



March 15, 2021

Contents

Employee News	1
Welcome to VDOF!	1
Project Updates	1
Urban Wood Project Update	1
Last Week	2
State Forester	2
Forestland Conservation.....	2
Forest Resource Management	4
Agency Lands	4
State Forest.....	5
State-Owned Lands.....	5
Central Region	6
Western Region	7
Public Information	8
News Clips.....	8

Employee News

Welcome to VDOF!

- ◆ The VDOF would like to welcome Peter Schoderbek as a new area forester position in the Rappahannock Work Area. Peter is a native of western New Jersey and has a B.S. in Forestry from West Virginia University plus seven months of experience working for the state forestry agency in Connecticut. His start date will be March 25.

Project Updates

Urban Wood Project Update

- ◆ Recently the Virginia Urban Wood Group published its sixth VA Urban/Local Wood newsletter. The e-newsletter is distributed through the Trees Virginia Constant Contact platform.
 - At least 297 people received this edition, including VDOF personnel interested in the Urban Wood program.

- 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/3usrhid>
- ◆ The Virginia Urban Wood Project has also been participating in the four-week, eight session, Natural Area Management Series Level-2 training webinars. These training sessions were developed by a cadre from VA 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 four webinars has been 130 participants, approximately 35 from Virginia.

Last Week

State Forester

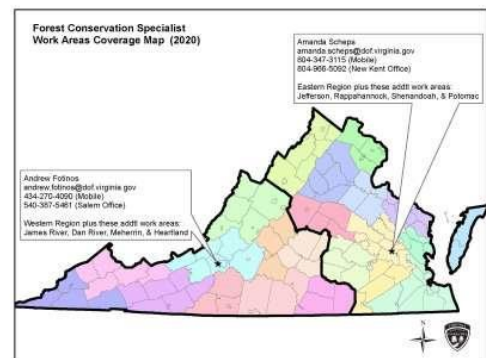
- ◆ VDOF hosted the first virtual meeting of the Board of Forestry. This meeting was necessary for the board to vote on the annual revisions to the Reforestation of Timberlands cost share program practices and rates. The board also voted for Ken Morgan of Morgan Lumber Corp. to serve as the chairperson and Beth Hutchins of Flippo Lumber Corp. to serve as vice chair for the coming year.

Forestland Conservation

- ◆ Joe Lehnen (urban wood utilization forester) coordinated a VDOF/Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS) visit to the new, mass timber APEX Energy Building under construction in Charlottesville. This eight-story building combines both Cross-laminated timber (CLT) panels and Glue Laminated (Glulam) timber beams. The group had the opportunity to tour the project with representatives from William McDonough & Partners (architects) and Hourigan Construction which serves as the general contractor for the project. (pictured)
- ◆ Joe Lehnen collaborated with Katlin DeWitt (forest health specialist) to produce a [Field Notes on emerald ash borer \(EAB\) ash mortality](#) and the utilization opportunities for these trees. Also included in the article is information on safe felling.
- ◆ Lara Johnson (urban & community forestry [U&CF] program manager) presented to the Chesapeake Bay Program Forestry Workgroup about urban heat islands and how the state program is utilizing new data to prioritize tree planting projects funded through pass-through grants.
- ◆ The first week of the Roanoke Workshop Webinar Series, hosted by Trees Virginia, occurred last week. This presentation was given to us by Dr. Lara Roman of the USDA Forest Service (USFS) Northern Research Station. Dr. Roman spoke about her on-going research in urban tree mortality and monitoring. The virtual event was attended by 165 people. There will be five webinars throughout the month of March.
- ◆ Molly O'Liddy (U&CF partnership coordinator), Jim McGlone (urban forest specialist) and Meghan Mulroy-Goldman (community forester) attended the USFS I-Tree Academy. This eight-week course will cover the latest developments in I-tree suite software. I-tree software is very useful in assisting communities with a variety of urban forest management endeavors.



- ◆ The Arbor Day Foundation Tree City USA, Tree Campus USA, and Tree Line USA awards were received by the VDOF headquarters office. All award materials have been distributed to the regions. Further distribution to work areas will be handled within the regions. Please contact Molly O'Liddy with questions or concerns about the delivery.
- ◆ Molly O'Liddy participated in the ranking process for the annual Trees Virginia Academic Scholarships. Awards will be given to students pursuing associates, bachelors and masters/doctoral degrees relating to urban forestry and arboriculture. Since 2008, Trees Virginia has awarded more than \$52,000 in scholarships to students across the Commonwealth.
- ◆ The Forestland Conservation program has undergone a reorganization over the last few months, and has an expanded mission and redefined responsibilities. The team is comprised of four staff, whose positions are now all based in Headquarters, although the staff will continue to work from their homes in the regions. The team reports to the Assistant State Forester, Terry Lasher.
 - Overall, the team is responsible for implementing and developing innovative strategies to conserve Virginia's working forests. The team's principal responsibility will continue to be growing and stewarding a statewide portfolio of open-space easements to protect high-conservation-value forests, although they are also tasked with starting or growing other effective strategies, including increasing landowner involvement in forest carbon markets and increasing forest landowner participation in estate and legacy planning (the Generation NEXT program). The team members are:
 - **Amanda Scheps** – one of two Forest Conservation Specialists and is responsible for developing new easements in the eastern half of the state (pictured). Amanda works from Warrenton.
 - **Andrew Fotinos** – our second Forest Conservation Specialist and is responsible for developing new easements in the western half of the state (pictured). Andrew will also be responsible for managing our relationship with the USFS's Forest Legacy Program that funds much of our work to create easements and acquire new state forests. He also serves as agency specialist regarding real estate issues that affect state forests (example, when the Department of Transportation requests to widen a road or put in a right-of-way on one of our forests). Andrew works from Salem.
 - **Sarah Parmelee** – our Forestland Conservation Coordinator responsible for stewardship and monitoring of easements, including maintaining continual communication and outreach efforts with easement landowners. Sarah is responsible for approving new Forest Stewardship Plans and Pre-Harvest Plans on easements – please send new plans to her. Sarah is also responsible for curating our GIS data as it relates to easements, so if you need information about a specific easement, please contact Sarah. Sarah works from Headquarters.
 - **Karl Didier** – Forestland Conservation Program Manager. In addition to coordinating the team, Karl will lead efforts to identify and implement new strategies to conserve Virginia's forests (e.g., carbon markets), as well as prioritizing *where* we should direct our efforts to have the biggest impact, including revising our [Forest Conservation Value map](#). In addition, Karl will be responsible for representing the team on conservation funding committees, such as the Virginia Land Conservation Fund (VLCF) and the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), and other multi-institutional conservation efforts such as the Generation NEXT program, Virginia United Land Trusts (VaULT), and the Land Trust Alliance (LTA). Karl works from Headquarters.



Forest Resource Management

- ◆ Lori Chamberlin (forest health manager) attended the virtual Spotted Lanternfly Summit and gave a talk about our efforts at VDOF. This was a three-day meeting that included talks about spotted lanternfly (SLF) research, extension, and regulation. There were over 100 participants from state, federal, and research institutions that are working together to slow the spread of SLF.
- ◆ Forest Health program staff attended the Southern Appalachian Forest Entomology and Pathology Seminar (SAFEPS). This two-day event usually takes place in Crossnore, North Carolina, but everyone joined virtually this year to give updates on emerging pests in their states. Talks of particular interest included the topics of Asian Longhorned Beetle in South Carolina, beech leaf disease in the north, and the integration of chemical and biological control for hemlock woolly adelgid treatment.
- ◆ Clemson University is hosting a free online forest health training on March 29 from 9 am to 1 pm. This will be a great overview of forest insect pests, diseases, and invasive plants in the south. You can register and find more information here: <https://bit.ly/3uNZbOw>
- ◆ VDOF has been developing a Hardwood Stand Assessment Tool that will allow staff and other professionals to better evaluate and quantify current stand conditions. On March 1, a small group of VDOF staff met with representatives from two private forestry consulting firms to discuss, learn about, and refine the tool. The session was held at the Heyward Community Forest near VDOF headquarters office in Albemarle County. VDOF staff included in the day were Jerre Creighton (research program manager), Todd Groh (forest resource management program coordinator), Patti Nylander (senior area forester), Clint Folks (area forester), Grayson Coleman (forest technician), and Dean Cumbia (forest resource management director). The combined group evaluated and scored four different stand conditions, and engaged in productive discussion to use and enhance the tool.
- ◆ Todd Groh attended a Forest Stewardship Program monitoring webinar to learn about the new USFS property monitoring tool in the web application Survey 123. This process will allow the monitoring team to upload the results of their visit immediately into the USFS database. The 2021 monitoring lists will only include properties where the landowner's plan is between 2 to 10 years old. If the property has been sold or the plan is obsolete, we will be able to request another plan to monitor, without being down-rated for lack of forestry activity. More information will be coming soon, so stayed tuned.

Agency Lands

- ◆ Garland Gray Forestry Center (GGFC) has lifted 65 percent of the 2021 loblolly crop and has 72 percent of its inventory graded.
- ◆ Jerre Creighton, Dean Cumbia and Todd Groh hosted a field orientation on the hardwood assessment tool for two potential contractors interested in work on the Lower Cowpasture River project. The group spent an afternoon visiting, sampling and discussing stands on the Ragged Mountain Nature Area.
- ◆ Jerre Creighton and Teagan O'Brien (forest health technician) completed age-nine height measurements on the Dragon Run State Forest location of the study comparing various planting spacing/layout options for loblolly pine.
- ◆ Jerre Creighton attended the nursery/seed orchard planning meeting at New Kent Forestry Center (NKFC) to discuss future goals for control pollinated seedling crops.
- ◆ Marc Puckett of the Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources conducted a quail habitat survey on the five-year-old plots in our hardwood control timing study in loblolly pine at Cumberland State Forest. The study contains plots where hardwoods were treated before planting, one year post-planting and two years post-planting as well as plots where hardwoods were never removed. Marc rated the cover

value for nesting, brood rearing, escape, and winter food. His summary: 1) Treated plots seemed to provide better escape cover now than untreated plots; 2) On the untreated plots, the hardwoods have out-competed most other plants including blackberry; 3) many plots still provide nesting cover; 4) both brood rearing cover and winter-feeding cover – which tend to be similar – have fallen out five years post planting. In short, all of the treatments provided some habitat at varying times, and after five years have now mostly become escape cover with some nesting cover remaining. Marc also found that, sadly, at least one of the study plots has been severely impacted by beavers and will probably have to be dropped from the study.

- ◆ Jim Schroering delivered 500 longleaf pine seedlings to David Singletary for plantings at five Newport News Public Schools.
- ◆ Ones Bitoki (tree improvement forester) and Jeff Stout (tree improvement technician) completed the layout/planting of two fifth cycle loblolly pine progeny tests at NKFC and Hockley with the help of Alan Sutherlin (forest technician), Lisa Deaton, Doug Audley, Kathleen Ogilvy (area foresters), Nelson Jarvis (forest technician), John Tolley (volunteer), Ben Duke (state forest technician) and Jerre Creighton.
- ◆ Ones Bitoki selected a third superior loblolly pine tree from a fifth cycle progeny test at Hockley. The selection process is based on early data analyzed by the North Carolina State Cooperative Tree Improvement Program and involves collecting a) scion material to be shipped to the coop's orchard at Arrowhead, Georgia for grafting and b) needle samples for DNA fingerprinting. This tree will be part of the VDOF tree improvement program in future tests and orchards.

State Forest

- ◆ Various staff received forklift operator's refresher training and initial training on Friday and Saturday to help with receiving and shipping seedlings being stored for use by various planters from the Cumberland cold storage unit. Staff will be assisting the nursery with inventory, care, receiving, and shipment of seedlings from Cumberland. Thank you to Josh for arranging the staff training.
- ◆ Staff participated in a virtual training for ArcGIS Pro Online. Additional GIS training will occur this week. The entire cadre of GIS users in the department are making the move to the new Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI) software ArcGIS Pro. ESRI is discontinuing support for the old ArcMap program, and the two programs have different file formats and are not backward compatible.
- ◆ Appomattox-Buckingham State Forest had two bidders for a recent bid opening on March 3 for an estimated 740.2 MBF of mostly pine sawtimber and 1,012 tons of pulpwood on 72 acres. Winning bid was from Gary Willoughby Logging, LLC with a bid of \$108,236.00.
- ◆ The Dragon Run State Forest is currently advertising a 65 acre timber sale consisting of 698.3 MBF of mostly pine sawtimber and 2,005 tons of pulpwood with bids due on March 31.
- ◆ Agreements recently signed with Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR)-Natural Heritage for VDOF to provide timber cruise information for 116 acres on the South Quay, 167 acres on the Cherry Orchard Bog, 142 acres on the Zuni Pine Barrens, and 130 acres on the Mount Joy Pond Natural Area Preserves. Cruise will be completed by September 2021 with VDOF being paid for personnel time, mileage, material cost, and indirect cost fee.

State-Owned Lands

- ◆ Guidelines and Memo of Understanding (MOU) finalized and signed between Department General Services (DGS) and VDOF in coordination of the State-Owned Lands Program that outlines responsibilities of each department in managing the program. Guidelines cover what properties a plan is required on, and the MOU covers the process to follow for timber harvesting approvals. Both follow existing policy and procedures for the program.

Central Region

- ◆ Kevin Dawson (water quality specialist) will be featured in an upcoming Virginia Farm Bureau magazine article (see below). The article, originally written for the Virginia Loggers' Association magazine by Kevin and Michelle Stoll (public information director) highlighted how Kevin worked with a logger to cross a stream and sewer line. Great communication, respect, pre-harvest planning, and the Logging BMP Cost-Share program resulted in a problem free harvest in a very visible and difficult location. The article was reprinted with permission.

- **Building bridges: a story of collaboration**

By Alice Kemp

Through communication and teamwork, a lesson about building bridges turned into reality.

When logger Donnie Reaves was getting ready to harvest timber at a site in Lynchburg last June, he knew the job would be complicated.

"Where the timber was, there was no access to get it out," explained Reaves, a Bedford County Farm Bureau member who owns around 2,500 acres of forested property. "We had to cross a sewer line and then a stream."

Crossing the sewer line posed potential water quality risks. The site also was in a visible location, which added an element of public scrutiny. Reaves is a seasoned logger who harvests around 200 loads a year, but he asked the Virginia Department of Forestry for help.

Through communication and teamwork, a lesson about building bridges turned into reality.

"We just sat down and talked about everything," explained VDOF water quality specialist Kevin Dawson, who worked with Reaves and forestry consultant Todd Goode on the project. "We figured out the best place to cross the creek, and we decided, 'OK, here's what we'll do, this is what we think will be the best plan.'"

Dawson wrote a pre-harvest proposal involving the installation of two sets of temporary bridges to navigate a crossing at Dreaming Creek—one to cross the sewer line and another the stream. The bridges needed to be stabilized and strong enough to hold heavy logging equipment, so Reaves consulted with Forest Pro Inc., a forestry equipment dealership owned by loggers.

To help cover the construction costs, Reaves secured funding through the VDOF Logger Best Management Practices Cost-Share Program. The program helps subsidize practices that improve and protect water quality, covering loggers' stream crossing expenses at 50% up to \$2,500 and \$5,000 if the project includes a portable bridge.

The Lynchburg area experienced record rainfalls during the harvest—sometimes as much as five inches a day. The bridges held up, and no sediment from the timber harvest entered the stream.

"I'm very happy to say we've never had a water quality problem on that job the entire time Donnie was working, and we still don't," Dawson remarked.

He fielded frequent calls from citizens about the project, and he regularly stopped by to check on the progress.

“Donnie would always take the time to walk the job with me,” Dawson recalled. “If we saw something that needed attention, we would just deal with it then and there.”

Ron Jenkins, executive director for the Virginia Loggers Association, said the success of this project demonstrates how cooperation and mutual respect go a long way in implementing best management practices.

“This clearly shows that the public and private sectors can work well together to produce a high-quality outcome,” Jenkins said. “When people take time to listen to each other, you learn from each other, and that’s what these two did.”

- ◆ Jim McGlone spoke with a citizens committee from the Town of Vienna about tree preservation and planting. Jim talked about the state enabling legislation, zoning codes, policies and programs in other jurisdictions in a one-hour conversation.
- ◆ Jim McGlone did some multi-tasking in his yard. In preparation for an upcoming pruning class he will teach to the Loudoun County Master Gardeners Basic Training class, he pruned his overgrown *Viburnum dentatum*. While he worked and talked his way through process of observing the plant, setting goals, making a plan and executing the plan, his wife filmed him. Now he has a pruned plant and a video demonstration he can show the Master Gardeners during the class.

Western Region

- ◆ Clint Folks and Grayson Coleman recently created a gravel parking lot for the new Mountain Valley Field Office at the Augusta Forestry Center (AFC). Staff moved into the office last summer, and while there was a lot more room for everyone inside, there wasn't enough room for the vehicles outside. Clint and Grayson borrowed the backhoe from AFC, leveled off the area, and then used the nursery dump truck and the State Forest dump truck to haul and spread 110 tons of gravel in the new parking area. Despite bad weather, Grayson and Clint were able to create adequate parking space for all the field staff and even fill in a couple of pot holes on the road leading to the office. Many thanks to Clint and Grayson for their engineering efforts. Thank you to AFC and the State Forest for loaning their equipment to get this job done. (pictured)
- ◆ Kenny Thomas (forest technician) worked with Wise County Emergency Services Coordinator to distribute a 4 PM Burning Law announcement to all Wise County Fire Departments and Rescue Squads. The announcement was also sent to the Wise County 911 Dispatch Office and the dispatch centers for the City of Norton and Town of Big Stone Gap. The Chief of the Norton Fire Department also included the announcement in a radio interview they were conducting concerning the current bad weather forecast.
- ◆ William Neff and Kenny Thomas (forest technicians) met with DWR Biologist Seth Thompson and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Quail Specialist Andy Rosenberger on a local hunt club lease area in Wise County. The club is interested in increasing the quail population on the property with the use of prescribed burning. The club’s lease with the coal company is approximately 12,000



acres with this initial area of interest being about 1,250 acres. The discussion focused on the possibility of conducting several small 10–25-acre burns scattered over the area that are already bounded by existing mine roads. A plan will be developed and presented to the club at their summer meeting.

- ◆ Jon Perry and Kenny Thomas (forest technicians) met with Clinch Ranger District Ranger, Fire Management Officer (FMO), and Assistant Fire Management Officer (AFMO) and attended their briefing on the USFS Flatwoods prescribed burns. As part of this meeting Jon, the District Ranger, and the FMO did an interview with WCYB TV5 about the burns and discussed the 4PM Burning Law. Kenny answered questions for the reporter and provided him with contact information to report on the status of other fires in the area. <https://wcyb.com/news/local/prescribed-burns-to-take-place-in-southwest-virginia-between-march-and-mid-may-03-08-2021>

Public Information

- ◆ Recordings are now available from last month's Governor's Summit on Equitable Collaboration. Keynote speakers included Chief Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Officer for the Commonwealth of Virginia Dr. Janice Underwood on day one and DWR Board Member & Former Head of Fisheries, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Dr. Mamie Parker on day two.
- ◆ In addition to the general sessions, a number of break sessions were directly related to the work we do at VDOF, including discussions about Heirs' Property legislation and watershed management projects. All sessions demonstrated the partnership work and collaboration that VDOF values. Takeaways from these sessions can be inspiration for projects planned or in progress. The recordings are available here: <https://www.equitablecollaboration.org/resources.html>
- ◆ Michelle Stoll (public information director) and Raina DeFonza (public information specialist) participated in the SGSF Communication Committee's virtual winter meeting.
- ◆ Ellen Powell (conservation education coordinator) taught tree ID and forest ecology to the latest trainee classes of Rivanna and Headwaters Master Naturalist chapters. She found an Elmo document camera useful for showing leaf and twig characteristics during virtual ID training.
- ◆ Ellen Powell attended a meeting of the Chesapeake Bay Program Education Workgroup.

News Clips

- ◆ [International Paper Funds New Forestry Research at Four Universities](#)
- ◆ [New data allows scientists to accurately measure the carbon flux of forests](#)
- ◆ [A reflection on World Wildlife Day: How forests sustain people and planet](#)
- ◆ [Your T-Shirts Could Soon Be Made From Green Wood-Fiber](#)
- ◆ [Planting trees helps fight climate change—but we need billions more seedlings](#)
- ◆ [City of Staunton announces Middlebrook Avenue tree removal project](#)
- ◆ ['Seedballs' giving Kenya's forests a fighting chance](#)
- ◆ [SFI Awarded NFWF Grant to Enhance Songbird Habitat in West Virginia Through Sustainable Forest Management](#)
- ◆ [New species of millipede — Nannaria hokie — found at Virginia Tech](#)