

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN YOUR NATIONAL FOREST?

“Your Working Forest”



Alabama’s national forests are “working forests” where you can expect to see controlled burns, tree thinning, tree planting, road maintenance and project site preparation throughout the year. The work is focused on maintaining the health and resilience of forests while at the same time providing products and services to the public.

The USDA Forest Service manages the Bankhead, Conecuh, Talladega and Tuskegee national forests that encompass more than 668,000 acres in 17 Alabama counties.

We use the Forest Land and Resource Management Plan as a guide to ensure that national forests continue to provide the cleanest water, most abundant wildlife and healthiest forests in the state.

FOREST RESTORATION

8 Steps to a Healthier Forest



CONTROLLED FIRE



FOREST MANAGEMENT



TREE PLANTING



UNDERSTORY PLANT
MANAGEMENT



WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT



FOREST INVENTORY



GIS MAPPING



PARTNERSHIPS

The U.S. Forest Service is partnering with the National Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), the Alabama Forestry Commission, the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, the Alabama Wildlife Federation and the Longleaf Alliance to revive the longleaf pine tree throughout Alabama's forests. The longleaf pine is a hearty tree native to Alabama and has the ability to evolve and adapt to fire management. Longleaf pine forest is tolerant to insects, disease and storms. The many species of plants and animals that evolved with longleaf pine and frequent fires make it one of the most diverse ecosystems in the world.

CONTROLLED BURNS



U.S. Forest Service fire specialists are conducting controlled burns (prescribed fire) on nearly 115,000 acres of public land that are home to at least 900 plant and wildlife species.

Controlled burns reduce hazardous fuels (accumulation of forest undergrowth) that if untreated can increase wildfire threats to communities. They also control populations of insects and diseases that can kill many trees, especially during periods of drought.

IMPROVING WILDLIFE HABITAT



Controlled burns (prescribed fire) improve habitats for wildlife by providing fresh, plant growth near the ground that comes back immediately following the fire.

This male fence lizard, in breeding coloration, was not harmed by the controlled burn, but instead benefits from being able to find more insect food to eat.

Equally, the controlled burns improve the quality of foraging habitat for threatened and endangered species such as the red-cockaded woodpecker, indigo snake and gopher tortoise. Deer, turkey and quail also benefit from controlled burns.

NATIVE SEED HARVESTING



A partnership project with Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) allows native, understory seeds to be collected from open, pine stands on the Conecuh National Forest using a tractor-mounted flail vacuum. Native seeds like wiregrass, bluestem, toothache grass and asters will be used to re-vegetate construction sites and previously infested invasive plant locations.

RESTORING NATIVE TREE SPECIES (Following a Restoration Harvest)

A planting crew plants longleaf pine seedlings as part of our longleaf restoration goals. Planting is done annually from December through February as a management tool for healthy and sustainable forests.



Chemical site preparation, when needed, uses foliar or hack and squirt application treatment methods. This process helps to clear unwanted vegetation and allows restored trees to grow.



GREAT ESCAPES TO NATURE



The Forest Service manages 28 recreation sites and more than 363 miles of trails throughout Alabama's national forests. Group picnic shelters, developed campgrounds, fishing ponds and sandy-white beaches are available for public enjoyment in addition to many hiking trails, horse-back riding, mountain biking and areas for off-road vehicles

