

DECLARATION STATEMENT

by

Auburn University School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences

MISSION

Auburn University's School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences (AU SFWS) mission is to bring expertise, passion and commitment to address society's needs for enhanced quality of life and sustainable development of our renewable natural resources. AU SFWS supports the conservation and restoration of longleaf pine by supporting the Center for Longleaf Pine Ecosystems at AU and outreach programs related to longleaf pine biology and management. The mission of the Center for Longleaf Pine Ecosystems is to address knowledge gaps in the restoration, conservation and management of longleaf pine ecosystems to provide a variety of ecological, social and economic services for the people of Alabama and the Southeast.

INTERESTS

AU SFWS's interest in participating in the partnership and *America's Longleaf Restoration Initiative* is to promote the conservation of the longleaf pine ecosystem by acquiring the research knowledge needed to better manage longleaf pine ecosystems for a wide variety of ecosystem services and products and to share that knowledge with the scientific, professional and landowner communities through meeting presentations, peer-reviewed journal articles, popular news media outlets, workshops and outreach materials. In conjunction with DoD, AU supports a major research project on ecological and carbon management of longleaf pine ecosystems on military installations in the southeastern US. AU SFWS's commitment to the partnership is outlined in the section below.

CONTRIBUTIONS AND ACTIVITIES

We intended to participate in the partnership in the following ways:

1. **Climate Change Research-** AU SFWS will promote scientific study of climate change effects on the longleaf pine ecosystem and carbon sequestration by longleaf pine ecosystems. Our carbon research will include the development of a standardized carbon accounting system. Research supported by AU SFWS will also examine interactions between fire and carbon sequestration. Results from climate change and carbon sequestration research will be integrated with other climate change planning efforts outlined in the Conservation Plan.
2. **Uneven-Aged Management** - AU SFWS will promote research and conduct outreach on sustainable management of longleaf under a continuous cover forest system. This work will include development of reduced intensity inventory and marking guidelines, identification of the range of stand structures allowing sufficient recruitment of reproduction to maintain a sustainable structure in perpetuity, and effect of recurring timber harvest entries on wildlife populations (recruitment and maintenance), particularly species of greatest conservation need including gopher tortoises and red-cockaded woodpeckers.

3. **GIS and Mapping-** AU SFWS will work with federal and state agencies and participate in regional GIS mapping efforts.
4. **Longleaf Economics and Markets.**—AU SFWS will promote development and/or updating of growth and yield models as economic tools, support studies of landowners that are key to longleaf restoration, and promote development of various ecosystem markets and conservation banking.
5. **Understory Restoration** – AU SFWS will promote research on ground cover restoration including the effects of fire, invasive species, silvicultural treatments, agroforestry, soil disturbance and pine straw harvesting on restoration efforts.
6. **Education and Outreach** – AU SFWS will support education of undergraduate and graduate students on the biology and management of longleaf pine ecosystems and issues important to longleaf conservation. We will support development of outreach materials and tools to support longleaf conservation.

SIGNATORY



James Shepard, Dean *JS*
Auburn University School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences



Date