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Employee Recognition

Welcome – Jack Colyer – Five Forks Technician

- ◆ Jack Colyer recently joined the Five Forks Work Area as a Technician. Jack’s background brings him to us with a CDL, S-130/190, and experience from the US Marine Corp and a recent Americorps assignment at Pocahontas State Park.

Training Opportunity

Southern Region Priority Trainee List

- ◆ The southern region of the USFS provides an enhanced opportunity to take out of state fire assignments each summer to complete “trainee” position needs as an aid for the development of key fire line positions. VDOF has been very successful in having nearly every one of our listed trainees complete their needed assignment, each year, to help our listed trainees advance in their desired fire qualifications.

- ◆ The sign-up period has just opened for the 2020 Priority Trainee Listing process. Any VDOF full-time employee interested in either participating in, or getting more information on, the program this year should contact [Steve Counts](#) for all of the details.

Project Updates

Policy and Procedures

- ◆ [Policy and Procedure 03-5 Personnel, Vehicle, Equipment, Service and Publication Rates](#) has been updated to reflect the current rates. Please review this policy and procedure several rates have changed.
 - Expense Reimbursement Mileage Rates
 - Personnel Rates
 - Part-time Firefighter Pay Rates
 - Vehicle Mileage Rates

Urban Wood Project

- ◆ The past several weeks have been full of planning for future events for the VA Urban Wood Program. Among the upcoming events are the following:
 - **Virginia Forestry Summit** - *Harrisonburg, Virginia, April 28 thru May 1* – will feature an urban wood marketing panel discussion and an urban wood field trip with three stops in the Harrisonburg area.
 - **East Coast Logging Expo** - *Richmond International Raceway, May 1 and May 2* – will have an urban wood outreach component in partnership with the Forest Health group. There will also be a small woodlot log skidder in front of the exhibit building.
 - **Southern Region Urban Wood Forum** - *July 22-23, Charlotte, North Carolina* – VDOF will be partnering with Trees Virginia, North Carolina Forest Service, Georgia Forestry Commission, Mississippi Forestry Commission, Oklahoma Forestry Services, North Carolina Urban Forest Council and the U.S. Forest Service. This two-day event will encompass all the aspects of being in the urban wood business and developing an effective urban wood program in communities from tiny towns to mega-municipalities.

Items of Note

- ◆ [Seeing the Urban Forests for the Trees](#)
- ◆ [Buildings as a Global Carbon Sink](#)
- ◆ [Virginia Honey Project Promotes Bee Habitat and Awareness](#)

Last Week

State Forester

- ◆ State Forest Rob Farrell, Deputy State Forester Ed Zimmer, Director of Forest Resource Management Dean Cumbia, and Director of Communications Michelle Stoll met with Sweet Briar College Associate Professor of Environmental Studies and Director of the Center for Human and Environmental Sustainability Dr. Lisa Powell. Dr. Powell would like to partner with the VDOF to more actively manage more than 2,000 acres of forestland associated with the College in Amherst County. She also met with State PLT Coordinator Page Hutchison and Conservation Education Coordinator Ellen Powell to discuss

ways to incorporate forestry into the sustainability curriculum. This will be a great opportunity to demonstrate various hardwood treatments and hardwood management techniques at a readily accessible location in Central Virginia, while connecting the dots between forestry and sustainability.

Forestland Conservation

- ◆ Charlie Becker (utilization & marketing manager) and Joe Lehnen (utilization & marketing specialist) met with Mike Galvin and Daniel Bunner with SavATree to discuss details on the one-year urban wood tracking pilot studies. Community (small, medium and large) and tree service company selection should be completed in the next few weeks. The project begins this spring.
- ◆ Charlie Becker participated in a reverse trade mission with forest product buyers from Mexico, Great Britain, Italy and the Netherlands. This was a weeklong event sponsored by Virginia Department of Agricultural and Consumer Services (VDACS) International Marketing and organized by Caitlin Maxwell (international marketing specialist). The event included VDACS European and Central American representatives, Andrew Brown and Monica Moreno Arellano, respectively. Charlie attended visits to Northland Forest Products, Troy; Flippo Lumber, Doswell; Blue Ridge Lumber, Millers Tavern; North Neck Lumber, Warsaw; and Teal Jones (Potomac Supply), Kinsale. The group also met with Don Bright, owner of Meherrin River Forest Products, over dinner Thursday night. It was a good opportunity to visit with the mills and see what products they had to sell, and what foreign buyers were interested in. This is the first time that pine mills were featured significantly. There are some opportunities, but more work will be needed to improve the export pine market.

Forest Resource Management

- ◆ Ryan Hewitt (forest inventory specialist) and John Pemberton (forest inventory manager) attended the Forest Inventory & Analysis (FIA) committee meeting held in Little Rock, Arkansas. One primary focus of the meeting was improving field production in the South (12 of 13 states are behind schedule to varying degrees). Discussions included improving recruitment and retention, as well as inter-state assistance by detailing personnel. There was also discussion on the FY20 budget with U.S. Forest Service Forest partners, as well as using social media to increase the public profile of the forestry agencies in the South.
- ◆ Lori Chamberlin (forest health manager) attended the Southern Group of State Foresters Forest Health Committee winter meeting. Every forest health specialist from the southern region was present, as well as many U.S. Forest Service Forest Health Monitoring staff. The group discussed regional outreach, forest health monitoring data collection, storm damage assessments, emerging forest health threats, and national forest health budgets.
- ◆ Katlin Mooneyham (forest health specialist) gave a presentation on common tree diseases to the Charlottesville Area Tree Stewards on January 22. Topics covered included oak decline, anthracnose, various root rots, and many other diseases.
- ◆ Todd Groh (forest management program manager) met with Greg Estoll (headwater's senior area forester) to visit some Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) riparian forest buffer establishment projects. The EQIP projects must follow USDA Natural Resources and Conservation Service (NRCS) standards and guidelines, so Todd and Greg evaluated the success of these buffers to determine if adjustments to the establishment scenarios should be made. Most of the sites had adequate survival. Reaching the program goal of tree crown closure in 10-15 years is a goal that we are examining and for which we are analyzing our recommendations to achieve this.

Agency Lands



- ◆ VDOF participated in a job fair held at Camp Community College in Franklin where 30 businesses were on hand to provide information about potential jobs with their organizations. The event was well attended and Cetia Stainback (Garland Gray Forestry Center program support technician) and Josh Bennicoff (forestry centers manager) staffed a VDOF booth and distributed information and answered questions about available nursery part-time positions. *(pictured)*
- ◆ As of January 27th, Augusta Forestry Center has received 510 orders for this year's seedling sales.
- ◆ Jerre Creighton (research program manager) along with assistance from P14 John Scrivani and Tom Saielli with the American Chestnut Foundation, re-mapped the hybrid chestnut orchard at Lesesne State Forest in preparation for roguing (thinning).
- ◆ Garland Gray Forestry Center has packed a total of 6.8 million loblolly pine seedlings to date.
- ◆ Ian Morris has begun working as a P14 at Appomattox-Buckingham State Forest.
- ◆ A horse riding volunteer group worked to clear brush for new section of trail on Appomattox-Buckingham State Forest.

Eastern Region

- ◆ Jeremy Falkenau (senior area forester) and Ellen Powell (conservation education coordinator) along with several representatives of the forest industry (private, educational, etc.) participated in a forestry curriculum update hosted by Virginia Department of Education's Office of Career and Technical Education Services. During the review, participants had an opportunity to provide comment and updates to two existing forestry curricula built for high school juniors and seniors.
- ◆ Meghan Mulroy-Goldman (community forester), Manij Updahyay (area forester) along with Scott Bachman (senior area forester) staffed a VDOF booth at the Virginia Beach Winter Wildlife Festival. The festival brought together many agencies and groups that are involved with wildlife and recreation in our outdoor environments. Attendees visited booths and asked questions of the resource professionals. Smokey Bear visited with the folks in attendance. Around 1,500 people visited the festival. *(pictured)*
- ◆ Meghan Mulroy-Goldman assisted Lara Johnson (urban community forestry manager) and Molly O'Liddy (urban community forestry coordinator) with ranking the Virginia Trees for Clean Water Grant proposals. There were many applicants for the funds this year. The best and most cost effective projects were ranked and the successful applicants selected. The UC&F staff will contact the grant winners shortly. Meghan was impressed with many of the projects and their impact on the communities they will impact, as well as the watersheds positively impacted.
- ◆ Meredith Bean (EAB coordinator) and Meghan Mulroy-Goldman met with Jonathan Mensink (Norfolk Tides) to discuss forming a partnership with the Oriole's AAA affiliate, the Norfolk Tides, to raise awareness of the emerald ash borer (EAB). Many major league baseball players choose to have their bats made from ash wood, so given the importance of ash to America's favorite past-time, baseball fans make a great target audience to raise awareness about EAB. Additionally, as the effects of EAB have not yet been felt in the Hampton Roads Area, they hope to encourage fans to treat healthy ash trees in their yards.



- ◆ Tom Snoddy (area forester) attended a meeting in Fredericksburg with the George Washington Regional Commission. There were several cooperating agencies present. Several presentations were held on topics including TMDL's, MS4, wastewater treatment plant funding and updates to the legislative sessions relating to storm-water management.
- ◆ David Houttekier (area forester) and Matthew Coleman (senior area forester) attended the Caroline County Fire and Rescue (CCFR) Awards Banquet. The VDOF was acknowledged by Caroline County Fire Chief Jason Loftus as a valuable partner in the CCFR's effort to provide wildland protection and prevention to the community.
- ◆ The Climate Adaptation Working Group held a meeting in Accomack County to discuss resilience funding and insurance issues in coastal areas. Representatives from The Nature Conservancy, Virginia Institute of Marine Science, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Accomack Northampton Planning District Commission and Wetlands Watch attended. Robbie Lewis (senior area forester) represented the VDOF.

Public Information

- ◆ Two new stories are available on Field Notes: [What's happening at Whitney State Forest? Looking Down on Tree of Heaven](#)
- ◆ On January 22 and 23 Page Hutchinson represented VDOF as a Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences (MWEE) Ambassador at the Environmental Literacy Summit in Shepherdstown, West Virginia. Page acts as a mentor to those educators new to MWEE.
- ◆ The week of January 13-17 Page Hutchinson led three consecutive professional development workshops for teachers of Roanoke County Public Schools grades K- 8. Teachers of grades K-2 were trained on Tuesday, teachers of grades 3-5 were trained on Wednesday and the 6-8 teachers were trained on Thursday. *(Pictured: A first-third grade teacher graphs the results of "Every Tree for Itself". (left), The group models their "To Be a Tree" vests. (middle), Planning out their "400 Acre Wood" for ultimate forest management. (right))*



News Clips

- ◆ [Dominion Energy: Project Plant It! Returns with New Educator Contest](#)