



March 16, 2020

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Project Updates

Urban Wood Project Update

- ◆ The VA Urban Wood Project is pleased to announce the publication of its third “success story” entitled “The Future of Woodcrafting,” which highlights wood technology education in Virginia. Featured in this report is an urban middle school wood technology program, a young entrepreneur who has created a wood business from training he learned in high school, and a local wood craft guild that supported wood technology education in the local school system.
- ◆ The VA Urban Wood Project has conducted a number of youth outreach programs across the Commonwealth including two urban wood-forest health events at Jefferson-Houston Middle School which is featured in the report.
- ◆ Many thanks to Michelle Stoll (director of public Information) and Janet Muncy (integrated media program manager) for editing and design assistance. The publication can be found on the VDOF website as a downloadable pdf at the following address:
http://www.dof.virginia.gov/infopubs/forestry-topics/FT0053_The-Future-of-Woodcrafting_2020-02_pub.pdf

Last Week

State Forester

- ◆ Rob Farrell met with Pat Carroll (Legislative Director for Arlington County), Mitchell Smiley of the VA Municipal League, Chris Sigler from Fairfax County, David Blount from Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission, as well as Katie Hellebush and Corey Connors from the Virginia Forestry Association, (Chris McDonald from VA Association of Counties was invited but was sick that day).

The purpose of the meeting was to plan for potential legislation to preserve and conserve urban trees. The localities were particularly interested in the WIP III and how to conserve trees both inside and outside the Chesapeake Bay Watershed. Based on this initial discussion, the VDOF is hosting a meeting of stakeholders interested in tree preservation as well as protecting the right to practice forestry. The meeting is scheduled for May 27, and will include representatives from the urban localities, Ag and Forestry, builders, Chesapeake Bay and water quality advocates and Department of Environment Quality (DEQ).

Forestland Conservation

- ◆ Molly O'Liddy (urban and community forestry partnership coordinator) along with new Richmond Community Forester, Eli Podyman, met with Richmond Tree Stewards to discuss possible Community Forest Management Plan for Linwood Holton Elementary School. The school has completed a number tree plantings throughout the campus and would like advice on caring for them for years to come. A management plan template is currently being constructed by the urban and community forestry (U&CF) team to help streamline an influx of requests for these plans throughout urban areas.
- ◆ Lara Johnson (U&CF manager), Katlin Dewitt (forest health specialist) and Meghan Mulroy (community forester) presented on emerald ash borer (EAB) treatment techniques, biotic and abiotic stressors of urban trees at the 2020 Horticultural Extravaganza.
- ◆ 2020 Tree City USA award materials arrived from the Arbor Day Foundation at VDOF HQ last week. Molly O'Liddy is coordinating delivery of these materials to each work area via the regional foresters.
- ◆ Lara Johnson spoke to seniors studying Environmental Science at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) about VDOF's Urban and Community Forestry Program, her education/background and careers in urban forestry.
- ◆ Charlie Becker (utilization & marketing program manager) had a conference call with Tim Foley, Policy Director for Southern Group of State Foresters (SGSF), on updating the SGSF Forest Certification document. Charlie shared the information he collects with Tim, who plans to complete the document for publication this year.
- ◆ Charlie Becker sent the final report of the Forest Industry Roundtables along with grant project information to partners of the Wood Innovation Program grant. He is now organizing the initial meeting of the State Wood Utilization Team who will develop an action/work plan to address issues identified from the Industry Roundtables.
- ◆ Mike Santucci (forestland conservation program manager) along with Jen Gagnon and Adam Downing (Virginia Cooperative Extension), and Jennifer Jones, presented on the topic of intergenerational forestland transfer as a part of the 2020 Southern Regional Extension Forestry Webinar series. The webinar was broadcast to 30 viewing sites across four southeast states (GA, KY, NC, VA). There were six viewing sites in Virginia.

Forest Resource Management

- ◆ Katlin DeWitt, Lara Johnson and Meghan Mulroy-Goldman attended the 2020 Horticultural Extravaganza in York on March 7th to speak with a group of Master Naturalists, Master Gardeners, and Tree Stewards. One presentation was on urban biotic and abiotic issues relevant for Southeastern Virginia, while the other was a discussion about emerald ash borer, treatment options available to landowners, and a short treatment demo.
- ◆ Lori Chamberlin (forest health manager) and Katlin DeWitt joined Lara Johnson and Jason Braunstein (GIS manager) at the Virginia Emergency Operations Center in Richmond. The group learned about the Virginia Emergency Support Team (VEST) standard operating procedures and what would be expected of VDOF staff should we be called to assist with GIS during a state emergency. It was helpful to see what GIS programs and procedures are used by VEST so that we can better prepare for the next emergency.

Agency Lands

- ◆ The 2020 American chestnut seedling crop of an estimated 925 seedlings has been lifted at Augusta Forestry Center. The seedlings were comprised of eight genotypes (nuts from five open-pollinated selections and three control-pollinated crosses).
- ◆ Garland Gray Forestry Center has packed a total of 20.5 million loblolly pine seedlings to date.
- ◆ Jerre Creighton (research program manager) along with P14's John Scrivani and David Crouch, measured the final VA Tech Modeling Co-op thinning study location at the Parker's Branch Tract of Big Woods Wildlife Management Area. All data entry and error-checking completed and dataset forwarded for all 11 locations (over 3,800 trees) to the co-op staff.
- ◆ Zach Olinger (western area state forests manager) attended a meeting in Johnson City, Tennessee for a discussion on hardwood management and establishing demonstration forests in different regions of the Southeast to educate foresters, landowners and industry professionals. The meeting included representatives from the USDA Forest Service (USFS) and state forestry agencies from Virginia, Tennessee, North Carolina and Kentucky.
- ◆ Augusta Forestry Center has processed 847 orders for this year's sales and 2.6 million seedlings have been graded to date.

Western Region

- ◆ Team members from both the Clinch and Headwaters areas along with Russell Proctor (regional fire specialist) met with Justin Gabler, fire management officer on the Clinch Ranger District, to discuss planned prescribed burns on the district. Also in attendance were representatives from DCR-Natural Heritage, DCR- State Parks, Kentucky Division of Forestry, Wise Fire Department and Norton City Fire Department. The USFS plans to burn several areas in Wise County. The agencies represented at the meeting provided agency updates and exchanged contact information.
- ◆ William Neff, Michael Salyer and Kenny Thomas (forest technicians) trained 25 inmates at the Duffield Regional Jail. The inmates have been instrumental in assisting with the suppression of wildfires in the area since the program was created.
- ◆ Bill Sweeney (area forester) and Andrew Vinson (water quality specialist) gave talks to landowners during this year's Woods and Wildlife Conference in Roanoke, organized by the Virginia Forest Landowner Education Program. Andrew spoke on forest road/trail construction and maintenance and Bill led a natural resource professionals panel discussion with other local natural resource managers. Special thanks to Ellen Powell (conservation education coordinator), Denny McCarthy (area forester)

and Bill Sweeney for their help in planning the conference, and to Ellen Powell again for moderating sessions.

- ◆ Brian Ledford (area forester) and Bill Miller (senior area forester) taught tree identification, tree measurements and tree aging to students in Emory and Henry College's (E&H) Environmental Monitoring Lab. The lab was held at E&H's Barlett-Crowe Field Station south of Glade Spring. (pictured)



- ◆ Chad Austin (water quality engineer) and Andrew Vinson met a class of 52 students and professors from Virginia Tech on a recently closed harvest in Botetourt County to inspect and discuss Best Management Practices (BMPs) for water quality. Andrew and Chad assisted the students in conducting an audit of the BMPs on site and discussed with them harvest planning, road layout and harvesting operations. Andrew also demonstrated one of the new UAVs for the class, and led a discussion on drone technology and their uses in forest management and water quality. (pictured)



Public Information

- ◆ Applications for Camp Woods & Wildlife 2020 are now being accepted. A press release was sent statewide March 9.
- ◆ Ellen Powell assisted with the Woods & Wildlife Conference in Culpeper, attended by over 200. She presented a session on nature journaling. Also assisting with the conference were Kinner Ingram, Ed Furlow (foresters), Joe Rossetti (senior area forester) and Jerre Creighton.
- ◆ On February 26-28 the Virginia Association for Environmental Education held their annual conference at Sweet Briar College. Page Hutchinson (PLT coordinator) and Bruce Young (NAEE Affiliate representative) acted as joint Chairs for the Conference Committee. The conference was a huge success with 148 environmental educators from around the state attending. VAAEE is only five years old and each year the conference has gotten bigger and better. Keynote speakers included nationally known Dr. Drew Lanham, master teacher at Clemson University in the Department of Forestry and Environmental Conservation and author, and Nancy Striniste, founder and principal designer at EarlySpace, is a landscape designer, an educator and an author.
 - Wednesday's offerings included six workshops, two all day field trips, an Interactive Activity Showcase, a Make-n-Take, and a Young Professionals Clinic. One of the workshops, "Wandering the Winter Woods" was led by Ellen Powell. The PLT workshop, "Engaging Young Children with the Environment" was led by Tarneshia Evans (Outstanding PLT Educator and facilitator).
 - Thursday and Friday offered 33 different concurrent sessions for participants. The culminating activity on Friday was a trip to the Monacan Ancestral Museum.
- ◆ Ellen Powell trained the new class of Rivanna Master Naturalists in tree identification.

- ◆ Michelle Stoll (public information director) and Robbie Lewis (senior area forester) attended the Virginia Natural Resource Leadership Institute last week in Danville. Drew Arnn (senior area forester) and Tom Burke (forester) led a forestry field trip demonstrating successional forestry management.
- ◆ Michelle Stoll met via conference call with Rae Tamblyn of the North American Forest Partnership to develop quarterly strategies for leveraging #forestproud materials in Virginia.
- ◆ A new story ([Agricultural-Forrestal Districts in Louisa County](#)) has been posted in Field Notes.

News Clips

- ◆ [Controlled Burn In Virginia Brings Ash and Smoke to Washington, DC Area](#)
- ◆ [Firefighters battling brush fire in Albemarle County](#)
- ◆ [Appomattox County sees influx of fires throughout county](#)
- ◆ [Controlled burns underway in George Washington and Jefferson National Forests](#)
- ◆ [Berryville named Tree City USA](#)
- ◆ [Update: Furnace Mountain fire contained, park trails opened](#)
- ◆ [Dry conditions lead to fire risk for Monday; what to know for the spring wildfire season](#)