



NFWF

INTERNATIONAL  PAPER

Forestland Stewards 2018 Grant Slate

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Red-cockaded woodpecker | Credit: Mary Snieckus

OVERVIEW

International Paper and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) formed the Forestland Stewards Partnership in 2013 to identify, restore and protect landscapes in three priority regions in the United States: the Low Country forests of North and South Carolina, Cumberland Plateau and the Piney Woods of Texas and Louisiana. Because of the effective conservation successes within these landscapes, International Paper and NFWF expanded the partnership in 2017 into a fourth landscape, the Lower Mississippi Alluvial Valley, in a concentrated effort to restore and protect bottomland hardwood forests and associated wildlife, including migratory and wading birds, wintering waterfowl, and other terrestrial and aquatic species.

Through a gift of \$17.5 million over a ten-year period from International Paper, the project is designed to:

- Protect and enhance core habitat areas as anchor forests
- Improve management of private and public forests for environmental and economic needs
- Restore populations of at-risk wildlife and plant species
- Improve water and air quality through healthier forests
- Promote and support working forests

The four priority geographies represent places where International Paper is part of the fabric of the community, where they own and operate mills and other facilities, and where many International Paper employees live and work. In addition, these are areas of special ecological value, where large intact forests serve as habitat hubs for many rare and

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ABOUT NFWF

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) protects and restores our nation's fish and wildlife and their habitats. Created by Congress in 1984, NFWF directs public conservation dollars to the most pressing environmental needs and matches those investments with private funds. Learn more at www.nfwf.org

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Louisiana pine snake | Credit: USFWS

threatened species and protect water quality and quantity. The partnership marries International Paper’s interests to continue to serve as a corporate steward in the communities in which it operates, and to enhance the health of forests on which the environment and many wildlife species rely.

In 2018, 19 projects were awarded grants and are expected to establish more than 25,500 new acres as well as enhance and protect approximately 113,000 existing acres of longleaf and shortleaf pine and bottomland hardwood and riparian forest habitats.

Pineywoods Longleaf Restoration (LA)

Grantee: National Wild Turkey Federation
 Grant Award:..... \$298,952
 Matching Funds: \$327,438
Total Amount:..... \$626,390

Establish and enhance 7,150 acres of longleaf pine in a six-parish West-Central Louisiana Ecosystem Partnership Conservation Area anchored by the Fort Polk/Kisatchie National Forest Significant Geographic Area. Project will provide financial assistance to plant longleaf and enhance existing habitat with prescribed fire, as well support landowner outreach and technical assistance through field

days and development of forest management plans.

Facilitating Longleaf Conservation in East Texas

Grantee: Texas A&M Forest Service
 Grant Award:..... \$300,000
 Matching Funds: \$300,000
Total Amount:..... \$600,000

Establish 500 acres of longleaf pine and enhance an additional 3,350 acres of existing longleaf habitat with prescribed fire and removal of mid-story hardwoods on private lands in east Texas. Targeted technical assistance will engage small family forest owners in conservation programs that promote stewardship planning, prescribed burning, and longleaf restoration and enhancement, benefiting Bachman’s sparrow, Louisiana pine snake, northern bobwhite quail and numerous other longleaf and grassland-dependent species.

Red-cockaded Woodpecker Conservation Project on Public and Private Lands (SC)

Grantee: The Longleaf Alliance
 Grant Award:..... \$117,475
 Matching Funds: \$94,560
Total Amount:..... \$212,035

Translocate 20 red-cockaded woodpeckers from the Francis

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Marion National Forest to state lands and private properties enrolled in the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources safe harbor program in the South Carolina coastal plain. Project will improve the demographic and genetic health of this endangered species, supporting the objectives of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Red-Cockaded Woodpecker Recovery Plan.

Engaging Working Forest Landowners, Building Stakeholder Collaboration & Developing Solutions (AL, FL, GA, LA, MS, NC, SC, TX, VA)

Grantee: Forest Landowners Association

Grant Award:..... \$145,000
 Matching Funds: \$150,000
Total Amount:..... \$295,000

Engage large family forest landowners in longleaf restoration and at-risk species conservation throughout the historic range of the longleaf pine. Project will assist landowners with the establishment and enhancement of at least 2,000 acres of longleaf pine, develop regulatory predictability tools for at-risk species endemic to the longleaf ecosystem, reducing uncertainty for landowners wishing to manage for longleaf habitat conditions on their lands, and explore market-based solutions to address the economic constraints to large-scale longleaf restoration on private lands.

Onslow Bight Longleaf Ecosystem Restoration Project (NC)

Grantee: The Nature Conservancy - North Carolina Chapter

Grant Award:..... \$266,000
 Matching Funds: \$400,000
Total Amount:..... \$666,000

Restore and enhance more than 30,000 acres of longleaf pine habitat on priority conservation lands within the Onslow Bight landscape in eastern North Carolina. Project will establish 249 acres of longleaf pine and support a seasonal burn crew to implement prescribed fire on at least 30,000 acres of existing longleaf around Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune and other public and private lands, improving habitat for Bachman's sparrow, red-cockaded woodpecker and the Carolina gopher frog.

South Lowcountry-ACE Basin Longleaf Ecosystem Restoration Partnership (SC)

Grantee: The Longleaf Alliance

Grant Award:..... \$300,000
 Matching Funds: \$304,100
Total Amount:..... \$604,100

Establish 500 acres of longleaf pine and enhance an additional 2,500 acres of existing longleaf habitat with prescribed fire and mid-story hardwood removal on private lands within the South-Low Country and ACE

Basin in South Carolina. Project will restore populations of gopher tortoises by hatching and fostering up to 250 eggs for release on restored habitat and bolster red-cockaded woodpecker recovery efforts by installing at least 25 artificial nest boxes.

Improving Forest Habitat for At-Risk Species in North Carolina

Grantee: North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

Grant Award:..... \$639,053
 Matching Funds: \$714,385
Total Amount:..... \$1,353,438

Increase capacity and partner coordination for private landowner outreach to restore and enhance longleaf pine and bottomland hardwood habitats on family forest lands in southeastern North Carolina. Project will engage 300 private landowners to restore and enhance 8,250 acres of longleaf pine and bottomland hardwood habitats benefiting numerous declining and at-risk forest-dependent species, including bobwhite quail, Swainson's warbler and gopher frog.

Pee Dee River-Winyah Bay Forest Restoration Partnership (SC)

Grantee: National Audubon Society

Grant Award:..... \$149,998
 Matching Funds: \$149,998
Total Amount:..... \$299,996

Engage at least 900 family forest landowners in sustainable management of longleaf pine and bottomland hardwood habitats to benefit at-risk species in the Pee Dee River-Winyah Bay landscape. Project will develop management plans, assist with Tree Farm certification and connect landowners with resource management professionals to establish and enhance 6,000 acres of longleaf pine and bottomland hardwood forest habitat.

Longleaf Restoration in the Sewee Longleaf Conservation Cooperative Landscape (SC)

Grantee: The Longleaf Alliance

Grant Award:..... \$150,000
 Matching Funds: \$150,000
Total Amount:..... \$300,000

Provide public and private landowner outreach and financial assistance for longleaf establishment, enhancement, and management in cooperation with the Sewee Longleaf Conservation Cooperative in South Carolina. Project will engage landowners through two workshops and provide technical and financial assistance to restore and enhance 2,200 acres of longleaf habitat, prioritizing efforts on lands that will benefit at-risk and listed species, such as the red-cockaded woodpecker.

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Accelerating Restoration of Fire Adapted Habitats on the Cumberland Plateau and Mountains (TN)

Grantee: The Nature Conservancy
 Grant Award:..... \$149,996
 Matching Funds: \$150,000
Total Amount:..... \$299,996

Use the best available science to map fire adapted ecological systems, conduct a consensus-based stakeholder process to prioritize sites for prescribed burns, and implement prescribed burning in three high priority locations within the Cumberland Plateau and Mountains in Tennessee. Project will improve forest habitat on 2,000 acres with prescribed fire, drive habitat restoration management to the highest priority locations, and maximize the future investments of all land managers in the region.

Skinner Mountain Forest Shortleaf Pine Restoration and Conservation (TN)

Grantee: The Conservation Fund
 Grant Award:..... \$100,000
 Matching Funds: \$200,000
Total Amount:..... \$300,000

Restore and enhance shortleaf pine ecosystems on the Skinner Mountain Forest Property located in Fentress and Overton Counties, Tennessee. Project will establish 123 acres of shortleaf pine, enhance an additional 159 acres of existing shortleaf-hardwood forest through thinning and prescribed burning, and permanently protect 11,734 acres with a working forest conservation easement.

Old Shoal Creek Dam Removal (TN)

Grantee: The Nature Conservancy
 Grant Award:..... \$70,767
 Matching Funds: \$70,916
Total Amount:..... \$141,683

Restore fish passage and water quality in Shoal Creek by removing Old Shoal Creek Dam. Project will reconnect almost 108 miles of Shoal Creek and its tributaries and expand habitat for at least eight fish species of greatest conservation need.

Restoring Shortleaf Pine in Kentucky

Grantee: Office of Kentucky Nature Preserves
 Grant Award:..... \$120,000
 Matching Funds: \$231,566
Total Amount:..... \$351,566

Establish 165 acres of shortleaf pine and grassland habitat and enhance an additional 432 acres of existing shortleaf pine habitat by thinning hardwood species and introducing prescribed fire on three nature preserves in eastern Kentucky. Project will reduce the threat of southern pine beetle infestations and improve habitat for numerous wildlife species, including bats, wild turkey, bobwhite quail

and several rare plants.

Improving Habitat for At-Risk Species in the Alabama Cumberlands

Grantee: Alabama Forestry Foundation
 Grant Award:..... \$150,000
 Matching Funds: \$150,000
Total Amount:..... \$300,000

Engage family forest owners in an area of the Alabama Cumberlands designated as a high priority landscape under the American Forest Foundation’s Southern Wood and Wildlife Initiative. Project will engage 250 landowners in outreach and technical assistance focused on habitat protection and enhancement for at-risk aquatic species, with the expectation that 14 family forests will improve 80 acres of riparian forests and 12 miles of streams.

Elk and Duck River Watershed Forest Initiative (TN)

Grantee: Lincoln County Soil Conservation District
 Grant Award:..... \$215,000
 Matching Funds: \$347,215
Total Amount:..... \$562,215

Establish 300 acres of shortleaf pine, develop forest management plans for 6,000 acres of family forestland and restore 450 acres of forested riparian buffers on degraded streams within priority subwatersheds of Tennessee’s Elk and Duck River watersheds. Project will develop transferable tools to identify priority conservation sites, increase landowner awareness on the benefits of sustainable forest management and riparian buffers, and improve water quality and habitat for northern bobwhite quail, prairie warbler, amphibians and aquatic species.

Bottomland Hardwood Conservation Partnership Initiative under the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (AR)

Grantee: National Wild Turkey Federation
 Grant Award:..... \$188,174
 Matching Funds: \$188,240
Total Amount:..... \$376,414

Implement a three-year project to monitor, evaluate, and plan conservation activities on existing Agricultural Conservation Easement – Wetland Reserve Easement (ACEP-WRE) program easements, specifically those where bottomland hardwood stands are at or approaching site conditions that warrant management. Project will also evaluate new properties for wetland and bottomland hardwood restoration opportunities and the potential for enrollment in the ACEP-WRE. Outcomes will include 6,000 acres of new bottomland hardwood forests established and 250 acres of existing hardwood forest under improved management.



Big brown bat

Mississippi Landowner Outreach and Conservation Technical Assistance Program

Grantee: Mississippi Land Trust

Grant Award:..... \$300,000

Matching Funds: \$75,000

Total Amount:..... \$375,000

Expand upon past outreach efforts and implement a three-year technical assistance capacity-building project in partnership with NRCS to improve landowners' understanding and participation in NRCS conservation programs in Mississippi. The project will improve water quality, enhance wildlife populations, and meet landscape-level conservation priorities. Outcomes include 1,500 acres of existing bottomland hardwood and longleaf pine forests under improved management, 3,500 acres placed under conservation easements and 1,000 landowners reached through outreach and technical assistance. At least 25 percent of the outreach and technical assistance will be devoted to working with underserved landowners and agricultural producers.

Wetland Restoration Technical Assistance Program (MS)

Grantee: The Trust for Tomorrow

Grant Award:..... \$296,169

Matching Funds: \$74,050

Total Amount:..... \$370,219

Establish a full-time, three-year position in Mississippi to provide targeted landowner outreach and education for

increasing new enrollment in USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service Agricultural Conservation Easement – Wetland Reserve Easement (ACEP-WRE) program. The project will also provide assessment and implementation planning for the enhancement and management of bottomland forests on existing easements. Outcomes include 223 private landowners reached through outreach and education and 90 new landowners in ACEP-WRE. Through these enrollments, the project will establish 12,180 acres of bottomland hardwood forest and manage and enhance an additional 4,500 acres of existing bottomland hardwood forests.

Protection of Groton Plantation in the Savannah River Watershed (SC)

Grantee: The Nature Conservancy

Grant Award:..... \$500,000

Matching Funds: \$10,445,000

Total Amount:..... \$10,945,000

Purchase a conservation easement on Groton Plantation, protecting 13,681 acres of high priority longleaf pine forest in South Carolina. Project will connect 125,000 acres of public and private protected lands in South Carolina and Georgia; create a 50-mile wildlife corridor; and provide habitat for rare plant and animal species including the endangered red-cockaded woodpecker and gopher tortoise. The project will also protect a major drinking water source for Savannah, Georgia and secure forestry-related jobs in the local rural economy.