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Coming Up

Forestry Summit Silent Auction

- ◆ If you are going to the 2021 Forestry Summit on September 28-October 1 in Harrisonburg, please consider donating something for the Silent Auction. This year all proceeds will be used for the Virginia Project Learning Tree Program. Thank you for your support! Also, if you cannot attend and still want to donate something, contact Cindy Frenzel (project learning tree coordinator) at cindy.frenzel@dof.virginia.gov or 434-282-4556.

Last Week

State Forester

- ◆ The Forest Stewardship Coordinating Committee provides guidance and direction to VDOF for the Stewardship program. It is made up of a diverse group of stakeholders, including forest landowners, natural resources agencies, associations, and groups. On August 27, VDOF held a recognition ceremony and luncheon for outgoing members of the committee, most of whom had served several consecutive terms. Rob Farrell thanked the members for their dedicated service and presented them with a certificate. New committee members will have an important role in providing input in the development of the Hardwood Forest Habitat Initiative. (Pictured: State Forester Rob Farrell and members of Forest Stewardship Committee at the recognition event.)



Forestland Conservation

- ◆ Lara Johnson (urban and community forestry [U&CF] program manager) and Molly O'Liddy (U&CF partnership coordinator) ranked all Urban & Community Forestry Grant Applications. Joe Lehnen (urban wood utilization forester), Jordan Herring (senior area forester), Kendall Topping (community forest specialist), and Joel Koci (Virginia State University) assisted in the ranking process. A total of 29 applications were received, totaling \$473,000 in requests. Award paperwork will be submitted to applicants this week.
- ◆ Lara Johnson and Eli Podyma (community forestry specialist) assisted Groundwork RVA and Southside Releaf with updating the Richmond Tree Inventory on Hull Street in Southside Richmond. This data will be used to prioritize tree planting activities in the area.

Forest Resource Management

- ◆ Establishing new forested buffers on non-forested open land is a very effective tool to protect water quality by reducing sediment, capturing nutrients, and improving stream health. Several programs assist landowners in buffer establishment, including the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP). VDOF closely partners with the USDA Farm Service Agency and the USDA Forest Service (USFS) Chesapeake Bay program in these efforts, through regional field staff and three riparian buffer specialists. In August, VDOF received another year of funding in the amount of \$194,000 from the USFS to support this important work.
- ◆ VDOF was awarded additional Southern Pine Beetle (SPB) grant funds from the USFS in the amount of \$125,000. These funds will support our Pine Bark Beetle Prevention program which includes cost-share programs for pre-commercial thinning, longleaf restoration, and a logger incentive program for first commercial thinning. You can read about the national SPB prevention program here: <https://usfs.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=64cda6d74a5749efbe300fe83806d442>
- ◆ Lori Chamberlin (forest health program manager) participated in a call with other state and federal agencies to discuss the first detection of beech leaf disease in Virginia. It was determined that VDOF will be the lead agency in terms of collecting and recording location data. If you see symptomatic beech trees, please contact forest health staff, foresthealth@dof.virginia.gov. You can find more

information here: <http://www.dontmovefirewood.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Beech-Leaf-Disease-Pest-Alert.pdf>

Agency Lands

- ◆ A state forest crew - Willie Shoemaker (trade technician) and Ian Morris (forest technician) - spent several days working to clear brush and debris from along the access roads to the chestnut orchards at the Lesesne State Forest. The work was essential to provide better access for the bucket trucks that will be used in the upcoming nut collection scheduled to begin in early September. (pictured before and after)



- ◆ Jerre Creighton (research and program manager) and John Scrivani visited a large planting of American chestnut hybrids established over the last two years in collaboration with private landowners along Little Back Creek in Bath County. Over 200 seedlings have been planted, survival is over 90%, and growth has been quite good. Plans were discussed to further expand the planting next spring and potentially add a small research plot to test field performance of some of the best hybrid crosses coming out of our greenhouse small-stem assay tests. If the plantation continues on its current trajectory it could become a future source of seed to expand chestnut into the surrounding landscape.
- ◆ Sussex Nursery Manager Josh Bennicoff and Deputy State Forester Ed Zimmer provided a facility tour of the Sussex Nursery to representatives of the State Medical Examiner's Office, including the Mass Casualty Event Planner and an Assistant Medical Examiner. Representatives from the Medical Examiner's Office have now toured both the New Kent Forestry Center and the Sussex Nursery and have a clear understanding of both our extensive cooler space and other infrastructure that could be utilized in the event a mass casualty event takes place in the Eastern half of the Commonwealth. Nursery staff has agreed to continue to work with them to develop a plan for utilizing the coolers if they are needed.

State Forest

- ◆ Jack Kauffman (forest management specialist) inspected the entrance at Conway Robinson State Forest with a Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) subcontractor to discuss the project that will close each entrance to the State Forest for a day as VDOT's work is completed to repair / replace the culvert crossings at each entry.
- ◆ Using a federal grant, we instituted a different invasive species control work process for treating *Ailanthus* on the Cumberland State Forest. Contract crews recently covered 45 miles of road 100 feet deep on each side, totaling 1110.8 acres for roads. They covered 12.8 miles of field edge 100 feet deep, equaling 154 acres for edges. The grand total of 1264.8 acres treated on the Cumberland cost just under \$12,000.
- ◆ Site preparation and release spray work started August 27 by H&H Forest Management on State Forests & State-Owned Lands. The contractor started on the Appomattox-Buckingham State Forest.
- ◆ Jack Kauffman recently returned from serving as Division Supervisor for the Southern Area Blue Team on the Christensen Fire in Montana, as part of our personnel assisting the U.S Forest Service with the unprecedented wildfires going on in the Western U.S.

- ◆ The Matthews State Forest hosted the Southwest VA Beginning Woodland Owner's Retreat and conducted a tour of white pine and hardwood management areas as well as the American chestnut orchard. Sixteen landowners participated in the tour.

Central Region

- ◆ Miller Adams (area forester) was interviewed for the video program "RealVA," which is produced by Farm Bureau. Miller provided an overview of timber management and its importance to Virginia's economy. <https://youtu.be/RDWucRyIfno?t=97>

- ◆ Andrew Matteson, Leslie Mace, Thomas Reeves, Matthew Hutchins (forest technicians), Miller Adams, Laura Guthrie, Amy Bigger (area foresters), Drew Arnn (senior area forester), Kevin Dawson, Zoë Sumrall (water quality specialists), Chad Stover (regional fire specialist), Rodney Newlin (water quality engineer), and Robbie Talbert (regional forester) conducted a 50-acre prescribed burn in Charlotte County utilizing a new drone equipped with the IGNIS II system. The IGNIS is a complete system that embeds to drones and carries a payload of ping-pong-ball-sized chemical spheres. Upon command, the spheres are injected with glycol, starting a chemical reaction that will generate flames after being dropped precisely where you want them. The drone was used to light the interior portions while ground crews used drip torches along the fire line. All ignition was completed



agency meet its strategic objective of promoting and expanding the use of prescribed fire to meet multiple management and training objectives. (pictured)

within two hours. Without the use of the drone, it would have taken at least twice as long to complete the burn in rough and dangerously hot conditions. Therefore, the use of the drone helped make the burn safer and quicker, and demonstrated its effectiveness in helping the



Eastern Region

- ◆ The Capital team is trying a new approach to reaching forest landowners and interested citizens by attending farmers markets across the work area. Dave Slack and Clint Phegley (area foresters) represented VDOF at a recent Dorey Park farmers market in Henrico. Clint and Dave met with local attendees to discuss the work VDOF does as well as answering questions regarding forest management, tree identification, urban tree health, and wildfire prevention. Over 250 people were in attendance at the market, with a large portion of them stopping by our booth while they were there.

- ◆ Eli Podyma, Joe Lehnen, Lara Johnson and Molly O'Liddy brought Katie McAndrew (with USFS urban wood) to urban forestry sites in Richmond on a tour of current projects involving VDOF. At the Amelia Street School, Wyatt Carpenter (Virginia Commonwealth University Sustainability) told the group about VCU's urban forestry efforts and plantings funded by VDOF grant funds, as well as their work with the Offset Network



developing carbon offset certifications for their urban plantings. Aaron McFarland



(Enrichmond TreeLab) then spoke with the group at the Amelia Street TreeLab location and provided a tour of Evergreen Cemetery to showcase the work that Enrichmond has done since having a management plan written by VDOF in 2019. (pictured)

Western Region

- ◆ The Blue Ridge Area Team matched up with the headquarters Forest Health Team to provide a VDOF presence at a Salem Red Sox baseball game. In celebration of Smokey Bear's 77th birthday, Denny McCarthy (area forester) escorted Smokey Bear - aka. David Tompkins (forest technician) - to the mound, where he threw out the ceremonial "first pitch" of the game. Additionally, they manned a VDOF engine at the ballpark entrance prior to the game, as well as a table inside the park where Smokey Bear collectibles were available to fans during the game. Lori Chamberlin, Katlin Dewitt (forest health specialist), Teagan O'Brien (riparian buffer specialist), and Joe Lehnen provided their own bountiful table of emerald ash borer stress-relief baseballs and other forest health paraphernalia, educating fans about insects and diseases threatening our trees. This was a great outreach event with the two agency teams partnering to educate over 2,445 fans. Thanks also to Fred Turck who provided extra Smokey Bear items to ramp up the value of the evening's exposure. More pictures can be viewed at this link:



<https://onedrive.live.com/?authkey=%21AMQgZeU7m6Xiw8&id=15286B9290A3D84B%21145626&cid=15286B9290A3D84B>

- ◆ Collin Sapp and Emily Wotton (forest technicians) represented VDOF at the Tazewell County Fair on Children's Day, showcasing a VDOF engine and providing fire prevention materials alongside partner agencies, including the substance abuse task force and local law enforcement personnel.
- ◆ Adam Cumpston (water quality specialist) gave a presentation at a Virginia Cooperative Extension SHARP Logger refresher program at the Russell County Fairgrounds. Participants received training on topics including trucking safety, logging safety, Best Management Practices (BMPs), and water quality compliance.

Public Information

- ◆ Ellen Powell (conservation education coordinator), Zach Olinger (forest manager and education specialist), and Chris Sullivan (senior area forester) assisted with the Southwest Virginia Beginning Woodland Owners' Retreat. The two-day program included presentations on forest management topics, field skill sessions outdoors, and a tour of Matthews State Forest. Sixteen landowners participated.
- ◆ Ellen Powell and Lara Johnson worked with a film crew to record a training session on basic tree identification for Tree Stewards. The video will be one of several that support the newly revised Tree Stewards Manual.

News Clips

- ◆ [Getting Our Heads Around the New Fire Environment](#)
- ◆ [The Worst Wildfire Season in a Century](#)
- ◆ [Governor Northam Announces Wood Products Expansions in Southwest Virginia](#)
- ◆ [Gerald Almy: Simple projects to improve wildlife habitat](#)
- ◆ [2021 Fall Foliage Peak Map: When Leaves Are Best In Virginia](#)
- ◆ ['Green' foam eliminates the need for toxic chemicals](#)
- ◆ [Brad Copenhaver sworn in as Virginia's commissioner of agriculture](#)