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Employee News

Welcome to VDOF

- ◆ We welcome Donald Mullins to the agency as our new Western Regional Mechanic. His first day was Wednesday, November 10. Donald comes to VDOF with over 30 years of private experience working on everything from weed eaters to bulldozers. He also has his Virginia State Police (VSP) inspection certification, a Class A CDL, and welding experience. Donald is an avid deer hunter and lives in Callaway (Franklin County).

Last Week

State Forester

- ◆ VDOF dedicated Charlotte State Forest on November 4. The property near Drakes Branch is the state's 26th state forest and the first publicly accessible land in Charlotte County. Speakers at the dedication included Rob Farrell, Secretary Ring, Governor Northam, Heather Richards (The Conservation Fund), Kay Reed (USDA Forest Service Region 8), and Phil Walker (Stanley Land & Lumber Corporation). The property was formerly owned by the Stanley Land & Lumber Corporation and features remarkable wetlands and waterfowl habitat, as well as mixed upland forests. A news release celebrating the event was issued from the Governor's Office. <https://www.governor.virginia.gov/newsroom/all-releases/2021/november/headline-910947-en.html>

- ◆ Rob Farrell, Dean Cumbia (forest management director), and Joe Rossetti (hardwood coordinator) travelled to Rocky Mount to visit the Bald Knob and Grassy Hill Natural Area Preserves. They met with VDOF local field staff - Kevin Keith (senior area forester), Daniel Cloeter, and Bill Sweeney (area foresters) to look at hardwood initiative demonstration sites and potential projects to utilize forest restoration mitigation funds.
- ◆ Rob Farrell also represented VDOF at the Governor's Summit on Rural Prosperity.

Forestland Conservation

- ◆ Molly O'Liddy, (urban & community forestry [U&CF] partnership coordinator) and Meghan Mulroy-Goldman, (community forestry specialist) planted additional trees and assisted in the maintenance of plantings for ForKids in Norfolk. This is a continuation of a project that was led by Meghan in the spring to aid in establishing an urban orchard on the ForKids campus. Additional educational tree signage will be installed for students who visit the center.
- ◆ The Utilization and Marketing Team met with a Nature Conservancy representative to discuss potential forest carbon project opportunities in Virginia.
- ◆ Terry Lasher (assistant state forester) attended a workgroup meeting to "Review the Practice of Retiring Agricultural Land for the Generation of Nutrient Credits" in Richmond. The meeting consisted of a cross-section of public and private entities assembled to discuss potential impacts to agricultural lands as a result of nutrient banking programs and to provide recommendations to a report for the General Assembly.
- ◆ Terry Lasher provided a short presentation to the Chesapeake Bay Stakeholder Advisory Group regarding highlights of the Watershed Implementation Plan Programmatic and Numeric Milestones Report. Topics of discussion included VDOF's watershed program, Sentinel Landscape designation efforts, the Hardwood Habitat Initiative, and the Augusta Forestry Center nursery investment.
- ◆ The Arbor Day Foundation application portal is open for communities and campuses to apply for Tree City USA, Tree Campus Higher Education USA, and Tree Line USA status. The deadline for application submission is Friday, December 31.

Forest Resource Management

- ◆ Forest landowners in Virginia pay annual real estate taxes to the county where the property is located. The tax amount is based upon the fair market value of the property and the tax rate for that county. Counties have the option to adopt "use value" taxation, where the property is taxed at its current use (agriculture, forestry, horticulture, or open space), rather than fair market value. These values are typically lower than fair market value, and serve as a way to encourage traditional rural uses and conserve land. The Cumberland County Board of Supervisors is considering dropping forest land use from their use-value tax program. Dean Cumbia was invited to speak at the Board's land use work session. He shared forestry facts specific to the county, as well as how forest use values are calculated.
- ◆ In the Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA) Quarterly Report to the Southern Group of State Foresters (SGSF), VDOF was one of only two of the 13 states (Arkansas Forestry Commission was the other) to meet plot production and grant management targets for the quarter ending September 30, 2021. VDOF FIA crews have completed & transmitted 99.9% of the inventory plots in the current VA2020 panel of work as of last week.
- ◆ VDOF FIA crews have completed work on the VA2020 & VA2021 urban FIA plots in the Virginia portion of the Washington, DC Metro area. This data will allow researchers to describe the condition of trees within the Northern VA area, as well as their contribution to air quality, reductions in energy usage,

absorption and storage of carbon, contribution to privacy and noise reduction, and added property value.

Human Resources

- ◆ On November 9 our Office of Human Resources participated in its most recent virtual career fair/event. The most recent event, "Virginia is Open for Business" (sponsored by the Commonwealth's Department of Human Resources (DHRM)), took place over an afternoon. Kristi Clore (talent management and HRIS coordinator) led our efforts by interacting with 146 attendees as they visited our virtual booth. Some attendees submitted resumes immediately to compete for open positions. Confidently we can share that it was one of the most successful virtual career fairs we have had in a while! Kudos to Ms. Clore and her continued receptiveness to learn and engage with new technologies.

State Forest

- ◆ Staff met with Tom Saielli from The American Chestnut Foundation (TACF) at the Matthews chestnut orchard to discuss plans moving forward. Staff took some measurements and began planning for upcoming new plantings. National TACF staff will be touring Augusta Forestry Center and Lesesne State Forest on November 15.
- ◆ Staff repaired a bridge damaged from last winter's rain storms on the Appomattox-Buckingham State Forest. The bridge had floated up from high water and had debris underneath, preventing it from returning to its proper place on the footers.
- ◆ Staff attended the National Wildfire Coordinating Group Equipment Technology Committee Fall Virtual Meeting (1.5 Days) and represented the National Association of State Foresters eastern states.
- ◆ Staff worked with the Shenandoah work area to install a trail at Devil's Backbone State Forest, connecting the parking lot to existing trails on the Forest.

Central Region

- ◆ Zoë Bergman (area forester) and Kinner Ingram (natural resource specialist) spoke to a Natural Resource and AP Environmental Science class at Fauquier County High School. They spoke about the difference between good and bad fire, benefits of prescribed burning, and what goes into the planning of a burn. In an outside portion of eth class, they discussed the planning of a future burn on the high school's property.
- ◆ Jim McGlone (urban forest conservationist) worked with the Purcellville Department of Parks and Recreation, members of the Purcellville Tree Board, and citizen volunteers to plant 12 trees in the Suzanne Kayne Nature Preserve. Jim demonstrated proper planting techniques for the 2-inch red maples. He also pointed out root problems typically associated with containerized trees and demonstrated how "squaring the ball" by pruning off the outer 1.5 inches could correct these problems. Jim's presentation was filmed as part of the town's outreach and education portion of the Virginia Trees for Clean Water grant that funded the planting.
- ◆ Jim McGlone taught Dendrology and Forest Ecology to the basic training class of the Fairfax Master Naturalists. He followed up the Thursday night class with a 3-hour field trip on Saturday at Mason Neck State Park. The 1.5-mile loop trail passes through four forest types and gave Jim plenty of opportunity to explain how soils and topography affect the distribution of trees in the forest.
- ◆ Jordan Herring (senior area forester) was interviewed by the PBS show *Untamed*. *Untamed* is a co-production of Virginia Public Media (VPM) and the Wildlife Center of Virginia. It introduces viewers to the natural and man-made challenges facing wildlife today and, most importantly, what we can do to

make a difference. Jordan's interview, addressing common forest management practices that can enhance wildlife habitat, will be showcased in an episode about land management.

Eastern Region

- ◆ Eli Podyma (community forest specialist) assisted Capital Trees Executive Director Shelly Barrick Parsons and Program & Outreach Manager Lisa Trapp with a tree giveaway at Great Shiplock Park, as part of Richmond's annual Arbor Day RVA event. Approximately 40 people showed up to claim a free tree. In addition to free tree seedlings, the attendees were provided with species selection advice, planting techniques, and maintenance recommendations. (pictured)



- ◆ Norfolk Naval Station celebrated their first Arbor Day with guests since the beginning of the pandemic. Kendall Topping, Meghan Mulroy-Goldman (community forestry specialists), and Evan Richardson (area forester) presented the station with their Tree City Award. The team with Smokey assisted the Base Commander and the Child Development students in planting several trees on base. (pictured)



- ◆ The Northern Neck Team, led by Charlie Knoeller (senior area forester, retired), worked with Northern Neck localities for over a year as part of a Resiliency Adaptation program. One of the results of these meetings was increased interest in urban and riparian tree planting programs. Using U&CF grant funding, and technical assistance from Lara Johnson (U&CF program manager), the town of Colonial Beach resurrected a previous plan to plant trees along their riverfront boardwalk. The result of this lengthy planning process was a group of volunteers gathering this fall to install the recommended trees along the boardwalk. https://fredericksburg.com/lifestyles/announcements/colonial-beach-volunteers-plant-trees-along-riverfront-and-colonial-avenue/article_e8e96404-ac6e-59cc-acba-48f10c2367do.html
- ◆ On November 7th, Kendall Topping led a group in planting six longleaf pines on the campus of the Seaford Yacht Club in Yorktown. The planting celebrated Hampton Roads' history of longleaf pine in maritime products. The site is located on Back Creek, which empties directly into the Chesapeake Bay. This planting will provide shade for members and visitors while reducing the amount of erosion entering the bay. Members of the club, families, and Master Naturalists participated in the planting. (pictured)



Public Information

- ◆ The 2022 VDOF wall calendars are available. The publication features stunning photography provided by American Tree Farm certified tree farmers in Virginia. The calendars are one of our most visible "in hand" marketing pieces. They will be distributed to regional offices and are available at HQ in Charlottesville.
- ◆ Photographs from last week's dedication of Charlotte State Forest can be seen at https://www.flickr.com/photos/vdof_photos/albums/72157720173330810

News Clips

- ◆ [Grown Here at Home: Virginia Department of Forestry selling trees](#)
- ◆ [As the weather cools, Virginians urged to keep firewood local](#)
- ◆ [Colonial Beach volunteers plant trees along riverfront and Colonial Avenue](#)

- ◆ [Urging people to buy local firewood](#)
- ◆ [Annual Tree Planting](#)
- ◆ [\\$350K VCLF grant to protect Greensville Co. forest, farmland](#)
- ◆ [Governor dedicates Virginia's 26th state forest](#)
- ◆ [HP Inc. Expands Forest Conservation Partnership With World Wildlife Fund](#)
- ◆ [New state forest is Charlotte County's first publicly accessible land](#)
- ◆ [2020 Forest Economic Contributions Summit Report Released](#)
- ◆ [VA Coop. Extension Organization & VT Extension Foresters Win Prestigious SAF Awards](#)