACCOMPLISHMENT REPORT

Longleaf Restoration Accomplishments  
Reported for Fiscal Year 2018



Andrew Schock, The Conservation Fund  
2018 Longleaf Partnership Council Chair

# NOTES FROM THE CHAIR



Photo Credit Shannon Lee

Welcome to the newly formatted America's Longleaf Restoration Initiative (ALRI) Annual Accomplishment Report. Rather than producing a report solely on what has been accomplished over the past year, we hope this report will be a tool showcasing what can be done to reach our goal of 8 million acres of longleaf pine habitat by 2025.

The work done over the last decade has revolved around enhancing the key benefits of longleaf pine - Wildlife Value, Benefits for People, Risk Abatement, Economic Value, and Military Readiness. These benefits express the varied objectives of all of the partners that are represented on the Longleaf Partnership Council (LPC).

Read the Accomplishment Report. I hope you like it, but more importantly I hope you use it! It tells the story of how our key strategies are impacting longleaf restoration overall and what lies ahead as we work toward our 2025 goals. We appreciate the R. Howard Dobbs Foundation for funding the production of this Report as well as the multitude of partners responsible for the impressive accomplishments.

## KEY STRATEGIES MOVING FORWARD

1

### RESTORATION IMPACTS

Since 2010, ALRI partners have been building a legacy that advances our nation's demand for goods and services such as clean water, fresh air, wildlife, recreation, wood fiber, jobs, and a strong national defense.

2

### PUBLIC LANDS INITIATIVES

In 2017, we launched an effort to more fully engage our Federal landowners to increase the number of acres dedicated to longleaf pine habitat.

3

### PRIVATE LANDS ENGAGEMENT

Large private timberland owners influencing 50,000 acres and more comprise a group interested in increasing longleaf on their lands, but who need new tools to make longleaf pine economically viable or sustainable.

4

### UNDERSTANDING THE LANDSCAPE

Mapping where longleaf pine occurs and where it could occur is important to reaching ALRI's goal. With this information, we can better focus our collective energies where they are needed.

# RESTORATION IMPACTS A DECADE OF ALRI

This report celebrates achievements associated with ALRI over the past decade based on data and success stories compiled from partners across the longleaf range from southern Virginia to eastern Texas. Over this time period, through collaboration, leveraging resources, and jointly setting management priorities between public and private partners, ALRI is a testament to the effectiveness of Shared Stewardship.

Since 2010, over 13 million public and private acres\* have been impacted through on-the-ground management activities advancing longleaf restoration, including over 1.2 million acres of longleaf planted. These unprecedented outputs have led to even more impressive outcomes on the land-

scape which are providing significant value to the American people.

This initiative demonstrates the economic, social, and environmental benefits to ALL when a conservation stewardship legacy is created. Through collaborative efforts, we are immensely proud of the gains in longleaf pine from a historic low of 3.2 million acres to 4.7 million acres across the Southeast; however, we are even more proud of the benefits, outcomes, and impacts being realized to support our communities, our lands, and our heritage.

\* multiple treatments applied to some acres

ALRI IMPACTS 2010-2018

1.2+ MILLION ACRES OF LONGLEAF PLANTED



10+ MILLION ACRES OF PRESCRIBED BURNS



200,000+ ACRES OF LAND PROTECTED



THROUGH ALRI AND PRINCIPLES OF SHARED STEWARDSHIP, THIS REPORT SHOWCASES HOW THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTOR, TOGETHER, ARE:

Improving our **ECONOMY**

Strengthening **NATIONAL DEFENSE**

Recovering **THREATENED & ENDANGERED SPECIES**

Creating and enhancing **RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES**

Improving **RESILIENCY OF SOUTHERN FORESTS**

Reducing **WILDFIRE RISK**

Protecting **AIR, LAND, & WATER**



# PUBLIC LANDS

90% OF VOTERS AGREE THAT FEDERAL AND STATE MANAGED LANDS ARE ESSENTIAL TO QUALITY OF LIFE IN THEIR STATE AND 70% AGREE PUBLIC LANDS ARE ESSENTIAL TO THEIR STATE'S ECONOMY.

SOURCE: CONSERVATIONTOOLS.ORG



Photo credit US Forest Service

The 33-member LPC recognizes the value of ALRI to the 94+ million residents in the nine longleaf states and the nation as a whole. As a portion of the 13.6 million public acres in the Southeast are restored, positive impacts are realized to the economy, timber industry, national defense, wildlife, forests, and overall quality of life to residents. The “return on investment” for restoring our public land base, where appropriate, to longleaf is enormous.

In 2017, the LPC requested a Public Lands Task Force be assembled to explore potential for increasing longleaf restoration on public lands. The US Forest Service (USFS) responded by conducting an in-depth analysis to determine their 1) existing acres of longleaf; 2) acres with a minor component of longleaf; and 3) acres with the biological potential for longleaf (where longleaf should be). From this process, the Million Acre Challenge was formed where the USFS committed to putting one million additional acres “on the path” to longleaf restoration by Year 2025 based on specified criteria. Other public agencies are exploring similar processes within their respective agencies. This represents one of the greatest opportunities to expand longleaf within the range.

## ON THE ROAD TO RECOVERY 29 THREATENED & ENDANGERED SPECIES WITHIN THE LONGLEAF PINE ECOSYSTEM

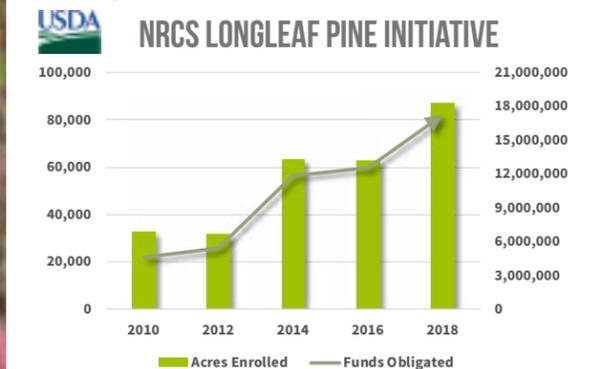
The red-cockaded woodpecker (RCW) inhabits mature longleaf pine woodlands and has been federally listed as endangered since 1970. To bolster recovery efforts, public and private partners are working together to move RCWs from healthy populations to new locations within or between populations. Hitchcock Woods, an urban forest in Aiken County, South Carolina, began receiving RCWs in 2015 through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Safe Harbor Program. By 2018, the Woods supported 11 clusters with 21 birds! Recipient populations contribute to range-wide recovery and forest biodiversity, and may one day help the species become de-listed from the Endangered Species Act. Through efforts of ALRI, as species are recovered, de-listed, and/or prevented from being listed, positive impacts are realized environmentally, socially, economically, as well as, within our military by enhancing operations/training conducted within and around our nation's military installations.

# PRIVATE LANDS

89% OF THE SOUTH'S 212 MILLION ACRES OF FORESTLAND IS PRIVATELY OWNED

SOURCE: WWW.SOUTHERNFORESTS.ORG

Longleaf restoration on private lands remained a crucial component to ALRI's 8-million-acre goal in 2018, as these accomplishments provided new opportunities for widespread restoration, connecting and bridging habitats across the landscape, and demonstrating economic, ecological and cultural models of success. Landowners invested their time and resources, as well as utilized cost-share funding such as the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Longleaf Pine Initiative, to plant, burn and manage longleaf. Efforts spanned across many landowner demographics and objectives, signifying the private commitment and investment from landowners and demonstrating that landowners can both meet individual management objectives while simultaneously and collectively working to maintain the viability of longleaf in the historic landscape.



Partners in the ALRI coalition provided technical and financial assistance, which gave landowners the tools needed to keep their lands in working conditions. In 2018, ALRI addressed new opportunities to draw in large industrial landowners to longleaf restoration, and a monumental success occurred when the Coastal Headwaters Project closed its first conservation easement in November. ALRI also continued to see growth and increase in landowner groups and associations, demonstrating the broader, range-wide effect that can happen when landowners band together to accomplish larger restoration goals and objectives.

# LONGLEAF SCORECARD

## FISCAL YEAR 2018 KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

### CREATING RESILIENT SOUTHERN FORESTS

ALRI's coalition of federal and state agencies, non-profit organizations, forest industry, private landowners, and other interests has come together for a common cause and built a momentum that can't be underestimated. In 2018, ALRI partners continued rebuilding the legacy of the longleaf pine and writing a new future for the longleaf

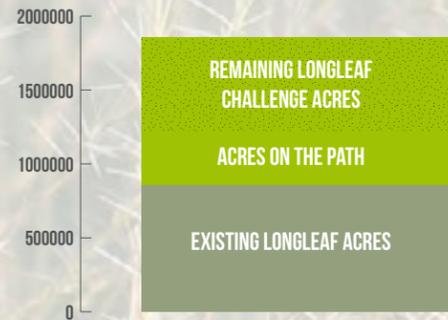
ecosystem toward 8 million acres. This goal is much more than a number. Our shared accomplishments are connecting people to the land, sustaining family forests, building a stewardship legacy, and supporting flourishing wildlife.

#### 2018 LONGLEAF ESTABLISHMENT



130,314 TOTAL PLANTED ACRES

#### US FOREST SERVICE MILLION-ACRE CHALLENGE



### IMPACTING ECONOMIES

For almost a decade, ALRI has promoted a steady, renewable supply of wood for lumber, energy, paper and packaging, and a forest products industry that provides more than 5,000 items consumers use every day. Healthy timber markets promote clean air, clean water, wildlife, and jobs. In many rural communities, timber is the basis of the local economy. Forestry and the forest products industry in the South generate \$230 billion annually (southernforests.org) and in the nine longleaf states, forest based employment accounts for 1,049,479 jobs (nafoalliance.org).

Private lands play an important role in shaping the markets contributing to the increase in stands managed for longleaf. Private landowner Mike Chism's property in Fayette County, Alabama is one such example. He, among other land managers, are understanding the value of a multi-faceted approach to habitat restoration. This is hard work most days, but these are the very practices that will support development of the quality timber and wildlife habitat he desires for his land. Bottom line: We need more landowners like Mike Chism restoring the longleaf pine ecosystem, and in turn, improving our economy.



Photo credit: Tim Albritton

### SPREADING THE FLAME TO IMPROVE ECOSYSTEMS & REDUCE WILDFIRE RISK

Wildfire risk has been reduced on over 10+million acres through application of prescribed fire since the beginning of ALRI.

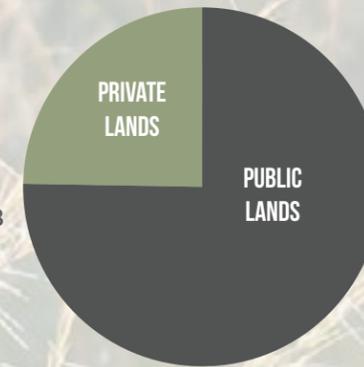
25% of 2018 reported prescribed fire acres occurred on private lands

61% of total longleaf acres are found on private lands

19% increase in reported acres of prescribed fire in 2018

1,629,350 total reported acres of prescribed fire on longleaf lands in 2018

#### PRESCRIBED FIRE BY OWNERSHIP



### ENGAGING PRIVATE LANDOWNERS

The North Carolina Sandhill Prescribed Burn Association (SPBA) is a landowner association created to provide peer support, training, and tools needed to effectively increase prescribed fire on private lands in North Carolina. Project Coordinator, Jesse Wimberley, a 4th generation landowner himself, expanded the network's capacity to 250 landowners in 2018 by providing education and hands-on learning experiences. Landowners in all stages of longleaf management are actively involved, from families who have owned land for generations, to heirs or recent buyers who are just starting out on their woodland ownership journey. Since 2016, NRCS has reported a 300% increase in landowner signups/completion of Farm Bill cost share projects which has been attributed to this group's efforts. This network is also impacting prescribed fire in other parts of the historic range, as up-and-coming PBAs are replicating and modeling their efforts based on the work of the SPBA.



Photo credit: Angela Gaskell

### INVESTING IN THE FUTURE OF LONGLEAF

LONGTERM PROTECTION THROUGH LAND ACQUISITION & CONSERVATION EASEMENTS



22,414 ACRES

### NATIONAL FISH AND WILDLIFE FOUNDATION LONGLEAF STEWARDSHIP FUND

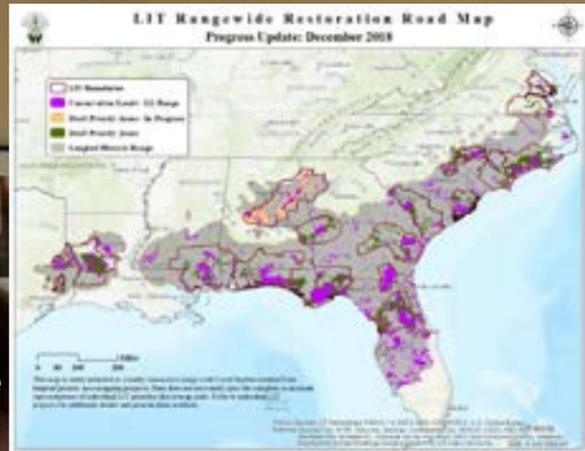
\$69,200,000 TOTAL



Since 2012, the Longleaf Stewardship Fund has awarded more than \$30.8 million in grants to longleaf pine restoration, enhancement and protection across the historical longleaf pine range. These grants have generated \$38.4 million in match from grantees, for a total conservation impact of more than \$69 million.

# UNDERSTANDING THE LANDSCAPE

Understanding longleaf extent and condition is at the core of ALRI's mission to monitor progress and prioritize restoration, and identify land protection opportunities for the greatest positive impact on the longleaf ecosystem and support the objectives of all our ALRI partners. At the local level within the 17 Local Implementation Teams, detailed conservation planning and mapping efforts have set goals for longleaf restoration priorities. Building on the great work of the teams, their targeted priorities were rolled up into a range-wide "Longleaf Restoration Road Map" to better communicate a shared vision for the future of the longleaf ecosystem.



## LOOKING FOR LONGLEAF

The new NRCS funded Southeast Longleaf Ecosystem Occurrence (LEO) database project, modeled after the Florida Longleaf Pine Geodatabase, is assembling pieces of the puzzle to provide ALRI with a comprehensive view of existing longleaf. The LEO database, being built by the Florida Natural Areas Inventory (FNAI) in cooperation with ALRI will enable partners to track longleaf acres and condition, and will be useful for conservation and cost-share planning at local and regional levels. The project's first phase began in early 2018 and includes database design, gathering and integrating existing longleaf pine data from many different sources across the range. The second phase, to kick off in Spring 2019 will address remaining gaps in our knowledge of longleaf through field surveys using a rapid assessment method. FNAI is developing protocols, training, and a mobile data collection app, and field teams are expected to fill in data gaps for all 17 LITs over the next few years.

The screenshot shows a mobile data collection app interface titled "LLP\_Condition\_Draft\_v1". It features several sections with radio button options for data entry:

- If longleaf is present:**
  - Longleaf Stand Type: **REQUIRED**
    - natural
    - planted
  - Longleaf Dominance: **REQUIRED**
    - dominant
    - codominant
    - occasional - rare
  - Flat-top Tree Presence:
    - None
    - Single Tree
    - 2-3 trees
    - >3 trees
  - Large Longleaf Pine Basal Area:
    - 0
    - 10
    - 20

# LOOKING FORWARD OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES

As we near the tenth anniversary of ALRI, our accomplishments to date are impressive indeed. An average annual establishment rate of over 143,000 acres has yielded 1.2+ million new acres of young longleaf! With over 1.6 million acres of prescribed fire reported in 2018, we are meeting the challenge of the enormous amount of work required to maintain well-functioning ecosystems. As we grow longleaf and expand our management activities, the LPC is ensuring that these trends continue on an upward trajectory toward our 2025 goals.

## FINDING OPPORTUNITIES

The improvement of forest stands with a minor component of longleaf is one of the most promising game changers for meeting the 8-million acre goal. New analyses of Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA) data indicate that several million potential acres could become longleaf-dominant through harvesting and improvement techniques. To help further identify these acres, the LPC has embarked on an ambitious range-wide mapping project, the LEO database. Beginning in 2019, field surveys will be conducted in LIT landscapes to better understand the extent and condition of the longleaf ecosystem and aid local partners in identifying opportunities for restoration.

## INCREASING ACRES

A highly successful LPC meeting and Biennial Longleaf Alliance Conference this past Fall offered the chance to highlight the USFS's Million-Acre Challenge, launched in Fall 2017. The USFS's incredible goal and commitment within the ALRI is engaging new partnerships and inspiring others to follow suit. Long and hard work with large institutional landowners is also beginning to yield real results with the closing of the first phase of the Coastal Headwaters project, a model for large scale longleaf conservation easements on working forests. As ALRI continues to increase acres of longleaf through land protection, stand improvement, and partnerships we continue to create recreational opportunities and build connected and resilient landscapes for the public good and the rare and threatened species that depend on the longleaf ecosystem.

## OVERCOMING CHALLENGES

Restoration efforts across the Southeast continue to face many challenges, such as the devastating hurricanes Florence and Michael this past year, and other natural disasters. As we work to build a resilient longleaf ecosystem, upholding and expanding funding streams is critical to supporting ALRI and building on the investments and progress we've made as a partnership to date. Fortunately, long-standing federal, state, NGO, and private partners, such as the NRCS and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, continue to make it happen. Funding alone will not restore America's great southern forest. The success of ALRI takes a village, from dedicated private landowners to technical assistance providers, from botanists to fire crew members, from local partnership coordinators to grants administrators, from county foresters to tree planters. Thanks to all of our many diverse partners, longleaf restoration across the southeastern landscape is becoming a reality!



Photo credit: Brady Beck



Mixed longleaf and slash pine forest. Photo credit: Jim Guldin.



NRCS staff inspecting longleaf plantings in MS. Photo credit: NRCS, Mississippi.



Hurricane Michael damage on Silver Lake WMA, GA. Photo credit Joe Burnam, GADNR.

# STRENGTHENING OUR NATIONAL DEFENSE

## FT. STEWART MANEUVERS

Howitzer lifting off at Ft. Stewart, GA. Photo by US Army.

## GEORGIA SENTINEL LANDSCAPE

In December 2017, the southern region of Georgia was officially designated a Sentinel Landscape (GASL) by the departments of Agriculture, Defense, and the Interior. The military network stretching over the region provides a full spectrum of training and operational resources and capabilities to service men and women, including heavy armor maneuver areas, unimpeded air-to-ground ranges, live-fire training facilities, and low-level flight routes. Designation will help bolster economic productivity, preserve working lands, enhance the military's mission, and protect critical natural resources in the region. Sustaining working lands, such as longleaf pine forests, will promote compatible development near essential training areas and protect vital habitat for a number of important species. The gopher tortoise is one such species that resides within the region; dedicated conservation activities aim to preclude the need to list the gopher tortoise under the Endangered Species Act, thereby reducing the risk of regulatory encroachment on DoD installations and ranges.

# BY THE NUMBERS: FISCAL YEAR 2018 ALRI ACCOMPLISHMENT DATA SUMMARIES

## ALRI Accomplishment Report Summary by Ownership

Category	Performance Measures					
	Longleaf Establishment Acres	Longleaf thru Silviculture Acres	Prescribed Burning Acres	Maintenance Activities Acres	Acquisition/ Easements Acres	TOTAL Acres
<b>Public Lands</b>						
National Forest System (USDA Forest Service)	4,415	737	482,998	34,461	39	522,650
Savannah River Site (USDA Forest Service)	414	1,500	11,027	1,600	0	14,541
National Wildlife Refuges (USFWS)	895	844	31,655	240	100	33,734
Military Installations (DoD)	4,897	0	274,010	0	19,311	298,218
National Parks/Preserves (NPS)	0	0	0	0	0	0
State Forests (State Foresters)	1,714	0	255,052	13,686	0	270,452
WMAs (State WL Directors)	1,345	0	63,654	18,382	1,242	84,623
Other State/Local Lands	2,591	223	63,308	3,386	0	69,508
Public lands (through Longleaf Stewardship Fund)	1,578	90	70,975	50	0	72,693
<b>Total Public Lands</b>	<b>17,849</b>	<b>3,394</b>	<b>1,252,679</b>	<b>71,805</b>	<b>20,692</b>	<b>1,366,419</b>
<b>Private Lands</b>						
State Forestry Agencies (State Foresters)	4,627	0	1,700	146	0	6,473
State Wildlife Agencies (State Wildlife Directors)	0	0	35	0	0	35
WHIP (NRCS)	130	0	3,702	0	0	3,832
EQIP (NRCS)	30,958	1,234	43,288	12,772	0	88,253
Other (NRCS)	5,078	0	167	434	0	5,680
<b>Total - NRCS</b>	<b>36,166</b>	<b>1,234</b>	<b>47,158</b>	<b>13,206</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>97,765</b>
Conservation Reserve Program (Farm Service Agency)	8,606	0	16,629	301	0	25,536
Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program (USFWS)	1,480	36	4,293	591	0	6,400
Corporate Lands -private funds only (State Foresters) - Outside cost-share programs	1,122	0	4,638	662	0	6,422
NGO Programs -private funds only (appropriate NGO) - Outside cost-share programs	623	0	11,928	7,918	1,722	22,190
Private Landowners - private funds only (State Foresters) - Outside cost-share programs	2,498	0	287,203	1,429	0	291,130
Private Landowners (through Longleaf Stewardship Fund)	1,100	0	6,493	84	0	7,677
Private Landowners - Projected Acres	56,244	0	0	0	0	56,244
<b>Total Private Lands</b>	<b>112,465</b>	<b>1,270</b>	<b>380,076</b>	<b>24,337</b>	<b>1,722</b>	<b>519,871</b>
<b>Grand Total - All Lands</b>	<b>130,314</b>	<b>4,664</b>	<b>1,632,755</b>	<b>96,142</b>	<b>22,414</b>	<b>1,886,289</b>

## ALRI Accomplishment Report Summary by State

Category	Performance Measures					
	Longleaf Establishment Acres	Longleaf thru Silviculture Acres	Prescribed Burning Acres	Maintenance Activities Acres	Acquisition/ Easements Acres	TOTAL Acres
<b>Public Lands</b>						
Texas	264	0	54,590	4,243	0	59,097
Louisiana	1,003	0	134,782	11,055	100	146,940
Mississippi	1,101	737	132,563	7,953	776	143,130
Alabama	1,223	0	142,552	8,517	39	152,331
Florida	10,085	384	536,249	27,429	3,942	578,089
Georgia	2,082	40	93,158	603	12,474	108,357
South Carolina	1,498	2,233	76,869	10,088	0	90,688
North Carolina	392	0	78,758	1,792	3,361	84,303
Virginia	201	0	3,158	125	0	3,484
<b>Total Public Lands</b>	<b>17,849</b>	<b>3,394</b>	<b>1,252,679</b>	<b>71,805</b>	<b>20,692</b>	<b>1,366,419</b>
<b>Private Lands</b>						
Texas	1,611	0	1,187	70	0	2,868
Louisiana	1,728	844	10,413	9,260	0	22,246
Mississippi	4,224	0	16,109	2,402	0	22,735
Alabama	7,898	0	238,799	938	0	247,635
Florida	4,102	390	10,342	1,411	0	16,244
Georgia	21,075	0	81,987	3,274	0	106,336
South Carolina	8,890	0	7,215	4,254	0	20,359
North Carolina	6,311	36	12,721	2,350	1,722	23,140
Virginia	382	0	1,304	378	0	2,064
Additional Acres	56,244	0	0	0	0	56,244
<b>Total Private Lands</b>	<b>112,465</b>	<b>1,270</b>	<b>380,076</b>	<b>24,337</b>	<b>1,722</b>	<b>519,871</b>
<b>Grand Total - All Lands</b>	<b>130,314</b>	<b>4,664</b>	<b>1,632,755</b>	<b>96,142</b>	<b>22,414</b>	<b>1,886,289</b>

# LONGLEAF PARTNERSHIP COUNCIL 2018 MEMBERS AND PARTNERS



American Forest Foundation



R. Howard Dobbs, Jr.  
FOUNDATION

