

Apalachicola National Forest Longleaf Groundcover Planting

FY11 Accomplishments

In Fiscal Year 2011 the Apalachicola National Forest was funded to complete groundcover enhancement work on approximately 35 acres. This report describes the action taken to complete that work.

Longleaf pine restoration includes not only the forest canopy but the groundcover too. The condition of the groundcover in a stand of trees can affect the spread of fire across the stand. Wiregrass (*Aristida stricta*) is considered a “workhorse” species of the groundcover because of its ability to help fire, weather prescribed or wild, spread across the landscape. Fire is a major component of the Longleaf Pine Wiregrass ecosystem. Without fire the pine grasslands would eventually give way to hardwoods. The goal of groundcover enhancement is to supplement or increase the amount of burnable species in the groundcover. Planting wiregrass will help the continuity of fine fuels across these stands.

This year’s NFWV funding was used to grow and plant wiregrass seedlings on 35 acres. The Forest Service currently has a five year IDIQ contract with International Forest Company in Moultrie, Georgia to grow wiregrass seedlings. This year’s rate is \$126 per 1000 seedlings. Our ordered was for 170,000 wiregrass seedlings. The Forest Service has to provide the seed to grow the wiregrass seedlings. This seed was previously collected by the ANF Seed Bank. We shipped 100 pounds of seed to the Nursery. We also solicited a contract to plant the seedlings when ready in December. Express Forestry, LLC was the successful bidder at \$387 per acre. This planting will begin in December of 2011. Wiregrass will be planted on 3 x 3 foot spacing or 4840 seedlings per acre. This will finish the restoration process for these stands.

The timeline of the Longleaf restoration activities was as follows:

<u>Work Item</u>	<u>Date Complete</u>	<u>Cost/Ac</u>
Grow Longleaf Seedlings	Feb 2010	\$ 76/Ac
Prescribe Burn	Jan 2011	\$ 34/Ac
Plant Longleaf Seedlings	Feb 2011	\$ 120/Ac
Provide Wiregrass Seed to Grow	June 2011	\$ 100/Ac
Grow Wiregrass Seeding	June 2011	\$ 610/Ac
Herbicide Site Preparation	July 2011	\$ 65/Ac
Plant Wiregrass Seedlings	Dec 2011	\$ 387/Ac
Total Longleaf Restoration Cost		\$1392/Ac

Next year we will report longleaf and wiregrass survival on a per acre basis.



*Wiregrass Planting Area Compartment 205 stand 89
Prescribed Burn Jan 2011, Trees Planted Feb 2011*

Year Awarded: 2011

Project completion: 2011

Report number: 1 of 2

Expenditures:

FY11 NFWV: \$ 70,000

Partners/Contractors/Coop:

The Nature Conservancy

National Seed Lab

International Forest Company

Express Forestry, LLC

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