

# Long Leaf Pine

## *Pinus palustris*

Once dominating the southern pine forests, Long Leaf Pine now represents less than 3% of these forests. Extensive logging of these trees in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries has essentially reduced the population of this species to an endangered state. The trees in this park are an attempt by Master Naturalists to reestablish the species.

The young pine stays in a grass or shrub stage for years and loses out to faster growing pines such as the Loblolly pine when competing for habitat.

In established Long Leaf pine forests, a ground covering of dry pine needles encourages fast, hot fires that do not damage the tree but reduce competition from other trees and plants.

The pine needles grow up to 14 inches and are prized for basket weaving.



This sign provided by Polk County Fresh Water Supply District #2