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Employee News

Leaving VDOF

- ◆ Matthew Lynch (Meherrin work area forester) is resigning his position on September 9 to pursue a new opportunity. Best of luck on your new adventure.

Coming Up

Generation NEXT Legacy Planning Seminars

- ◆ VDOF and Cooperative Extension are holding this year’s Generation NEXT Legacy Planning Seminars online as a Webinar Series Sept. 16, 17, 23, and 24 from 3 - 4:30 p.m. The program has developed over the past 10 years so that we now have our own accompanying 56-page publication, "Legacy Planning: A Guide for Virginia Landowners". VDOF field staff are encouraged to attend and spread the word to landowners.
- ◆ The four-part program will teach participants how to pass their land on to the next generation while keeping it intact, in forest, and in family. The \$40 registration fee covers online participation by all family members. Registration for VDOF personnel is free (leave the payment section blank when registering online).

- **Video promo:** <https://youtu.be/k0Bzc0ciY9A>
- **Registration link:** <https://tinyurl.com/VaGenNext2020>

Did You Know

- ◆ September 4 is National Wildlife Day.

Items of Note

- ◆ Photos of VDOF helping with the Texas fires:
<https://www.statesman.com/photogallery/TX/20200814/NEWS/814009999/PH/1>

Last Week:

State Forester

- ◆ VDOF has a dozen full-time and one part-time firefighter on temporary detail assisting in western wildfire response.
- ◆ Hardwoods make up 80 percent of Virginia's forests, and we are striving for improved hardwood management through the emerging Hardwood Initiative. VDOF is working with partners to develop the Hardwood Assessment Tool which will help foresters assess forest conditions and select the best treatments to achieve landowner objectives. On August 17, Rob Farrell led a call with five VDOF foresters to introduce the tool and provide instructions for initial testing of the tool. Kirby Woolfolk (Eastern Region forester specialist), Sarah Parmelee (Central Region forester), Joe Cotner (Western Region forester), Zach Olinger (forest management & education specialist) and Shannon Lewis (forest management forester) are the testers. They will field test the process and provide feedback prior to broader use of the tool.

Forestland Conservation

- ◆ Meghan Mulroy-Goldman (community forester), Molly O'Liddy (urban & community forestry partnership coordinator), and Raina DeFonza (public information specialist) teamed up with Norfolk City Forester Steven Traylor to make and begin filming for an informational video on food forests/urban orchards. The video will highlight the successes, challenges, benefits and species associated with these types of plantings.
- ◆ Terry Lasher (assistant state forester) hosted a watershed team meeting to discuss the agency's Watershed Implementation Plan progress for Fiscal Year 2019. The results of this year's efforts are increased numbers across the board in all relevant categories.
- ◆ Terry Lasher and Bryant Bays (regional forester) met with Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) Director of Legislative and Community Services Nathan Burrell and Groundwork RVA Executive Director Rob Jones to discuss potential workforce development potential, cooperation on inner city underserved areas and grant opportunities within Richmond.

Agency Lands

- ◆ Ben Duke (state forest technician) brought the mini-excavator to the Matthews State Forest. A team replaced one old culvert, installed another culvert on the main road and reworked the approaches to a ford crossing along with Zach Olinger. Thank you, Ben and Zach!
- ◆ Shannon Lewis reviewed the presentation on the Hardwood Assessment Tool, went through a short exercise with Dean Cumbia (director of forest resource management), and will test it on a stand

at the Cumberland State Forest this next week. Zach Olinger also participated in the presentation and exercise. Thank you, Shannon, Zach and Dean!

- ◆ Sustainable Forestry Initiative / American Tree Farm System certification audits currently scheduled for September 8 to 10.

Eastern Region

- ◆ As EAB continues to move east across the state, VDOF has been working to treat rare ash species. After treating pumpkin ash (*Fraxinus profunda*) in the Blackwater work area, we have now treated individuals from all species found in the state. The species is found along swamps and river bottoms in the Atlantic Coastal Plain, and is named for the swollen butt which is said to resemble a pumpkin. Over a three-day period, Molly O'Liddy (urban & community forestry partnership coordinator), Katlin Dewitt (forest health specialist), Meghan Mulroy-Goldman (community forester), Lara Johnson (urban & community forestry program coordinator) and Manij Upadhyay (area forester) treated six trees in the swamps surrounding Stumpy Lake in Virginia Beach, and 36 on Joint Base Langley-Eustis (JBLE) in York County. While treating trees at JBLE, they also demonstrated treatment techniques for Alicia Garcia (JBLE natural resources program manager) so that these trees can be preserved into the future.
- ◆ Molly O'Liddy, Katlin Dewitt and Meghan Mulroy-Goldman treated an additional eight pumpkin ash trees near Stumpy Lake in Virginia Beach.
- ◆ Clint Phegley (area forester/coastal resiliency team lead), Eli Podyma (community forest specialist), and Bryant Bays attended the Lower Chickahominy Watershed Summit. The Lower Chickahominy Watershed Summit is hosted by PlanRVA in partnership with Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program through the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), and facilitated by the Institute for Engagement and Negotiation at the University of Virginia. These organizations have been working together on a five-year Lower Chickahominy watershed project with a goal of advancing natural resource conservation and sustainable economic development in New Kent, Charles City and James City Counties. The goal of this summit is to refine the stakeholder-driven framework into a set of specific strategies that can be implemented over the next five years, with priority attention to those that can be implemented in the next year to advance natural resource conservation and sustainable economic development. Summit participants included key staff from New Kent, Charles City and James City Counties, as well as three Tribes that have historical and economic interests in the watershed, state agencies, and leaders in the not-for-profit and business community, and interested citizens.
- ◆ Eli Podyma and Jeremy Falkenau (senior area forester) attended the first meeting of the Richmond Green City Commission Tree Committee. This recently formed committee was established to provide natural resource agencies, partners and interested citizens with an outlet to discuss urban forestry needs and develop action items within the City of Richmond, focusing on supporting the efforts of [Richmond300](#) and [RVAGreen2050](#).
- ◆ Katlin DeWitt and Meghan Mulroy-Goldman met with DCR staff to monitor sassafras for laurel wilt disease at False Cape State Park in Virginia Beach. The disease, which affects species of the Lauraceae family including sassafras and redbay, has been found as far north as North Carolina, and in 2019, jumped to Kentucky and Tennessee. They also got a tour of the park and observed the maritime dune scrubs, dune woodlands and upland forests. Development along the Atlantic Coast has removed much of these communities, so they enjoyed seeing these unique habitats that are protected within the park.

Central Region

- ◆ The Shenandoah work area met with a local Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS) member to visit a site in Winchester with large spotted lanternfly populations. VDACS is currently working with contract crews to treat *Ailanthus* trees with a combination of herbicide and insecticide throughout the greater Winchester area. (pictured)
- ◆ Matt Wolanski (senior area forester) met with the invasive species control contractor at the Paul State Forest, where they will be targeting *Ailanthus*, multiflora rose, mile-a-minute, and Japanese stiltgrass.
- ◆ Matthew Hutchins (forest technician), David Powell (senior area forester) and Chuck Wright (area forester) met with a private contractor to begin planning and implementing a kudzu eradication project on James Monroe's Highland. The project will be a hybrid mechanical and herbicide treatment project.



- ◆ The Shenandoah work area hosted a localized bulldozer refresher for two full-time staff and five part-time fire fighters. The course was developed by Darwin Rhodes (forest technician), who led the training designed for each individual to advance their skills in a safe, challenging, and fun environment. Thank you, Darwin! (pictured)



- ◆ David Stone (forester specialist) has been working on a special project since late spring to develop and expand Agricultural/Forestral Districts (AFD) in Louisa County. He recently handed in applications to the Louisa County Planning Department to expand one existing AFD by 5,025 acres on 72 tax parcels, expanding two existing AFDs by 568 acres and creating a new AFD called Trevilian Station, which will contain 5,049 acres on 72 tax parcels. When approved by the Louisa County Board of Supervisors, subdivisions are not permitted in the new AFD for the 10-year term of the district, which can be renewed. These additions will expand Louisa's AFDs by 10,642 acres on 149 tax parcels. Communicating with numerous land owners to encourage their participation has played a significant role in this project. State Code of Virginia characterizes the purpose of an AFD as a means to "... conserve, protect and encourage the development and improvement of agricultural and forestal lands for the production of food and other agricultural and forestal products, and conserve and protect agricultural and forestal lands as valued and ecological resources which provide essential open spaces for clean air sheds, watershed protection, wildlife habitat as well as aesthetic and other environmental purposes". [[Read this Field Notes post from earlier this year about David's work with AFDs.](#)]

Western Region

- ◆ Dylan White (forest technician) used community service leave to assist incoming freshmen at Roanoke College with a Habitat for Humanity house build. He has been active with Habitat since his days at Roanoke College and volunteers annually as a crew leader.
- ◆ Chris Thomsen (regional forester) made a "Forestry as a Career" presentation to interested seniors attending Roanoke County's Northside High School.

Public Information

- ◆ The website redesign workgroup met August 17 to establish recommendations and vision for the development contractor. The group looked at several examples of websites and design elements, identified audiences and discussed calls to action. The group's recommendations have been shared with the contractor who will use that information to create initial template designs for us.
- ◆ Page Hutchinson (Virginia Project Learning Tree coordinator) was interviewed by national Project Learning Tree (PLT) for an article in their monthly newsletter, The Branch. The article will highlight the three state coordinators who have taken the lead to implement blended PLT workshops and set the standard for all other coordinators.
- ◆ Page participated in a two-session webinar, *Best Practices for Virtual PD*.
- ◆ Raina DeFonza videotaped Page demonstrating the PLT activity "We All Need Trees" specifically to be used in virtual PLT workshops.

News Clips

- ◆ [National Forest Timber for Sale Integrated Resource Timber Contract ...](#)
- ◆ [Storied wood gets a second chapter](#)
- ◆ [What is legacy planning and why it is important.](#)
- ◆ [CA Asks Other States for Help Battling Hundreds of Wildfires](#)
- ◆ [All the Ways the Pandemic Makes the Wildfire Crisis Worse](#)
- ◆ [No mess-tent meals, no giant camps: This is wildfire fighting in Colorado during coronavirus](#)
- ◆ [The forest industry is essential — so are the employees who work in it](#)
- ◆ [Is Going Paperless Really Better for the Environment?](#)
- ◆ [White Paper: Family-owned Forests and Carbon Markets](#)
- ◆ [Water Supply from Southern State and Private Forest Lands](#)