



## AMERICAN FOREST FOUNDATION

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### American Forest Foundation:



- Solutions outlined for mitigation options focused on changing the behavior of landowners, foresters and loggers and leading to conservation of HCVs
- Specified risk linkages:
  - Cape Fear Arch CBA
  - Florida Panhandle CBA
  - Central & Southern Appalachian CBAs
  - Dusky Gopher Frog
  - Native Longleaf Pine Systems

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3

# AMERICAN FOREST FOUNDATION



## AFF SOLUTIONS FOR FSC SPECIFIED RISK MITIGATION

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# OVERVIEW

As part of its national risk assessment (NRA) published in 2018, the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) found several areas of specified risk in the US Southeast. To effectively mitigate these specified risks, and to impact positive conservation action on the ground, the American Forest Foundation (AFF) proposes to build a program to implement, monitor, and verify mitigation practices that would serve as a mechanism for verifying that forest feedstock from family-owned forests is compliant with FSC standards.

As the trusted and valued partner to family forest owners, as well as a broad range of organizations, including federal and state public agencies, private industry, and conservation organizations, AFF is uniquely and well-positioned to develop and administer on-the-ground practices and projects that forest product companies can use to mitigate specified risk as outlined in the FSC National Risk Assessment (NRA).

Through its network of family forest owners, forest professionals, and conservation organizations, AFF is able to provide measurable and credible mitigation that can effect actual change on the ground. This provides both forest product companies, as well as FSC, a greater assurance level and the opportunity for credible conservation impact.

## BY ENGAGING WITH AFF, FOREST PRODUCT COMPANIES CAN:

- Leverage AFF's vast network to work with conservation organizations, ATFS network, state agencies and more.
- Pay for the "right size" of risk mitigation as appropriate given the size and location of the company's fiber procurement area.
- Get more for the money: risk mitigation, landowner engagement, measurable impact.

The intent for much of the guidance outlined in the Controlled Wood FSC US National Risk Assessment: Guidance for Mitigation Options is to change the behavior of landowners, foresters and loggers, such that their activities lead to **improved or enhanced conservation of forests including High Conservation Value (HCV) forests**. AFF's "Landowner Journey" highlights how a landowner can move from being unengaged with regard to sustainable forest management to consistently and sustainably stewarding their land.

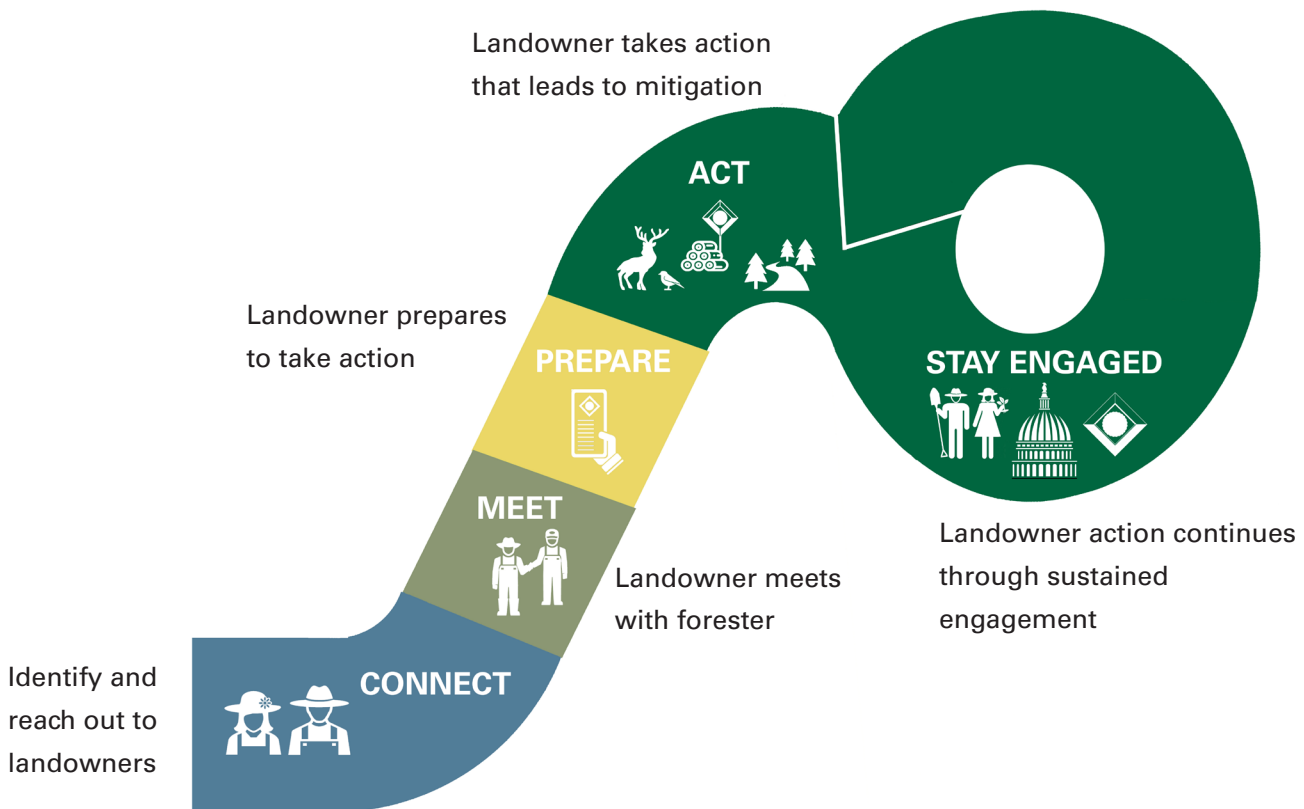
# EFFECTIVE RISK MITIGATION REQUIRES TRUE LANDOWNER ENGAGEMENT

To meet the guidance outlined by FSC around activities on the ground, programs should focus on the **Connect, Meet, Prepare and Act** steps in the landowner journey, where the landowners are taking actions on the ground that directly benefit the conservation outcomes needed to mitigate risk. This proposal applies this journey to actionable, measurable activities that a company can do. Risk mitigation will be measured in ACRES.



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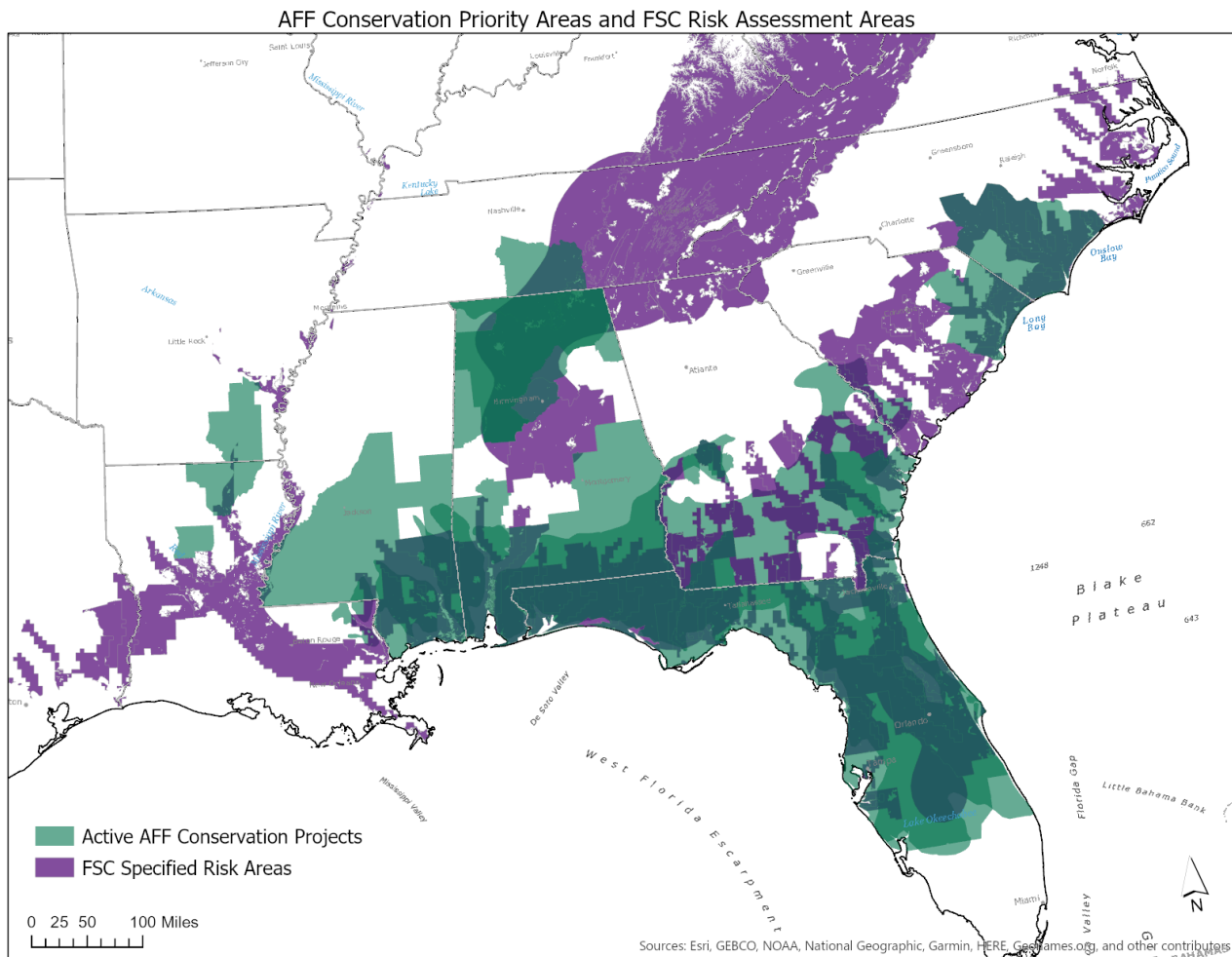
## LANDOWNER JOURNEY



**AFF OFFERS CONSERVATION INITIATIVES AND EDUCATION & OUTREACH MITIGATION OPTIONS FOR THESE AREAS OF SPECIFIED RISK:**

- Cape Fear Arch CBA
- Florida Panhandle CBA
- Southern Appalachian CBA
- Central Appalachian CBA
- Dusky Gopher Frog
- Native Longleaf Pine Systems

**OVERLAP OF AFF CONSERVATION PRIORITY AREAS AND AREAS OF SPECIFIED RISK IN THE FSC NRA**



## EXAMPLE OF AFF RISK MITIGATION PROJECT: NATIVE LONGLEAF PINE SYSTEMS

**Requires 3-year commitment** to mitigate specific risk in a way that moves landowners through the journey to action on the ground.

Landowner activities on the ground could include:

- BMPs to protect soil and wetlands
- Prescribed burning
- Understory restoration with native plants: prescribed burning to enhance understory vegetation
- Restoration of longleaf pine

### YEAR 1

- **CONNECT** with landowners and recruit them to join the program.
- Landowners agree to conduct forest management practices for longleaf forest ecosystem.
- Costs include:
  - Developing and/or implementing the AFF Landscape Management Plan
  - Setting up WoodsCamp (online customer relationship management (CRM) tool to connect with landowners)
  - Identifying and training foresters to conduct an initial meeting with landowners to promote and report on listed practices
  - Outreach program administration
  - Promotional materials and events (if necessarily/not already covered by existing project).
- Metrics:
  - The number of landowners who respond and engage as a result of the connection.

### YEAR 2

- Foresters **MEET** with landowners, make recommendations for activities related to longleaf restoration on their land, and landowners **PREPARE** to complete those activities.
- Costs include:
  - Forester capacity/technical assistance
  - Contracting with landowners
  - Outreach program administration: including legal agreements with landowners
  - Workshops/trainings
- Metrics:
  - Number of landowners who meet with a forester
  - Number of landowners who apply for cost-share
  - Number of landowners who commit to action



## YEAR 3

- Landowners **ACT** on implementing activities that lead to longleaf stands that are maintained, restored, established.
- Costs include:
  - Monitoring/verification/reporting
  - Landowners assistance (if applicable)
  - Additional activities needed to maintain longleaf over time
- Metrics:
  - The number of acres improved

## MONITORING OF RISK MITIGATION

- Using the AFF CRM tool, track landowners in the project area for metrics:
- **CONNECT METRICS**
  - # landowners reached
  - # landowners/acres responded
- **MEET**
  - # landowners/acres meet with a forester
- **PREPARE**
  - # landowners/acres commit to taking action
  - # landowners/acres attended preparation workshops
  - # landowners/acres hired a contractor
  - # landowners/acres applied for cost-share
- **ACT**
  - # landowners/acres signed cost-share contracts
  - # landowners/acres completed action
  - # acres of habitat improvement for species

