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Employee News

Welcome to VDOF

- ◆ Riley Ripa has started as a Forest Inventory Field Assistant on June 10 in the far southwest Virginia and will be working in this capacity through mid-August. Welcome Riley, and we welcome the help!

Donation of Obsolete Uniforms/Clothing

- ◆ On July 2, VDOF collaborated with local Charlottesville partners to donate obsolete but serviceable clothing to those in need. Chrissy Gough (customer care and personnel assistant) was tasked early in the COVID-19 pandemic with identifying innovative ways for repurposing worn-out clothing for face coverings, as well as leading our efforts to donate gently used clothing to The Piedmont House and The Charlottesville Winneba Foundation. This initiative resulted in nearly 100 pounds of donated clothing and established the foundation for a continued relationship. If you would like to learn more about the work the Piedmont House and the Charlottesville Winneba Foundation are doing in the Charlottesville community and around the world, please visit their websites below.

<https://www.piedmonthouse.org/index.html>
<http://cville-winneba.blogspot.com/>

Assistance Requested

Turkey and Grouse Observation Survey

- ❑ Katie Martin from the Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources (DWR) is requesting assistance from VDOF with their annual summer turkey/grouse brood survey.
- ❑ The survey is pretty basic and asks participants to record observations of any turkey (or grouse if in the grouse range) while they are out and about completing their normal work tasks. Information needed from participants is the date and county of observation along with the number of turkeys seen (broken into category by sex/age if possible) and their total mileage driven for the months of July and August (recorded separately).
- ❑ Please use this [2020 Turkey and Grouse Observation Form](#). Below are a few highlights:
 - Survey time period is July 1-August 31, 2020.
 - Please record the county for each observation and record all observations on separate lines.
 - Report mileage driven for the entire month of July and August (separately).
 - Avoid recording duplicate sightings (i.e. the same birds each morning).
 - Please fill out a form with the county you primarily work in and send it back even if no observations are noted for either July or August. No observation forms are just as important as those with observations.
 - Please return all forms to me through mail or email by September 4, 2020.
 - a. Email: Katie.martin@dwr.virginia.gov
 - b. Mail: 107 Foxwood Drive, Farmville, VA 23901

Project Updates

Security Upgrade

- ◆ A contract to install upgraded security features to the James Garner (headquarters) building has been awarded to S3 Integration. This upgrade will include cameras at entrance/exit points, proximity card access to the building and remote management of the building and card access system. The work should be complete by mid-September. Next, we will assess the regional office buildings to identify security improvements at those facilities.

Tractor Sheds

- ◆ The new tractor sheds in Goochland and Louisa are racing toward completion. Both sheds are under roof and as of this update electrical is being installed. If the projects continue to stay on course both will be complete around the 1st of August. Stay tuned for grand opening plans.

News You Can Use

Forest Stewardship Program

- ◆ The annual Forest Stewardship Program property monitoring list has gone out to the Regions. These monitoring visits help us collect forest management implementation data that the VDOF reports to the US Forest Service (USFS). Showing that our Forest Stewardship planning efforts are leading landowners toward implementing good management practices helps USFS prove to Congress the

importance of funding this program. This year's monitoring forms are due back to the Forest Resource Management Branch by Friday, September 18.

Last Week

State-Owned Lands Program Fiscal Year Recap of Activity

- ◆ Ed Stoots (state lands coordinator and acting agency lands director) gave a fiscal year update on the State-Owned Lands Program to VDOF Senior Management. Since August 2019 thru June 30th 2020 the State-Owned Lands Program has sold and received \$680,420.33 dollars of timber harvesting projects from 11 different projects State-wide. Over 5.5 million board feet of Pine and Hardwood Sawtimber along with several thousand tons of pulpwood has already or will be harvested by Virginia's professional loggers and used by Virginia mills. Approximately 572 acres of projects will be conducted on State-Owned forested land with the money generated. Projects will include reforesting areas harvested with improved seedlings, improving the health and vigor of forests, protecting water quality, and establishing riparian buffers that will contribute to improvements of water quality into the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

Forestland Conservation

- ◆ Lara Johnson (urban & community forestry program manager) and Meghan Mulroy-Goldman (community forester) assisted the Natural Resource Manager at Joint Base Langley Eustis with inventorying rare Pumpkin Ash for emerald ash borer (EAB) treatment later this year. They also measured one on the grounds and submitted it for State Champion status for the Big Tree Program.
- ◆ Terry Lasher (assistant state forester) participated in the Chesapeake Bay Interagency WIP Implementation Team meeting. Agencies provided updates regarding their agency programs and progress towards the WIP III goals as well as how to better collaborate on achieving goals.

Forest Resource Management

- ◆ Forest Inventory and Analysis crews have completed measurement and data transmission to the Forest Service of nearly 70 percent of the current panel plots.
- ◆ Lori Chamberlin (forest health program manager) participated in a Southern Group of State Foresters (SGSF) Forest Health Committee conference call on June 25. This call was in place of the annual summer meeting that was cancelled due to COVID-19. Discussion topics included the recent Asian longhorned beetle discovery in South Carolina, Play Clean Go outreach, Southern Regional Extension Forestry (SREF) Regional Forest Health Program, USFS updates, collaboration with the Urban and Community Forestry (U&CF) Committee on the new Forest Action Strike Team initiative, and Don't Move Firewood outreach material.
- ◆ On June 30, Lara Johnson and Katlin DeWitt (forest health specialist) visited a site in Shenandoah County with Matt Wolanski (senior area forester) to look at declining oaks. Soil and root samples were taken and submitted to the plant disease clinic to determine if a root rot was present. After this visit, all three went to Page County to look for gypsy moth egg masses that were reported by a landowner. No egg masses were found but the area will continue to be monitored. Please report evidence of gypsy moth defoliation to VDOF Forest Health staff.
- ◆ Virginia Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is under new management. On May 31, 2020, the NRCS State Conservationist, Jack Bricker, retired after 35 years of service with the NRCS. The new Acting State Conservationist, effective July 6, 2020, is Jon Hubbert who is currently the Assistant State Conservationist for Programs in Iowa. Also, the Virginia Assistant State Conservationist for Programs, Julie Hawkins, will be leaving Virginia as of July 19 to become the State Conservationist for New

Jersey. Mrs. Hawkin's replacement has not been selected at this time. VDOF/NRCS Forestry Liaison, Todd Groh, will provide updates when they happen.

Agency Lands

- ◆ Jerre Creighton tallied 90-day survival on the Appomattox location (one of three - the others are at Dragon Run State Forest and Garland Gray State Forest) of the test comparing our current "clay-dip and bundle" storage system to several bagged alternatives for our loblolly seedlings. Back in May (30 days after planting), 100 percent of the seedlings were alive and had new growth at all three sites. This time, at Appomattox there were three dead seedlings out of 160 total planted (in four replications of four treatments). Jerre will check the other two locations but so far it looks like survivability of our seedlings is excellent even for those that were just lifted and put directly in the bags with no clay or water dipping at all. Note: all seedlings were stored in the cooler for a month before out planting.
- ◆ Shannon Lewis (Cumberland State Forest manager) met with two DWR game biologists and gave them locations of where bear traffic seems to be the heaviest. They are hanging baits on Cunningham State Forest with the plans of trapping sows to collar for their bear program. Collared sows will be monitored for travel patterns, assessed for health, monitored for reproduction, and may be given an orphaned cub.
- ◆ Jerre Creighton finished cutting all the volunteer pines out of the productivity co-op thinning x fertilizer study at Appomattox-Buckingham State Forest. This is important to prevent different levels of volunteers (responding to different light levels after thinning treatments) from confounding the growth responses of the crop trees to the studies treatments of interest - thinning intensity and fertilizer. For perspective, this amounted to just short of 19 acres of chainsaw work.

State-Owned Lands

- ◆ First Round of Invasive Species Control Spraying was finished on June 30 on the Catawba Hospital State-Owned Lands Tract. Eastern Forest Consultants sprayed invasive species (multi-flora rose, garlic mustard, Japanese stiltgrass, barberry, Ailanthus, and some others on approximately 19 acres in advance of a timber harvest. A second round of spraying will occur in late July or early August.

News Clips

- ◆ [Lumber company plans \\$11 million investment at sawmill in Caroline County](#)
- ◆ [AFF Helps Family Forest Owners Make Significant Contribution to Longleaf Restoration](#)
- ◆ [Report: Biomass, biofuels can help US meet net-zero goal](#)