

stands on the Anderson Springs and Mill Creek South tracts totaling 34 acres. TRSF also submitted another NWTF project proposal for the removal of hardwoods and hardwood sprouts on 56 acres of planted longleaf pines on the Mill Creek South Tract. If funding is approved the work will take place during the FY 2019-2020.

FFS staff secured funding through FWC to contract some “rough woods” mowing of 82 acres on Anderson Springs and Mill Creek South tracts, all within existing longleaf pine plantations. In addition, FFS staff submitted an application through the Prescribed Fire Enhancement Program (PFEP) and was approved for \$8,740 in funding to conduct a similar project on the Chitty Bend East Tract. Specifically, this involved using a skid steer type tractor with a forestry attachment to mow down young hardwoods and hardwood sprouts in an existing 103-acre longleaf pine plantation. For both projects, the purpose is to help control hardwoods in areas where prescribed fire alone has not done so effectively.

The operation was a success in reducing the amount of encroaching hardwoods. FFS staff plans to treat with herbicide the residual hardwood sprouts within the treatment area and prescribed burn the stand in the winter 2019-2020. Another PFEP application was submitted and is pending approval for similar type work on the Ellaville Tract during the upcoming FY 2019-2020.

Maintaining the state forest for the public to enjoy outdoor-based recreation continues to be an important goal for the TRSF staff. This year there were an estimated 42,690 day-use visitors, 559 overnight users, 24 special use permits issued, and 3 horseback riding events held. To provide a favorable experience to users, FFS maintains numerous parking areas, 20 recreational sites and 47 miles of hiking, horseback riding, and bicycle trails. Last year TRSF mowed or disked approximately 70 miles of road and road shoulders to provide better access within the state forest.

An important part of land maintenance is the continual clearing and marking of the perimeter boundaries. This allows the public and adjacent landowners to know and respect where TRSF property boundaries are located. This year TRSF re-marked the Chitty Bend West boundary.

Another maintenance activity requiring constant vigilance is the upkeep of cables and gates on the state forest. These are used exclusively to keep motor vehicle traffic off the state forest trails, service roads and environmentally sensitive areas. Other woods roads are maintained and opened to provide public access. This year six cables were replaced with manual, powder-coated steel, swing gates, as well as two galvanized steel farm gates.

Inmate labor is an important part of the general maintenance of recreation site parking areas, roads, kiosks, gates, trails, and numerous other tasks. This year 4,536 hours of inmate labor were logged on TRSF (District-owned). Considering current staff levels, the DOC Inmate Supervisor and inmate crew is an invaluable asset to the maintenance and