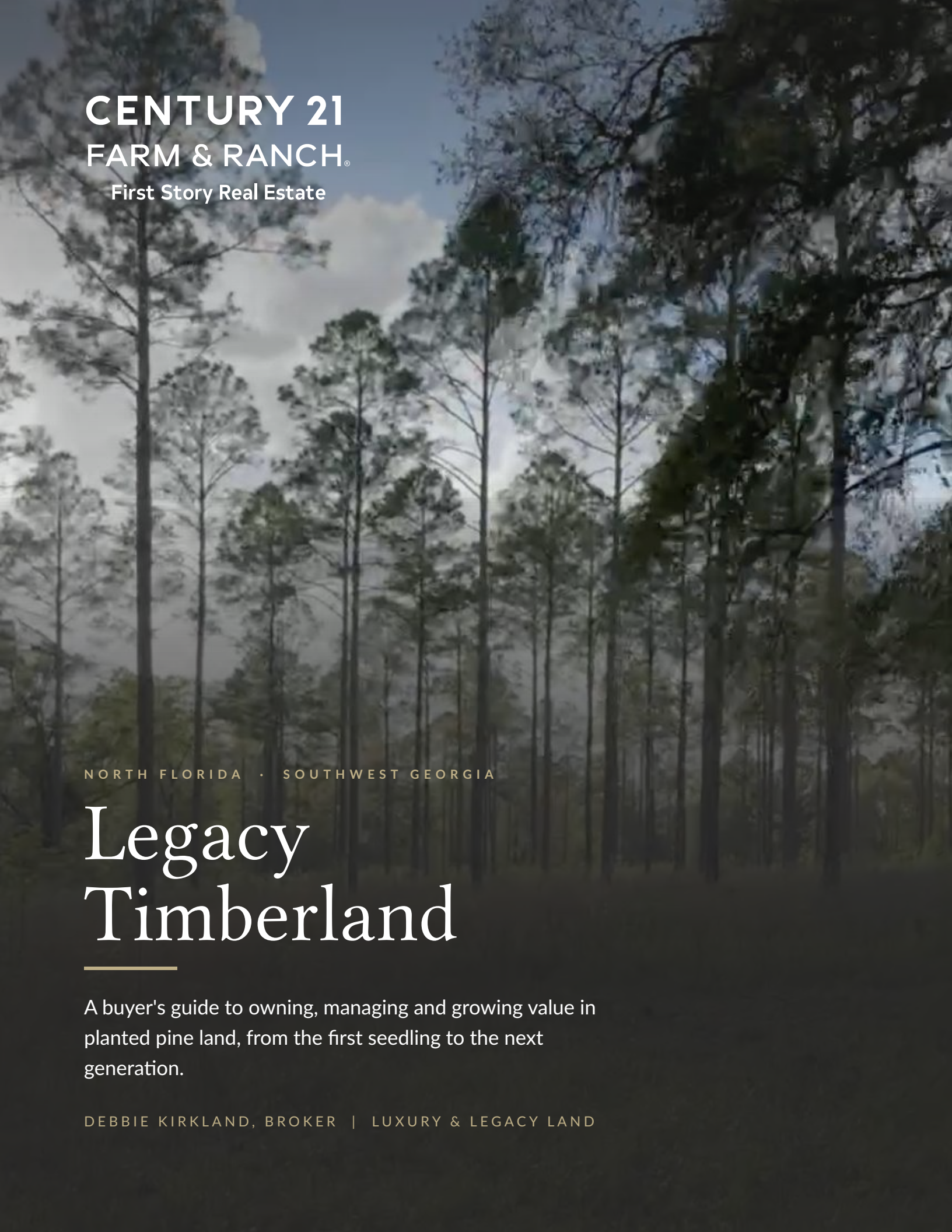


CENTURY 21
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NORTH FLORIDA · SOUTHWEST GEORGIA

# Legacy Timberland

A buyer's guide to owning, managing and growing value in planted pine land, from the first seedling to the next generation.

DEBBIE KIRKLAND, BROKER | LUXURY & LEGACY LAND



WHY A LAND SPECIALIST

# Land is not a house. It is your legacy. It deserves understanding of a specialist.

Timberland and agricultural property are bought and sold on very different terms than residential real estate. The value is in the soil, the water, the stand of trees, the road frontage, the hunting, the tax treatment, and the long-term plan. A farm and land specialist reads those layers and translates them into price, risk and opportunity.

As a Luxury & Legacy land broker, my focus is helping families and investors buy property that performs today and endures for the next generation, whether that is a working pine plantation, a quail plantation, or a riverfront retreat.

## What you gain

- **Timber valuation insight** – stand age, species, stocking and merchantable volume, verified with a licensed forester's cruise.
- **Due diligence** – surveys, wetlands, easements, access, mineral and timber rights, and soils.
- **Program knowledge** – agricultural classification, conservation easements and cost-share options.
- **Legacy planning** – structuring purchases with estate, recreation and income goals in mind.
- **Trusted network** – foresters, loggers, surveyors, lenders and attorneys across the region.

> **The legacy idea:** a well-managed pine stand is a living asset. It can generate periodic income from thinnings, provide wildlife habitat and recreation, and still be growing in value when it passes to your children.

KNOW YOUR TREES

# The pines of North Florida & Southwest Georgia

The species planted on a tract shapes its growth rate, its markets, its fire management and its look. Four southern yellow pines dominate this region.

| SPECIES | CHARACTER | VALUE & MARKETS |
|---|---|---|
| Loblolly *Pinus taeda* | Fastest early growth; the most widely planted pine in the South. Prefers moister, better soils. | Strong pulpwood, chip-n-saw and sawtimber markets. Short rotations (25–35 yrs) and improved genetics maximize yield. |
| Slash *Pinus elliottii* | Native to the Coastal Plain; tolerates wet, sandy flatwoods. Common in North Florida. | Sawtimber, poles and pulp; also pine straw and historically naval stores. Rotations 25–40 yrs. |
| Longleaf *Pinus palustris* | The iconic, fire-adapted native pine of the region's plantations. Slow "grass stage" start, then very long-lived. | Premium poles and high-grade sawtimber, valuable pine straw, top-tier quail and wildlife habitat, high aesthetic and resale appeal. Strong resistance to fire, wind, insects and disease. Rotations 40–80+ yrs. |
| Shortleaf *Pinus echinata* | Found more in upland areas to the north; less common here. | Quality sawtimber; mainly a restoration and diversity species. |

*Rotation lengths are typical ranges and vary with site, goals and markets. Current stumpage prices are tracked regionally by Timber Mart-South.*



*A mature, open pine stand with a healthy grass understory.*

**Products by size**

**Pulpwood** – smallest diameters, paper & fiber

**Chip-n-saw** – mid size, small lumber

**Sawtimber** – large logs, highest value per ton

**Poles** – straight, premium utility poles

**Pine straw** – recurring income from longleaf & slash

# The maintenance protocol

## Prescribed fire

Controlled burning every 2–4 years (once trees are large enough) reduces fuel and wildfire risk, controls hardwood competition, recycles nutrients and opens the understory for quail, deer and turkey. Burns should be planned and conducted by certified burn managers under a state authorization.

## Competition control

Site preparation and targeted herbicide in the first years keep hardwoods and brush from shading young pines. Mowing or roller chopping maintains firebreaks and roads.

## Fertilization

Soil and foliar testing guide fertilizer, often applied at planting and after thinning, to accelerate growth on responsive sites.

## Health monitoring

Watch for southern pine beetle, Ips beetles, fusiform rust and annosus root rot. Thinning and fire keep stands vigorous and less susceptible.

## Roads, lines & records

Maintain boundary lines, firebreaks, culverts and roads, and keep a written forest management plan, inventory and harvest records for taxes and resale.



*A prescribed burn moving through the understory.*



*Pines along a pond after a burn, a clean, open stand.*



*Routine maintenance keeps lanes and firebreaks open.*



THINNING & HARVESTING

# Grow value, then capture it

## Recommended thinning

**First thinning (age 12–18):** removes about a third to half of the trees, often every fifth or seventh row plus selection, yielding mostly pulpwood. The remaining trees gain light and room to grow.

**Second thinning (age 18–25):** removes smaller, poorer-formed trees, producing pulpwood and chip-n-saw while concentrating growth on the best stems.

**Target:** a thinned stand typically carries about 50–80 sq. ft. of basal area per acre, as recommended by your forester.

## Final harvest

Clearcut or regeneration harvest typically comes at age 25–35 for loblolly and slash, and later for longleaf, when trees reach sawtimber size and markets are favorable.

## Best practices for sellers

- Hire a consulting forester to cruise, mark and market timber.
- Sell by sealed bid to multiple buyers.
- Use a written timber sale contract with BMP, cleanup and insurance terms.
- Follow state Silviculture BMPs to protect streams and wetlands.
- Consult a tax advisor on timber basis and capital gains treatment.

THE PINE ROTATION

# From seedling to legacy

A typical planted loblolly or slash pine cycle. Longleaf follows the same path on a longer, more fire-driven schedule.

**Yr 0 — Prep**

## Site Preparation

Harvest cleanup, chopping or shearing, herbicide, burn and bedding on wet sites. Order improved seedlings early.

**Yr 0–1 — Plant**

## Planting

Plant December–February, roughly 450–700 trees per acre (longleaf often containerized). Check survival after the first growing season.

**Yr 1–5 — Establish**

## Establishment & Weed Control

Herbaceous and woody competition control, fertilization as needed, firebreak and road maintenance.

**Yr 5–12 — Grow**

## Crown Closure & First Burns

Begin prescribed fire once trees can tolerate it; monitor pests and disease; maintain lines.

**Yr 12–18 — Thin**

## First Thinning

Row and selection thinning; first income, mostly pulpwood. Optional post-thin fertilizer.

**Yr 18–25 — Thin**

## Second Thinning

Release the best trees; pulpwood and chip-n-saw income. Continue a 2–4 year burn cycle.

**Yr 25–35+ — Harvest**

## Final Harvest

Sawtimber and poles at peak value. Market by sealed bid through a consulting forester.

**Repeat — Replant**

## Replanting & the Next Generation

Reforest within one to two years, choosing species and genetics to fit the site and the family's legacy goals.

FOR BUYERS

# Buying timber land in North Florida & South Georgia

## 01

### Define your goals

Income, recreation, hunting, conservation, a family retreat, or a blend. Your goals drive species, stand age and the right property.

## 02

### Get a timber cruise

A licensed forester estimates volume and value by product. On many tracts, standing timber is a meaningful share of the price.

## 03

### Study the land

Soils, site index, wetlands and flood zones, access and road frontage, water features, and any existing timber leases or hunting leases.

## 04

### Review taxes & programs

Florida Greenbelt agricultural classification, Georgia CUVA and FLPA conservation programs, and federal cost-share can significantly affect holding costs.

## 05

### Finance with a land lender

Farm Credit and agricultural lenders understand timber collateral and often offer longer terms than conventional banks.

## 06

### Plan for the long term

Put a forest management plan in place and consider entity structure, easements and estate planning to protect the legacy.

> **Region at a glance:** the Red Hills between Tallahassee and Thomasville is one of the country's best-known longleaf and quail plantation landscapes, while the broader Coastal Plain offers productive soils, strong timber mill markets and a long growing season.

# Land management, water & agricultural resources

## Forestry & Land Management

**Florida Forest Service (FDACS)** – county foresters, management plans, burn authorizations, BMPs and wildfire help. fdacs.gov

**Georgia Forestry Commission** – landowner assistance, seedlings, burn permits, forest health. gatrees.org

**UF/IFAS Extension & School of Forest, Fisheries & Geomatics** – research-based forestry and agriculture guidance. sfrc.ifas.ufl.edu

**UGA Warnell School & UGA Extension** – Georgia forestry publications and county agents. extension.uga.edu

**Tall Timbers** – Red Hills fire ecology, quail research and conservation easements. talltimbers.org

**Florida & Georgia Forestry Associations** – landowner advocacy and education. floridaforest.org · gfagrow.org

**Timber Mart-South** – quarterly southern stumpage price reports. timbermart-south.com

**Longleaf Alliance** – longleaf restoration guidance. longleafalliance.org

## Water Management

**Suwannee River WMD** – north-central Florida water use permits and springs protection. mysuwanneeriver.com

**Northwest Florida WMD** – Panhandle permitting, including Tallahassee and the Apalachicola basin. nwfwater.com

**St. Johns River WMD** – northeast Florida water permits and agricultural cost-share. sjrwmd.com

**Georgia EPD – Watershed Protection Branch** – agricultural water withdrawal permits in Georgia. epd.georgia.gov

## Agricultural Programs & Services

**USDA NRCS** – EQIP and CSP cost-share for tree planting, burning and conservation practices. nrcs.usda.gov

**USDA Farm Service Agency** – farm loans, CRP and disaster programs. fsa.usda.gov

**FDACS Office of Agricultural Water Policy** – Florida agricultural BMP enrollment and cost-share. fdacs.gov

**Georgia Dept. of Agriculture** – programs, licensing and market services. agr.georgia.gov

**Florida Greenbelt (County Property Appraiser)** – agricultural classification that can lower property taxes on bona fide timber and farm use. floridarevenue.com

**Georgia CUVA & FLPA** – conservation-use assessment programs administered by county tax assessors. dor.georgia.gov

**Florida Rural & Family Lands Protection Program** – purchase of agricultural conservation easements. fdacs.gov

**Farm Credit (Southwest Georgia, Florida & North Florida associations)** – land, timber and ag lending. farmcredit.com

**Florida & Georgia Farm Bureau** – advocacy, insurance and member services. floridafarmbureau.org · gfb.org

**Florida FWC & Georgia DNR** – wildlife habitat assistance and landowner programs. myfwc.com · georgiawildlife.com

**Association of Consulting Foresters** – directory of independent consulting foresters. acf-foresters.org

*This guide is general information, not forestry, legal or tax advice. Consult licensed professionals for your property.*



YOUR LAND SPECIALIST

# Debbie Kirkland

BROKER · LUXURY & LEGACY LAND

Debbie helps families, investors and outdoorsmen buy and sell timberland, plantations and agricultural property across North Florida and Southwest Georgia, with a focus on land that builds wealth and lasts for generations.

If you are looking to purchase timber or agricultural land, contact Debbie Kirkland.

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