

*Longleaf  
Ecosystem  
Findings*



# *Longleaf Ecosystem Findings*

- Longleaf pine-dominated ecosystems once occurred on 56% of our forest (144,492 acres), including 21% (53,857 acres) as upland longleaf woodlands and 35% (90,735 acres) as wet pine savannas and flatwoods.



# *Longleaf Ecosystem Findings*

- Lack of frequent, 2-3 year prescribed fire is the primary threat to longleaf- associated ecosystems and at risk species on the forest, and throughout the range of longleaf pine, particularly at the Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI).



# *Longleaf Ecosystem Findings*

- Open park-like savanna and woodland conditions, including two-tiered or uneven-aged canopy structures and diverse herbaceous understories, are key ecosystem characteristics of longleaf pine ecosystems.



# *Longleaf Ecosystem Findings*

- Several studies of longleaf pine-associated vegetation have concluded that longleaf pine woodlands and savannas are among the most species rich ecosystems in North America, and they are also among the most endangered.



# *Longleaf Ecosystem Findings*

- Loblolly pine or loblolly pine/hardwood forests currently occupy 104,376 acres including 25,673 acres on upland longleaf sites, 50,760 acres on wet pine savanna sites, and 23,310 acres on non-riverine swamp sites.

# *Longleaf Ecosystem Findings*

- The majority (53%) of our existing and restorable longleaf pine ecosystems (47,086 acres) on the Forest are in the “restore all condition class” (based on the longleaf assessment conducted in 2010 with the South Carolina Nature Conservancy).



# Longleaf Ecosystem Findings

- Possible old growth forests, dominated by longleaf pine or mixtures (>100 years and those on unsuitable lands) increased from 3,583 acres in 1996 to 3,668 acres in 2013, representing 1.4% of our potential longleaf ecosystem acreage.

# Longleaf Ecosystems Findings

- Management Area 26 does not reflect our landscapes most suited for maintaining and restoring longleaf ecosystems.

# Longleaf Ecosystem Findings

- Non-native invasive species have increased to threaten all ecological systems on the forest, and were not addressed in the 1996 Revised Plan.



# Longleaf Ecosystem Findings

- Landscape connectivity is important for facilitating gene flow, for mitigating effects of climate change, for promoting terrestrial and aquatic lifecycles for species, and for maintaining associated fire-adapted and dependent plant and animal habitats, communities, and ecosystems.