



November 9, 2020

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Employee Spotlight

Andrew Vinson and Dylan White– Job Well Done!

- ◆ Below note was received from Virginia Outdoors Foundation (VOF) Administrative Director of Stewardship Harry Hibbitts.
 - “I wanted to reach out and thank you for the time, talent, and energy Andrew Vinson and Dylan White provided to Virginia Outdoors Foundation (VOF) staff on October 22, 2020. From what I have been told, Andrew and Dylan provided a valuable overview of forestry practices focusing on water quality protection, including best management practices at a property in Botetourt County near Fincastle.”

Employee News

Uniform Invoices

- ◆ Effective immediately please begin sending your Receiving Reports (Form 3.15) and any questions about your uniform order to Christine Gough at christine.gough@dof.virginia.gov

Project Updates

Policy and Procedures

- ◆ [Policy and Procedure 1-5 Small Unmanned Aircraft Systems \(sUAS\)](#) – Please review this new policy and procedure it provides guidance to promote safe, efficient, and lawful operation of VDOF small unmanned aircraft systems.

Urban Wood Project

- ◆ Recently the Virginia Urban Wood Group published its third VA Urban Wood newsletter. The e-newsletter is distributed through the Trees Virginia Constant Contact platform.
- ◆ Over 280 people received this edition, including VDOF personnel who have been involved in the Urban Wood program. Many thanks to Molly O'Liddy (urban & community forestry [U&CF] partnership coordinator) and Becky Woodson (forest management programs coordinator) for their editorial assistance with this project.
- ◆ Following is a link that will take you to the latest edition of the VA Urban Wood newsletter. Please contact Joe Lehnen (joe.lehnen@dof.virginia.gov) if you would like to be included on the distribution list >> <https://conta.cc/2TAIDJx>
- ◆ The Virginia Urban Wood Project has also been participating in the four-week Natural Area Management Series training webinars. These training sessions were developed by a cadre from Virginia Tech Extension, Penn State Extension, University of Maryland Extension, Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay and VDOF. The main goal is to develop an expanding base of service providers to serve the needs of small parcel landowners across the multi-state area. The average attendance for the first three webinars has been 180 participants, approximately 60 from Virginia.

Last Week

State Forester

- ◆ Rob Farrell, Dean Cumbia (director of forest resource management), Todd Groh (forest resource management program coordinator) and Jerre Creighton (research program manager) prepared field tour locations and routes and delivered a one-day upland hardwood assessment training session based at the Holiday Lake 4H Center. Attendees spent the morning hearing a description of the VDOF's hardwood stand assessment process and the afternoon testing it in three nearby hardwood stands.

Forestland Conservation

- ◆ Andrew Fotinos (forestland conservation specialist), worked with Adam Downing and Bill Worrell of Forestry Extension on September 29 to put on a one-hour training webinar for statewide Soil and Water Conservation District staff. The webinar provided an introduction to the agency's Generation NEXT Estate/Legacy Planning program, and train-the-trainer material for how/why to bring up this topic with customers. The brand new Generation NEXT publication for landowners is available as a PDF download, offering a nine-step process for landowners to keep their forestland intact, in forest, and in the family: <https://www.pubs.ext.vt.edu/CNRE/CNRE-121/CNRE-121.html>. Print publications will be available around the first of the year.
- ◆ Lara Johnson (urban & community forestry [U&CF] program manager) met with Shenandoah Valley Electric Cooperative to assist them with filling out their first Tree Line USA application.
- ◆ Terry Lasher (assistant state forester) participated in the quarterly "Virginia International Trade Work Group" meeting. The meeting consisted of participants from Virginia Economic Development

Partnership (VEDP), Virginia Department of Agricultural and Consumer Services (VDACS), Virginia Tourism Corporation (VTC), VA Ports and others. The group discussed outlooks for Virginia in 2021, how agencies have positioned themselves in light of COVID-19, and updates regarding current projects such as resource verification programs, trade guides, the website and conference schedules.

- ◆ Terry Lasher represented VDOF at the monthly Chesapeake Bay Interagency meeting. This meeting is attended by state agencies to discuss and address progress towards the 2025 WIPIII goals. Of interest in this meeting was the status of the VDOF accomplishments to the Best Management Practices (BMP) Warehouse.
- ◆ Terry Lasher represented the VDOF at the quarterly Chesapeake Bay Stakeholder Advisory Group meeting. At this meeting the agencies provide updates to various stakeholders across the Bay watershed on Virginia's progress towards the 2025 WIPIII goals.
- ◆ Terry Lasher represented the VDOF at the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay Annual Watershed Forum. A virtual platform provided an opportunity for those engaged in Bay work to discuss programs, projects and timely approaches to our collaborative work on Bay issues.
- ◆ Terry Lasher represented the agency at the Blue Ridge Conservation Alliance's Annual Forum. A virtual platform that allowed the conservation community to discuss how we can better plan regional conservation efforts and the potential missing pieces from our processes.

Agency Lands

- ◆ This year's pine cone collection was completed by contract crews at the New Kent Forestry Center orchards. A total of 3280 bushels (bu) of loblolly pine cones were harvested and are projected to yield a total of approximately 47 million seedlings. This year's effort focused on our best producing families: control pollinated (120 bu, 1.36 MM), Virginia's Best (1420 bu, 20.65 MM), and Elite (1680 bu, 24.12 MM). In addition, 20 bu of each of the three loblolly families that are most resistant to fusiform rust were gathered and will provide approximately .78 MM seedlings for landowners concerned about that disease in their area. Shortleaf pine cones were also collected - a total of 23 bushels that should yield more than a half million seedlings. All cones have been trucked to our contracted cone processing / seed cleaning vendor in Georgia. Many thanks to Ones Bitoki (tree improvement forester) and Jeff Stout (tree improvement technician) for their many weeks of preparation and oversight of this important effort.
- ◆ VDOF Forest Inventory & Analysis (FIA) crews have completed field work on the VA2019 panel of plots as of November 2. Southern Research Station Forest Inventory staff are now processing the results of the data collection, which will be sent to VDOF for a 30-day review. After that, the results will be available to users.
- ◆ FIA crews have completed six percent of the VA2020 panel of work as of November 1.
- ◆ The nurseries have successfully packed their third container crop of just over 300,000 trees. They were lifted the second week of October, more than a week earlier than previous years. The nursery worked with Weyerhaeuser in moving the packing date earlier in hopes to increase fall growth. The fertilizer program we implemented this year caused an average increase in root-crown diameter from 3.2mm last year to 4mm this year.
- ◆ Both nurseries have been working to make their grading room safer in response to COVID-19. Some of the precautions that we are taking include:
 - Only using grading tables that are six feet apart.
 - Constructed fiberglass barriers on each grading table.
 - Promoting handwashing and cleaning.

- Requiring contractors to wear a mask and face shield anything they are less than six feet apart.
- ◆ Jerre Creighton joined Ed Stoots (state lands coordinator), Patti Nylander (senior area forester), Adam Dowling (VT Extension) and Charlie Huppuch (consultant) for a visit to McCormick Farm hardwood stands slated for potential harvest activities. Discussions centered around advance regeneration (or lack thereof), invasive species and planning for demonstration areas. In addition, the team cruised and marked a small area for thinning between final harvest areas in the stand where patch clearcut demonstrations will occur.

Eastern Region

- ◆ Lara Johnson, John Hisghman (deputy regional forester), Scott Bachman (senior area forester), Manij Upadhyay and Stephan Jasenak (foresters) and Meghan Mulroy-Goldman (community forester) assisted Virginia Beach Parks and Recreation staff and approximately 30 volunteers with reforesting approximately two acres of land in the Asheville Park neighborhood of Virginia Beach with a variety of native hardwood species.

This effort was the first step in a process of reforesting a piece of property that Virginia Beach purchased back from developers after it was determined that the site was a wetland and unsuitable for development. After the buyback, Virginia Beach Councilwomen Barbra Henley, Virginia Beach City Arborist Susan French, and Parks and Recreation Operations Coordinator Symsi Denson saw an opportunity to make a positive impact on the city by reforesting the area. Lara Johnson, Molly O’Liddy and Meghan Mulroy-Goldman worked with the city to develop a reforestation plan featuring a variety of native species. We look forward to seeing the whole area converted back to forest in the future.

Here is a link to the news story covering the planting project:

<https://www.13newsnow.com/video/weather/to-stop-flooding-virginia-beach-employees-plant-800-trees-in-ashville-park/291-8f47ba21-871f-449a-ab04-2d19647304fd> (pictured).

- ◆ Matthew Coleman (senior area forester) worked with Rappahannock River Steward with Friends of the Rappahannock Brent Hunsinger on Saturday, October 31, to give away approximately 200 potted trees of various species. This project was funded by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and the Arbor Day Foundation. Trees were pre-ordered and each order included three trees of the same or mixed species. This event was held in Port Royal as part of a series of similar events along the Rappahannock River. (pictured)



- ◆ Heather Dowling (senior area forester) presented a virtual field trip for Pleasants Lane Elementary School in Petersburg. Using pre-recorded video, eighty fourth grade students accompanied Heather on a walk through the (virtual) woods. Topics discussed included forest products, ecosystems, erosion and life as a forester.

Public Information

- ◆ An article about prescribed fire recently appeared in *Blue Ridge Outdoor Magazine*. The article pulls together all of the goals of Cohesive Strategy and shows the collaborative efforts that occur frequently

in the Southern region. The embedded video is a great video explaining the why and how we conduct prescribed burns. <https://www.blueridgeoutdoors.com/magazine/fighting-fire-with-fire/>

News Clips

- ◆ [Road, logging restrictions to end in largest national forest](#)
- ◆ [State wildlife agency opposes plan to build hospital near Carolina Forest preserve land](#)
- ◆ [GHOSTLY FORESTS ON EASTERN SHORE HAVE A STORY TO TELL](#)
- ◆ [DNR Releases Forest Action Plan; Prioritizes Local Forests And Concerns](#)
- ◆ [UP Couple Invites Rare Birds Using Forest Management](#)
- ◆ [Bound for the EU, American-made biomass checks the right boxes](#)
- ◆ [Forests & Fires - Perfect Together However?](#)
- ◆ [Near Peak Fall Foliage Blankets Much of the Washington Region](#)
- ◆ [Keeping trout where they belong: Trout Unlimited, Bitterroot Forest find partners in placing two fish screens](#)
- ◆ [Certification allows loggers to LEAP into sustainability](#)
- ◆ [Baseball Bats and Ash Trees Face an Uncertain Fate](#)
- ◆ [Forests and Fires: Perfect Together, However...](#)
- ◆ [Harnessing nature to fight climate change](#)
- ◆ [Using tree bark, U of T researcher develops new generation of sustainable products](#)
- ◆ [How droughts affect forests](#)
- ◆ [Rooftop Camera Will Track How Local Forests Change With the Climate](#)