



## *Illustris Palustris Award* 2017



The North Carolina Longleaf Coalition presented the 2017 Illustris Palustris Award to Lark Hayes, former consultant with Lark Conservation Consulting and attorney with the Southern Environmental Law Center.

Lark has been a crucial and pivotal thinker, writer, leader and doer in the effort to restore longleaf, in North Carolina and across the southeast. She was key in developing a vision for an innovative, collaborative, range-wide approach to restoring longleaf. One of the architects of America's Longleaf Restoration Initiative, Lark was a principal author of the Range-Wide Conservation Plan for Longleaf Pine. Lark worked in various ways to see that the plan was implemented, in NC and across the range, and deserves considerable credit for the significant progress in longleaf restoration.

Lark also helped establish the NC Longleaf Coalition, providing early leadership to the group. As a former Coalition chair, Lark was passionate and supportive in her efforts to organize meetings, set up subcommittees, and instigate GIS/mapping projects, while actively seeking input and listening to suggestions from committee members. Lark consistently connected the local initiatives in North Carolina with the range-wide longleaf efforts. Fred Cabbage was one of two people nominating Lark, writing "She was a gracious, committed, and dedicated [NC Longleaf Coalition] committee chair, and deserves recognition for getting us as far as we did in our early efforts."

Recently retired, Lark continues to serve as an inspirational state and national leader on longleaf restoration. Lark is well-deserving of this recognition.



Lark Hayes proudly displays the Illustris Palustris pine cone award.



Lark Hayes (*middle*) receives the 2017 Illustris Palustris Award from NC Longleaf Coalition representatives Susan Miller (USFWS), Bill Pickens (NCFS), Barry New (NCFS), and John Ann Shearer (USFWS), *left to right*.

