

Longleaf Pine Initiative

Conservation Beyond Boundaries

LLPI

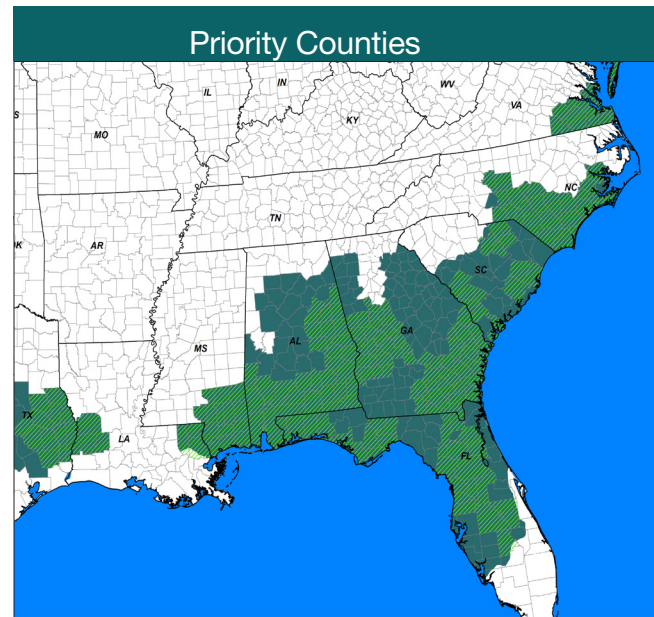
Longleaf pine forests once encompassed more than 90 million acres across the Southeast, stretching from eastern Texas to southern Virginia. These forests represent some of the world's most biologically diverse ecosystems and are home to nearly 600 plant and animal species. But over the past two centuries, development, timbering and fire suppression reduced the ecosystem's range substantially.

USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) established the Longleaf Pine Initiative (LLPI) in fiscal year 2010 to provide an avenue for NRCS to support the goals of America's Longleaf Restoration Initiative (ALRI), a collaboration working to restore and maintain this unique ecosystem. Through ALRI, NRCS and its partners, have aided in the rebirth of the native forest.

NRCS and Longleaf Pine Forests

Through LLPI, NRCS works with producers on private lands in nine states to improve the sustainability and profitability of longleaf pine forest ecosystems. NRCS provides technical and financial assistance to producers, helping them restore and better manage longleaf forests. Prescribed burning is a key management practice supported through LLPI and helps suppress competition to young longleaf pines while creating a desirable understory for wildlife.

NRCS delivers LLPI in priority areas where longleaf pine restoration will provide the most significant benefits. These priority areas are aligned with significant geographic areas identified through ALRI, and are generally chosen because they contain large existing blocks of longleaf forest. These existing forests are often on military installations, national and state forests, national wildlife refuges, and heritage reserves. Targeting funds for private lands restoration in these areas helps to build more extensive and functional areas of this valuable landscape.



Outcomes and Impacts

LLPI enables producers to make conservation improvements on their forestlands with NRCS providing technical and financial help. A healthier longleaf pine forest translates into more valuable timber and wildlife habitat and a more efficient operation through the use of forest management and prescribed burning systems.

Longleaf pine forests provide habitat for diverse threatened and endangered species such as the red-cockaded woodpecker, gopher tortoise and northern bobwhite. In addition to the environmental benefits of restoring and planting longleaf pine, landowners are recognizing the economic benefits of producing high-quality timber and the growing market for pine straw. In addition, a healthier longleaf pine forest provides ample recreational opportunities such as hunting and birding.

Longleaf Pine Initiative



Conservation programs provide assistance to landowners to help them manage longleaf forests, such as used prescribed burning.

Fiscal Year 2015 Longleaf Pine Initiative NRCS Financial Assistance (FA) and Active and Completed Contracts

	Contracts	Acres	NRCS Investment
Alabama	180	19,956	\$1,967,192
Florida	42	4,295	\$647,966
Georgia	172	11,620	\$2,614,818
Louisiana	6	1,183	\$287,841
Mississippi	53	6,508	\$955,316
North Carolina	32	3,333	\$667,347
South Carolina	64	4,542	\$1,031,727
Texas	4	589	\$126,928
Virginia	4	528	\$122,620
Grand Total	557	52,553	\$8,421,754

Data source: NRCS Resource Economics, Analysis and Policy Division, October 2015.

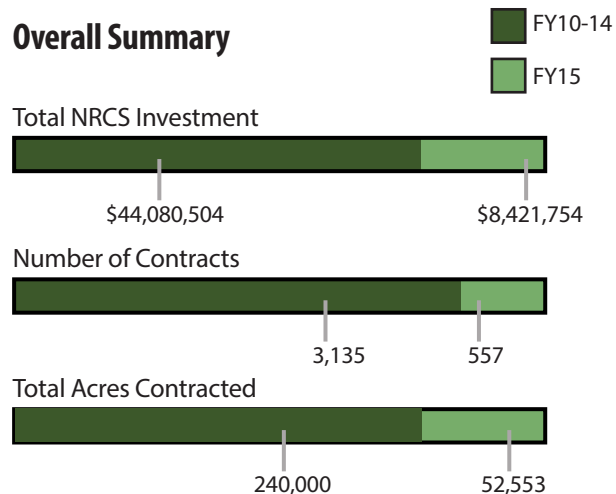
NRCS GOALS

Through LLPI, NRCS works with producers and conservation partners to restore longleaf pine forests. ALRI's Range-Wide Conservation Plan for Wildlife has a goal of protecting, restoring and enhancing an additional 4.6 million acres of longleaf by 2015. To help ALRI meet this goal, NRCS is working with producers to restore longleaf forests with at least 50 percent of these efforts occurring in priority counties per ALRI's plan.



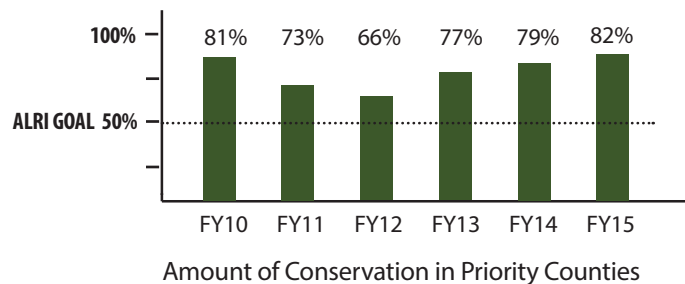
Efforts to restore longleaf forests on private lands benefits many wildlife species, including the gopher tortoise

Overall Summary



Milestone:

NRCS aims to exceed the ALRI goal that restoration activities take place in priority counties.



October 2015

For more information, visit: nrcs.usda.gov/initiatives

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