

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services Announces
Longleaf Pine Incentives for Landowners**

TALLAHASSEE, FL –Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services Florida Forest Service is accepting applications now through June 27, 2014 for its Longleaf Pine Landowner Incentive Program which offers Florida’s non-industrial private landowners incentive payments for longleaf pine restoration.

“Longleaf pine forests once covered a vast range from Texas to Virginia, but have been reduced over time to accommodate other land uses,” said Commissioner Putnam. “These forests are highly valued for their resistance to damage by insects, disease, wildfire, and storms, and for their yield of high quality wood products, biological diversity, and scenic beauty.”

The program works to increase the acreage of healthy longleaf pine ecosystems in Florida by helping non-industrial private forest landowners to make the necessary investments required to establish and maintain longleaf pine ecosystems. Funding is provided through a grant and support by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, the Southern Company, USDA Forest Service, The Nature Conservancy, Natural Resource Conservation Service, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Program participants receive incentive payments for various land improvements completed including invasive species control, prescribed burning, longleaf planting, and other practices that improve longleaf pine ecosystems and associated wildlife habitat. The program is offered for private lands in Florida counties located west of the Apalachicola River and those near the Ocala and Osceola National Forests.

Interested applicants should visit their local Florida Forest Service office or visit www.floridaforestsERVICE.com for program requirements and procedures. Qualifying applicants will be evaluated and ranked for funding approval.

The Florida Forest Service manages over one million acres of public forest land while protecting over 24 million acres of homes, forestland, and natural resources.

For more information about the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, visit www.FreshFromFlorida.com or follow Commissioner Putnam on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), or [Google+](#).

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