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Employee Spotlight

Capital Work Area – Great Job!

- ◆ The below email was received from Eastern State Hospital Building & Ground Superintendent David Pratt in regards to harvest operations done:
 - "thank you, it was a pleasure having your team and contractors on our facility, David"
- ◆ Great job by all who assisted with the thinning project consisting of marking, cruising and administration of the harvesting!
- ◆ Thank you to Jeremy Falkenau (senior area forester) and other folks in the Capital work area for completing the harvest Best Management Practices (BMP) work needed on the Eastern State Hospital Harvest area. The cost for doing the work was deducted from the buyer's cash bond with their agreement for VDOF to perform the work!

Last Week

Forestland Conservation

- ◆ Lara Johnson (urban & community forestry [U&CF] program manager) and Molly O’Liddy (U&CF partnership coordinator) met with Lynchburg City Arborist Sarah Hagan and Lynchburg Tree Stewards to discuss partnership opportunities and demonstrate sonic tomography advanced tree risk assessment techniques.
- ◆ U&CF, Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE) and Trees Virginia hosted the first Waynesboro Tree Webinar on Leveraging Technology to Care for Mature Trees with Van Yahres Tree Company. More

than 320 people watched virtually. This is the first of a month-long series happening every Wednesday in September.

Forest Resource Management

- ◆ Deya Ramsden (James River buffer coordinator) organized a buffer training day at the Department of Corrections (DOC) State Farm facility in Goochland and Powhatan Counties On September 2. Riparian forest buffers are one of the most effective ways to protect water quality and VDOF will play a significant role in Virginia's efforts to establish new riparian buffers. The training was attended by approximately 20 VDOF staff, along with Amber Ellis, Ann Maire Roberts and Joey Shelton from the James River Association. Hunter Landis of DOC agribusiness welcomed the group and provide background on the goals on the property. Topics covered by VDOF staff included addressing concentrated water flow issues (Rodney Newlin, water quality engineer), specific buffer plans for the State Farm Property (Chuck Wright and Heather Dowling, area foresters), site preparation and herbicides (Jerre Creighton, research program manager), other buffer programs (Todd Groh, forest resource management coordinator) and natural regeneration (Dean Cumbia, director forest resource management).
- ◆ The Hardwood Management Initiative is taking shape. As part of a follow-up to the Upland Hardwood Silviculture training in July, the training group met virtually on September 3. The primary topic of discussion was a hardwood management survey, designed to gather input and ideas. Survey questions addressed barriers to management, steps to improve management and action steps that may be possible to achieve better management. Additionally, the group discussed development of demonstration areas for better management.
- ◆ In the western part of the Mountain Valley work area flows the Cowpasture River, coming out of Bath County into Alleghany County. The lower portion of the watershed includes significant National Forest property and private farms and timberland, as well as lands owned by The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and Douthat State Park. It has been the focus of efforts to improve forest management though a project known as the Joint Chiefs Lower Cowpasture Project. This is a cooperative effort of the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) Chief and the Natural Resources Conservation Service Chief to bring resources to both federal and private land. VDOF is a part of this effort. On September 3, members of the Mountain Valley team Patti Nylander (senior area forester), Clint Folks (area forester) Brad Carico (deputy regional forester), along with Todd Groh and Dean Cumbia, met to plan activities for the coming year. Some of these will include developing management plans and demonstration areas and deploying two new sets of portable timber bridges.

Agency Lands

- ◆ Dennis Gaston (state forest forester) and Ed Stoots (state lands coordinator) met and discussed conservation efforts with Brian van Eerden, Director of TNC's Virginia Pinelands Program at their preserve adjacent to the Big Woods State Forest. TNC is an excellent partner with VDOF and others in conserving pinelands in southeast Virginia and bringing back the Red Cockaded Woodpecker in the area.
- ◆ Invasive species control work was completed on the Paul and Whitney State Forests last week.

State-Owned Lands:

- ◆ A National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) grant has been awarded for a large riparian buffer project on the Augusta Correctional Center near Craigsville. More than \$500,000 has been awarded to aid in various riparian buffer projects, which will be implemented with additional funding to aid the project from the State-Owned Lands Fund when ready to proceed.

Eastern Region

- ◆ Eli Podyma (community forester), Meghan Mulroy-Goldman, and Robbie Lewis (senior area forester/coastal resiliency lead) gave a presentation at a Lower James River Roundtable Meeting. The collective presentation focused on VDOF's expanding role in urban and community forestry and coastal resiliency.
- ◆ Jesse Bander (forest technician) assisted with a training with New Kent Fire and Rescue, focusing on safely working around operating bulldozers. During the training, firefighters were able to clear around a communications tower where the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration will be installing new weather equipment.
- ◆ Lisa Deaton (area forester) led a presentation during the September 3 breakfast meeting of the Rotary Club of Mathews. She discussed the services provided by VDOF, common forest management practices in the work area and local forest health concerns. Spotted lanternfly identification materials were distributed, and one club member described infestations he had seen in Pennsylvania.

Central Region

- ◆ Sarah Parmelee (area forester) organized a part-time bulldozer operator training in Rappahannock County. Two operators participated in the event where they installed fireline for a prescribed fire to be completed this fall and practiced loading and unloading the bulldozers on the transport's metal beds. Both operators are gaining skill and confidence operating the larger 550 bulldozers.
- ◆ Joe Rossetti (senior area forester) participated in the planning for a Regional Conservation Partnership Program application under consideration by the Piedmont Environmental Council, Rappahannock Rapidan Regional Commission and many other partners. The group is still determining which resource concerns the application will focus on, but water quality seems most likely.
- ◆ Shenandoah Habitats completed two-and-a-half days of herbicide treatment on the Whitney State Forest to begin control of an approximately six-acre patch of Kudzu. They cut and treated all vines going up trees, as well as some bittersweet vines, and conducted foliar treatments to everything else they could reach.