

# EQIP Environmental Quality Incentives Program



2013 - Supplement to EQIP Manual

January 30, 2013

## *Longleaf Pine Initiative*



**PURPOSE** - Georgia NRCS under the Longleaf Pine Initiative (LLPI) are helping private landowners improve the sustainability and profitability of Longleaf pine forest ecosystems. The Longleaf pine ecosystem provides critical habitat for 29 threatened and endangered species. Environmental outcomes will include improving herbaceous understory conditions in Longleaf pine forests, improving habitat conditions in existing Longleaf pine forests, as well as establishing new Longleaf pine forests.

### **515.51 - EQIP PROGRAM PRODUCER ELIGIBILITY – LONGLEAF PINE INITIATIVE**

- 1) General Producer Eligibility Criteria.—To be eligible to participate in EQIP, an applicant must meet all of the following criteria:
  - a) Be a producer. to be considered a producer, the applicant must be—
    - i) A person, legal entity, Indian Tribe, or joint operation with signature authority; and
    - ii) Engaged in agricultural production or forestry management or have an interest in the agricultural or forestry operation associated with the land being offered for enrollment in EQIP. Interest in the farming operation means one of the following:
      - (1) Owner or renter of the land in the farming operation

- (2) An interest in the agricultural products, commodities, or livestock produced by the farming operation; or
- (3) A member of a joint operation that either owns or rents land in the farming operation or has an interest in the agricultural products, commodities, or livestock produced by the farming operation
- b) Have control of the land for the term of the proposed contract period.
- c) Be in compliance with the provisions for protecting the interests of tenants and sharecroppers, including the provisions for sharing EQIP payments on a fair and equitable basis.

**Georgia Supplemental material for EQIP Longleaf Pine Initiative. Conservation practices within the conservation plan should focus on:**

1. Applicants enrolling  $\geq 10$  - acres.
2. Contracts will be for five years.
3. NRCS-Georgia has set a 75% payment rate limit for this Longleaf Pine Initiative .
4. Planting Montane Variety Longleaf Pines seedlings in Piedmont Counties (see map) where applicable.
5. Control of invasive/exotic species *see list in FOTG under Herbaceous Weed Control (315)*.
6. Plant Containerized Longleaf Pine seedlings for both Montane and Coastal Plain seedlings varieties.
7. Both Tree and Shrub Establishment (612) and Tree and Shrub Preparation (490) practice has a (50) ac maximum cap.
8. Prescribe Burning practice (338) has a (125) ac maximum cap.
9. It is recommended that at least (1) prescribe burn after planting be implemented within a contract.
10. Prescribe burning and pre-commercial thinning may only be used in existing longleaf pine stands.
11. Select Mountain (Montane) species as a priority in the following counties: Baldwin, Bank, Barrow, Bartow, Bibb, Butt, Carroll, Chattooga, Clarke, Clayton Cobb, Columbia, Coweta, Douglas, Elbert, Fayette, Floyd, Franklin, Fulton, Greene, Gordon, Hall, Hancock, Haralson, Hart, Harris, Heard, Jackson, Jones, Lamar, Lincoln, Madison, Meriwether, Newton, Oconee, Oglethorpe, McDuffie, Monroe, Morgan, Paulding, Pike, Polk, Putnam, Spalding, Stephens, Talbot, Taliaferro, Troup, Upson, Walton, Wilkes, and Warren.
12. See Map (Figure 1) for eligible counties for planting Containerized Montane Longleaf Pines. All other Containerized Longleaf Pines will be appropriate for areas south of the Piedmont southern limits.
13. *Advise landowners that Longleaf Pines have a difficult time surviving where soil PH exceeds 7. "On Old fields the recommended rate which Oust® is applied when PH exceeds 6.0 should be reduced, and Oust® should probably be avoided when PH exceeds 6.5 ( Longleaf Alliance)."*

***Approved and Required Land Uses for this Longleaf Initiative:***

<b>1. Forest</b>
<b>2. Grazed Forest</b>
<b>3. Wildlife</b>

***Approved Natural Resource Concerns:***

***Plant Conditions***

<b>a) Noxious and Invasive Plants</b>
<b>b) Productivity, Health and Vigor</b>
<b>c) T&amp;E Plant Species: Declining Species, Species of Concern</b>
<b>d) Threatened and Endangered Plant Species</b>

***Fish and Wildlife***

<b>a) Habitat Fragmentation</b>
<b>b) Inadequate Cover Shelter</b>
<b>c) Inadequate Food</b>
<b>d) T&amp;E Species: Declining Species, Species of Concerns</b>
<b>e) Threatened and Endangered Fish and Wildlife Species</b>

*Note: No additional resource concerns may be added or used to support this Initiative. At least one core practice should be implemented within the conservation plan to meet the objective.*

***Core Practices Required to be offered for this initiative:***

<b>Practice Name</b>	<b>Practice Code</b>
Forest Stand Improvement	666
Prescribe Burning	338
Restoration and Management of Rare and Declining Habitats	643
Tree/Shrub Establishment (Containerized Longleaf Seedlings only)	612

***Supporting Practices may be offered to support this initiative:***

<b>Practice Name</b>	<b>Practice Code</b>
Access Control	472
Brush Management	314
Conservation Cover	327
Early Successional Habitat Developing/Management	647
Fence	382
Firebreak	394
Forest Trails and Landings (Water Bars)	655

Herbaceous weed control	315
Intergrated Pest Management ( <i>Silvopasture Only</i> )	595
Silvopasture Establishment	381
Tree/Shrub Site Preparation	490
Upland Wildlife Habitat Management	645

***Conservation Activity Plans (CAPS)***

Practice Name	Practice Code
Forest Management Plan	106

**PROGRAM EVALUATION**

NRCS-Georgia uses the Habitat Suitability Index (HSI) as one potential gauge of effectiveness of the habitat improvements and conservation practices implemented. Please use the excel spreadsheet, Habitat Suitability Index (HIS), to calculate the change in HSI after EQIP practices are implemented. The Habitat Suitability Index (HIS) is located in GA FOTG; section III, Resource Management Systems by Land Use, select Pine Woodlands tab.

Figure-1

### Longleaf Pine Priority Counties Map

