



## Longleaf Pine Restoration Grants Available to Landowners



The Alabama Division of Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries (WFF) is now accepting applications through its Landowner Incentive Program (LIP) to continue longleaf pine restoration efforts in Alabama. LIP funding is made possible through a partnership with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and is available to qualifying landowners for longleaf pine restoration on private lands.

Landowners are encouraged to submit applications to receive assistance with site preparation, seedlings, planting, native grass restoration and/or exotic control costs. This program is focused on longleaf pine ecosystem restoration for the benefit of wildlife species in greatest conservation need. Currently, applications are being accepted for 50/50 cost share on-site

preparation, containerized longleaf pine trees, and planting. All applications will undergo a competitive ranking process.

For an application and program information, contact Traci Wood at 334-353-0503. The deadline for LIP applications is March 1, 2013.

Eligibility requirements are that the property must have suitable soils for planting longleaf, be held under private ownership, have a 15-acre minimum for reforestation, and fall within the following counties: Barbour, Bibb, Bullock, Butler, Calhoun, Chambers, Chilton, Choctaw, Clarke, Clay, Cleburne, Coffee, Conecuh, Coosa, Covington, Crenshaw, Escambia, Geneva, Henry, Houston, Lee, Macon, Mobile, Monroe, Perry, Pike, Randolph, Russell, Shelby, St. Clair, Talladega, Tallapoosa, Tuscaloosa and Washington.

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## Prescribed Burning Season is Almost Here

Prescribed burning season is almost here. Prescribed fire is an important and extremely cost effective tool in forest management. Prescribe burns reduce hazardous fuels, prepare sites for seeding and planting, help in the management of competing vegetation, improve wildlife habitat, control insects and disease and enhance

a property's appearance.

However, prescribed



burning is a complex tool which should only be utilized by a certified burn manager after detailed planning is completed. An incomplete assessment of any factor in a plan can cause extensive damage to personal and public property and can cause damage that could lead to the death of desirable trees. Call Gary Butler to schedule a burn.

## Regeneration of Bottomland Hardwoods

Our last newsletter discussed bottomland hardwood management and species/site relationships. We will discuss the regeneration of bottomland hardwoods in this issue.

Successful regeneration of bottomland hardwoods requires careful and effective silvicultural planning including interpretation of site characteristics, selection of appropriate species and selection of appropriate regeneration methods.

Interpretation of site characteristics involves the evaluation of hydrology and soil characteristics. Hydrology includes when, frequency, duration and to what depth waters cover the site. All of these affect the sites suitability for bottomland hardwoods as well as which hardwood species will be

most productive on the site. Soil characteristics which affect the growth of bottomland hardwoods are fertility, texture and structure. These factors combined with topography and hydrology control soil moisture, soil aeration and nutrient availability. Soils suitable for bottomland hardwoods range from well-drained loams to poorly-drained clays. Even the well-drained sites tend to be moist and may be flooded during the dormant season. Winter flooding is helpful in that it replenishes the nutrient supply. However, it should be noted that many hardwoods cannot tolerate flooding during the growing season if it lasts longer than a few weeks.

The present and past use of a site is a good indication of whether a site is suitable for the

production of bottomland hardwoods. If a site is supporting desirable hardwoods, it is likely that the potential for regeneration to hardwood is good. If a site is prone to drought during the growing season, is sandy and lacking in fertility, it is unlikely that it will support a good stand of bottomland hardwoods.

The selection of the appropriate species for a site is extremely important in bottomland hardwood regeneration. Species selection is usually determined by soil type and hydrology because small differences in drainage and fertility will favor one species or species mix over another. The table on the opposite page includes information on species flood tolerance.

The selection of tree

The selection of tree species most often depends on the goals of the landowners in addition to site conditions. Oaks are valuable for commercial reasons and for wildlife, as are the various species of hickories. Other species such as ash and sweetgum may be desirable from a commercial standpoint but less favorable as far as wildlife is concerned. Local markets should also be considered when selecting a species to regenerate.

There are several methods of regeneration that may be employed to establish a new stand of bottomland hardwoods. Old abandoned fields can be planted in hardwood seedlings or direct seeded. Older, more mature or high graded stands can be clear cut, followed by site preparation including high shearing, tree injection or chain sawing all residual stems and

planting where needed. Group selection or patch clear cutting is also a viable option and may be desirable if wildlife is a major concern of the landowner. Patch clear cutting entails the clear cutting of 3 to 5 acres throughout the stand every 5 to 7 years until the entire stand is regenerated. Group selection involves the thinning of groups of trees every 5 to 7 years. The advantage of group selection is that trees with better potential for growth and production can be kept in the residual stand and grown to maturity. Epicormic branching can be a problem in patch clear cutting or group selection.

Once desirable regeneration is established, it may be necessary to release it from undesirable competition. This can be done by tree injection, spraying or chainsawing the stems

manually. The removal of unwanted midstory and understory vegetation will result in more light to the forest floor and the establishment of desirable species. This is particularly true in the case of many of the oak species.

The regeneration of bottomland hardwood stands is a complex and often expensive proposition. It requires careful planning as well as knowledge of the many aspects associated with the growing of bottomland hardwoods. Both of these are needed if bottomland hardwoods are to be successfully regenerated.

Source: Guide to Regeneration of Bottomland Hardwoods. US Department of Agriculture General Technical Report SE.76.

Continuous Flooding	
January - June	January - May
Cypress	Green Ash
Overcup Oak	Nuttall Oak
Water Hickory	Persimmon
Water Tupelo	Water Tupelo
Swamp Tupelo	Swamp Tupelo
	Red Maple

Periodic Flooding		
January - May	January-April	January - March
Sweetgum	Sawtooth Oak	Shumard Oak
Water Oak	Sycamore	Cherrybark Oak
Willow Oak	Cottonwood	Swamp Chestnut Oak
Nuttall Oak	Sweet Pecan	Nuttall Oak
Green Ash	Nuttall Oak	Green Ash
Swamp Tupelo	Green Ash	Swamp Tupelo
Red Maple	Swamp Tupelo	Red Maple
	Red Maple	

*We want to hear from you! Email your thoughts and requests to butlerandcoinc@bellsouth.net, fax them to (334)289-1972 or mail them to P.O. Box 88, Demopolis, Alabama 36732.*



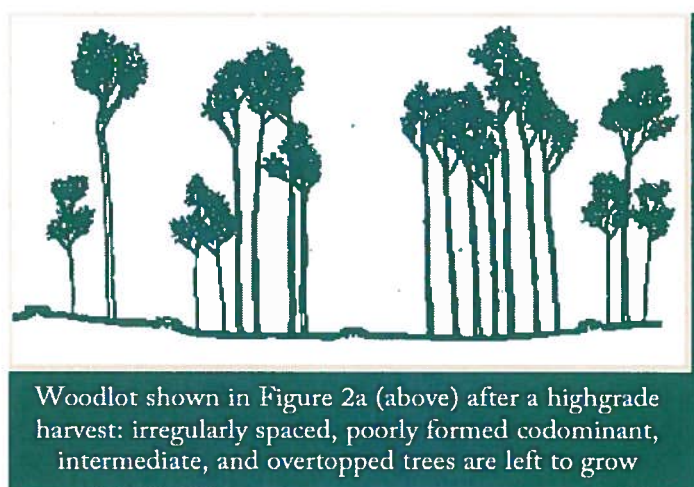
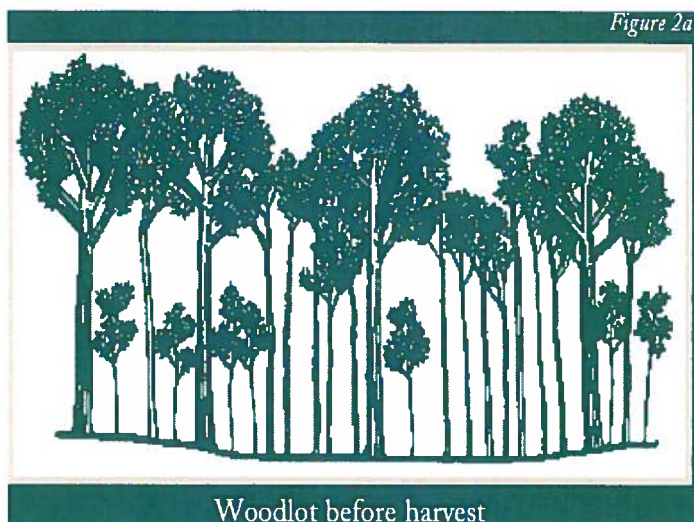
## What is High-Grading?

High-grading is defined as the removal of the best or most commercially valuable trees, leaving a residual stand of less valuable, less desirable, poor quality trees. It is often referred to as “cut the best and leave the rest”. High-grading results in the harvesting of the best, most valuable and most desirable trees in the stand at the time of harvesting. It gives little if any consideration to the residual stand.

The most often used method of high-grading is diameter limit cutting where all trees of a certain diameter class are harvested. This has been used in many hardwood stands with devastating results. A stand can also be high-graded by harvesting one species at a time. An example of this would be the removal of all large pine trees in a mostly pine stand.

High-grading often produces a poor quality stand that will eventually need to be clear cut and regenerated. Needless to say, high-grading should be avoided if at all possible.

Source: *Managing Forests on Private Lands in Alabama and the Southeast*. Alabama Forestry Association.



## Tornado Safe Room vs. Storm Shelter

Tornadoes can rip a house apart in a matter of seconds. When a tornado warning has been issued, people are urged to go into the safest room in their house. But a normal room in a house offers no guarantee of safety. Many homeowners are investing in either tornado rooms or storm shelters.

A tornado room (or safe room) is built inside your home, while a tornado shelter is separate

from the home and can either be built underground or above ground. Both rooms and shelters can protect you from winds up to 250 mph and from flying objects moving at 100 mph.

Tornado safe rooms are built with extra thick walls and ceilings and have been known to remain intact even when the rest of the house has been destroyed. Safe rooms should be

built in an area that is easy to get to. It should be anchored to the foundation so that it does not topple over. It should also be windowless and have a door that is as strong as the walls. FEMA estimates that costs for construction vary across the United States. The cost for constructing a safe room inside a new house, which can double as a master closet, bathroom or utility room, is between \$2,500

and \$6,000. In some high-risk areas, residents can get a rebate for installing a tornado safe room! While tornado safe rooms are generally safer than stand-alone storm shelters, they are also more expensive and take some time to build.

Standalone storm shel-



ters start at approximately \$2,600 for the smallest size (to comfortably fit 4 people). From there, the price increases with size. Compared to tornado safe rooms, storm shelters are easier (and quicker) to install. Plus, there is only minimal inconvenience during the construction phase. However, they are more



difficult to get to during an emergency, since the entrance is outside of your home. There are both above-ground storm shelters and underground storm shelters.

Carefully consider your needs and options before making your final purchase decision.



## Before You Build Your Safe Room

Before you hire a builder or roll up your own sleeves to install a safe room, start by obtaining the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) publication 320, [Taking Shelter From the Storm: Building A Safe Room Inside Your House](#). This free booklet includes construction plans that meet the National Performance Criteria for Tornado Shelters. Then consider the following:

- **The location** - The best place for a safe room is in the basement. If that's not possible, it should be in the interior of your home's first floor. If you

are unable to add a safe room within the confines of your house, build a separate room that is easily accessible from the house.

- **The size** - A tornado-safe room should have five square feet of space per person.
- **Your area's wind zone** - Look at FEMA's "Wind Zones in the United States" map to determine your area's wind zone. That will help you figure out how strong your safe room

should be.

- **Amenities** - All safe rooms should have first aid and emergency kits with at least the following items: medications you need, an emergency radio, batteries, a flashlight, basic tools, blankets, water, and snacks.
- **Legal requirements** - Be sure to get the proper permits and inspections needed before you begin construction. You can find more information on FEMA's website.



## You Might Face Tax-Filing Delay This Year



Congress's down-to-the-wire fiscal cliff deal on tax changes has delayed the IRS. It's now scrambling to create new tax forms and modify old ones to reflect the tax code changes.

As a result, the IRS announced on January 8 that its plans to open the 2013 filing season and begin processing

individual income tax returns on January 22 had been pushed back to January 30.

The announcement means that the vast majority of tax filers should be able to start filing tax returns starting Jan 30. However, at this time the IRS estimates that the remaining taxfilers will be unable to start filing until late February or into March because of the need for more extensive form and processing systems changes. This group includes people claiming residential energy credits, de-

preciation of property or general business credits.

The IRS hopes to begin accepting tax returns including these tax forms between late February and into March; a specific date will be announced in the near future.

For now, gather your paperwork, such as proof of any credits you're entitled to, so when the IRS is ready, you are, too.

## Featured Property



**333 acres, Tishabee:** Located in the SW portion of in Greene County. The tract features open areas, wildlife food plots, 2 lakes with piers, a duck pond, a slough and Cobb Creek which flows into the Tombigbee River. Improvements on the property include a 3 bedroom, 2 bath camphouse, 2 storage sheds (one with a walk-in cooler), and an equipment shed. The property has been intensely managed for timber and wildlife and is an excellent recreational tract presenting numerous opportunities for hunting and fishing. Sales price: \$950,000.00. Call Gary Butler for more information at 334-289-0051.



## Listings in West Central Alabama



**140 acres on Greene County Highway 117:** Near West Greene in the northwest portion of Greene County, Alabama. Forest stands consists of pine plantation recently treated with second thinning. Excellent timber investment and recreational property. Sales price: \$320,000.00. Call Gary at 334-217-0595.



**140 acres on YC Stone Road:** East central Perry County, Alabama. Premerchantable pine plantations and standing timber. Three wildlife food plots with shooting house. Good hunting and investment property. \$280,000.00. Call Gary at 334-217-0595.



**3469 County Road 19, Greensboro:** Three bedroom/two bath ranch-style home on 200 acres just north of Greensboro in Hale County. Truck shed, horse stable, three barns, four small shooting houses, one large shooting house, a water well and two five-acre lakes with a pier each are all featured on this great property listed at \$550,000.00! Owner is willing to sell the house and 2-5 acres separately. Call Gary at 334-217-0595 for more information.



**281 Phillips Street, Gallion:** Don't miss out on this one! House features 3 bedrooms/2.5 baths. Beautiful family room with vaulted ceilings! Amazing master bedroom suite! Study, formal dining room and a custom kitchen that features a great view of the lake. Relax in the great pool on hot summer days. Nice utility room. Room above garage is perfect for a teen or a potential mother-in-law's room. Located on 5.21 acres +/- . Offered at \$332,000.00! Call Barbara at 334-216-1225 to view!!!



**120 Cassimore Road, Greensboro:** Great location with 6 acres of pasture. Front lot fenced with rear lot fenced on 2 sides. Home recently upgraded with new roof in 07 and new heat pump in 06. In 09 installed vinyl siding, windows, rear deck, water heater, floor covering, remodeled baths, and painted

home. Large game room or 4th bedroom. If you want a good home with some privacy and pasture for horses or cattle, this is it. Priced at \$139,900. Call Jim Mayton at 334-507-8379 to view!

*Thinking about selling your property? Why not list it with Butler and Company? Call Gary at 334-289-0051 to discuss your options.*





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## Housing Market Update

Existing home sales decreased 1% to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 4.94 million in December from 4.99 million in November. This is 12.8% more than December 2011 sales.

Single-family home sales dropped 1.4% to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 4.35 million in December from 4.41 million in November, but are 11.5% above the 3.9 million-unit level in December 2011.

Existing condominium and co-op sales increased 1.7% at a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 590,000 in December and are 22.9% higher than the 3.9 million-unit pace one year ago.

Total housing inventory at the end of December fell 8.5% to 1.82 million existing homes available for sale, which represents a 4.4-month supply at the current sales pace, down from

a 4.8-month supply in November.

Building permits rose .3% in December to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 903,000. Builders broke ground on 954,000 homes, a 12.1% increase over November's totals.

Source: Department of Commerce and National Association of Realtors Press Releases

**We hope that you have enjoyed this newsletter, but if you haven't and wish to opt out of future issues, please send an email to [dawn@butlerandcompanyinc.com](mailto:dawn@butlerandcompanyinc.com) with your name or organization.**