



**July 6, 2020**

**Contents**

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**Action Required**..... **1**  
 Reminder - Fiscal Year 2020 Vehicle Mileage Due ..... 1  
**Employee Spotlight**..... **2**  
 Job Well Done! – Denny McCarthy, Zach Olinger and staff ..... 2  
**Employee News** ..... **2**  
 Thank you! ..... 2  
 Congratulations! ..... 2  
**Project Updates** ..... **3**  
 Time Reporting in Cardinal HCM ..... 3  
**Last Week**..... **3**  
 State Forester ..... 3  
 Forestland Conservation..... 3  
 Forest Resource Management ..... 4  
 Agency Lands ..... 4  
 State Owned Lands ..... 5  
 Central Region ..... 5  
 Eastern Region ..... 5  
 Western Region ..... 6  
 Public Information ..... 6  
 News Clips..... 7

**Action Required**

***Reminder - Fiscal Year 2020 Vehicle Mileage Due***

- Record your assigned VDOF vehicle mileage during the timeframe of June 31 to July 1, 2020 and enter the mileage into IFRIS before 10 a.m. on Thursday July 16.
- Those with assigned DGS Fleet vehicles should email Danny Fortune the vehicles mileage from the timeframe of June 31 to July 1, 2020 by 10 a.m. on Thursday July 16.

## Employee Spotlight

### *Job Well Done! – Denny McCarthy, Zach Olinger and staff*

- ◆ Wanted to share this email from Acting Director, Administrator & Chief Operating Officer for the Catawba Hospital State-Owned Lands Project Charles Law where we sold \$177,000 worth of timber.
  - “Now this is a perfect example of partnership, collaboration, sustainable Forest Management and Land Management working to the benefit of all.  
Forestry gets \$177,000.00 on top of that in cash and DBHDS Catawba Hospital gets two really nice environmental management projects paid for as well.  
Ed, we look forward to bidding the next phase!  
Thank you, Denny and the rest of Team Forestry. You are consummate professionals and I really value any partnerships where everyone is looking out for the best interests of all parties!”
- ◆ This is the way State-Lands was envisioned working, which takes continued good communication and interaction with the agency owners of the properties! Thank you to Denny McCarthy (area forester) and other Western Region staff for their assistance, along with Zach Olinger (forest management and education specialist) who assisted with cruising along with others. The property is one of several that the Department of Behavioral Health & Developmental Services owns.

## Employee News

### *Thank you!*

- ◆ Thank you to Heather Dowling (senior area foresters), Chuck Wright (area forester), and Deya Ramsden (Middle James River Forest Watershed Project Coordinator) their recent work on the State Farm (Goochland & Powhatan) Department of Corrections (DOC) property in working with DOC staff to help identify riparian buffer work on this large property. The Deputy Secretary of Natural Resources has led the efforts to address water quality concerns on the State Farm, and VDOF staff have stepped up to the plate to help with the forested portion of riparian buffer management. This large project has the potential to help mitigate water quality into the James River through the potential planting of over 25 acres and fencing out of streams to cattle with over 75,000 lineal feet of fencing. There’s a lot more to get done to prepare for this coming winter, but we’re off to an excellent start at a partners’ meeting on Thursday with Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCD), and DOC staff.

### *Congratulations!*

- ◆ VDOF now has another Virginia Contract Officer, or VCO, on staff. Fernanda Crandol (finance director) took classes virtually to receive her certification as a state contracting officer. As such she will be able to provide consultation and support to our other VCO’s, Amy Ricotta, and Jessica Carroll, as well as agency staff on procurement and contract matters.
- ◆ Jeremy Falkenau (senior area forester) and his wife Brittany welcomed their first child over the weekend. Jeremy sent this note: “Reid Arthur joined our little family on Saturday, June 27 at 2:43 pm. He has been very alert and curious since the moment he got here. We’ve been getting to know each other these last few days and enjoying our time as a family. Brittany and Reid are doing phenomenally! We are awaiting discharge paperwork and will be headed home soon. I don’t expect he’ll be ready to drag a rake this fall, but we’ll make a firefighter out of him soon enough!” (pictured)



## Project Updates

### Time Reporting in Cardinal HCM

- Below are sixteen time reporting codes for expired grants that were deactivated in IFRIS. It is important that we continue to simplify the time reporting process prior to the conversion to the Commonwealth's Human Capital Management System – **Cardinal HCM**. Currently, there are several paths to reporting time; fewer choices will simplify the process - you will be hearing more about this project in the future.

Time Category	Expired Time Code
Conservation Easement Mgt	Tomorrow Woods Project
Forest Management Plans	WQIF
Forest Management Practices	WQIF Project
Forest Management Plans	DGIF Quail Plan
Forest Management Practices	DGIF Quail Project
Grants/Funds - Dedicated	Focused Woodland Legacy Plans
Grants/Funds - Dedicated	Greatest Biodiversity - Clinch River
Grants/Funds - Dedicated	UCF Green Infrastructure - LSR
Prof Services - Forest Markets	Biomass Energy
Prof Services - Forest Markets	Barriers to Forest Certification
Prof Services - Land Conserv	Tomorrow Woods
Prof Services - Urban Forestry	WQIF Services
Prof Services - Water Quality	WQIF - Regional cost share
Public Outreach/Ed - For Markets	Barriers to Forest Certification
Public Outreach/Ed - Forest Mgt	Tomorrow Woods
Public Outreach/Ed - Land Conserv	Tomorrow Woods

## Last Week

### State Forester

- As Director of Agency Lands Harvey Darden departs the agency to enjoy a well-deserved retirement, his duties and direct reports have been reassigned. State Lands Coordinator Ed Stoots will be assuming responsibility for all state forestlands, including the State Forest system. State Forests Manager Gary Heiser will report to Ed Stoots. Nursery Manager Josh Bennicoff will report directly to Deputy State Forester Ed Zimmer, as will Research Manager Jerre Creighton.
- Deputy State Forester Ed Zimmer participated in the kickoff meeting of the State Lands Watershed Implementation Plan (WIP) team, led by Deputy Secretary of Natural Resources Ann Jennings. Over the next several months, this team will be conducting a comprehensive assessment and inventory of state-owned lands to determine where these lands can make improvements to contribute to the Commonwealth's Chesapeake Bay WIP goals.

### Forestland Conservation

- Charlie Becker (utilization & marketing program manager) participated in the annual Southern Forest Resource Assessment Consortium (SOFAC) meeting held on Zoom. Much of the meeting covered updates and projects related to the Sub-Regional Timber Supply (SRTS) model including impacts from Hurricane Michael, COVID-19, and the Hardwood SRTS project. There was also a lot of discussion on carbon modeling related to forests.

- ◆ Molly O'Liddy (urban & community forestry partnership coordinator) and Eli Podyma (Capital community forester) met with the manager of Enrichmond Foundation's Treelab, Aaron Mcfarland, to tour their new nursery operations in the City of Richmond. Aaron also gave Molly and Eli a tour of Evergreen and East End cemeteries, for which VDOF completed an urban forest management plan in the past.
- ◆ Lara Johnson (urban & community forestry program manager) and Meredith Bean (emerald ash borer coordinator) treated several rare blue ash with Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) staff in Natural Tunnel State Park. They also released biocontrol and remeasured three national champion big trees in Grayson Highlands State Park.

## Forest Resource Management

- ◆ Establishing streamside forest (riparian forest buffers) where they do not currently exist is an excellent way to protect water quality by reducing sediment and nutrients. VDOF plays an important role by being the technical expert in establishing trees and forests and providing services to landowners and other agencies. On June 23, several newer VDOF employees met at Augusta Forestry Center (AFC) to learn more about riparian buffers. Cain Harbison, Walker Wolff (area foresters), Annie Ligush (riparian buffer specialist) and Amelia Kahle (intern) participated, and Dean Cumbia (director of forest resource management), Todd Groh (forest resource management program coordinator), Sarah Parmelee (area forester), Josh McLaughlin (AFC assistant nursery manager) and Jake Good (AFC nursery technician) led the training. The day included an overview of buffers, a tour of AFC, as well as a visit to First Mountain State Forest to discuss forest regeneration.
- ◆ On June 24, Katlin DeWitt (forest health specialist), Johnny Vest (area forester) and Kyla Thompson (western region intern) met with two members of the forest entomology lab at Virginia Tech at Mountain Lake to survey fall cankerworm damage. Areas of defoliation and mortality were recorded and though most had started pupation, a few live cankerworms were found. This is a native pest and while damage was noticeable in areas, most trees should recover from defoliation.
- ◆ Hardwood forest management and emerald ash borer (EAB) are both important topics with which VDOF is engaged. On June 24, Lori Chamberlin (forest health program manager), Shannon Lewis (state forest forester), Amelia Kahle and Dean Cumbia worked at Cumberland State Forest on two tracts where hardwood management and EAB management intersected. In a mixed hardwood stand, ash trees were marked and treated for EAB prior to a harvest (that was recently completed). Surviving ash were again treated, and the hardwood regeneration on the site was assessed. On a second site, a younger mixed hardwood stand, the results of hardwood crop tree release, EAB treatment, and the effect of EAB parasitoids was evaluated. Through this work, we hope to learn how natural forest stands develop over time in the presence of EAB and active hardwood management.

## Agency Lands

- ◆ Shannon Lewis participated in the internal Sustainable Forestry Initiatives (SFI) audit for Cumberland State Forest the afternoon of June 25.
- ◆ State Forest staff prepared for upcoming certification audits on some of the Eastern state forests with field visits to projected stops this past Tuesday, including Dragon Run, Chilton Woods, Crawford, and Zoar State Forests. Ed Stoots joined staff for lunch with visits to Dragon Run and Chilton Woods State Forests. Thank you to Dennis Gaston (state forest forester), Gary Heiser (state forests manager), Tom Zaebst (assistant state forests manager), and Ben Duke (state forest technician) for the important work they do!
- ◆ Maintenance work and bidding for cone collection and seed processing are the priorities right now. The second round (there are often three and sometimes four) of insecticide applications to control

coneworms and seedbugs was completed at both the New Kent Forestry Center (NKFC) and Appomattox-Buckingham State Forest (ABSF) orchards. Banded herbicides were applied to control weeds under the orchard trees at ABSF. Mowing, pruning and thinning operations are ongoing at New Kent. Ones Bitoki (tree improvement forester) has posted three bid invitations, with help from Amy Ricotta (procurement officer), for loblolly, white pine and shortleaf pine cone and seed related activities.

### *State Owned Lands*

- ◆ The Central State Hospital State-Owned Lands Timber Sale in Dinwiddie County sold June 24 to Real Tree Wood Corporation for a value of \$26,468.00. The sale area covers approximately 24 acres consisting of an estimated 282.06 MBF of pine & hardwood sawtimber (233.45 MBF pine) and 726 tons of pulpwood. Two bidders bid on the sale with the other bid less than \$1,000.00 under. Thank you to Heather Dowling, her staff and Charlie Becker for their assistance. The sale area is to be harvested by year end and will be the site for a new Central State Hospital. Some of the wood is hoped to be utilized in the construction of the new hospital for things such as benches, conference tables, and tongue-and-groove ceiling tile in one area; it's a great story to tell, and the harvest of the trees will save more than \$50,000 in clearing costs for the project while using the timber in Virginia's Wood Products Industry.

### *Central Region*

- ◆ Andrew Matteson (forest technician), aided by Tom Burke and Laura Guthrie (area foresters), conducted a training for the South Boston Fire Department. Fire behavior, line construction and dozer safety were covered.
- ◆ Jim McGlone (urban forest conservationist) was invited to be an instructor at the Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE) Master Gardener College. Jim gave a presentation to a community group on urban tree benefits, and a member of the curriculum committee was in the audience and later made the invitation. Jim taught classes titled "Adaptations of Landscape Trees: A View from the Forest" and "The Benefits of Urban Trees." The classes were well attended with 140 and 135 participants. The students asked questions and generally felt better prepared to assist with tree selection and advocate for tree planting in their communities.

### *Eastern Region*

- ◆ Eli Podyma (community forest specialist) has been busy working with the City of Richmond and the James River Park System to help identify emerald ash borer infested ash and apply for the VDOF EAB cost-share program. To date, Eli has assessed 43 trees for our partners and has 40 more to assess!
- ◆ Jeremy Falkenau (senior area forester) gave a virtual presentation to a local Cub Scout den reviewing the Outdoor Code and Leave No Trace principles. During the presentation, the five Cubs Scouts were able to learn about both core values of the Boy Scouts of America (BSA) program and complete their "Tigers in the Wild" adventure.
- ◆ Short Pump Rotary Club reached out with great interest in Rob Farrell's recent [For a healthy Chesapeake Bay, trees are the answer](#) column in the Richmond Times Dispatch, asking if VDOF could provide further information on the matter. In response, Eli Podyma served as a guest presenter during one of their meetings highlighting the benefits of trees in relation to the Chesapeake, enhancing riparian buffers, and the different programs VDOF and other partner groups are utilizing to enhance the health of the Bay.

- ◆ Meghan Mulroy-Goldman (community forester) and Scott Bachman (senior area forester) completed a demonstration pruning on a dozen trees in Campostella Park in the South Norfolk area of Chesapeake last week. This small city park is located in an area identified as an urban heat island. Meghan has been working with the City of Chesapeake as well as the Chesapeake Health Department to begin to address this heat island. The pruning demonstration was a chance to model what would be needed to care for the existing trees and any future trees. Discussions are ongoing with the city to perhaps create an arborist position to care for the city-owned trees. (Pictured: Meghan using a pole pruner to remove dead, decayed or damaged wood from a tree at Campostella Park.)



## Western Region

- ◆ William Neff (forest technician) attended DCR-Natural Heritage's Friends of the Cedars meeting. Attendees met at the Daniel Boone SWCD office parking lot and traveled to Warner Field for an outdoor camp chair-style meeting. After a short business meeting, William assisted Laura Young and Claiborne Woodall (DCR-Natural Heritage) with a hiking tour of the Warner Tract. The area was prescribed burned this past spring with VDOF assistance. William answered questions about the burn and showed how it was used to meet the goals prescribed for the regeneration of warm season grass. (pictured)



- ◆ The Blue Ridge Work Area held their first in-person team meeting since February. No hands were shaken or hugs exchanged, but all agreed they were happy for a break from tele-conference meetings. The team met outdoors in the "Burchinal State Forest" and maintained appropriate physical distance for face-to-face conversation and work collaboration. (pictured)



- ◆ Andrew Vinson (water quality specialist), Chad Austin (forest engineer) and Ed Stoots met with officials from Catawba State Hospital in Roanoke County to plan for a pending timber harvest and discuss a pre-existing, improperly-sized culvert crossing and solutions to improve it. All agreed that the best permanent solution was to remove the existing crossing and install a ford using geo-web. State Land's monies will fund the crossing which will be used for future forest management activities and demonstrations, as well as hospital access.

## Public Information

- ◆ Recent stories in Field Notes -- [Forestry for Water Quality](#), [In This Together, Apart](#)

## ***News Clips***

- ◆ [With 4th of July displays canceled, a reminder that personal fireworks are illegal in Hampton Roads](#)
- ◆ [Ashton Lewis to establish new pine sawmill in Caroline County](#)