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# Florida Tree Farm Program Tour:

## Boyles Tree Farm

### *2025 Jon Gould Outstanding Florida Tree Farmer of the Year*

Suwannee, Madison, and Hamilton Counties

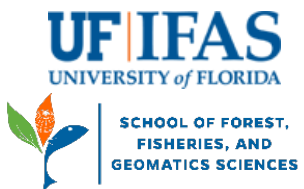
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**Wednesday, November 12, 2025**

Thank you for joining us for a tour of Boyles Tree Farm. Today we'll witness a 3-generation Tree Farm legacy and learn about sustainable forestry, pine straw production, longleaf pine regeneration and management, Best Management Practices to protect water quality, and more. This is also a great opportunity to meet and network with forestry and natural resource professionals and fellow landowners that share your interests.

This event is provided by the Florida Tree Farm Program, UF/IFAS Florida Land Steward Program, Florida Forest Service, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, LandYield, Florida Forestry Association, and other partners.



Funding for this event is provided by the Florida Tree Farm Program, LandYield, USDA Forest Service through the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Service's Florida Forest Service, and the Florida Sustainable Forestry Initiative Implementation Committee.

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## Tour Resource Contacts

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# Developing Your Strategic Plan

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(850) 570-9588

## Strategic plan questions:

1. What is the vision for our tree farm?
2. Based on our vision, how do we describe our mission?
3. What are the values we strive for?
4. Now, what are our objectives and goals?
5. What products, in terms of goods and services, does our tree farm produce?
6. How do we define quality for these products?
7. Who are the customers for our products?
8. What processes do we employ in our business?
9. Who are our suppliers and how do we define quality in what they supply to us?
10. What information do we use to improve management of our resources?
11. How do we publish and make this information available?
12. How do we improve our education level and update our techniques?
13. How do we review and revise the plan to keep it current?
14. How do we position our tree farm to make it viable for future generations?
15. What are our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT)?
16. Who are our key partners in this enterprise?

## Outline of strategic plan for forest stewardship:

1. Organization and Management:  
Mission, Vision, Values, History, Certification, Succession
2. Planning  
Annual Report, Annual Meeting, SWOT
3. Information and Analysis  
Information, Reports, Education, Technology, Finances
4. Descriptions and Technology  
Products, Customers, Quality, Suppliers, Equipment
5. Process Management  
Processes, Soil Productivity, Site Preparation, Thinning, Mowing, Herbiciding,  
Fertilization, Interplanting, Annual Activities Chart
6. Results  
Goals and Objectives, Measures of Merit, Average Age of Planted Stands, Pinestraw  
Income, Timber Contract Price History, Harvest/Thin Analysis, Hunting Lease Inventory,  
Reforestation Investment versus Return
7. Tract Descriptions  
Description and Map for each Tract
8. Key Partnerships  
Contact information



## **Boyles Tree Farm (BTF) Tour Sites**

### **Tract III**

- Foundation of BTF acquired in November 1942
- Soils predominately Oscilla-Albany-Blanton; site index of 90
- 310 acres divided into four blocks
  - A: 81 acres of containerized loblolly planted in 2019
  - B: 71 acres to be planted this winter in Funga treated loblolly; 8x12 or 454/acre
  - C: 25 acres of CMP loblolly planted in 2012' 6x12 or 605/acre
  - D: 123 acres of environmentally sensitive wetlands

### **Tract II**

- 100 acres acquired in 1965
- Blanton-Bonneau soils; site index for slash is 90
- Planted 2019 in containerized slash pine 2-SL003; 6x12 spacing; 605/acre
- Pinestraw production begins this winter at 7 years

### **Tract V**

- 275 acres acquired in 1981
- Farmland: Bonneau-Padlock-Blanton-Alpin
- Divided into three blocks
  - A: 120 acres in bareroot slash planted in 2014 now being raked for pinestraw
  - B: 126 acres of bareroot slash planted in 2009; some storm damage
  - C: 28 acres of containerized longleaf planted in 2023; 6x12 or 605/acre
  - Spacing for first two are 6x10 or 726/acre

# FLORIDA LAND STEWARD



A Quarterly Newsletter for Florida Landowners and Resource Professionals

SUMMER/FALL 2025 – VOLUME 14, NO. 3

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Funding for this publication is provided by the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services Florida Forest Service and a grant from the Florida Sustainable Forestry Initiative Implementation Committee.

An Equal Opportunity Institution.

## Congratulations Boyles Tree Farm: 2025 Jon Gould Florida Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year!

By Joe Boyles, Boyles Tree Farm; Brian Cobble, Florida Forest Service; and Chris Demers, UF/IFAS School of Forest, Fisheries, and Geomatics Sciences

The Florida Tree Farm Program is excited to announce that Boyles Tree Farm is recognized as the 2025 Jon Gould Florida Outstanding Tree Farm of the Year. Boyles Tree Farm LLC (BTF) began in 1942 when Eugene Boyles, then a 22-year-old lieutenant in the Army and 1941 graduate of the University of Florida School of Agriculture, purchased a 365-acre farm near his parents in Suwannee County, FL. For half a century, Eugene was at the helm and added additional timber tracts through purchase and 1031 exchange amounting to 1,145 acres. After Eugene's death in 1991, the management of Boyles Tree Farm conferred to his two sons; Joe and Fred, who have doubled the size of BTF to 2,235 acres. Joe Boyles is an Episcopal Priest, and Fred Boyles has a career in Historic Preservation. Joe and Fred work closely with the third generation of the Boyles family to facilitate succession and

continue the family's stewardship legacy. Currently, nine descendants of Eugene and Frances own the properties.

Boyles Tree Farm has been certified in American Tree Farm System (ATFS) for over 50 years and they proudly display a gold 50-Year Tree Farm Sign on one of the Suwannee County properties. Joe Boyles explains the benefits of involvement with the ATFS: "Our relationship with ATFS has been very beneficial for information. My late father who began this enterprise as a young man in 1942 enrolled his forestry business (then 700 acres) in 1972 with AFTS. Today we are three times that size. Through the years, we have continued to expand our operation and broaden our business plan. We have learned new techniques and kept abreast of changes in the industry through our industry partners like ATFS."

Continued on next page



(Left) Joe Boyles with Florida Forest Service County Forester, Jacob Earnest at a Boyles Tree Farm tract in Suwannee County. Photo by Brian Cobble. (Right) Joe Boyles and grandson, Ian in a new longleaf pine plantation, planted in December 2024 in Suwannee County. Photo by Boyles Tree Farm.



(Left) Grandson, Ian standing in front of a 2-year-old slash pine stand; (Middle) 3-year-old longleaf pine stand in Madison County; (Right) This Suwannee County pine stand is managed for pine straw production. Photos by Boyles Tree Farm.

### Diverse forest and watershed resources

There are ten geographically separated timber tracts, ranging in size from 100 to a little over 500 acres in size in Suwannee, Hamilton, and Madison counties. Some of these tracts border or have tributaries to the Suwannee and Withlacoochee Rivers. Important watershed features on these properties include sinkholes, lakes, intermittent streams, and karst topography. These are protected as designated natural

areas or with the use of Silvicultural Best Management Practices.

Pine stands are planted with longleaf, slash, and/or loblolly pines; and range in age from 1 to 18 years. Since 2018, all the pine plantations have been hand-planted with containerized, genetically improved seedlings, as available. BTF markets timber products, hunting leases, pine straw, real estate, and some stands are enrolled in the carbon market. Joe explains,

“This winter, we are planting 71 acres of containerized loblolly on Tract IIIB. We are entering a carbon credit program with Funga to treat the seedlings at the nursery (PRT/IFCO) to introduce fungus to replenish the soil. We hope to see 30 percent additional growth in the first 5 years. While we have investigated several carbon credit programs, this is the first where we have enrolled.”

### Resilience through three major hurricanes

On August 30, 2023, Hurricane Idalia hit Florida as a Category 3 storm with 125 mph+ winds. It ripped through Florida's Big Bend region where Boyles Tree Farm is located, destroying hundreds of thousands of acres of timberland. Just 11 months later, on August 5th, 2024, Hurricane Debby made landfall in the same region of Florida as a Category 1 storm, with winds and flooding affecting eastern Madison, Western Suwannee, and Hamilton County. Then, 6 weeks later, on September 24, 2024, Hurricane Helene made landfall in Florida as a Category 4 storm – the only known hurricane of this magnitude to be recorded in the Big Bend area of Florida since records began in 1851. Boyles Tree Farm was impacted by all 3 storms, but due to the management style of the Boyles family, they recovered and continued with management as normal.



Load of slash chip-n-saw logs headed for the mill. Photo by Boyles Tree Farm.

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Since Hurricanes Idalia, Debbie, and Helene have occurred, Boyles Tree Farm has actively managed salvage timber sales and commercial thinning, site preparation, and reforestation as a common occurrence. Regarding assistance with recovery from these storms, Joe explains, "We enrolled with two USDA programs through NRCS and FSA, the latter having the most promise. This will enable us to clean up the damage from recent hurricanes. We continue to visually monitor our timber stands and have seen no evidence of bark beetle activity."

#### **"Sustainable Forestry in North Florida since 1942"**

The family takes the business and sustainability of their Tree Farm enterprise seriously. BTF has been registered as an LLC in the state of Florida since 1986. Joe explains the importance of their management plan: "One thing that sets BTF apart is that we have a very extensive and current forestry management plan which we wrote using the strategic planning or process developed by the Sterling Council. We update this annually to keep current with changes made each year. We have extensive data in our plan to help us with decisions."

An annual report is produced each year, and the family meets several times each year to discuss management progress and upcoming activities. Joe explains, "We believe in the long-term benefits of forestry, both economic and environmental. We are dedicated to the land and real property and to the concept of stewardship. Our challenge is to make the real estate generate good economic return while at the same time benefiting water, soil, air and wildlife. We must be profitable in order to stay in business."

BTF belongs to three professional and trade organizations: Florida Forestry Association; Forest Landowners Association, and the American Tree Farm System, which is their preferred certification program. Boyles Tree Farm family members have made several presentations to the Madison Rotary Club to describe and illustrate family forestry in North Florida. Their motto is "Sustainable Forestry in North Florida since 1942."

#### **Jon Gould**

Florida's Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year Award honors the memory of Mr. Jon Gould, a respected member of Florida's Tree Farm Program State Committee and a proud Tree Farmer and advocate for forestry for more than 30 years throughout the southeast. Mr. Gould was selected as the Florida Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year in 2006 and as the Southern Regional Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year in 2018. Mr. Gould passed in 2019. His legacy lives as an ultimate model of the Tree Farm Program for which the Florida award is now renamed beginning in 2020. Learn more about Jon, his wife Carol and the Gould Tree Farm at: [www.treefarmssystem.org/south-nominee-goulds](http://www.treefarmssystem.org/south-nominee-goulds).

Learn more about the Florida Tree Farm program at [www.treefarmssystem.org/florida](http://www.treefarmssystem.org/florida).

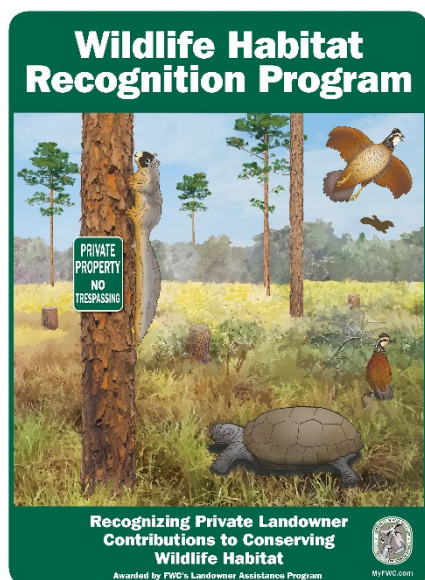
Learn more about the Funga carbon program at [www.funga.earth](http://www.funga.earth).

Learn more about the Sterling Council at [thesterlingcouncil.org](http://thesterlingcouncil.org).

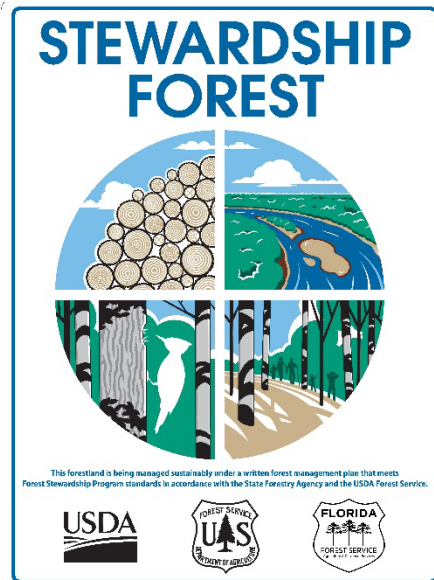


(Left) The Boyles family gathered in 2025. Photo by Boyles Tree Farm. (Right) Jon Gould. Photo by Tyler Jones.

## Assistance and Recognition Programs for Landowners



Private lands play a critically important role in the fate of Florida's vast wildlife resources. The efforts of private landowners to manage their land to benefit wildlife by providing food, water, shelter, and space will help ensure that future generations have the opportunity to experience and enjoy wildlife as much as, or even more than, we do today. To show appreciation for the accomplishments by landowners to conserve our state's wildlife, FWC's Landowner Assistance Program (LAP) created the **Wildlife Habitat Recognition Program**. This program honors landowners who have satisfactorily completed habitat management practices that benefit wildlife and/or their habitat by awarding them with a sign to display on their property and a certificate recognizing their habitat restoration efforts. For more information, contact your FWC LAP biologist (on contact page) or see <http://www.myfwc.com/conservation/special-initiatives/lap/>



The **Forest Stewardship Program**, developed by state forestry agencies, like the Florida Forest Service, provides educational and technical assistance for private landowners. Forestry and natural resource professionals cooperate to help private forest landowners develop and implement a plan designed to increase the economic value of their forestland while maintaining its wildlife habitat value and environmental integrity for future generations. Landowners who demonstrate good forest stewardship are recognized with a Stewardship Forest sign. For more information contact your FL Forest Service County Forester (on contact page) or see <https://www.fdacs.gov/Forest-Wildfire/For-Landowners/Programs-for-Landowners/Forest-Stewardship-Program>



The **American Tree Farm System (ATFS)** Standards of Sustainability guide and ensure that forest benefits are enhanced and available for future generations. Landowners can enroll and be certified in the ATFS to improve access to sustainable forest product markets and educational opportunities. The Florida Tree Farm Program is a nonprofit organization and state affiliate of the ATFS that promotes sustainable forest management and educational outreach to private forest landowners. For more information, contact your FL Forest Service County Forester, FWC LAP biologist (on contact page), or your consultant, or see <https://www.treefarmssystem.org/florida>





WOMEN LEARNING TOGETHER  
WOMEN SUPPORT EACH OTHER



Our goal is to provide opportunities for collaboration and education for all generations of women landowners in Florida. We share land stewardship resources through in-person events and virtual networking related to land ownership including farms, ranches, forests, recreation, and wildlife.

Whether you have 1 acre or 1,000 - we are here for you.

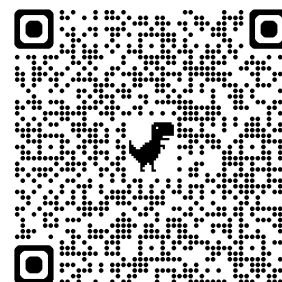


## LANDOWNER INITIATIVES

- Conservation
- Agriculture
- Forestry
- Wildlife
- Water quality
- Financial Sustainability
- Alternative income streams

Contact us at [Info@FWLA.net](mailto:Info@FWLA.net)

Visit us on our Website  
<https://fwla.net/>





# Florida Forest Service

## Silviculture Best Management Practices



### SILVICULTURE BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES (BMPs)

Silviculture BMPs are the minimum standards necessary to protect our state's waterbodies and wetlands from the degradation and sedimentation that can sometimes occur because of erosion during and immediately following recent forestry operations. Silviculture BMPs should be applied on all bonafide ongoing forestry operations, especially those adjacent to waterbodies and wetlands, and may be enforced by federal, state, and local authorities through reference of regulatory statute or rule.

### SILVICULTURE BMP COURTESY CHECKS

Silviculture BMP courtesy checks are available to give landowners, land managers, and loggers a "report card" on Silviculture BMP implementation for recent or ongoing forestry operations. This helps with future management planning as well as evaluating the performance of contractors on your property.

### SILVICULTURE BMP SITE ASSESSMENTS

On-the-ground Silviculture BMP site assessments are available to discuss which Silviculture BMPs will apply to planned operations on a specific site. This helps with harvest plan development, road layout, mitigation of existing problem areas, etc.

### SILVICULTURE BMP NOTICE OF INTENT

The Silviculture BMP Notice of Intent (Rule 5I-6 F.A.C.) is a one-time pledge that a landowner signs to indicate his or her intention to follow Silviculture BMPs on their property. Once a landowner has signed the Notice of Intent, he or she will become eligible to receive a *presumption of compliance* with state water quality standards during future bonafide ongoing forestry operations. This is very important if the landowner's property falls within an area covered by a Florida Department of Environmental Protection's Basin Management Action Plan for impaired waters.

### ADDITIONAL SERVICES

For information on the services listed above or any other services provided by the Florida Forest Service's Hydrology Section please visit [www.fdacs.gov/bmps](http://www.fdacs.gov/bmps) or contact:

Robin Holland  
BMP Program Manager  
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**Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services**





# Forestry Wildlife Best Management Practices for State Imperiled Species



- Forestry Wildlife Best Management Practices for State Imperiled Species (WBMPs) were adopted into Florida Administrative Code (Rule 5I-8) on October 21, 2014.
- WBMPs were developed through a partnership between the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services' Florida Forest Service and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC).
- WBMPs are **voluntary** practices designed as a practical approach for avoiding and minimizing the loss of **State Imperiled Species** due to silviculture operations.
- WBMP practices address the 16 State Imperiled Species which are considered to be potentially vulnerable to silviculture operations including ten aquatic species, two burrowing animals, and four nesting birds.
- WBMPs are designed to supplement the existing water quality-based Silviculture BMPs which already provide many valuable benefits to the conservation and management of fish and wildlife in Florida.
- Landowners and other forestry resource professionals can enroll in the voluntary program by completing a WBMP Notice of Intent. Those who do not wish to enroll will continue to be subject to all current laws and regulations regarding State Imperiled Species.
- Once enrolled, applicants who **properly implement** WBMPs will no longer be required to obtain a permit authorizing the incidental take of State Imperiled Species during bonafide ongoing forestry operations. In addition, they will not be subject to any fines or penalties associated with an incidental take of the State Imperiled Species covered by the WBMP Manual.
- WBMPs are not designed to facilitate wildlife habitat restoration or species recovery and expansion. Also, they do not address any Federally Listed Species. For information on Federally Listed Species, refer to FWC's online "Florida Wildlife Conservation Guide."
- For more information or to request a copy of the Forestry WBMP Manual and Notice of Intent contact:

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[www.fdacs.gov/bmps](http://www.fdacs.gov/bmps)



# 5

## Steps to Assistance

How to Get Assistance from NRCS  
for Farms, Ranches and Forests

### 1 PLANNING

Visit your local NRCS field office to discuss your goals and work with staff on a conservation plan.

### 2 APPLICATION

With the help of NRCS, complete an application for financial assistance programs.

### 3 ELIGIBILITY

Find out if you're eligible for NRCS' variety of financial assistance programs.

### 4 RANKING

NRCS ranks applications according to local resource concerns.

### 5 IMPLEMENTING

Put conservation to work by signing a contract and implementing conservation practices.

## Get Started with NRCS

**Do you farm or ranch and want to make improvements to the land that you own or lease?**

Natural Resources Conservation Service offers technical and financial assistance to help farmers, ranchers and forest landowners.

### 1 Planning

**To get started with NRCS, we recommend you stop by your local NRCS field office.**

**We'll discuss your vision for your land.**

NRCS provides landowners with free technical assistance, or advice, for their land. Common technical assistance includes: resource assessment, practice design and resource monitoring. Your conservation planner will help you determine if financial assistance is right for you.

### 2 Application

**We'll walk you through the application process. To get started on applying for**

**financial assistance, we'll work with you:**

- To fill out an AD 1026, which ensures a conservation plan is in place before lands with highly erodible soils are farmed. It also ensures that identified wetland areas are protected.
- To meet other eligibility certifications.

Once complete, we'll work with you on the application, or CPA 1200.

Applications for most programs are accepted on a continuous basis, but they're considered for funding in different ranking periods. Be sure to ask your local NRCS district conservationist about the deadline for the ranking period to ensure you turn in your application in time.

### 3 Eligibility

**As part of the application process, we'll check to see if you are eligible.**

**To do this, you'll need to bring:**

- An official tax ID (Social Security number or an employer ID)
- A property deed or lease agreement to show you have control of the property; and
- A farm tract number.

If you don't have a farm tract number, you can get one from USDA's Farm Service Agency. Typically, the local FSA office is located in the same building as the local NRCS office. You only need a farm tract number if you're interested in financial assistance.

### 4 Ranking

**NRCS will take a look at the applications and rank them**

according to local resource concerns, the amount of conservation benefits the work will provide and the needs of applicants.

### 5 Implementing

**If you're selected, you can choose whether to sign the contract for the work to be done.**

Once you sign the contract, you'll be provided standards and specifications for completing the practice or practices, and then you will have a specified amount of time to implement. Once the work is implemented and inspected, you'll be paid the rate of compensation for the work if it meets NRCS standards and specifications.

*USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.*

To find out more, go to: [www.nrcs.usda.gov/GetStarted](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/GetStarted)

## FSA DOCUMENTS NEEDED FOR CUSTOMERS APPLYING FOR NRCS PROGRAMS

If you have not worked with the USDA before you will need to make an appointment with the Farm Service Agency (FSA) at your local USDA Service Center. To find your local office, visit [www.farmers.gov/working-with-us/service-center-locator](http://www.farmers.gov/working-with-us/service-center-locator).

### What to bring with you

Bring the following documentation:

- Proof of your control of the land you wish to enroll by providing a lease or a copy of the deed to the property.
- Parcel ID number from the County Property Appraiser site for locating the farm.
- Provide your Social Security or Employer Identification Number and contact information.
- For entities, partnerships, or joint operations you will need to provide information documenting those individuals with authority to represent the business.

### What you will need to complete for the Farm Service Agency

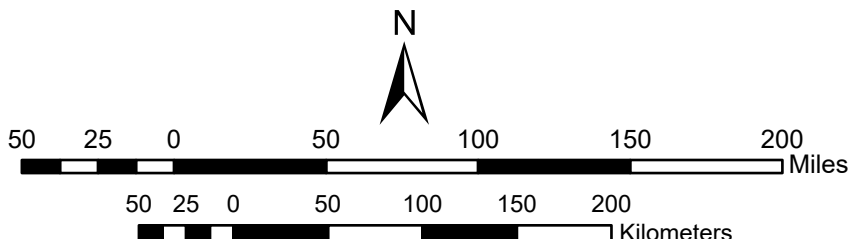
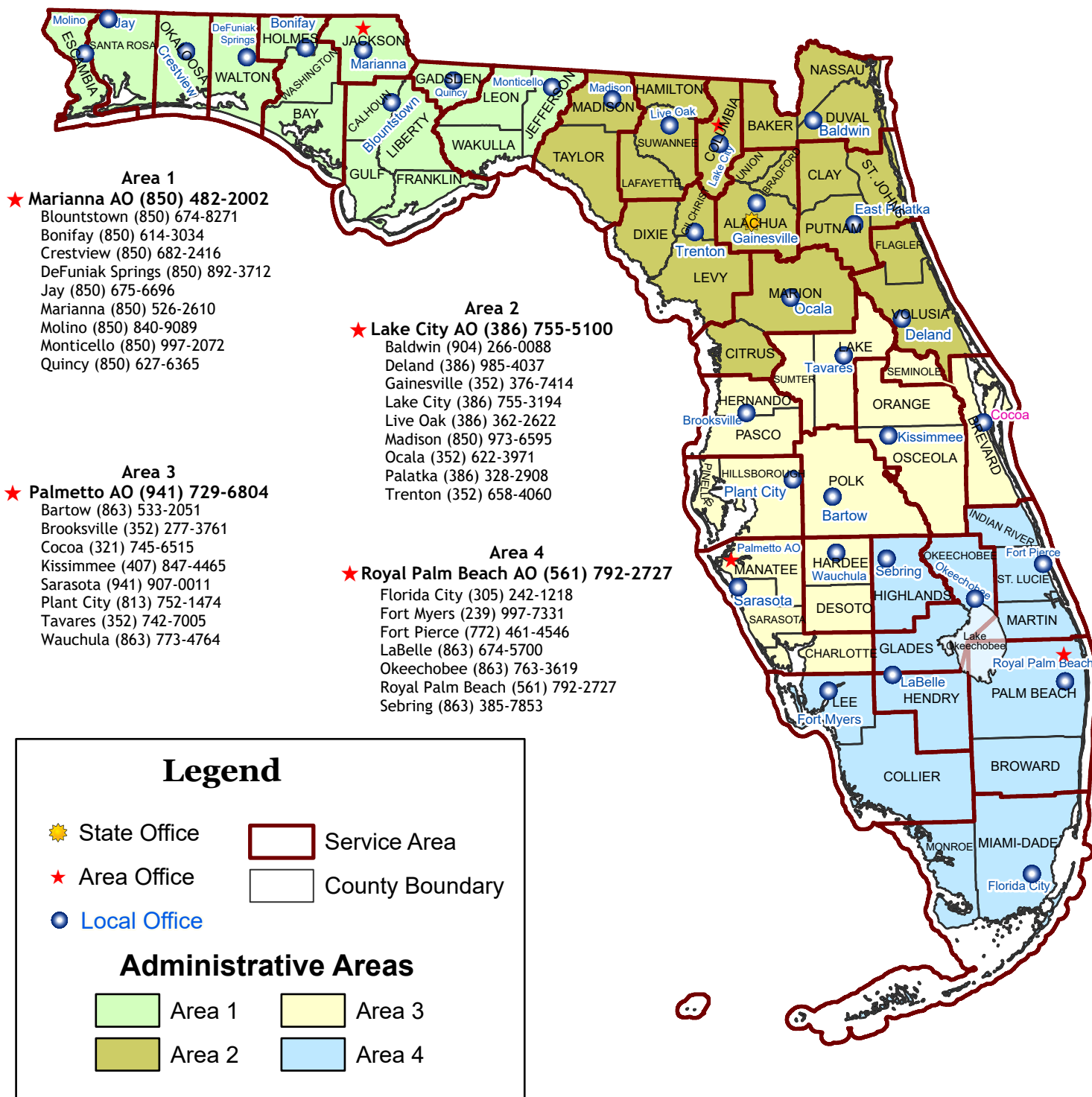
- **AD-2047 For Individuals and Entities – Form is required for all members of the entity.**
- **CCC-941 - Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) – Form is required for entity and all members of the entity.**
- **CCC-901 and CCC- 902 - Members' Information for entities and joint operations.**
- **AD-1026 - Highly Erodible Land Conservation (HELC) and Wetland Conservation (WC) Certification – Form is required for all individuals, LLC and all its members, corporations and all its members with more than 20% shares.**

It takes time for the paperwork to be processed and additional information may be needed. Please start this process early in order to insure you are eligible prior to any program sign-up cut-off dates. If you apply for a USDA program and the system does not show you or your entity as eligible, your application will not be processed or funded.



# USDA-NRCS ADMINISTRATIVE AREAS & LOCAL OFFICES

## FLORIDA



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Gainesville, FL

# Planting Southern Pines in Florida



Florida landowners have contributed vastly to the Southeast's planting of pines over many decades. Understanding the factors that affect pine seedling quality and survival will assure a more successful forest plantation, whether objectives focus on timber production, recreation, wildlife habitat, water quality protection, etc.

Seven pine species (*Pinus* spp.) are considered to be native to Florida. These species are loblolly pine (*P. taeda*), longleaf pine (*P. palustris*), shortleaf pine (*P. echinata*), slash pine (*P. elliottii*), sand pine (*P. clausa*), spruce pine (*P. glabra*), and pond pine (*P. serotina*), and each varies in the site conditions where it grows as well as in its commercial utility and availability.

The publication below discusses the importance of site selection and soils as they relate to each species, the landowners' objectives, and their target markets. This publication is a guide to facilitate selection of appropriate pine species and offers guidance on best practices for handling seedlings throughout all stages of tree planting.

**Planting Southern Pines in Florida:**

<https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/FR456>



## Longleaf Pine



Longleaf pine is a great choice for landowners interested in using prescribed fire to manage forests to accommodate multiple benefits such as wildlife habitat and timber. It's also a great choice for pine straw production on upland sites.

**Longleaf Pine Regeneration:**

<https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/fr064>

## Genetically Improved Pine Stock

Landowners have many options in regenerating forest stands with genetically improved pine stock. Learn about genetically improved pines and see if they might be a good fit for your site and objectives.

**Genetically Improved Pines for Reforesting Florida's Timberlands:**

<https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/fr007>



## Pine Straw

Pine straw is a popular mulch in residential and commercial landscaping. It is attractive, relatively low-cost, easy to work with, and suitable for various locations, including slopes. It plays an important role in water-efficient landscaping (xeriscaping).



In Florida, pine straw raking has become an important industry. **Longleaf and slash pines are the favored southern pine species** because their long needles bale well. However, loblolly plantations can be raked when demand is not met by the preferred species. Pine straw raking **may begin when stands are as young as seven or eight years old**, when pine straw yield is expected to be between **100 and 150 bales per acre**. **Trees yield the most pine straw at the age of about fifteen years, potentially producing between 200 and 300 bales per acre**, depending on site quality, pine species, and management intensity.

### The Importance of Pine Straw in Pine Stands

Pine straw is the uppermost layer of forest floor consisting of recently fallen pine needles that have not yet decayed. Pine needles fall year-round with the **peak fall in southern pines occurring late in the growing season and early winter**, two years after the needles are produced. Pine straw used as mulch in landscaping has the same positive effect on plant growth that it has in the forest:

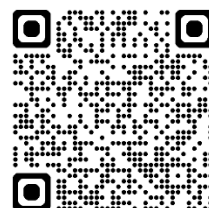
- Pine straw plays an important role in **nutrient cycling** - as the needles decompose, the nutrients revert to available forms (available meaning that they can be absorbed by plant roots again) in a process called mineralization.
- After mineralization by soil fungi, bacteria, insects, and earthworms, pine straw contributes **organic matter** to the soil and improves its nutrient- and water-holding capacity.
- Pine straw reduces water loss from the soil surface, and it has great water-holding capacity, two qualities that help **ensure that pine trees have the water they need to grow**.
- Pine straw helps **insulate the soil from temperature extremes** and reduces the rate of moisture and temperature change.
- It **reduces erosion and weed growth**.
- Pine straw **provides habitat and food** for animals and microorganisms contribute to litter decomposition or are a source of food for many wildlife species.



Harvesting Pine Straw for Profit: Questions Landowners Should Ask Themselves  
(AL): <https://tinyurl.com/3s9rsve6>



Guide to Fertilization for Pine Straw Production on Coastal Plain Sites:  
<https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/fr395>



## Enhancing Habitat for Wildlife

Southern forests and ranges have the potential to provide productive wildlife habitat for a variety of species. Landowners interested in promoting wildlife must recognize that each wildlife species requires a specific set of habitat conditions. Animals will frequent your property depending on the condition, type, and variety of food and cover that are present.



Timber, livestock, and crop production objectives can be compatible with enhancement of wildlife habitat and diversity. However, some tradeoffs may be necessary because strategies that maximize commodity outputs are typically not the same as strategies that will provide habitat for a wide variety of wildlife species. For this reason, it is important to prioritize your objectives and decide where wildlife ranks relative to the commodities you produce in your land use planning.

**Establishing and Maintaining Wildlife Food Sources:**

<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/fr062>



**Providing Wildlife Cover:** <https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/fr124>



# Cogongrass Control

Cogongrass (*Imperata cylindrical*) is a warm-season perennial grass species found throughout tropical and sub-tropical regions of the world. Native to Southeast Asia, cogongrass is an aggressive invasive plant that has spread to all continents except Antarctica and is considered among the worst problematic weeds in the world. In the United States,



Control of cogongrass is difficult because it spreads in two ways: by extensive rhizome systems and by seeds. Cogongrass rhizomes can comprise more than 60% of the total plant biomass. The rhizomes support rapid re-growth following mowing or burning.

## Control in Pine Forests

Chemical control is required. Glyphosate, imazapyr, and combinations of the two herbicides are most effective. Eradication requires multiple applications. In many instances, selective control of cogongrass without damage to desired vegetation is not possible, but where the canopy of shrubs and trees is above that of cogongrass, glyphosate sprays may be directed to cogongrass in the understory with fair selectivity to the taller vegetation. Imazapyr, however, used in the quantities and at the application frequencies necessary to eradicate cogongrass, will kill hardwood trees and shrubs.

## Control in Hardwood Forests

To avoid injury to hardwood trees or shrubs in mixed pine-hardwood stands, glyphosate alone is commonly used at 3 to 4 lb ai/acre (3 to 4 quarts per acre for many common 4 lb ai/gallon product formulations), and selectivity is obtained by spraying cogongrass in the understory and avoiding any spray contact near the crowns of trees and shrubs. Imazapyr will kill hardwood trees and shrubs.

## Controlling Invasive Plants in North Florida Forests

(various species including cogongrass): <https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/FR133>



Biology and Control of Cogongrass in Southern Forests:

<https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/fr411>



## Cogongrass Biology, Ecology, and Management in Florida Grazing Lands:

<https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/WG202>



# UF/IFAS Stewardship Publications



- [Planting Southern Pines in Florida](#)
- [Benefits of Prescribed Fire](#)
- [Assessment and Management of Hurricane Damaged Timberland](#)
- [Florida's Forest Stewardship Program: An Opportunity to Manage Your Land for Now and the Future](#)
- [Forest Resource Information on the Internet: Connecting to Today's Online Resources](#)
- [Genetically Improved Pines for Reforesting Florida's Timberlands](#)
- [Improving, Restoring, and Managing Natural Resources on Rural Properties in Florida: Sources of Financial Assistance](#)
- [Improving, Restoring, and Managing Wildlife Habitat in Florida: Sources of Technical Assistance for Rural Landowners](#)
- [Longleaf Pine Regeneration](#)
- [Marking First Thinnings in Pine Plantations: Potential for Increased Economic Returns](#)
- [Opportunities for Uneven-Aged Management in Second Growth Longleaf Pine Stands in Florida](#)
- [The Optimal Forest Management of an Even-Aged Stand: The Biological Rotation versus the Land Expectation Value](#)
- [Ownership Succession: Plan Now for the Future of Your Land](#)
- [Prepare Your Forest Property for Hurricane Season](#)
- [Selecting a Consulting Forester](#)
- [Steps to Marketing Timber](#)
- [Stewardship Ecosystem Services Study Series: Assessing Forest Water Yield and Regulation Ecosystem Services in the Lower Suwannee River Watershed, Florida](#)
- [Thinning Southern Pines—A Key to Greater Returns](#)
- [What if prescribed fire is not an option? An overview of alternative vegetation and fuel management treatments](#)
- [What Is in a Natural Resource Management Plan?](#)
- [What to Expect in a Forest Inventory](#)

See [\*\*https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/\*\*](https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/) to access these and many more UF/IFAS Extension publications.



# The Next Frontier of Stewardship, Restoring Forest Soils

*Funga reintroduces growth-enhancing fungal biodiversity into forests, a regenerative forestry practice that aligns timber productivity and ecological health.*

## The Forest Soil Microbiome, an Underutilized Resource

The soil microbiome underpins forest productivity, yet many managed landscapes are depleted of the fungi that support healthy and resilient growth. At Funga, we offer landowners an in-depth understanding of their forest microbiome, and leverage cutting edge technology to reintroduce soil fungi where they are missing.

### How Funga Restores Soil at Scale



#### Discover

We collect and DNA sequence thousands of forest soil samples to catalogue soil biodiversity across the region. By pairing this with growth data, we discover fungal communities linked to strong forest performance.



#### Restore

We reintroduce growth-promoting fungi to forests at the time of planting, resulting in improved survival, timber growth, and carbon sequestration.



# LANDYIELD

CREATED FOR PRIVATE FAMILY FOREST OWNERS

LandYield is designed to generate carbon revenue for landowners who own between 40 – 5,000 acres. We use innovative technology and an ACR approved methodology to efficiently produce high-integrity offsets, enabling us to provide landowners with a greater share of their carbon value.

## What is Forest Carbon?

### INCREASING CARBON STORED ON YOUR LAND CAN GENERATE INCOME

As trees grow, they convert carbon dioxide from the atmosphere into woody biomass. The bigger your trees grow, the more carbon they store. By enrolling in LandYield, the increasing carbon stored in your forest can be quantified and verified.

A carbon offset is issued for each ton of carbon dioxide removed from the atmosphere and stored. These offsets can be purchased by companies as part of their emission reduction strategy.

#### ELIGIBILITY

Landowners with forests as small as 40 acres can receive payment for growing their trees

**Private**

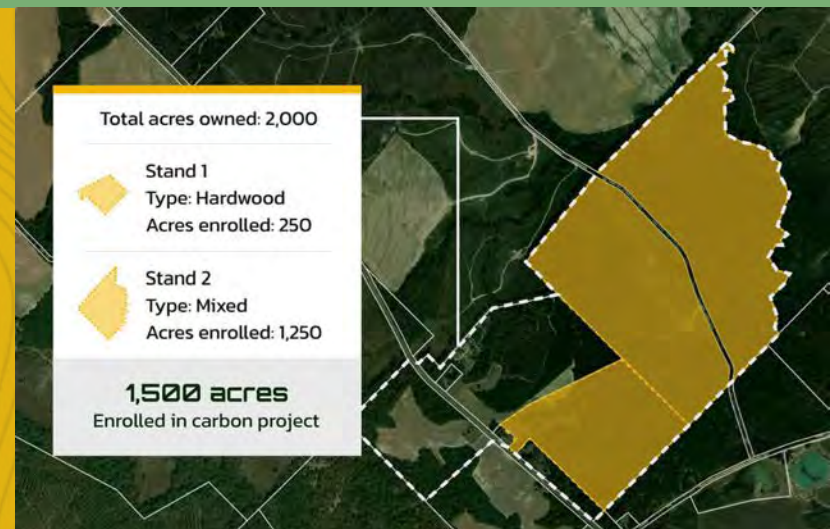
Non-industrial forest lands in the U.S.

**40-5,000**

Forested acres

**40**

Year commitment



## Landowner Benefits

#### GET PAID TO GROW YOUR STANDS

Earn revenue from your forest without harvesting trees. Receive regular payments to help pay your taxes, insurance and other costs.

#### DESIGNED FOR PRIVATE FAMILY LANDOWNERS

Using ACR's Small Non-Industrial Private Forest Landowner (SNIPFL) methodology reduces costs using innovative remote sensing technology. Carbon credits from harvest deferrals produce independently verified, high-integrity offsets which are sought after and purchased by Fortune 500 companies.

#### ENHANCE ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITIES

While enrolled in LandYield, you can increase your revenue while enhancing the beauty, recreational opportunities, wildlife habitat, water quality and long term value of your land. Take real action and join the many forest owners supporting climate action through forest conservation, and sustainable management.

#### DIVERSIFY YOUR INCOME

Continue to generate income from non-timber resources. While you are enrolled in LandYield, you are permitted to pursue other commercial activities such as leasing hunting rights and collecting non-timber forest products.



## Now Enrolling Landowners for Planting in 2026

Fields & Forests works with Alabama, Florida, Georgia, and South Carolina family landowners to plant and grow loblolly pines on open fields, diversifying the income from your land. Once enrolled, you'll receive annual payments of \$30 per enrolled acre, technical support from local foresters, and the opportunity for additional revenue streams such as timber harvests. Fields & Forests is operated by the American Forest Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to serving small landowners in stewarding their natural resources. We launched this program to support rural families in achieving their goals while creating meaningful conservation impact. For more information visit [www.fieldsandforests.org](http://www.fieldsandforests.org).

### Benefits of Enrolling

- Site preparation, seedlings and planting costs are covered and coordinated by the program.
- Guaranteed annual payment of \$30 / enrolled acre.
- Optional thinning and harvesting during enrollment.
- You keep all timber profits.
- Technical guidance from local consulting foresters.
- A free forest management plan.
- Healthier land for planting, wildlife and recreation.

Farmers across the Southeast are taking advantage of a new, low-maintenance business opportunity: planting pine trees on inactive land, adding timber production to their income streams.

### Eligibility Criteria

- Privately-owned land in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, and South Carolina.
- At least 30 plantable acres.
- Land has not been forested for at least 10 years.

### Why Loblolly Pine?

This native tree species is fast-growing and highly adaptable. It has many ecological benefits, such as providing wildlife habitat and improving soil health, and it stores carbon more efficiently than other tree species. Because of its high-timber value, the loblolly pine is a great option for those looking to expand or downsize their business operations as it provides a low-maintenance revenue stream easily managed now and by future generations.

**Contact us to learn  
more about getting started.**

📞 229-231-3818

✉ [fieldsandforests@forestfoundation.org](mailto:fieldsandforests@forestfoundation.org)





# Forest Landowner Academy

**Enroll Now!**

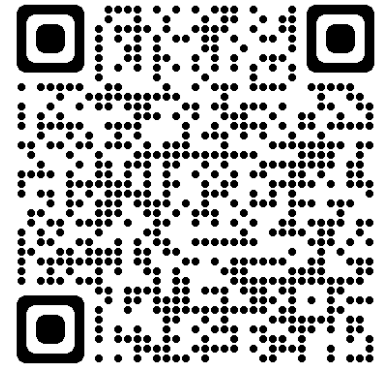
Are you new to forestry and land management? Need a good primer on forest management concepts and next steps? This course is for you! The **Forest Landowner Academy** connects you with forest management experts at the University of Florida and delivers quality core educational content on forestry and multiple-use stewardship concepts.

The seven course modules include field and virtual classroom presentations on **understanding your forest resources, developing your management plan, timber management, marketing forest products, other forest enterprises such as pine straw and hunting leases, wildlife management, and planning for the future**. Each module includes an assessment where you can apply what you've learned to your land or situation and begin or continue planning and making contacts. The cost of the course is \$150. Those completing the course will earn a University of Florida Certificate.

This course is relevant for Florida landowners as well as those in the coastal plain regions of neighboring states. Landowners can build on this course as they receive information and attend educational events offered by the Florida Land Steward Program and other partners in Florida and neighboring states.



SCHOOL OF FOREST,  
FISHERIES, AND  
GEOMATICS SCIENCES



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**PBDFLA25**

for 30% off

(valid through 2025)

**UF/IFAS School of Forest, Fisheries, and Geomatics Sciences**

**For more information, contact:**

Chris Demers at [cdemers@ufl.edu](mailto:cdemers@ufl.edu), 352.846.2375 or  
Dr. Michael Andreu, [mandreu@ufl.edu](mailto:mandreu@ufl.edu)

<https://ifas-sfrc-for.catalog.instructure.com/courses/for-fla/>

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## NOTES

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# **2024 -2025 Florida Tree Farm Program Supporters**

## Crown Level

Packaging Corporation of America (PCA)

## Heartwood Level

Smurfit/Westrock

## Trunk Level

Florida Farm Credit

Florida Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SIC) Committee

Florida Farm Bureau Insurance

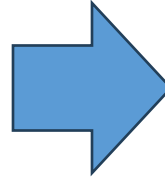
## Root Level

LandYield

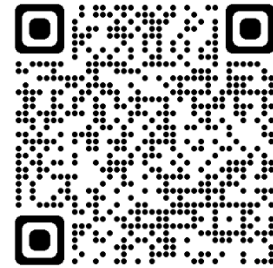
Jamie Pitts – Board Member

Benjamin “Guign” Wyche – Board Member

Please share some quick feedback about this tour here.



<https://www.treefarmssystem.org/florida>



<https://programs.ifas.ufl.edu/florida-land-steward/>

**Thanks for joining us!**