

NOVACULITE UPLIFT

ARKANSAS

South Central Fire Learning Network

34,000 acres



Novaculite Ridges with shortleaf pine (*Pinus echinata*) at Trap Mountain Preserve © McRee Anderson / TNC

LANDSCAPE PARTNERS

Arkansas Forestry
Commission
National Wild Turkey
Federation
Oak Ecosystem Restoration
Team
Quail Unlimited
The Nature Conservancy –
Arkansas
USDA Forest Service –
Ouachita National Forest
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
– Arkansas Field Office

THE NOVACULITE UPLIFT project consists of the Caddo Ranger District's 33,000 acre restoration site, the Conservancy's Trap Mountain site and other lands managed for resource extraction and conservation. It is part of the Ouachita Mountain ecoregion of Arkansas and Oklahoma, a landscape of more than eight million acres of rugged mountain ridges, broad valleys and the headwaters of several large river systems. The complex geological formations and soils of this forested landscape have created diverse habitats for a wide variety of species including numerous birds, two dozen species of butterflies, white-tailed deer and black bear. The four major habitats types are glades, woodland slopes, riparian forests and wooded seeps. The woodlands feature shortleaf pine, oaks and hickories with shrubs, grasses and wildflower understory. Partners are using prescribed fire and other treatments to restore these woodlands to a more open structure. When selecting treatments, partners consider such factors as risks-versus-benefits to natural systems, public perceptions about fire use, economic costs, possible impact on recreational opportunities and legal and policy constraints.

The project contributes to conservation in the region by developing ecological models for the Novaculite Uplift ecosystems needed to develop a fire restoration project. Among the tasks now in progress are the development of maps of current and desired conditions and a plant community monitoring program to track the ecosystem's response to fire.

LANDSCAPE VISION

At the landscape scale, this partnership will design and implement management activities that ensure ecosystem components and processes are maintained within the historical range of variation through a combination of prescribed fire, mechanical, chemical and other alternative treatments.

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