

## **Rivercane Gathering Statement of Purpose**

To gather tribes, artisans, traditional knowledge holders, scientists, land managers and other stakeholders to discuss the current state of knowledge for rivercane in the southern United States.

### **Background**

Rivercane (*Arundinaria gigantea*) is a native bamboo species that is fundamental to traditional arts, technologies and cultural identity of tribes across the Southern U.S. Rivercane is used in basketry, tools, weaponry such as blow guns, darts and arrows, utilitarian items including mats and construction materials, instruments, ceremonies, and provides fuel and food. It is a source of livelihoods and traditional knowledge.

Rivercane ecosystems, called canebrakes, provide vital ecosystem services including erosion and runoff control, and endangered species habitat. However, rivercane currently occupies two percent of its historical range due to changes in land use and overgrazing.

Numerous USDA Forest Service consultations with federally-recognized tribes in the South indicate an urgent need for increased information and availability of rivercane. National forests in the region are committed to increasing access to rivercane, and need more information about species ecology and management to be effective. This meeting seeks to begin to address these needs in a collaborative environment focused on two-way learning.

### **Potential Meeting Topics Include**

- Rivercane Restoration
- Propagation /Management
- Cultural Importance
- Increasing Access
- Hands on Demonstrations
- Artisan Exchange
- Field Trips to Managed Canebrakes
- Storytelling
- Rivercane Contests
- Rivercane Ecology and Genetics

### **Benefits and Outcomes**

- Information sharing about current best practices for rivercane propagation and planting techniques that can inform tribal restoration and management efforts.
- New connections/partnerships that may increase tribal access to rivercane.
- Increased opportunities to include traditional knowledge of rivercane into state and federal land management practices.
- Communication of cultural importance of rivercane to diverse stakeholders.
- A synthesis of current rivercane initiatives/projects to identify potential opportunities for information exchange.
- Identification of future research needs and priorities.