



# The Longleaf Leader

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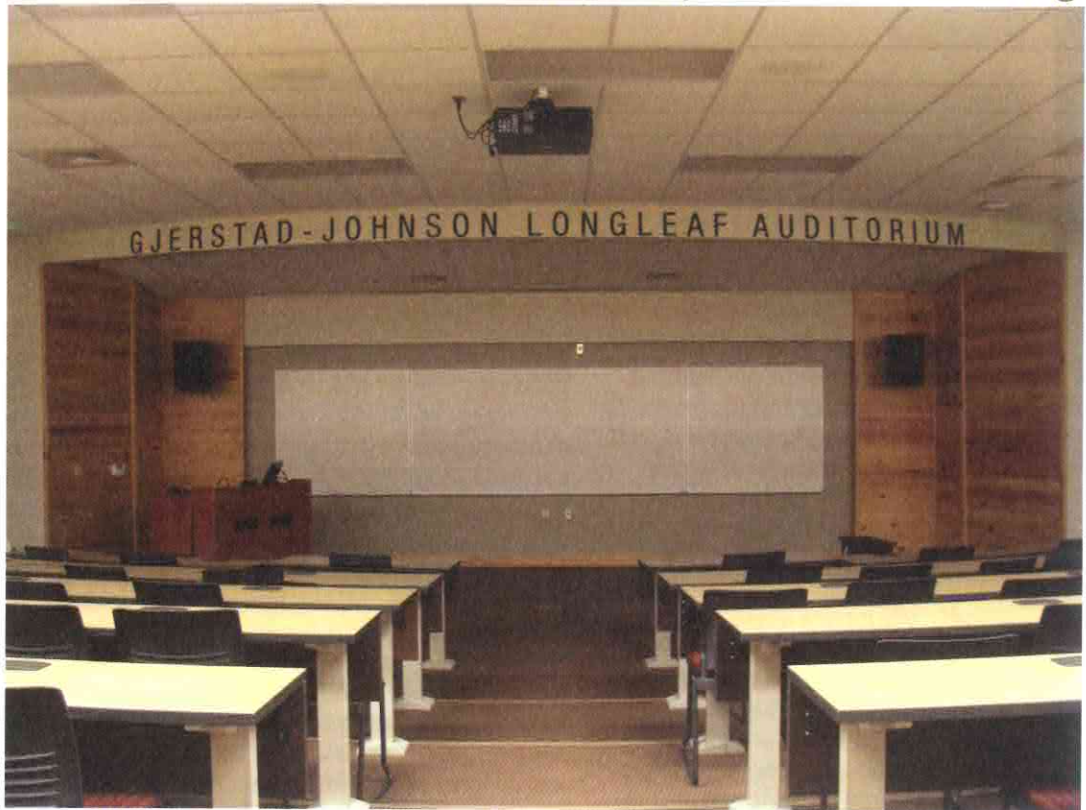
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## ALLIANCE FOUNDERS HONORED *by Ad Platt & Anne Rilling*



Gjerstad-Johnson Longleaf Auditorium at the SDFEC, photo by Heather Crozier

It is a rare event and a great pleasure when our normal busyness stops to honor individuals who made a positive difference in the world. And, it is uncommon to recognize these worthy individuals while they are still active and engaged. Statues are nice but by their nature they tend to focus on the past. How much better it is to designate a place in someone's honor that continues to advance their causes into the future. Since the spring issue of the Longleaf Leader went to press, we've witnessed two such events.



The first occasion came on April 10<sup>th</sup>, when the **Gjerstad-Johnson Longleaf Auditorium** was dedicated within the new Solon and Martha Dixon Foundation Learning Center at Auburn's Solon Dixon Forestry Education Center (SDFEC). Dr. Jim Shepard, Dean of Auburn School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences, and Char-

Auditorium dedication at the SDFEC (l-r: Charley Tarver, Dean Gjerstad, Rhett Johnson, Jim Shepard, and Dr. Timothy R. Boosinger); photo by Heather Crozier

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## Sandhills Longleaf Pine Conservation Partnership Update by *Wayne Harris (USFWS)*

The Sandhills Longleaf Pine Conservation Partnership (Partnership), the longleaf implementation team for the South Carolina Sandhills Focal Area in Chesterfield and Darlington Counties, is comprised of representatives from USFWS (Environmental Services and National Wildlife Refuge System), USDA-NRCS, USDA-FSA,

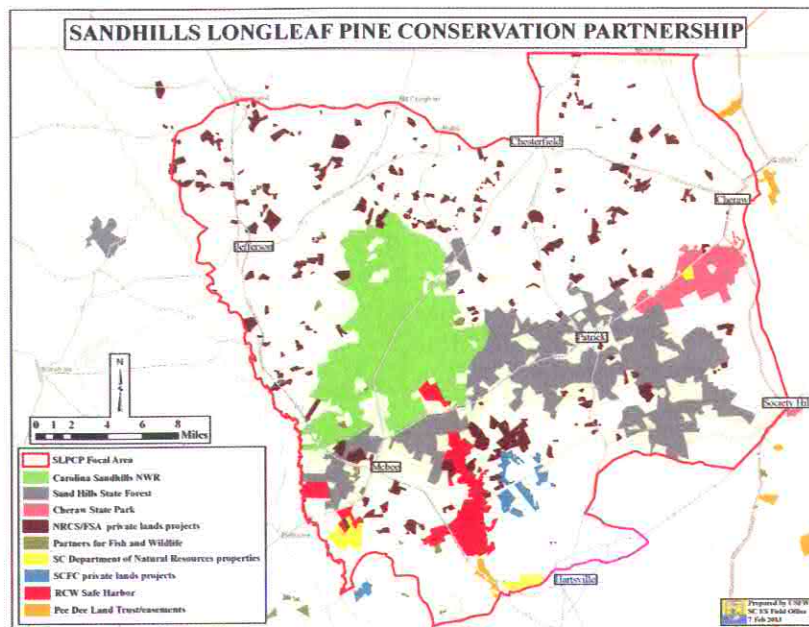
Chesterfield Soil and Water Conservation District, SC Forestry Commission (SCFC), SC DNR, SC Parks, Recreation and Tourism, Pee Dee Land Trust, and the Friends of Carolina Sandhills National Wildlife Refuge (CSNWR). Since formation of the Partnership about 3 years ago, the group has been making noticeable progress in promoting restoration of the local longleaf pine ecosystem. The focus of the Partnership is on providing technical assistance, financial assistance, and outreach and education to private landowners whose properties surround the CSNWR, Sand Hills State Forest, and Cheraw State Park and that have a desire to increase the quantity and quality of local longleaf pine habitats. The Partnership plans to continue promoting longleaf pine establishment and is working to develop practical strategies for managing previously established stands.

### Restoration

To date, well over 5,000 acres of private lands within the Focal Area have been converted from other forest types to longleaf pine through cost-share assistance. An estimated 2,200 acres of longleaf pine will be planted using cost-share assistance in late 2013 through early 2014.

### Outreach and education

Outreach and education are critical to the success of the Partnership. The goal is to educate landowners as much as practical so that they can make their own well-informed decisions about longleaf pine restoration and management. The Partnership received funding specifically for educational programs through



the 2012 NFWF award and the 2012 South Carolina Soil and Water Conservation Society grant. Fall field days were developed by the Partnership in October of both 2011 and 2012. Each of these field days attracted about 35 private landowners and land managers while four forestry consultants sponsored lunch. Two educational

events have already been conducted by the Partnership this year. First, a prescribed fire workshop was held April 16<sup>th</sup> 2013 at the Carolina Sandhills NWR in McBee. This event focused on educating landowners concerning the use and benefits of prescribed fire on their properties and the local landscape. Speakers from multiple Federal and State resource agencies had an audience of 40 individuals. The second educational opportunity of 2013 was held on May 14<sup>th</sup> in Chesterfield and was attended by 30 landowners and land managers. The Partnership made arrangement with SCFC to provide a special Certified Prescribed Fire Manager Course (CPFMC) for landowners in the Sandhills Focal Area. The CPFMC course is required by SCFC for individuals to receive a state issued prescribed fire manager certification number.



SC Sandhills Longleaf Restoration Site  
Photo by Wayne Harris, USFWS