

## Joint Chiefs' Landscape Restoration Partnership

# Louisiana Longleaf Pine Partnership

2016–2018



*Longleaf pine forest with open canopy and herbaceous understory*

Longleaf pine forests once covered much of the southeastern U.S., from Texas, to Florida, north to Virginia. But now these forests are limited to a fraction of their historic range. One of the largest remaining longleaf pine forests is located in northwest Louisiana. Partners and stakeholders have identified this region as a prime location to accelerate the restoration and enhancement of longleaf pine stands and other native ecosystems. Restoring these ecosystems are important because they are habitats for many at-risk wildlife species including: American chaffseed, swallow-tailed kite, Bachman's sparrow, Louisiana pine snake, and the federally endangered red-cockaded woodpecker. This Joint Chiefs' project restored thousands of acres of longleaf pine forests by returning fire to the landscape and improving the existing road infrastructure. These restoration efforts on private lands are anchored by large holdings of forests on public lands such as Kisatchie National Forest and Fort Polk and Joint Readiness Training Center.

### PROJECT IMPACT:

**\$5,655,043**

Dollars in partner contributions to the project.

USFS & NRCS JCLRP funds awarded 2016–2018: \$2,190,543  
Total USDA and partner project funds: \$7,845,586

## PROJECT RESULTS



*Red-cockaded woodpecker (Credit: Alan Schimierer)*



**Longleaf pine habitat improvements:** 2,456 acres were thinned

to benefit red-cockaded woodpecker, Louisiana pine snake, Bachman's sparrow, and northern bobwhite quail.



**Water quality protection:** 20.3 miles of roads and trails were improved and stabilized.



**Restoring natural fire regime:** 8,852 acres of prescribed fire in longleaf pine ecosystems.

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.

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## LOUISIANA LONGLEAF PINE PARTNERSHIP



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## Workshopping Better Conservation Practices

The Louisiana Pine Joint Chiefs' Partnership Project (LPJCP) has successfully expanded longleaf pine forestland in Vernon, Sabine, Natchitoches, Beauregard, Allen and Rapides Parishes. This partnership was implemented across federal and state agencies, and private lands to include non-governmental organizations to restore and expand the continuity, health, and resiliency of the longleaf pine ecosystem.

Through this partnership, establishment and management of longleaf pine is flourishing in Louisiana. Field days, workshops, and educational outreach were some of the ways the LPJCP promoted the benefit of planting and maintaining longleaf pine to private landowners.

One forest land owning family stands out in the crowd—Les and Cathy LeBleu, who began their longleaf journey by attending workshops to learn about the history of longleaf pine on their land.

Once they realized their land was in the historic range of longleaf, the LeBleus applied through NRCS for the Environment Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) – Longleaf Pine Initiative (LLPI) and received funding in 2017.

First steps to improve the landscape included working with their local NRCS field office, developing a conservation plan—working with NWTF, LDWF and the USFS to restore longleaf pine on their property with site preparation, herbicide treatments, tree planting, prescribed burns and establishing fire breaks around the land's perimeter.

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The LeBleus have become champions for longleaf pine—attending workshops, educational classes and field days whenever possible. Learning about the importance of the longleaf pine ecosystem was life-changing for the LeBleu family. Through the LLPI, the LeBleus converted family land back to longleaf pine ecosystem, restoring and preserving the land for future generations.

For more information, please visit [nrcs.usda.gov/JointChiefsReports](https://nrcs.usda.gov/JointChiefsReports)



*Longleaf pine tree bud close-up*

## Key Partners

Fort Polk and Joint Readiness Training Center  
Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries  
US Fish and Wildlife  
National Wild Turkey Federation  
The Nature Conservancy  
Sabine Soil and Water Conservation District

## Contact

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