



Longleaf Pine Coordinate Assistance to Private Lands

Background

The 15-year goal for the Range-wide Conservation Plan for Longleaf Pine (RCPLP) is to increase longleaf from 3.4 to 8.0 million acres. As described in the RCPLP, the vast majority of forestland potentially available for restoration across the longleaf range is privately held. The success of the Plan depends on delivering science-based technical advice and financial incentives to the people that will restore and take care of the ecosystem—private landowners. The front-end costs of longleaf restoration are significant as is the need for technical assistance from those knowledgeable about longleaf systems. Many landowners would find these costs prohibitive but for some form of public support. Fortunately, an array of publicly funded landowner assistance and incentive programs also exists (many authorized in the federal Farm Bill) to improve stewardship of forestland. In some cases, actions are needed to optimize the programs' utility for the non-industrial landowners seeking to restore longleaf. Some programs are inadequately funded while others have not been designed or implemented in ways that maximize participation or effectiveness.

of achieving the goals of the Plan but also helping to assure the wise use of tax dollars. Therefore, the Subcommittee recommends that the issue of enhancing assistance to private landowners be adopted as a SERPPAS organizational priority. Furthermore, the Subcommittee recommends that NRCS and Alabama Forestry Commission be invited to take leadership in overseeing implementation of key actions listed above.

Applicable RCPLP Key Actions:

Private Lands Strategy, Objective B, Key Action 5 (page 12):

- ▷ **RCPLP Key Action 5**—Encourage federal and state agencies, (e.g., State Technical Committees) that provide technical assistance and cost-share to forest landowners to increase support for landowners (especially those in the Significant Geographic Areas) willing (a) to improve poor quality longleaf stands through thinning and burning, (b) to convert forests back to longleaf on appropriate sites and (c) to plant new acres of longleaf trees and restore understories.

Subcommittee Recommendations

Many SERPPAS members provide technical and/or financial assistance to private landowners. It is the opinion of the SERPPAS Subcommittee on Longleaf Pine that a coordinated effort by the SERPPAS Principals whose agencies provide financial or technical assistance to landowners would pay dividends not only in terms