



February 17, 2020

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Employee Recognition:

Stuart Sours – Good Job!

- ◆ Stuart Sours (water quality specialist) recently received the following communication from a logger:
 - “Good morning and let me say that I have come to respect you over the years and the job you do. I have really learned a lot from you. I don’t figure you get a lot of kind words from our industry but I have witnessed what you all deal with and I have also went back and saw how important vegetation is to control erosion. You do a good job. We try to do good because we want to be known for trying. Take care.” Undoubtedly this confirmation would brighten all of our days.

Ed Furlow – Thank You!

- ◆ Thank You to Ed Furlow (Central Region area forester for the Rappahannock work area) who arranged for a conference call bringing together Ed Stoots (state lands coordinator), Kenny Raiford (agribusiness manager for the Virginia Department of Corrections (VDOC), himself and folks from Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS) to discuss possible ways to incorporate silvopasture into management

on state-owned lands. The call revealed several possibilities that could aid VDOC in their grazing management while incorporating some possible forest practices, as well as possible cost-share opportunities to help establish some practices. Way to think outside the box!

Zach Olinger – Thank You!

- ◆ Thank You to Zach Olinger (state forest forester on the Matthews State Forest) who assisted Ed Stoots in cruising 62 acres of timber owned by Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) Natural Heritage on their Difficult Creek Natural Area Preserve north of Halifax. Thanks also to Tom Zaebs and other State Forest staff who provided technical support in running the cruise data. DCR will be paying VDOF for our costs including indirect costs.

Help Needed!

Logging Expo 2020

- ◆ It's time again for the Logging Expo, May 1-2, 2020 with setup on April 30. We're seeking VDOF employees to engage and interact with attendees about forestry and related topics. The show hours are 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Friday, and 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday. We will do a raffle for Log-A-Load for Kids.
- ◆ We ask that each staff person sign up for a half-day block of time, which allows staff to have the other half of the day to enjoy the show and travel. The morning shifts will be 8:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and the afternoon shifts will be 12:15 p.m. to 5 p.m. each day. We will be setting up all exhibits on Thursday from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.
 - Anyone interested in helping with setup, please let [Jennifer Leach](#) (conservation, markets and public programs coordinator) know.
- ◆ Staff are encouraged to work adjust, but work time for this event is approved for compensatory or overtime leave with **supervisor approval**.
- ◆ If you would like to help with this event, **obtain supervisor approval** and then let Jennifer Leach know your preferred shift and a second choice shift, or if you are flexible and can work any shift. We will do our best to accommodate your preference, while still ensuring proper coverage. If you and another employee can both work and will be riding together, therefore needing the same shift, please be sure to note that in your response. We ask that once you commit to a shift, that you will indeed be there for the entire shift. The shifts are:
 - Thursday Setup, 04/30 1 p.m. – 4 p.m.
 - Friday AM Shift, 05/01 8 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
 - Friday PM Shift, 05/01 12:15 a.m. – 5 p.m.
 - Saturday AM Shift, 05/02 8 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
 - Saturday PM Shift, 05/02 12:15 a.m. to 5 p.m. (3pm - 5 pm - takedown and load)
- ◆ We will also need to know if you will need lodging Thursday night or Friday night.
- ◆ We need to ensure adequate staffing to cover each exhibit and that staff assigned are versed in the subject matter to interact with and answer questions from attendees. If you have a preference of what area you'd like to work, let Jennifer Leach know. We'll do our best to accommodate.
 - BMPs and Logger Notification
 - Forest Products/Virginia Grown
 - Proper Forest Management Does Affect the Bottom Line

- Kids Zone with Camp Woods and Wildlife and Smokey exhibits
- Urban Wood and Forest Health/Specialty Markets Equipment Display (outside)
- ◆ Please sign up to work the Expo with Jennifer Leach (jennifer.leach@dof.virginia.gov) by Monday, March 30.

News You Can Use:

VDOF Form 43 is now Form 3.26

- ◆ VDOF Forestry Grant Programs Time and Activity Log for Staff and Volunteers (old Form 43) has been updated with a new number and a new look. Please discard any old blank paper copies and use the new [Form 3.26 VDOF Forestry Grant Programs Time and Activity Log for Staff and Volunteers](#) on the [VDOF intranet](#) also posted on the [VDOF website](#).

Last Week

State Forester

- ◆ Rob Farrell, Lara Johnson (U&CF program manager) and Molly O’Liddy (U&CF partnership coordinator) attended the Southern Group of State Foresters U&CF Coordinators Winter Meeting in Florida to discuss opportunities to collaborate on urban forestry issues across the region.

Forestland Conservation

- ◆ Chris Cox (utilization and marketing project developer) resigned his position to take on a new opportunity in Indiana.
- ◆ Joe Lehnen (utilization and marketing Specialist), Jennifer Leach (program support technician) and Chris Cox completed and mailed survey packets to all Virginia primary forest industries as part of the annual Timber Products Output (TPO) survey.

Forest Resource Management

- ◆ Todd Groh (forest management program manager) attended the National Forest Stewardship Program Coordinator’s meeting on February 4 - 6 in Charleston, South Carolina. The Forest Stewardship Program is our preeminent forest management planning program, developed by the USDA Forest Service in 1990, to provide multiple-use planning services for our Virginia landowners. State Coordinators and US Forest Service representatives from across the continental U.S., Hawaii and the Virginia Islands met to discuss the current and future direction of the program as well as reporting annual accomplishments and working with partnering agencies to reach common resource management goals. Some of the most productive discussions happened during breaks and meals when ideas and methods were exchanged one-on-one with others from around the country.

Agency Lands

- ◆ Jeff Stout (tree improvement technician), Gary Heiser (state forests manager), Tom Zaebs (assistant state forests manager), Mike Womack (Appomattox-Buckingham & Prince Edward-Gallion state forest manager), Dennis Gaston (eastern area state forests manager) and Ben Duke (eastern area state forest technician) attended the Virginia Association of Forest Health Professionals Conference in Glen Allen. Attendees with state pesticide licenses earned credits for their recertification.
- ◆ Dennis Gaston attended a radio inter-operability meeting at the Department of Conservation & Recreation’s (DCR) office in Petersburg, in conjunction with the SE Prescribed Burn Cooperators and also attended the group’s planning meeting.

- ◆ Five log decks on Big Woods State Forest were seeded as part of a National Wild Turkey Federation project to enhance wildlife habitat in cooperation with the Department of Game & Inland Fisheries (DGIF).
- ◆ K9 Alert Search and Rescue conducted training on Sandy Point State Forest.
- ◆ Augusta Forestry Center has processed 622 orders for this year's sales and 586,500 seedlings have been graded to date.
- ◆ Garland Gray Forestry Center has packed a total of 10.8 million loblolly pine seedlings to date.

Western Region

- ◆ David Bryan (forest technician), Daniel Cloeter, Bill Sweeney (area foresters), Kevin Keith (senior area forester) and two part-time firefighters completed two prescribed burns in Patrick County. The first one was a six-acre field that will be planted in pollinator habitat and the second one was a 15-acre understory burn through a low-grade hardwood stand to improve wildlife habitat. Both projects had received EQIP funding.
- ◆ Grayson Coleman (forest technician and 2016 Dabney S Lancaster Community College (DSLCC) graduate) Jake Good (Augusta Forestry Center technician and 2018 DSLCC graduate) and Chris Thomsen (regional forester and DSLCC Advisory Board) were invited to meet with the Society of American Foresters (SAF) Accreditation Review Team of Carol Redelsheimer, SAF; Craig Houghton, Penn State – Mont Alto; and Blair Bishop, Bishop Forestry & Land PLLC, during their two-day visit to assess DSLCC's forestry program. The visit will help decide if their two-year program, resulting in an Associate's Degree, will be SAF accredited for ten more years. DSLCC is Virginia's only SAF-accredited forestry program, and in recent years boasts 100 percent job placement or four-year college placement for their students.

Eastern Region

- ◆ Saturday, February 8, Robbie Lewis (senior area forester), Kenny Midgett (forest technician), Michelle Stoll (public information director), Janet Muncy (integrated media manager) and Molly O'Liddy joined the residents of Saxis Island to plant more than 100 trees as part of the first steps in a larger coastal resiliency effort: The Resilience Adaptation Feasibility Tool (The RAFT). The RAFT is an innovative "collective impact" collaborative approach to climate resilience that leverages the expertise and resources of multidisciplinary partners and diverse stakeholders to assist coastal localities striving to increase their resilience. VDOF and the residents of Saxis have been planning this effort for nearly a year. Joined by several local residents, Robbie, Kenny and Molly helped unload, distribute and plant various tree species best suited to the island's salinity and flooding. The trees were purchased through a U&CF grant. In addition to the trees planted in residents' yards, several trees were planted to establish a riparian buffer just off the shore of the Chesapeake Bay. Janet and Michelle spoke with residents and documented the event with photographs and video interviews. The children of Saxis thanked all the VDOF staff members by presenting them with hand-made tote bags featuring "trees" made from the children's handprints. (pictured)



- ◆ View more photos of the event here:
https://www.flickr.com/photos/vdof_photos/albums/72157713071020766

Public Information

- ◆ On Saturday, February 8 the Rivanna Master Naturalist (RMN) chapter used Project Learning Tree and other forestry education activities at Kid*Vention, the Virginia Discovery Museum's annual celebration of everything science. This community event inspires children to explore the world around them with all their senses as families meet dozens of local exhibitors and investigate biology, chemistry, environmental science, engineering, physics, zoology and more through hands-on demonstrations, experiments and games.
- ◆ The RMN Chapter had tree cookies to examine for counting rings, and the children could make a tree cookie of their own life on a paper plate. The famous tree stump puzzle was there to amuse and confuse, but many were successful in getting it back together. For the parents there was the *Have Seeds Will Travel* activity in which they could match a picture of a tree to the correct seed or seed pod/cone. And the really big hit of the day was re-assembling the cypress knees! Page Hutchinson (project learning tree coordinator) was there to represent both VDOF and the RMN Chapter as the Adviser and volunteer. (pictured)
- ◆ The public information office distributed a news release statewide reminding residents of the 4 p.m. Burn Law that goes into effect on February 15 to April 30.
- ◆ The public information office distributed a news release to regional media about this week's Urban Forest Strike Team activity to track spotted lantern fly in Winchester.



News Clips

- ◆ [Protecting Virginia Forests from Wildfires](#)
- ◆ [Virginia's 4 p.m. Burn Law goes into effect on February 15](#)
- ◆ [Virginia's last wild areas must be protected and connected](#)