Southeast Longleaf Ecosystem Occurrences (LEO) Geodatabase - FAQs

Q: What is this project?

The project's primary goal is to develop a shareable GIS database of documented longleaf pine locations and ecological conditions across the range. The first phase includes database design, gathering and integrating existing longleaf pine occurrence data from many different sources across the range. The second phase includes identifying and prioritizing data gaps for field assessment, developing a field data collection protocol, mobile app and training guide for field staff. The field efforts will be in focal Longleaf Implementation Team areas (LITs) within the range of gopher tortoise. The final phase includes integration of the new field data and development of a web map application.

Q: What is the purpose?

The resulting database will provide partners with the most comprehensive dataset available for longleaf pine acres and condition. This will enable partners to view and analyze standardized longleaf data for reporting and map production at multiple scales – local, statewide and range-wide. The database will be useful in future conservation and cost-share planning efforts and in tracking progress in conservation and restoration efforts through time.

Q: Will my data be available to the public?

Original data files received from partners will not be shared with anyone else. We will use polygon and point features (boundaries and locations) and vegetation attributes of your data to inform the LEO database. The source of data that informs the LEO database will be credited. See "*How will data be credited?*" below.

Q. What if I don't want my data to be public?

We hope participants will see the benefit of full data sharing, but we have the ability to maintain privacy within the database. If requested, we can flag data as restricted and not available for public display or distribution. Restricted data will be used by us for general reporting purposes (acres range-wide, or state-wide for example) but will not be displayed or included in the shareable geodatabase.

Q. How will you use my data?

We store your original file on our secure in-house server. When we are ready to examine your dataset, we will contact you to ensure we understand your data content and document it as you specify.

Data we may use in the LEO database include: point/polygon location, polygon boundary, attributes pertaining to longleaf ecosystem vegetation at that location, and the data source (the name of the original data provider and the original file date). Points and polygons will help us identify longleaf or potential longleaf locations and delineate LEO polygons. Attribute values for vegetation will be cross-walked into standardized LEO database categories for longleaf presence and ecosystem condition. The data source is tracked along with these data in LEO.

Q. Will my data be altered in any way?

Your original data does not change. It is yours. To use your data in the LEO database, we may need to crosswalk your original data values for an attribute to a comparable attribute in the LEO database. For example, the LEO database will include a standardized condition attribute for shrub cover with values of "maintain", "improve", or

"restore." Your original "Tall shrub cover" value of "65%" will will be crosswalked into the standardized condition attribute for LEO.

The LEO database may also reflect location in a more general way than you provided it. For example, the attributes associated with an original point feature may be extrapolated to a polygon in the database. LEO polygons are intended to represent uniform conditions at a stand scale as much as possible.

Q: How will data be credited?

The original data source is tracked along with the data. The original data source appears as an attribute in the database tables. All sources will be credited in all reporting documents and internet pages. Providers are welcome to specify how their data will be named or described.

Q: How is the geodatabase connected to NRCS/U.S. Endowment funding for ground-truthing in priority landscapes?

Working with our partners, we will develop the field protocol, data collection app, training guide, and a set of polygons for field surveys. The field surveys will be conducted by others, to be determined, with funding expected from NRCS as a separate component of this project. The results of the field surveys will be integrated into the LEO database.

Q: How is this project related to the LIT road map & prioritization?

The LEO database is complementary to the LIT road map. Although some of the same initial GIS layers will be or have been pulled together for both LEO and the LIT prioritization efforts, LEO will serve as a central repository for this information going forward. In addition, as we continue to mine existing data and add new information from field assessments, the LEO project should help inform further LIT planning and prioritization.

Q: How is this project related to other ongoing longleaf mapping and assessment, especially remote sensing efforts?

This project will integrate data from multiple sources, including other longleaf pine mapping and assessment projects, into a single system for display and summary of longleaf occurrence and condition. Longleaf pine occurrence will be reported in the LEO database; however, remote-sensing analyses will help us identify and prioritize sites for further field assessment based on the likelihood of longleaf presence. Remote-sensing may also help fill gaps in condition where ground-truthed information is absent. On the flip side, data from the LEO project could be used to inform and improve remotely-sensed datasets.

Q: Is there an example of the geodatabase?

The LEO database will be modeled upon the Florida Longleaf Pine Ecosystem Geodatabase (LPEGDB) developed by the Florida Forest Service and FNAI. A description of this effort and a link to a webmap of the LPEGDB are here: http://www.fnai.org/longleafGDB.cfm .

Q: What type of database is being developed?

The data will be stored and distributed as an ESRI File Geodatabase. The primary dataset planned for public release is a polygon feature class with attributes related to longleaf occurrence and ecological condition.