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Coming Up

Spotted Lanternfly 101 Webinar

- ◆ There will be a Spotted Lanternfly 101 webinar February 17, hosted by the Forest Health program at Cornell University. This event will give an overview of the spotted lanternfly, an invasive insect; discuss the threat it poses to our economy and ecology; and review efforts to control populations. A range of experts will present their research.
 - Register for the Zoom event at this link:
https://cornell.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_Y3Tuw2RdSc6L-UOf6V2LMg

Save the Date – 2022 Logging Expo

- ◆ The 2022 Logging Expo will be in person on May 20 - 21 at the Richmond Raceway Complex in Richmond. This year VDOF is planning to highlight Virginia’s forest products, water quality, and forest

health topics, along with our USDA Forest Service partners who will be showcasing a dehumidification kiln at the event. Details can be found here: <https://www.exporichmond.com/>

Save the Date – 2022 Statewide Wildfire Academy

- ◆ VDOF statewide wildfire training academy will be May 25 – 28, on the campus of Longwood University.
- A special full-time VDOF only registration period will run February 22 – March 8, with regular open registration beginning at noon on March 8. Full details will be shared in next week's issue of the Branch.

Project Updates

Policy and Procedures

- ◆ [Policy and Procedure 06-02 EAB Cost Share Program](#) has been updated to reflect the 2022 enrollment period. If you have any questions, please contact [Lori Chamberlin](#) (forest health program manager).

Urban Wood Project

Fort Monroe and Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation Meeting

- ◆ Joe Lehnen (urban wood utilization forester), Meghan Mulroy-Goldman (community forestry specialist), and Scott Bachman (senior area forester) met with the staff from the Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation's (JYF) Maritime Program and the Fort Monroe Authority (FMA) to discuss an exciting urban wood opportunity.
- Previously Meghan had met with the FMA to help them understand their urban forest management needs. During this visit, she suggested they consider pursuing urban wood re-use for the trees that needed to be removed. When it came time to take trees down, the FMA reached out to Meghan and Joe to discuss possible avenues of use for urban wood from the fort. Because several of the trees that were removed were live oaks which, due to their resistance to decay and strength, were often used in shipbuilding, Meghan and Joe reached out to the JYF. They hoped that the wood could be of use to the Jamestown Settlement ships: the Susan Constant, Godspeed, and Discovery. The ships, which can be seen at the Jamestown Settlement, are recreations of those that sailed from London to Virginia in 1607 with English colonists on board. The General Assembly has also designated the ships as "the official fleet of the Commonwealth".
- During the meeting, the group learned that the JYF Maritime Program regularly uses urban wood and reclaimed longleaf pine timber for the ship maintenance. They were excited about this new source of live oak and were able to find several pieces to use for ship-maintenance and repair. For any future live oak removals, FMA plans to contact JYF so they can be involved in the removal process, allowing them to specify the structural cuts of wood that can best be used in the maintenance of the Fleet of the Commonwealth. As you will notice in the following picture, JYF was not interested in straight logs; they were looking for "compass wood" which is used for the structural ribbing of the ships (pictured).
- The JYF also shared that they would be willing to serve as the contact for several other historic ship organizations, including the Mystic Seaport Museum, and the USS Constitution, who may be able to use some of the remaining wood at Fort Monroe.



Last Week

State Forester

- ◆ Rob Farrell, Ed Zimmer (deputy state forester), Terry Lasher (assistant state forester), and John Colligan (chief of administration) attended the Rural Caucus reception and heard remarks from Governor Youngkin, Lieutenant Governor Sears, and Attorney General Miyares regarding their emphasis on rural economic development.
- ◆ Rob Farrell participated in the quarterly board meeting of the Virginia Loggers Association. Representative Abigail Spanberger also attended. The congresswoman serves as the Chair of House Agriculture Committee's Conservation & Forestry Subcommittee and has been very committed to issues related to forestry, timber harvesting, and forest products markets.

Fire and Emergency Response

- ◆ John Miller (director of fire and emergency response) was invited to attend the Virginia State Firefighters Association Executive Committee meeting on February 12. He provided an update on the VDOF, highlighted the agencies Volunteer Fire Assistance and Dry Hydrant grant programs, and discussed the calendar year 2021 fire season, Incident Management Team (IMT) assistance to Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM), and recent winter storm related responses.

Forestland Conservation

- ◆ The Utilization & Marketing (U&M) team is assisting a company that wants to expand their existing operation in Virginia. The team coordinated a meeting with Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP), Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS), and VA Port Authority to discuss their plans and possible state incentives to assist with expansion. The company is planning to double the size of their existing operation, add jobs, and invest \$2.3 million. Currently they are mostly processing softwood products, but with the expansion they are planning to process higher and lower quality hardwoods as well.
- ◆ U&M team assisted VEDP in collecting marketing materials to highlight Virginia wood resources, market accessibility, workforce, and infrastructure to attract private business investments in the Commonwealth, by reaching out to potential investors at the International Builders Show in Orlando, FL.
- ◆ Lara Johnson (urban & community forestry [U&CF] program manager) and Molly O'Liddy (U&CF partnership coordinator) attended the Southern Group of State Foresters Urban and Community Forestry Winter Meeting in Oxford, Mississippi. Representatives from the 13 southern states were present to discuss regional priorities and goals for the year.
- ◆ Lara Johnson gave a virtual presentation to 165 US Forest Service staff about the ten urban heat island studies completed last year using federal program funds.

Forest Resource Management

- ◆ The red imported fire ant occurs in several southern and eastern localities in Virginia. Last week, Katlin Dewitt (forest health specialist) and Lori Chamberlin (forest health program manager) worked with Virginia Cooperative Extension to create a self-inspection checklist for loggers in the red imported fire ant quarantine area.

Agency Lands

- ◆ As of February 4, the Sussex Nursery has completed lifting 25% of this year's crop.

- ◆ Augusta Forestry Center (AFC) field staff continued to prep for the potential start of lifting this week. The office has taken in 1228 orders for a total of \$318,422.

State Forest

- ◆ Staff met with USDA Forest Service (USFS) personnel from the Glenwood Pedlar District to review the proposed road location across U.S. Forest Service property to access Moore's Creek State Forest for forest management. The proposed road is approximately .9 miles long to get to the State Forest boundary and is currently out for public comment that also could include a Good Neighbor Authority Timber Sale project on USFS lands.

Central Region

- ◆ Darwin Rhodes (forest technician) and Chad Stover (regional fire specialist) participated in a virtual meeting with the Massanutten Property Owners Association's (MPOA) Firewise committee. Included in this meeting were representatives from the MPOA Board, local fire department, and Massanutten Resort. This meeting was in response to a request from the MPOA as a follow up to a November woods fire that occurred in their community, a 1,200 home medium density woodland community in Rockingham County, on the east side of Massanutten Mountain, bordered by the George Washington National Forest and Massanutten resort. The goal of the meeting was to reaffirm their commitment to the Firewise program and to discuss what additional mitigation actions they could take to reduce the risk of wildfire in their community. As a result, a new community risk assessment is planned, with participation of VDOF, Rockingham County's Fire Marshal's office, and the MPOA. Information gathered from this assessment will help develop an updated action plan for the community.
- ◆ The Central Region conducted two law enforcement refresher training sessions for all employees identified as responders. One training was held in Chatham and led by Dave Houttekier (assistant director of fire and emergency response) and Chad Stover (regional fire specialist), with 20 in attendance. The other training was held in Charlottesville and facilitated by Derek Keiser (water quality specialist) and Chad Stover, with 19 in attendance. Topics included a review of fire laws, timber theft laws, court procedures, fire reporting, and the FiResponse program.
- ◆ Jim McGlone (urban forest conservationist) led a workshop for Tree Stewards of Arlington and Alexandria. The workshop focused on tree physiology and its effect on proper pruning. Tree Stewards of Arlington and Alexandria are Northern Virginia volunteers who take the lead to enhance a sustainable urban forest through volunteer activities and public education programs. Workshops like these are important to educate partner organizations on pertinent forestry topics throughout Northern Virginia.
- ◆ Jim McGlone participated in the Arlington/Alexandria Tree Steward orientation and tree walk for the 45 new applicants for the program. Jim also shared some show and tell items including a shear plane crack his maple suffered in the early January snowstorm.
- ◆ Alex Hernandez (area forester) and Adam Smith (senior area forester) provided information and professional direction for multiple landowners with interests in pursuing Christmas tree farms in Brunswick County.
- ◆ Bobby Robertson (forest technician), Alex Hernandez, and Adam Smith assisted with a mutual aid fire call to a four-alarm structure fire in northeastern Brunswick County. The nearby forest was protected from further fire spread and a small handline was made with the help of local volunteer firefighters to contain the fire. Dolphin, Lawrenceville, Dinwiddie, and Greensville volunteer fire departments assisted in the suppression.

Eastern Region

- ◆ Dennis Gaston (forest management specialist) Ben Duke (state forest technician), Kathleen Ogilvy (acting senior area forester), Travis Tindell, Cody Noblitt, Jesse Bander (natural resources specialists), Eli Podyma (community forestry specialist), Brian Lacey (regional resource forester), Rich Reuse (area forester) and Dean Cumbia (forest resource management director) persevered through the rain on Thursday to mark about 25



acres for crop tree release (CTI) on the Chesterfield State Forest

(pictured). CTR is being highlighted by the Hardwood Forest Habitat Initiative this year as a beneficial practice to improve hardwood growth. It's most appropriate during the stem exclusion stage of forest development. The project will be bid out for a contractor to cut competing trees and release the crop trees later this year.



- ◆ The Blackwater work unit contracted with a landowner in Southampton County to burn 25 acres of warm season grasses for wildlife habitat improvement. The landowner had planted the grass approximately 5 years ago and had been mowing it for maintenance. He wished to remove the thatch in the stand and thin it a bit by disking. He was not comfortable burning it on his own and contacted the DOF office. Staff made a site visit and committed to helping him reach his goal.
 - Evan Richardson, Stephen Jasenak (area foresters) and Scott Bachman (senior area forester) were assisted by Alanna Ostrowski (forest technician) on this 25-acre burn. The weather was not perfect, but the burn went well and met all the goals for the landowner. On top of the excellent work on the burn, staff got to exercise some equipment right before fire season.
 - On the way out of the property with the transport, three birds flew in front of the transport and landed in the back. They were *Colinus virginianus*, better known as bobwhite quail! Bobwhites really do respond well to a prescribed burn!

News Clips

- ◆ [How a humble mushroom could save forests and fight climate change](#)
- ◆ [Number of Earth's tree species estimated to be 14% higher than currently known, with some 9,200 species yet to be discovered](#)
- ◆ [Big trees, tall buildings: How forests can help solve global warming through carbon storage](#)
- ◆ [Carbon credits could help U.S. lower greenhouse gas levels, while producing more wood products](#)
- ◆ [Tips to help prevent wildfires as a community](#)
- ◆ [Dept. of Forestry Provides Guidance When Burning Storm Debris](#)
- ◆ [Local business owner Cole achieves high status: Full Member in Association of Consulting Foresters of America](#)
- ◆ [5 Lesser-Known State Parks In Virginia That Will Absolutely Amaze You](#)
- ◆ [New Fauquier conservation easements down for year](#)
- ◆ [Bedford County farm protects more than 100 acres with conservation easement](#)

- ◆ [The Garden Muse – Ponder the importance of hardwood trees in the landscape](#)
- ◆ [Forest Legacy expands conservation around Big Woods State Forest](#)