



Southern Company Longleaf Legacy Program

About the Program

The Longleaf Legacy Program is a partnership among Southern Company, its four operating companies - Alabama Power, Georgia Power, Gulf Power, and Mississippi Power – and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. The goal of the program is to help restore the South's most famous and unique ecosystem, longleaf pine, as well as to sequester atmospheric carbon.



Longleaf pine forests once carpeted an estimated 95 million acres of the southern United States. Today, less than 3% remains. Longleaf forests provide important habitat for bobwhite quail, red cockaded woodpecker, wild turkey, gopher tortoise, and a host of other plants and animals found nowhere else on earth. Longleaf ecosystems contain a stunning diversity of plants-- nearly 600 species have been recorded in these habitats, of which more than one-half are considered rare. Restoration of this ecosystem is a top priority for government agencies, conservation groups, and the public. Millions of people enjoy hunting, fishing, birding, hiking, and recreating in longleaf forests.



The Longleaf Legacy Program was launched in 2003 and is one of the largest public/private funding efforts of its kind for conservation of this ecosystem. Southern Company and National Fish and Wildlife Foundation each contribute \$500,000 annually to this 10-year partnership. The combined \$1,000,000 is then made available through a competitive grants program for projects within the Southern Company operating area. Grantees are required to match all grant awards, providing even greater leverage to benefit longleaf ecosystem restoration. In addition, Southern Company provides \$100,000 annually to support the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation's longleaf conservation efforts.

Funding Priorities

- Restoring longleaf on public lands, which includes conversion of non-native pine plantations
- Re-establishing ecosystem on sites adjacent to or near existing longleaf stands so as to maximize habitat area
- Replanting in areas that are high priority for wildlife conservation, such as red-cockaded woodpecker recovery sites
- Providing outreach and assistance to private landowners who are willing to manage longleaf on a long rotation to benefit wildlife

Accomplishments to Date (Anticipated)

- Awarded 35 grants to 18 different conservation organizations and agencies
- Nearly \$7.2 million dedicated in Southern Company/National Fish and Wildlife Foundation funds
- Nearly \$38 million in grantee match
- Total on-the-ground impact of more than \$45.1 million
- Funded 6 multi-state projects, 11 projects in Alabama, 8 projects in Florida, 8 projects in Georgia, and 2 projects in Mississippi
- More than 50,000 acres replanted with more than 13.7 million longleaf seedlings



Photo by: Ad Platt/TNC



Photo by: Christine Ambrose

2010 Longleaf Legacy Grants

- The National Wildlife Federation received \$150,000 to restore longleaf pine (LLP) habitats on private lands in Alabama. This project will affect 15,000 acres through a mix of active LLP reestablishment and landowner outreach that will have the added benefit of building community leaders and networks to sustain landscape conservation over time.
- The Nature Conservancy (Alabama) received \$67,361 to restore longleaf pine on approximately 456 acres using 126,000 containerized longleaf pine seedlings. Native groundcover will be improved via prescribed burning on an additional 500 acres through a Federal/State/Conservancy partnership.
- The Longleaf Alliance received \$196,708 to continue the Gulf Coastal Plain Ecosystem Partnership (GCPEP) for restoration of 5,185 acres of longleaf pine using 2.4 million seedlings. The GCPEP will be used as a model to expand the partnership to include the Conecuh National Forest/Blackwater River State Forest/Eglin Air Force Base significant geographic area as identified by the Range-Wide Conservation Plan for Longleaf Pine developed by America's Longleaf.
- Alabama Forestry Commission received \$197,960 to restore a total of 667 acres to longleaf pine on four state forests through site preparation, burning, and replanting with approximately 363,515 containerized longleaf pine seedlings. This project will help protect and enhance land and water ecosystems through invasive species management in longleaf understory and overstory. Once completed, the project areas will be utilized for public recreation, education, awareness and outreach.
- Florida Division of Forestry received \$250,000 to restore 1,400 acres of clearcut sand, loblolly, and slash pine plantations to longleaf using 1,016,400 seedlings. This project will aid in the connectivity of the Conecuh National Forest/Blackwater River State Forest/Eglin Air Force Base significant geographic area as identified by America's Longleaf.
- The Nature Conservancy (Florida) received \$150,000 to restore 600 acres of longleaf pine through the planting of 90,000 seedlings on Torreya State Park, to provide fire assistance on 60,000 acres, and to plant 6,000 pounds of wiregrass seeds. These activities directly support the Range-Wide Conservation Plan for Longleaf Pine.

Established by Congress in 1984, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) sustains, restores and enhances the nation's fish, wildlife, plants and habitats. Working with federal, corporate and individual partners, it has awarded 10,800 grants to 3,700 organizations and leveraged \$490 million in federal funds into \$1.6 billion for on-the-ground conservation.

For additional information on the Longleaf Legacy grant program, please contact Suzanne Sessine at Suzanne.Sessine@nfwf.org, or visit www.nfwf.org. For updates on the Longleaf Legacy program and other Southern Company environmental programs, please contact Leslie Montgomery at LCMontgo@southernco.com or visit www.southerncompany.com/planetpower.