Cherokee Foothills Joint Chiefs' Project

"A multi-state collaborative of natural resource managers working together to reduce hazardous fuels and restore native species and habitats within the project area."















Background: Joint Chiefs' Landscape Restoration Partnership



- A partnership between the two USDA agencies
- Focused on an "All Lands" approach to:
 - Improving forest health
 - Reducing wildfire threats to communities and landowners
 - Protecting water quality
 - Enhancing wildlife habitat
- Beginning in 2014, each year new three-year projects are selected
- In 2017, \$10 million went to 10 new projects, and \$22 million went to 26 active projects.

Overview: Cherokee Foothills Joint Chiefs' Project



- Approved in 2016
- Tiered to complimentary "collaborative" efforts such as:
 - Southern Blue Ridge FLN
 - Chestatee-Chattahoochee RC&D
- Includes "all lands" in two states (GA and SC)

Cherokee Foothills Fire Adapted Landscape Restoration Project The Nature Conservancy Meminn Project Area Chattahoochee/Sumter NF Buffer Pisgah NF **Protected Land** Federal Land Bradley Native American Land NC Cherokee NF State Land Nantahala NF Local Government Land Private Conservation Lands 25 Mi Picken Whitfied SC Easley 25 Km Chattahoochee NF Sumter NF NF = National Forest NP = National Park Service Protected Land Data source = Protected Areas Database of the United States - 2010 Lumpkin (http://www.protectedlands.net/padus/) Gordon Stephens Pickens Hall Banks rranklin For swffi 985 Sugar Jackson Woodstock Buford **Project Area** Elb Madison Alpharetta Location Suwanee Roswell Kennesaw Duluth Gwinnett Sandy Copyright: @2013 Esri, Marietta DeLorme, NAVTEQ Springs Athens Map by S. Gottlieb Powder. Lilbum Paulding. myrna The Nature Conservancy Springs Oglethorpe Snellville Atlanta, GA Tucker Mableton Sources: Esri, DeLorme, USGS, NPS, Sources: Esri, USGS, NOAS October 2015

Overview: Cherokee Foothills Joint Chiefs' Project



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- Tiered to complimentary "collaborative" efforts such as:
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- Includes "all lands" in two states (GA and SC)
- A diverse group of partners working across state lines and jurisdictional boundaries



USDAFS - CONF and FMS NF

NRCS-GA and SC Field Offices

TNC – GA and SC Chapters

Georgia Forestry Commission

South Carolina Forestry Commission

South Carolina State Parks

Chestatee-Chattahoochee RC&D

Georgia Plant Conservation Alliance

Clemson/SRS/CAFMS

Project Goals and Objectives



- Demonstrate a true "all lands" approach in restoring fire adapted communities at the landscape scale
- Restore and maintain rare and declining species habitats by increasing the use of Rx fire and mechanical treatments
- Reduce priority NNIS populations by increasing the use of herbicide applications
- Expand wildfire education, outreach and mitigation programs for citizens living in the WUI

Introducing Brian Schaffler



2016 Funding



- NRCS EQIP Financial & Technical Assistance Funds: \$112,510
- FS-Hazardous Fuels & Natural Resources: \$346,250
- FS-State and Private Forestry: \$187,000
- Total: \$645,760

2017 Funding



- NRCS EQIP Financial & Technical Assistance Funds: \$134,000
- FS-Hazardous Fuels & Natural Resources: \$442,500
- Total: \$576,500



- Prescribed Burning (Fed lands): 20,489 acres
- Participating Agreement with TNC: 2 year
- Mechanical Treatments (Fed lands): 357 acres
- Herbicide Treatments (Fed lands): 75 acres
- EQIP Contracts Obligated: 8
- New Conservation Plans: 8
- Prescribed Burning (Non-Fed): 4,403 acres
- Fire Breaks: 39,040 feet
- Tree Planting: 81 acres



- Site Preparation: 81 acres
- Forest Stand Improvement: 51 acres
- Brush Management: 726 acres
- Prescribed Fire Plans: 5 Plans
- Community Wildfire Protection Plans: 1 Countywide CWPP (Oconee)



- Obtained WO Fuels funding to supplement Joint Chief's funding: \$750,000
- 1. Purchase Mastication Equipment
- 2. RX Burning
- TNC Agreement for RX Burn Module (3 years)
- Prescribed Burning (Fed lands):
 5,700 acres
- Cross Boundary Prescribed Burning



- NNIS and Mechanical woodland creation contracts on 775 acres.
- Wildfires, Wildfires

Future Opportunities



- Think Big. Expand? More Partners?
- Pursue funding sources
- Agreements
- Cross Boundary work-Tip of the iceberg