



News Release

For more information, contact:
Lee Brown
478-751-3474
lbrown@gfc.state.ga.us
GaTrees.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE...OCTOBER 27, 2009

REFORESTATION BEGINS THROUGH A.R.R.A. GRANTS

The Georgia Forestry Commission (GFC) has embarked on a reforestation project made possible by funding from the 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). The first of five grants totaling \$9.7 million will provide for the planting of seedlings in a suburban Atlanta forest.

"This is the first contracted activity we've completed with an ARRA grant," said Lee Brown, GFC Grants Manager. "We have partnered with Chesnut Forestry, which has begun work in the Paulding Forest Wildlife Management Area in preparation for the planting of 70,000 longleaf pine seedlings." The Paulding Forest WMA is a 25,000 acre tract located in Paulding and Polk Counties west of Atlanta, near Dallas, Georgia.

During the first week of October, Chesnut Forestry performed an aerial application of herbicides to control unwanted hardwood sprouting and herbaceous growth on 115 acres in Paulding Forest, according to Brown. The herbicide application is the first step in the process of preparing to plant the seedlings in December.

Funded by the ARRA, the Regional Longleaf Pine Restoration Initiative project, administered by the GFC, will reestablish longleaf pines in the southeast United States. Longleaf pine forests are highly valued for their resistance to damage by insects, diseases, wildfire, and storms, and for their yield of high quality wood products, biological diversity, and scenic beauty.

Four other forestry-related ARRA grants will be administered in the months ahead as part of the ARRA plan to help stimulate the economy and benefit Georgia's environment. The funds will not replace or supplant state mandated GFC budget reductions, but can only be used for the creation of new, temporary positions in the forestry industry.

"These proposals will enhance GFC initiatives beyond what was possible under current austere budget conditions," said Robert Farris, Director of the Georgia Forestry Commission. "The work will have multiple benefits, including reducing the risk of catastrophic wildfire, fighting invasive plant species and reaching out to thousands of landowners who need updated forest management plans."

Funding for these five projects was provided by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Recovery Act). The U.S Department of Agriculture (USDA) is working to implement provisions of the Recovery Act to put Americans back to work and rejuvenate the nation's economy. The Recovery Act provided USDA with nearly \$28 billion in funding; of that, \$1.15 billion has been allocated to the Forest Service for project work in forest restoration, hazardous fuels reduction, construction and maintenance of facilities, trails and roads, green energy projects, and grants to states, tribes, and private landowners.

For more information about GFC-administered ARRA grants, visit GaTrees.org or call 1-800-GA-TREES.

#