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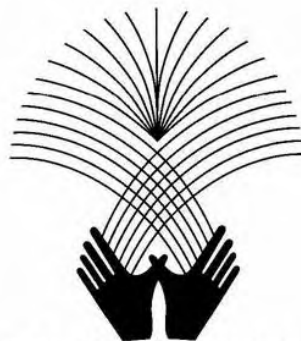


Longleaf Pine: *Making Dollar\$ and Sense*



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Hattiesburg, Mississippi



THE LONGLEAF ALLIANCE

www.longleafalliance.org



INSTRUCTING TOMORROW'S PRACTITIONERS TODAY: PRESCRIBED FIRE TRAINING IN UNIVERSITY NATURAL RESOURCE PROGRAMS

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Abstract: Currently, few opportunities exist for students in university natural resource programs to learn applied aspects of prescribed fire as a management tool. In the southeastern United States, fire is an ecological imperative for many coastal plain ecosystems and future natural resource management professionals need training in the use of prescribed fire as a management tool. The Joseph W. Jones Ecological Research Center, located in southwest Georgia, conducts basic and applied research on coastal plain ecosystems and has conservation as well as education programs as part of its mission. The Center is located at Ichauway, a 29,000 acre property that includes 18,000 acres of fire-dependent longleaf pine dominated forests. The Center has an active fire management program, burning over 10,000 acres annually. As part of its education program, a weeklong "Maymester" prescribed fire class is offered to upper-level undergraduate and graduate students. The course gives hands-on experience with all aspects of planning and implementation of prescribed fire as well as the ecological basis and historical uses of fire as a management tool. Instructors include representatives from the Jones Center, U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Georgia Forestry Commission, and the University of Georgia (UGA), and the course carries two semester-hour credits through UGA. Participants have included students in forestry and wildlife management from the UGA Warnell School of Forest Resources as well as conservation biology students from the Institute of Ecology. This course fills an important niche in the natural resource management curriculum, emphasizing both the science and the art of prescribed fire as a management tool.