



**October 12, 2020**

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**Employee News**

*Thank You – Ed Stoots and Jack Colyer*

- ◆ A thank you note from Department of General Services (DGS) Project Manager Michael Gilbert.
  - “Just a quick note to say thanks to Ed Stoots (state lands coordinator) and Jack Colyer (forest technician) for all of the help and guidance through the tree harvesting process. We could not have done it without you, and we picked up some valuable knowledge along the way thanks to the additional work you did to give us an understanding of the mill needs for lumber re-integration into the hospital project architecture. We’ve successfully landed the lumber at the mill and have them under contract for the special millwork. Also, the buffer layout work that Jack did was very valuable and helped both the harvester and Department of Historic Resources (DHR) and DGS out substantially.”

## Condolences

- ◆ Former VDOF Regional Forester Roland Bruce Geddes passed away October 9. Please see the link for details.  
<https://memorials.faulknerfuneralhcs.com/roland-geddes/4353906/obituary.php#details>

## Coming Up

### Fueling Collaboration Panel Discussion Series

- ◆ A series of interactive panel discussions designed to encourage collaboration between fire managers and researchers. This discussion series will be built on questions from the registered attendees. Register for a chance to get the latest in fire science and management and answers to your burning questions. Upcoming discussions will be:
  - Pairing Historical Fire Regimes with Silviculture – November 19, 2020
  - Using Fire Seasonality to Open the Burn Window – December 17, 2020
  - Fire and Climate Change – January 21, 2021
  - Timber Management and Prescribed Fire – February 18, 2021
- ◆ Register at <https://apfire.wixsite.com/fuelingcollaboration>

## Project Updates

### IFRIS Time Reporting Codes

- ◆ We are one year away from the state-wide conversion to the Commonwealth's Human Capital Management System – **Cardinal HCM** – when the time reporting module of IFRIS will be retired and we will enter our time worked directly into the state system. Below are seventeen additional time reporting codes that have been deactivated in IFRIS. By streamlining our current time codes, the pending transition will be easier for everyone. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact [Faye DiFazio](#) at headquarters.

Time Category	Time Code	Alternative Time Category/Time Code
Public Outreach/Ed - For Markets	All Other Forest Markets	<b>Time Category:</b> Prof Services - Forest Markets; <b>Time Code:</b> All Other Forest Markets
Prof Services - Forest Mgt	Conservation Stewardship Program - NRCS	<b>Time Category:</b> Prof Services - Forest Mgt; <b>Time Code:</b> All Other Services
Public Outreach/Ed - Forest Mgt	CRP/CREP	<b>Time Category:</b> Prof Services - Forest Mgt; <b>Time Code:</b> All Other Outreach
Grants/Funds - Dedicated	Emergency Forestry Restoration Program	Grant closed
Agency Administration	Forest Research & Tree Improvement Admin	<b>Time Category:</b> Agency Administration; <b>Time Code:</b> Other Programs/Work Units Ad
Grants/Funds - Dedicated	GIT4 Healthy Watersheds	Grant closed
Grants/Funds - Dedicated	Non-DOF State Lands	<b>Time Category:</b> Forest Management Practices; <b>Time Code:</b> Non-DOF State Lands
Prof Services - Forest Mgt	Non-DOF State Lands Assistance	<b>Time Category:</b> Forest Management Practices; <b>Time Code:</b> Non-DOF State Lands
Public Outreach/Ed - Forest Mgt	NRCS Programs	<b>Time Category:</b> Prof Services - Forest Mgt; <b>Time Code:</b> All Other Services
Prof Services - Forest Mgt	Other Certifications	<b>Time Category:</b> Prof Services - Forest Mgt; <b>Time Code:</b> All Other Services
Forest Management Plans	RCP - NRCS	<b>Time Category:</b> Forest Management Plans; <b>Time Code:</b> All Other Cost Share Plans
Forest Management Practices	RCP - NRCS	<b>Time Category:</b> Forest Management Practices; <b>Time Code:</b> All Other Projects
Grants/Funds - Dedicated	RCP - NRCS	<b>Time Category:</b> Forest Management Practices; <b>Time Code:</b> All Other Projects
Forest Management Plans	RCP - PRISM	<b>Time Category:</b> Forest Management Plans; <b>Time Code:</b> All Other Cost Share Plans
Public Outreach/Ed - For Markets	Service Providers & Products	<b>Time Category:</b> Prof Services - Forest Markets; <b>Time Code:</b> Service Providers & Prod
Forest Management Plans	Tomorrow Woods Plan	Grant closed
Forest Management Practices	Tomorrow Woods Project	Grant closed

## Last Week

### State Forester

- ◆ Rob Farrell participated in the Virginia Fire Services Board and the Fire Prevention and Control Committee meetings. The Board discussed changes to the procedures of the Statewide Fire Prevention Code Development Committee to help ensure fire services issues are adequately represented in committee decisions.
- ◆ Rob Farrell participated in the American Forest Foundation Woodland Operations Committee meeting as the National Association of State Foresters liaison.
- ◆ The agency's Senior Area Foresters (SAF) met in Charlottesville to discuss areas of mutual interest and concern and possible improvements to agency operations. Of particular interest this year were COVID-19 related issues and concerns and how to best implement the next step of our Going Mobile initiative. Greg Estoll was re-elected for another one-year term as SAF representative to the Leadership Roundtable.

### Forestland Conservation

- ◆ The Waynesboro Tree Workshop held its fifth webinar last week. This final webinar focused on urban tree canopy cover and featured Virginia Tech Professor Eric Wiseman. More than 220 people attended the webinar.
- ◆ Terry Lasher (assistant state forester) hosted the inaugural meeting of the State Level Coordinating Committee for the formulation of the Sentinel Landscapes application for Virginia. The group consisted of members of multiple non-governmental agencies, representatives of each branch of the military, federal agencies, state agencies and the offices of the Secretary of Military and Veterans Affairs and the Secretary of Agriculture and Forestry. The group discussed the application process, goals of the landscape, timelines and next steps.

### Forest Resource Management

- ◆ The Reforestation of Timberlands (RT) Program is an important program for forest landowners, forest industry and the Commonwealth of Virginia. The success of this Program is primarily due to the VDOF foresters and technicians who make the program work on the ground. The final accomplishments for the 2020 fiscal year are in the following table.

Region	# of Agreements	Total Acres	Net Acres*	Total Landowner Incentives Paid
Central	510	38,805	23,855	\$1,259,060.00
Eastern	498	36,249	23,601	\$1,113,709.00
Western	128	4,952	3,281	\$173,412.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	1,136	80,006	50,737	\$2,546,181.00

\*Actual acres, "footprint", where prescriptions were completed.

- ◆ RT Program at a glance:
  - The average size of property enrolled in the RT Program is 43 acres
  - The RT incentives are covering about 33 percent of landowner costs

- 99 percent of acres are planted with loblolly pine,
  - 88 percent of acres that are being site prepared are using herbicide (pine and hardwood, and hardwood only)
  - 73 percent of all the acres planted this year were site prepared
- ◆ Todd Groh (forest resource management coordinator), represented the VDOF at the Smith Creek Watershed Partnership's 10th Anniversary Celebration on October 2 on former USDA Natural Resources and Conservation Services (NRCS) Chief Matt Lohr's farm in Rockingham County. Several dignitaries from the National NRCS office were present to hear the stories of federal, state, and private groups coming together to leverage funding to improve and protect the Smith Creek watershed. Secretary of Agriculture and Forestry Bettina Ring spoke about partnerships between the many groups that were the key to getting the good work done on the ground.
  - ◆ VDOF Forest Inventory & Analysis (FIA) crews have completed and transmitted 98 percent of the inventory plots in the VA2019 panel of work as of October 1 (FIA staff had completed 89 percent as of September 1). In addition, FIA crews have completed two percent of the VA2020 panel of work as of October 1. VDOF has made excellent progress at returning Virginia to a five year plot re-measurement interval. This represents approximately five percent more of the FIA field workload that has been completed this year, in comparison with the same point in 2019. FIA field staff was reduced by 50 percent during the FY2013-FY2015 period, due to reductions in federal funding. With current staffing levels, the progress to reduce the resulting backlog from FY13-FY15 has been gradual—but steady—since then.
  - ◆ The 2020 emerald ash borer (EAB) treatment cost-share program wrapped up at the end of September. A total of 141 applications were completed and almost \$84,000 in cost share funds distributed. Recipients came from 75 different municipalities and included private landowners, historical organizations, communities and non-profits. There is funding for one more year of this program so encourage eligible landowners and organizations to apply next spring!
  - ◆ The Forest Stewardship Coordinating Committee met, virtually, September 30. The committee is composed of representatives of state and federal agencies, private organizations, universities and landowners. The committee is primarily tasked with making recommendations to the State Forester concerning the administration of the Forest Stewardship Program and the Forest Legacy Program. However, the committee is also used to gather feedback on a variety of current forestry topics. The main items for this meeting were to move two Forest Legacy projects forward for submission into the national funding pool, and to brainstorm ways of reaching unengaged landowners. The VDOF was represented by Todd Groh, Dean Cumbia (forest resource management director), Ed Zimmer (deputy state forester) and Andrew Fotinos (Western Region forest conservation specialist).
  - ◆ Todd Groh attended the Mountain Lake Vegetative Management Council's virtual meeting on September 29. This group is composed of public and private sector companies, groups, and individuals who are all interested in the safe and economic use of pesticides. The presentations for this meeting were about long-range planning, application timing around threatened and endangered species, wildlife habitat, and an update on current and potential regulatory items-of-interest to the Council. Although it was a shortened conference, it provided a lot of good information about the use of pesticides across the region.

## Agency Lands

- ◆ Garland Gray Forestry Center has completed the fall inventory. There are 28,580,000 loblolly pine seedlings available for sale. Our bulk contractors have already submitted requests for the total production. Online store orders are being fulfilled with the seedlings grown at Augusta, and we estimate there will be 800,000 available for purchase in the store.

- ◆ The contract crew began collecting this year's loblolly cone crop at New Kent on October 1. Progress so far is good but it's too early to start projecting or summarizing the overall crop. The crew will move on to Appomattox-Buckingham State Forest once they finish at New Kent.
- ◆ Augusta Forestry Center field staff removed fumigation plastic from the 18 acres that was fumigated and collected over 800 pounds of acorns and nuts.
- ◆ William Good (forestry center technician) and Josh McLaughlin (assistant forestry center manager) did a socially distanced lab for nine students from the Dabney Lancaster Community College Silviculture class. The class consisted of a tour and dendrology quiz.
- ◆ In the office the 2020-2021 seedling sales started. We took in a total of 228 orders that had \$106,235 thousand dollars attached to it.
- ◆ Mike Womack met with Holiday Lake State Park staff to look at areas that need some fill dirt at a campsite to make improvements and locate some campfire wood near the park for them to cut for park visitors.
- ◆ A volunteer planter at Cumberland State Forest has now planted a total of eight fields in cold weather forage for wildlife. He is an avid hunter and retired military. The local hunt club that he belongs to does a volunteer hunt each year for wounded veterans. Many of these hunts will take place on Cumberland State Forest. On September 30 the volunteer discovered damage to the game plots from a small SUV getting stuck in the mud and having to be pulled out by a truck, resulting in giant ruts and destruction to 10 percent or more of the plot. Pictures were taken by on-site game camera of the vehicles and individuals.
- ◆ Ed Stoots (state-owned lands manager), Tom Zaebst (assistant state forests manager), Gary Heiser (state forests manager), Raina DeFonza (public information specialist), and Andrew Fotinos toured property previously owned by Stanley Land & Lumber Corporation that is being acquired in phases as the new Charlotte State Forest. The tract, known as the Greenwood Tract, is currently owned by The Conservation Fund. Since 1978, the tract has been managed with the assistance of MeadWestvaco and the Virginia Department of Forestry. Hopes are to close on the first phase of the acquisition by the end of 2020. Raina took photos of VDOF's soon-to-be State Forest and assessed the logistics and needs for a future event next year.

### **Eastern Region**

- ◆ The Eastern Region hosted a mini fall fire academy last week at New Kent Forestry Center. It consisted of two classes: S-212 Saw Class and Emergency Vehicle Operator Course (EVOC). Bill Perry (Central Region area forester) led the S-212 class with help from Jesse Bander and Jay Bassett (forest technicians), and Dave Milby (area forester). This class taught students how to safely operate chainsaws in the field. Instructors from Hanover County Fire & EMS taught the EVOC course, which focused on how to safely maneuver emergency vehicles of different sizes. In the end nine VDOF students completed S-212 and six VDOF students completed EVOC.

### **Public Information**

- ◆ Media coverage of VDOF acorn collection continues to gain traction. The news release and social media posts have garnered attention with traditional media outlets as well as many online journals, blogs and social media pages. This story features an interview with Josh McLaughlin (assistant forestry center manager).
- ◆ Ellen Powell (conservation educator) led an outdoor tree identification session for nine students in the Natural Resources Management class at Sweet Briar College. This semester's class will be working on assessment and management recommendations for the campus' extensive forestlands.

- ◆ The final design for the home and landing pages of the new VDOF website have been approved. Next steps include content development and database creation/utilization functions.

### ***News Clips***

- ◆ [Earth Notes: The Future Of Woody Biomass](#)
- ◆ [Biochar to go: New process will make carbon-rich soil supplement on-site](#)
- ◆ [21 Reasons Why Forests Are Important](#)
- ◆ [Groups fight for Maryland forest on chopping block](#)
- ◆ [Our forests: Denying science kills species](#)
- ◆ [The National Forest Foundation \(NFF\) and USDA Forest Service Announce Partnership with The VF Foundation to Create Front Range Stewardship Strike Team](#)
- ◆ [Forests Near or Far Can Protect Water for Cities](#)
- ◆ [A Yearly Health Checkup for U.S. Forests](#)