



January 6, 2020

Contents

News You Can Use **1**
 Rate Change as of January 1, 2020 1

Last Week..... **1**
 Forest Resource Management 1
 Agency Lands 1
 Eastern Region 2
 Western Region 2

News You Can Use

Rate Change as of January 1, 2020

- ◆ The IRS standard mileage rate/personal mileage rate will decrease from \$0.58 to \$0.575 per mile effective January 1, 2020.
- ◆ The non-taxable rate for moving and relocation reimbursement will decrease from \$0.20 to \$0.17 per mile effective January 1, 2020.

Last Week

Forest Resource Management

- ◆ The Ips pine bark beetle is one of three primary bark beetles that affects pines in Virginia. It typically targets individual or small groups of trees that may be under stress due to drought or damage. Lori Chamberlin (forest health program manager) and Katlin Mooneyham (forest health specialist) were recently invited to examine several beetle “spots” in Southside Virginia by Joel Cathy (Ontario Hardwoods and Board of Forestry). The group visited several sites in the Halifax, Lunenburg, Charlotte county area. At one site, they felled a dying tree and confirmed the presence of two of the three varieties of Ips beetle normally found in Virginia. Reports of Ips beetle by VDOF and others have increased, likely due to our late season drought.

Agency Lands

- ◆ Tina Macintyre from VDACS conducted Virginia gypsy moth quarantine training at Garland Gray Forestry Center. The quarantine prevents the movement of gypsy moth from infested areas to areas that are not infested. The training is required and allows the nurseries to certify that VDOF seedlings are gypsy moth-free. Josh Bennicoff (forestry centers manager), Trent Wilson, Josh McLaughlin (assistant forestry centers managers), Jamie Wright, James Banty, Michael Babb and Jake Good (forestry center technicians) attended the training.

- ◆ As of December 23, Augusta Forestry Center has received 290 orders for this year's seedling sales.

Eastern Region

- ◆ Scott Bachman (senior area forester) was a member of a panel of speakers at the Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCD) meeting held in Norfolk. The panel addressed field safety for workers preparing Resource Management plans. The panel consisted of Scott, Pete Acker (biologist with the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries), Kathy Clarke of the Northern Neck SWCD and Grant Kronenberg from the Office of the Attorney General. Approximately 70 natural resource professionals attended and many in the audience reported that Scott's panel was one of the most engaging. Scott would like to thank Heather Dowling for the chance to meet with these partners. With the help of the SWCD's the VDOF can accomplish so much more than we can on our own.
- ◆ While on his way to conduct a harvest inspection Jesse Bander (forest technician) got stuck in traffic as a lane of highway was closed near West Point. When he got closer he noticed the Virginia State Police officer was directing traffic around a cedar tree which had fallen into the road. Jesse stopped and offered assistance. He was able to quickly clear the tree from the road for the officer who was then able to re-open the road.
- ◆ For their final 2019 team meeting the Capital work area team toured Siewers Lumber and Mill Works in Richmond. Siewers Lumber and Mill Works focuses on specialty lumber mainly for use in home renovations. Much of their stock is targeted at the specific, historic homes and buildings found around the Richmond area. During the tour, the team had the opportunity to learn about the company, walk through the warehouse, learn about Siewers' timber sourcing, and view the mill and showroom floor. Special thanks to Dave Terwilliger (area forester) for setting everything up.
- ◆ Matthew Coleman (senior area forester) and David Terwilliger (area forester) spoke at a Farm Service Agency Producers meeting held at the Hanover Tavern. A multi-topic presentation about current forestry issues was given to the crowd of approximately 100 farmers. Other speakers were present from the Natural Resources Conservation Service, Soil/Water Conservation District and Farm Credit Union.
- ◆ The Mattaponi work area assisted a local landowner by planting an abandoned agriculture field with shortleaf pine seedlings. The landowner had recently lost land use status on her property, because the field was no longer being used for agriculture, and she needed an additional two acres of forestland to qualify. The planting needed to occur in the 2019 calendar year in order to qualify for land use status in 2020. The folks at the nursery were kind enough to lift 1,000 shortleaf pine seedlings early, which were provided to the landowner at no charge through the Belfort Furniture program. Volunteers from the Izaak Walton League (Spotsylvania Chapter), Fredericksburg Tree Stewards, Central Rappahannock Chapter of the Virginia Master Naturalists all volunteered their time on a rainy Saturday morning. Dean Cumbia (forest management director) and Tom Snoddy (area forester) from the VDOF were both on hand as well.

Western Region

- ◆ Greg Estoll (senior area forester) assisted partners from VCE and VDACS with a commercial pesticide recertification class in Tazewell. Greg addressed forest health issues with 40 private pesticide applicators.
- ◆ Rocky Wood (forest technician) and Smokey Bear participated in the Haysi and Clintwood Christmas parades.

- ◆ Over thirty active employees and VDOF retirees celebrated the holidays at the 3rd Annual Western Region Holiday Gala held this year at the Galax / Matthews State Forest office. Representing the retirees were Mr. and Mrs. Randall Parris, Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Cox, and Mr. Jim Baxley. A delicious potluck lunch gave attendees many choices to satisfy their palates. The thieving elves gift exchange was a hit again and produced many laughable moments. Congratulations to Rocky Wood for winning our ugly sweater contest and taking the much-coveted first place trophy back to the Headwaters work area for all to see. Thanks to the Mount Rogers / Matthews SF staff of Chad Austin, Brad Carico, Donnie Garman, Zach Olinger and Chris Sullivan for hosting our celebration.