

Joint Chiefs' Landscape Restoration Partnership

My Alabama Woods: Restoring Shortleaf and Longleaf Pine

2016–2018



View of the canopy in an Alabama pine forest

In north Alabama a partnership of conservation groups formed with the shared vision of woodland restoration across traditional jurisdictional boundaries. With only 3.5% of Alabama in public conservation land—most of which is federal—these restoration efforts have been focused on private lands. Working with family forest owners, Alabama State forests, and Bankhead and Talladega National Forest this partnership focused on shortleaf and longleaf pine restoration. Shortleaf and longleaf pine once dominated much of this region. Located on and around the Cumberland Plateau these pine forests harbor a high diversity of unique plants and wildlife. The region is also home to the last remaining old growth mountain longleaf pine forests in the world, with many trees over 200 years old. This Joint Chiefs' project objectives included increased use of prescribed fire and planting to help restore forest and forest ecosystem services. Central to these objectives is landowner engagement and education on proper forest conservation practices.

PROJECT IMPACT:

\$340,000

USFS & NRCS JCLRP funds awarded 2016–2018: \$1,472,389
Total USDA and partner project funds: \$1,930,389

Dollars invested in local contracts to grow nursery seedlings and tree planting.

PROJECT RESULTS



Young longleaf pine trees after planting



Shortleaf and longleaf establishment: 3,111 acres of tree planting.



Returning fire to the landscape: 1,051 acres of prescribed burns.



Managed prescribed burns: 216,725 feet of firebreaks established or maintained to control burn events on private lands.

USDA's Forest Service and Natural Resources Conservation Service are working together to improve the health of forests where public forests and grasslands connect to privately owned lands. Through the Joint Chiefs' Landscape Restoration Partnership, the two USDA agencies are restoring landscapes by reducing wildfire threats to communities and landowners, protecting water quality and enhancing wildlife habitat.

Photos in this document are public domain or stock imagery unless otherwise noted.

Joint Chiefs' Landscape Restoration Partnership

MY ALABAMA WOODS: RESTORING SHORTLEAF AND LONGLEAF PINE



Pinecone on a shortleaf pine tree

Working Together for the Woods

Public lands on the Bankhead and Talladega National Forest, and the private lands making up the great landscapes around them, are being restored to native longleaf and shortleaf pine communities.

Through funding by USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service and the USDA Forest Service, partners like the Alabama Forestry Association and Alabama Forestry Commission of foresters were able to install firebreaks and perform prescribed burns. Prescribed burning reduces wildland-urban interface wildfire risk which increases community safety and helps maintain the health of these fire-dependent ecosystems.

Fuels reduction on national forest system and private lands have been rapidly implemented at a time when drought conditions and wildfire risk is at an all-time high. Partnering with members of the Southwest Shore Healthy Forest Association provided the catalyst for effective communication and conservation actions across the landscape.

Through the My Alabama Woods, Restoring Shortleaf and Longleaf Pine Joint Chiefs' Project partners leveraged existing efforts to provide additional benefits on the ground. There is now a comprehensive conservation plan focusing on fuels reduction to increase forest health and protect the surrounding communities.

In addition, site preparation for the tree plantings on private lands across North and Central Alabama created several employment opportunities for the surrounding communities. Even local high school students were employed through the Youth Conservation Corps to clean sediment basins, clear trail corridors, improve and maintain trails, monitor streams, and clean up trash.

"The project area continues to build synergy around restoration management, forest health and longleaf and shortleaf pine restoration," said Ben Malone, Alabama State Conservationist. "Following this project, the collaboration is expected to continue with longleaf and shortleaf pine restoration management being spear-headed by the Talladega Mountain Longleaf Local Implementation Team, The Shortleaf Initiative, and the Cumberland Plateau Conservation."

For more information, please visit nrcs.usda.gov/JointChiefsReports



Working together for the health of Alabama's National Forest

Key Partners

Alabama Forestry Commission
American Forest Foundation
Alabama Forestry Association
Talladega Mountain Longleaf Local Implementation Team
Shortleaf Pine Initiative
Cumberland Plateau Conservation Partnership

Contact

USDA-NRCS Alabama State Office
3381 Skyway Drive
Auburn, AL 36830-6443
(334) 887-4500

National Forests in Alabama
2946 Chestnut Street
Montgomery, AL 36107
(334) 832-4470