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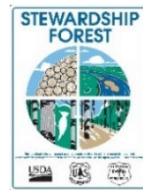
Florida Land Steward Tour:  
**Property of Ronnie Stephenson**  
**2024 Florida Land Steward of the Year**  
Jackson County, Florida

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**Thursday, May 2, 2024**

Thanks for joining us for a tour of the property of Ronnie Stephenson, 2024 Florida Land Steward Landowner of the Year. Habitat for northern bobwhite quail and wild turkey are priority objectives at his properties. You'll learn first-hand from Ronnie, and local and state resource partners, about the many aspects of wildlife habitat management and land stewardship. We'll also discuss challenges like invasive species and hurricanes and how we can best address them in our planning and management.



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

The University of Florida is an Equal Opportunity Institution.

# Table of Contents

Page

## Tour Information

Topic Agenda	3
Ronnie Stephenson Property Tour Map	4
Tour Resource Contacts	5
2024 Florida Land Steward of the Year article (from Winter/Spring 2024 Florida Land Steward newsletter)	6

## Assistance

Assistance and recognition programs for landowners	8
Florida Women Landowners Association	9
Silviculture Best Management Practices	10
Forestry Wildlife Best Management Practices for State Imperiled Species	11
USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service Assistance Fact Sheets	12

## References and Links

Planting Southern Pines in Florida	15
Longleaf Pine	16
Enhancing Habitat for Wildlife	17
Prescribed Fire	18
Cogongrass and Invasive Species Control	19
UF/IFAS Forest Management and Stewardship Publications	20
UF/IFAS Forest Landowner Academy	21
Note space	22
Lunch location information	23

Florida Land Steward Tour:  
**Ronnie Stephenson Property**  
Jackson County, FL



**Agenda:**

**9:00 AM**    **Check-in, meet & greet**

**9:30**        **Tour begins**

**Topics:**

- 1- Native warm-season grass field
- 2- Cypress pond, Best Management Practices to protect water quality
- 3- Mature timber, prescribed fire, quail habitat
- 4- Fence row management for wildlife, invasive species control
- 5- Mast tree grove
- 6- New planted longleaf pine, cogongrass control

**12:30 PM**    **Lunch at Campbellton Community Center**

Sponsored by **Farm Credit of Northwest Florida**

(location information on inside of back cover)

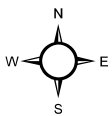
**1:30**        **Evaluations, Adjourn**



Esri, USDA Farm Service Agency

## FSP Tour

Ronnie Stephenson  
158 ac  
Jackson County, FL



## Legend

### Stops

- 1 - Native Warm Season Grass field
- 2 - Cypress pond
- 3 - Mature timber/quail habitat
- 4 - Fence row management for wildlife
- 5 - Mast tree grove
- 6 - Newly planted longleaf

## STEWARDSHIP FOREST



This landowner is being managed sustainably under a written forest management plan that meets Forest Stewardship Program standards in accordance with the State Forestry Agency and the USDA Forest Service.



## Tour Resource Contacts

<p><b>Chad Allison</b> State Coordinator Partners for Fish and Wildlife and Coastal Programs U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (352) 749-2447 chad_allison@fws.gov</p>	<p><b>Chris Demers</b> Extension Program Manager UF/IFAS School of Forest, Fisheries, and Geomatics Sciences (352) 846-2375 cdemers@ufl.edu</p>	<p><b>Barry Stafford</b> Jackson County Forester Florida Forest Service (850) 482-9509 Barry.Stafford@FDACS.gov</p>
<p><b>Katie Ayers</b> Biologist Private Lands Partners for Fish and Wildlife Coordinator U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (850) 867-9311 kathryn_ayers@fws.gov</p>	<p><b>Michael Felton</b> District Conservationist USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (850) 526-2610 x 6467 Michael.Felton@usda.gov</p>	<p><b>Ronnie Stephenson</b> Landowner rstephenon2010@hotmail.com</p>
<p><b>Nathan Bunting</b> Regional Landowner Assistance Coordinator Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (850) 767-3616 Nathan.Bunting@myfwc.com</p>	<p><b>Doug Mayo</b> Director UF/IFAS Extension Jackson County (850) 482-9620 demayo@ufl.edu</p>	<p><b>Joe Vanderwerff</b> Regional Cooperative Forestry Assistance Coordinator Florida Forest Service (850) 597-4416 Joseph.Vanderwerff@FDACS.gov</p>

# FLORIDA LAND STEWARD



A Quarterly Newsletter for Florida Landowners and Resource Professionals

WINTER/SPRING 2024 - VOLUME 13, NO. 1

## IN THIS ISSUE

Tree-nesting Ducks in Florida	3
Tax Tips for Forest Landowners: 2023 Tax Year	5
2024 New Year 30% Enrollment Discount for the Online Forest Landowner Academy	5
Timber Price Update	6
Certified Landowners	7

## Congratulations Ronnie Stephenson: 2024 Florida Land Steward of the Year



Ronnie Stephenson proudly displaying his Wildlife Habitat Recognition sign from Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. Photo by Arlo Kane.

Ronnie Stephenson's passion for wildlife and his tenacity for hands-on habitat management goes above and beyond what would be expected of one person. Ronnie grew up in the Florida Panhandle where his family owned and managed a couple historic hotels

along Panama City Beach. He purchased his Cottdale Farm in 1996 which encompasses 159 acres with 60 acres leased to a local farmer for agricultural purposes, where a portion of the crop is left in the field each year for wildlife. While his children and grandchildren provide occasional help, Ronnie does most of the land management himself. In addition to the Cottdale Farm, Ronnie owns and manages 300 acres on the state line near Grangeburg, Alabama. He states that it's a seven day a week job, but it is a labor of love.

The farms are his passion, and he works on them daily to optimize wildlife habitat through a variety of management activities. Ronnie harvested 14

acres of mature slash pine and reforested to longleaf pine and cleared large areas of heavy brush and hardwoods to create northern bobwhite quail habitat. He is encouraged and proud that the wondrous sounds of the bobwhite have returned to the farm.

Ronnie conducts prescribed burns annually to manage the forested areas and wildlife corridors that are adjacent to the agricultural fields. The field edge habitat on his farm is exceptional and provides forage habitat and cover for a multitude of birds and pollinators. Ronnie also has a healthy disdain for invasive species and bolsters his management by treating invasive plants with herbicide, primarily targeting Chinese tallow and cogon grass.

Continued on next page

## UF|IFAS UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA



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.



Ronnie with his trusted bird dog enjoying quail hunting on his property. Photo by Ronnie Stephenson.



Prescribed burn. Photo by Ronnie Stephenson.

Perhaps Ronnie's most impressive management practice is the planting of more than 1,000 hard and soft mast trees around the property, solely for the use and benefit of wildlife. He has planted varieties of chestnut, pecan, pear, apple, oak, blueberry, and persimmon. As a talented grower, Ronnie propagated most of the mast trees on his property using his own cuttings and grafting techniques. Some of the Fuyu persimmon trees on the property, which are vigorous fruit producers, were grafted to native persimmon root stock to make them more suitable to the local soils and climate.

In addition to the larger scale management activities, Ronnie has created depressions for retaining water at multiple sites that are utilized as supplemental open water sources by wildlife. His property is home to several areas of

beautiful cypress dome swamp, and he maintains nine wood duck nesting boxes. He has retained many older dead trees, or snags, on the property and plants small grains and wildflowers in the field margins annually.

Ronnie seeks out the advice of foresters and wildlife biologists and is willing to share his knowledge with anyone with an interest. In 2022, Ronnie led a Forest Stewardship tour on his property to provide information and give his experience to other landowners about how they can integrate wildlife practices into their forestry operations. He explained multiple grafting and planting techniques for the mast producing trees located on his property. He also shares his expertise and enthusiasm for land stewardship on Winston Chester's Panhandle Outdoors show. These episodes can be found on

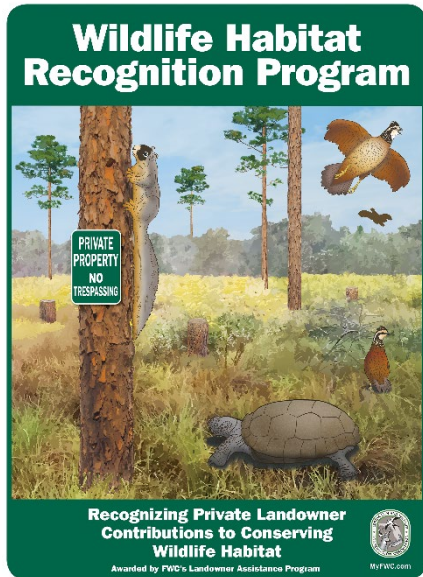
their YouTube channel at <https://www.youtube.com/@PanhandleOutdoors>.

Ronnie enjoys running his bird dogs for bobwhite quail and hunting deer and turkey with his grandchildren. When asked why he works so hard in managing his property, he says, "I have gotten so much enjoyment throughout my life from nature, I just want to give something back." He goes further to say that the biggest payoff of all his hard work is to see his grandchildren's excitement when they are sitting in a tree stand together and a deer or turkey walks by. Ronnie's tireless contributions to wildlife and habitat management have been an example of dedication and hard work that will expand and inspire the next generation of land stewards.



(Left) Ronnie leading a Florida Land Steward Tour in April 2022. Photo by Chris Demers. (Right) Ronnie and his prize persimmon tree. Photo by Nathan Bunting.

## Assistance and Recognition Programs for Landowners

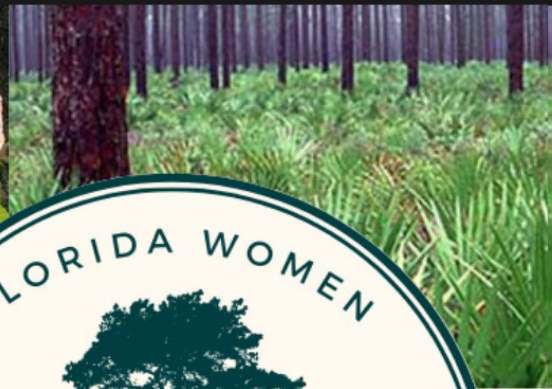


Private lands play a critically important role in the fate of Florida's vast wildlife resources. The efforts of private landowners to manage their land to benefit wildlife by providing food, water, shelter, and space will help ensure that future generations have the opportunity to experience and enjoy 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, please contact your region's FWC LAP Coordinator on the contact page.

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, please contact your Florida Forest Service county forester, consultant, or FWC LAP biologist. See the contact page.

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, please contact your Florida Forest Service county forester, consultant, or FWC LAP biologist. See the contact page.

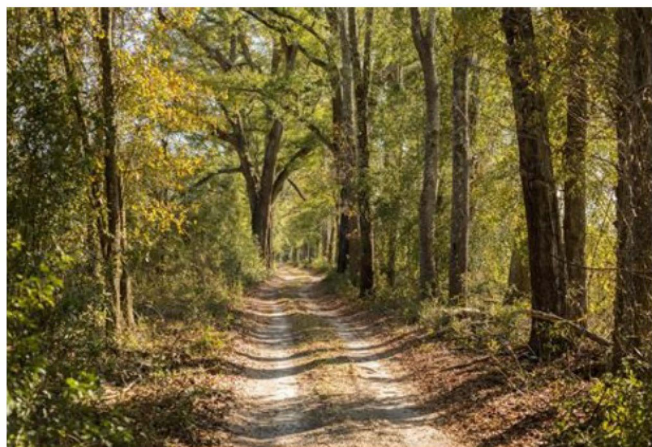
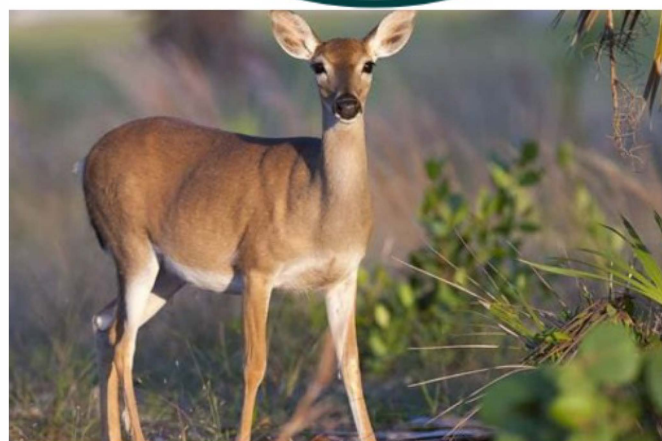




WOMEN LEARNING TOGETHER  
WOMEN SUPPORT EACH OTHER

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
- Legacy

Don't wait, this property won't last long!

Follow us on Facebook



SCAN ME

CONTACTS

ALLISON NASH -- FWLA.CONTACT@GMAIL.COM  
GINGER FEAGLE -- GINGER.FEAGLE@MYFWC.COM



# 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  
Florida Forest Service  
(352) 732-1781  
[Robin.Holland@FDACS.gov](mailto:Robin.Holland@FDACS.gov)



**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:

Robin Holland  
BMP Program Manager  
Florida Forest Service  
(352) 732-1781  
Robin.Holland@FDACS.gov  
www.fdacs.gov/bmps



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# 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.

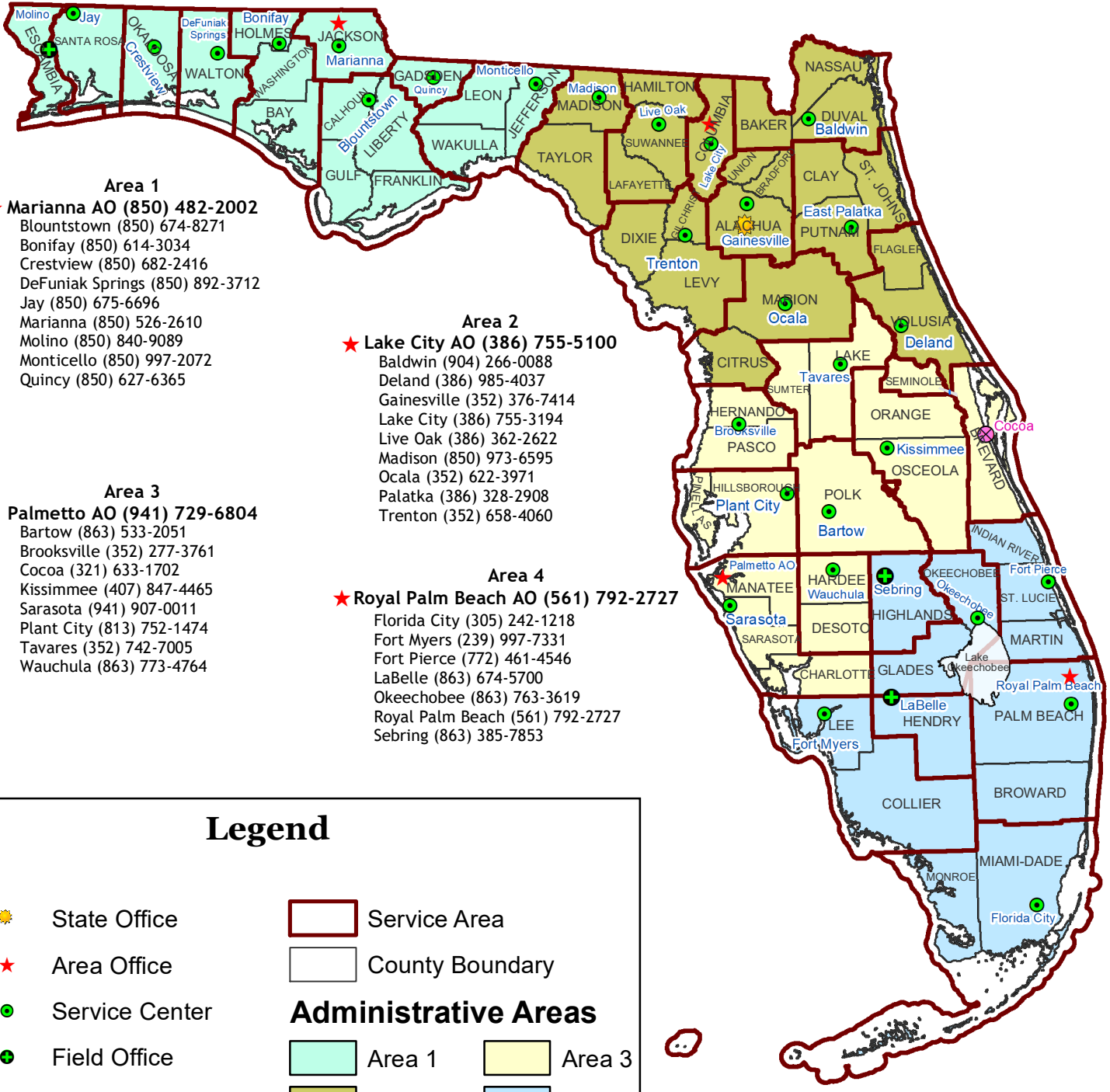
### What you will need to complete for the Farm Service Agency

- **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 (HELIC) 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



**Area 1**

★ **Marianna AO (850) 482-2002**  
 Blountstown (850) 674-8271  
 Bonifay (850) 614-3034  
 Crestview (850) 682-2416  
 DeFuniak Springs (850) 892-3712  
 Jay (850) 675-6696  
 Marianna (850) 526-2610  
 Molino (850) 840-9089  
 Monticello (850) 997-2072  
 Quincy (850) 627-6365

**Area 2**

★ **Lake City AO (386) 755-5100**  
 Baldwin (904) 266-0088  
 Deland (386) 985-4037  
 Gainesville (352) 376-7414  
 Lake City (386) 755-3194  
 Live Oak (386) 362-2622  
 Madison (850) 973-6595  
 Ocala (352) 622-3971  
 Palatka (386) 328-2908  
 Trenton (352) 658-4060

**Area 3**

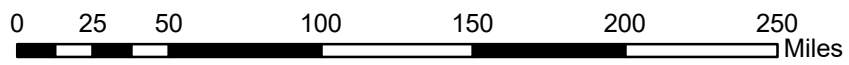
★ **Palmetto AO (941) 729-6804**  
 Bartow (863) 533-2051  
 Brooksville (352) 277-3761  
 Cocoa (321) 633-1702  
 Kissimmee (407) 847-4465  
 Sarasota (941) 907-0011  
 Plant City (813) 752-1474  
 Tavares (352) 742-7005  
 Wauchula (863) 773-4764

**Area 4**

★ **Royal Palm Beach AO (561) 792-2727**  
 Florida City (305) 242-1218  
 Fort Myers (239) 997-7331  
 Fort Pierce (772) 461-4546  
 LaBelle (863) 674-5700  
 Okeechobee (863) 763-3619  
 Royal Palm Beach (561) 792-2727  
 Sebring (863) 385-7853

### Legend

☀ State Office	▭ Service Area
★ Area Office	▭ County Boundary
● Service Center	<b>Administrative Areas</b>
⊕ Field Office	▭ Area 1
⊕ Partnership Office	▭ Area 2
	▭ Area 3
	▭ Area 4



## 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.

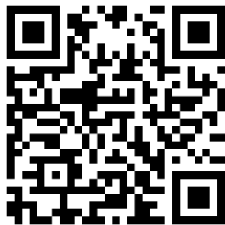
The publication below discusses the importance of site selection and soils as they relate to each species, the landowners' objectives, and their target markets. This publication is a guide to facilitate selection of appropriate pine species and offers guidance on best practices for handling seedlings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



## Longleaf Pine

Longleaf pine (*Pinus palustris*) has many favorable characteristics for landowners who have long-term, multiple-use resource management objectives. Of all the southern pine species, longleaf pine is the most adapted to fire and has the greatest longevity. When burned regularly, longleaf pine forests develop a stable grass savannah ecosystem, providing ideal habitat for a diverse array of plants and animals.

Longleaf pine is a pioneer species on a variety of sites but is intolerant of competition and flooding during its grass stage, when it appears like a clump of grass. Historically, fire and moisture have been the principal factors controlling longleaf distribution within its natural range. In the lower Coastal Plain longleaf grows on sandy, well-drained to excessively well-drained soils where loblolly or slash pine perform more poorly.



**Prescribed fire** is an important part of longleaf pine management. Fire reduces competing vegetation, exposing the bare soil necessary for successful seedling establishment. In the historic fire-dominated longleaf pine grass savannah ecosystem, relatively stable plant communities are characterized by an overstory of uneven-aged, widely spaced longleaf pines and fire-tolerant oaks such as bluejack oak (*Quercus incana*) and turkey oak (*Quercus laevis*) and a predominate ground cover of bunch grasses such as wiregrass (*Aristida stricta*) and bluestems (*Andropogon* spp.) which facilitate ignition and spread of periodic fires.

More on Longleaf Pine Regeneration: <https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/fr064>



Opportunities for Uneven-Aged Management in Second Growth Longleaf Pine Stands in Florida:  
<https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/fr132>



## 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>

## Prescribed Fire

Prescribed burning is the carefully planned and directed use of fire to achieve land-management goals. This tool is used to achieve a variety of objectives; including restoring fire-dependent ecosystems, enhancing forage for cattle, improving wildlife habitat, preparing sites for reforestation, and reducing hazardous fuel loads. Prescribed burns achieve many benefits for the environment and for people, but they have the potential to impact the public via smoke. Smoke is a mixture of water vapor, carbon dioxide and combustion products, including tiny particles of organic matter.

The potential for harm from smoke can be reduced with the use of smoke-management techniques. The movement of smoke plumes can be modeled with maps or computer programs long before anyone strikes a match. This allows land managers to avoid impacts on smoke-sensitive areas by burning under weather conditions that minimize smoke problems. As a result of pre-planning and careful smoke management, smoke impacts from prescribed fires are generally far less detrimental than smoke impacts from a wildfire burning over the same area. It is extremely important to mitigate problems associated with smoke so we can continue to use this critically important land management tool.



Benefits of Prescribed Fire: <https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/FR468>



Where there's Fire there's Smoke: Air Quality and Prescribed Fire in Florida: <https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/FR058>

# 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, it is naturalized in Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Texas, and Oregon. It was first accidentally introduced in the United States near Mobile Alabama in 1912 and subsequently intentionally introduced from the Philippines into Mississippi as a forage crop in 1921. Early regional introductions contributed to the establishment of cogongrass in the Southeast. Cogongrass is regulated as a federal noxious weed.



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/> to access these and many more UF/IFAS Extension publications.





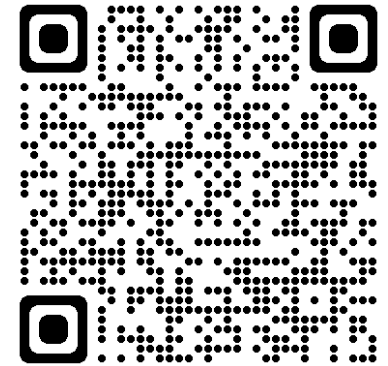
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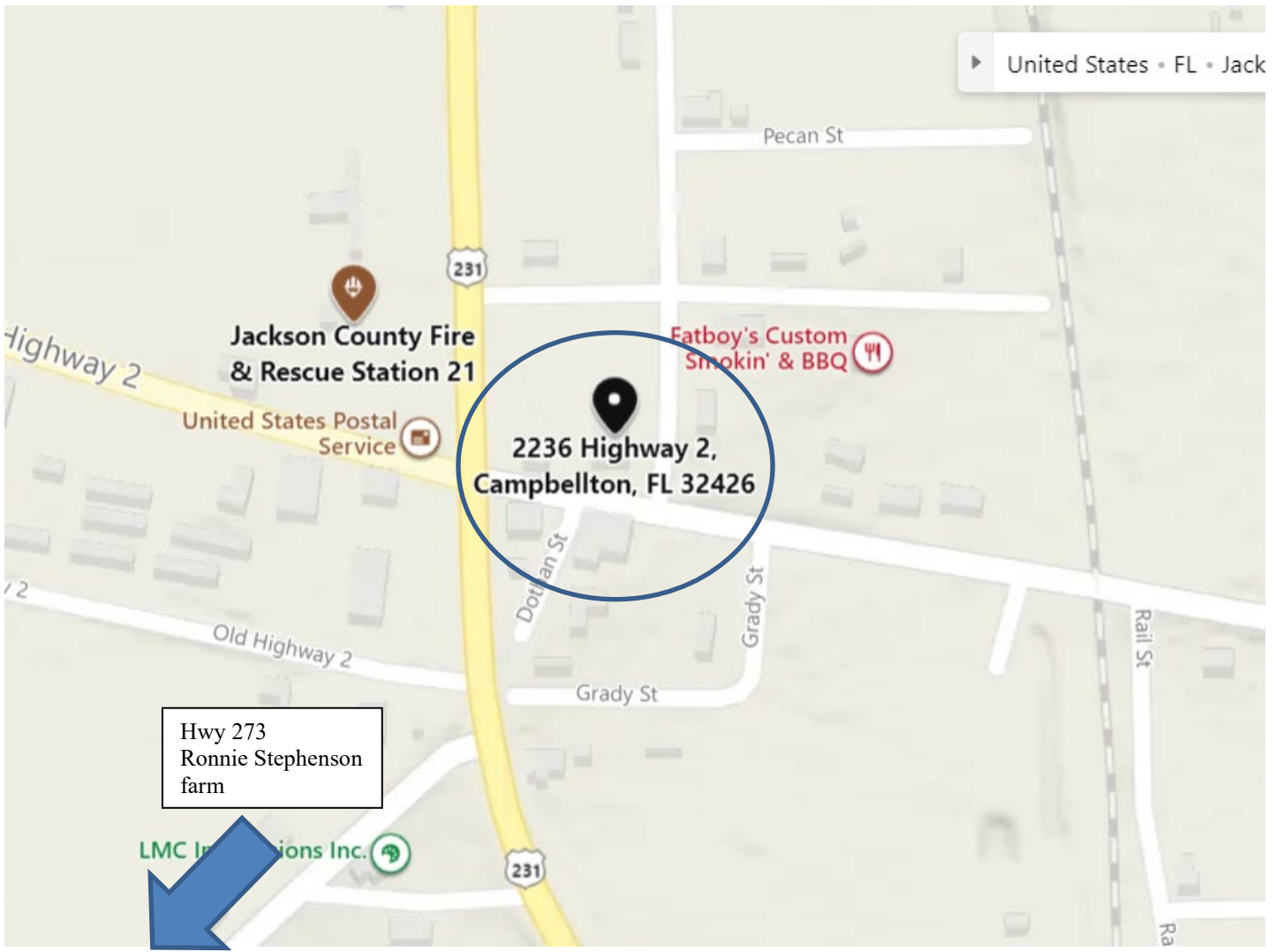
NOTES

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**Thanks Farm Credit of Northwest Florida for sponsoring lunch!**

**Campbellton Community Center**  
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Lunch will be served after the tour at the Campbellton Community Center on the north side of Hwy 2 near the intersection of US Hwy 231 and SR 2 in Campbellton, FL. This is approximately 10 minutes from Ronnie Stephenson's farm. It's right next to Southern Fields Brewing.



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