



February 21, 2022

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Employee News

Leaving VDOF

- ◆ Jim Blackwell (forest technician) is retiring from VDOF on February 28, 2022 after 42 years and 9 months of service. Congratulations, Jim! Enjoy your well-deserved retirement.
- ◆ Drew Howell (helpdesk technician) is resigning his position on March 4 to pursue a new opportunity. Best of luck on your new adventure.

Congratulations – Justin and Blake Barnes!!

- ◆ It's a boy! Theodore Francis Barnes arrived at 1:20 AM February 16. Young Theodore weighed 7 lbs.11 oz. Mom, Dad, and baby are exhausted but doing well.

Coming Up

2022 Statewide Wildfire Training Academy – Registration

- ◆ VDOF’s 2022 Statewide Interagency Wildfire Training Academy will be on the campus of Longwood University, May 26 – 28.
- ◆ A special two-week registration period, **exclusively for all full time VDOF employees**, will open at noon on **February 22**. Regular public/open registration will begin at noon on *March 8*. Registration is free for all fulltime VDOF employees, although you’re immediate supervisor should first approve your course plans.
- ◆ Here is the direct link to the registration site: <https://cvent.me/17z0gb>

(Please do not share this link with anyone outside the agency at this time.)

The course matrix for this year is as follows:

CLASS MATRIX					
Virginia Interagency Wildland Fire Academy, Longwood 2022					
5/25-5/28/2022					
Classroom	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
	24-May	25-May	26-May	27-May	28-May
TBD	Setup	S-212	S-212	S-212	S-212
TBD	Setup	M-410	M-410	M-410	M-410
TBD	Setup		S-215	S-215	S-215
TBD	Setup	S-131	S-131	S-270	S-270
TBD	Setup	RX-310	RX-310	RX-310	RX-310
TBD	Setup	Tractor	Tractor	Tractor	Tractor
TBD	Setup	S-330	S-330	S-330 AM	
N/A AB State Forest	Setup				S-130/190
TBD	Incident Command Post (ICP)				
Field Work		S-212	S-212	S-212 +	S-212 +
Field Work					S-215
Field Work		Tractor	Tractor +	Tractor +	Tractor +
Field Work					S-130/190 +

Roanoke Tree Care Workshop – Registration is Open

- ◆ The one day workshop will be held in person on Wednesday, March 16. Topics covered include greenway utilization, bioretention management, tree/sidewalk mitigation techniques, and winter abiotic/biotic stressors.
 - The U&CF Program will cover registration for up to 12 staff to attend.
 - Please get permission from your supervisor and email [Becky Woodson](mailto:Becky.Woodson@vdf.virginia.gov) to register you.

- Continuing education credits will be available for ISA, SAF and CBLP.

Last Week

State Forester

- ◆ Rob Farrell attended the National Association of State Foresters (NASF) quarterly executive committee meeting in DC. This included a half-day meeting of the State & Private Forestry Board with USDA Forest Service (USFS) Associate Deputy Chief, Jaelith Hall-Rivera. The meetings focused primarily on coordination between the USFS and the states related to the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) funding for forestry. NASF also adopted initial positions related to the upcoming Farm Bill legislation.

Forestland Conservation

- ◆ Sabina Dhungana (utilization and marketing program manager) delivered a forest carbon informational session to Eastern Region's Senior Area Foresters. Sabina discussed forest carbon market opportunities, challenges, and issues during the presentation.
- ◆ Rachel Harris (utilization and marketing program specialist) sent out the first quarterly update to the Virginia Wood Council on our progress and recent developments.
- ◆ Joe Lehnen (urban wood utilization forester) and Meghan Mulroy-Goldman (community forestry specialist) coordinated a project with Fort Monroe on an urban wood project, in which live oak logs were donated to the Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation (JYF) for the three historic ships at JYF. Since their meeting, they have also been able to connect JYF with another local wood company in Powhatan that has supplied wood for the Charles Morgan at Mystic seaport, rigging for the heart block on the US Constitution, and rigging for other wooden boats requiring authentic blocks.
- ◆ Molly O'Liddy (urban & community forestry [U&CF] partnership coordinator) and Joe Lehnen met with staff from the City of Harrisonburg, James Madison University (JMU), and the Edith J. Carrier Arboretum. Collaboration efforts among these groups are underway to plan a one-day workshop for grounds managers from JMU, Eastern Mennonite University, Bridgewater College, and the City of Harrisonburg. Topics include young tree care and pruning, stormwater management, and urban wood utilization.
- ◆ Lara Johnson (U&CF program manager) met with the new horticulturist, Tyler Holtzman, for the Science Museum of Virginia to discuss design and species selection for The Green Project. Construction is underway at the museum for this project that will be converting two acres of impervious surface to an urban greenspace with native trees.
- ◆ Molly O'Liddy gave a presentation, 'Siting, Selecting & Maintaining Strong Trees to Withstand Storms,' to the Piedmont Master Gardeners, with more than 100 in attendance. This presentation addressed what Master Gardeners and homeowners can do to monitor and prevent storm damage on their property.
- ◆ American Forests Foundation (AFF) held its second stakeholder meeting with groups in the City of Richmond to discuss the potential Tree Equity Score Analyzer (TESA) project proposed for the area. Stakeholders included place-based non-profits, city government, and state agencies. Eli Podyma (community forestry specialist), Molly O'Liddy, and Lara Johnson attended the meeting to offer suggestions and historical input. Another meeting is scheduled for next month.

Forest Resource Management

- ◆ The Hardwood Forest Habitat Initiative includes eight strategies to advance hardwood management in Virginia. Several activities this past week highlighted two of these: institutionalizing hardwood management in VDOF through training, and developing demonstration areas for the purpose of outreach. Eleven VDOF staff received training in stand marking for the crop tree release on two sites on state forest property (see State Forest for details). These sites will be used as demonstration areas to showcase this forest improvement practice.
- ◆ On February 10, 12 VDOF foresters from across the state participated in a conference call with Joe Rossetti (hardwood initiative coordinator) to discuss the Hardwood Assessment Tool (HAT). All 12 participants were trained on the current version in September, 2021 and have been able to use it when developing stand recommendations. Their feedback will assist in updating the HAT in time for the next hardwood training in May, for the 2022 class of Hardwood Foresters.
- ◆ On February 8, 12 VDOF staff took the state-certified pesticide applicators examination at VDOF Headquarters. The test was administered by the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS). The test is usually taken at Department of Motor Vehicles offices, but Lori Chamberlin (forest health program manager), organized this in-person testing day at HQ to assist agency staff in obtaining this important credential.
- ◆ The Reforestation of Timberlands (RT) Subcommittee of the Board of Forestry met virtually on February 9. Todd Groh (forest resource management program manager) facilitated the meeting, which included a review of the current program year and discussion of proposed funding rates for FY23. In its 51st year, the RT program annually assists over 1,100 private forest landowners with pine reforestation efforts.

Agency Lands

- ◆ The Sussex nursery continues its lifting and grading season. Currently, 8,618,000 seedlings (37 percent of the crop) have been lifted.
- ◆ This past week at Augusta Forestry Center (AFC), field staff and lifting contractors started lifting and grading trees. In the office, 1300 orders have been taken, with \$333,997 attached.

State-Owned Lands

- ◆ VDOF and Department of Corrections (DOC) staff visited the Sussex Correctional Center for selection of stands proposed for harvesting.

State Forest

- ◆ On February 8, Kirby Woolfolk, Jack Kauffman (forest management specialists), Brian Lacey (regional resource forester), Chris McClelland (area forester), Dean Cumbia (director of forest resource management), and Joe Rossetti marked 32 acres for Crop Tree Release (CTR) on the Prince Edward-Gallion State Forest. As it is the first property in the State Forest system (1919), VDOF has a long history of forest management there. Donated by its namesake Emmett Dandridge Gallion, its 6,490 acres provide a number of educational & recreational opportunities, including Twin Lakes State Park located within its boundaries. The 16-year-old upland hardwood stand was marked to favor oaks, particularly white oak, but also southern red, black, chestnut, and scarlet. In all, 629 trees were marked, for about 19 trees per acre in 17 man hours.

- ◆ On February 9, Mike Womack (forest management specialist), Ben Duke, Ian Morris (state forest technicians), Bobby Robertson, Gary Hall-Matson (forest technicians), Alex Hernandez-Zuniga (natural resource specialist), Amy Bigger (area forester), Dean Cumbia, and Joe Rossetti marked about 48 acres for CTR on the Appomattox-Buckingham State Forest. The stand originated after a shelterwood harvest of a mature stand, followed by a prescribed burn, and is now 24 years old. Marking again favored white and other oaks, with approximately 26 trees per acre marked. In both stands, contractors will cut competing trees with crowns that touch the crop trees, thus allowing them more room to grow and develop. Oaks were the preferred species group for release, with white oak being first, followed by southern red, black, chestnut, and scarlet. Yellow-poplar and hickory were also occasionally chosen. In all, 1237 trees were marked, about 26 trees per acre in 45 man-hours. (pictured)
- ◆ Staff also marked a CTR area on the Chesterfield State Forest to be performed by contractors. Oaks are the preferred species group for release.
- ◆ On February 25, the new County Administrator for King William County, Percy Ashcraft, will be visiting with staff via Zoom about the two State Forests located in their county. He'd like to learn more about the State Forests, as well as how the county and Virginia Department of Forestry might work together to promote tourism and education.



Central Region

- ◆ Tom Snoddy and Chris McClelland (area foresters), presented debris burning law facts and figures to the local Amish Safety Council. This group provides suggestions to the Old Order Amish communities in Buckingham, Cumberland, and Prince Edward Counties. A new burn law poster is in the works, with the help of Janet Muncy (integrated media manager), Fred Turck (prevention program manager), and Tom Snoddy. There is an increasing population of Old Order Amish settling throughout this part of central Virginia.
- ◆ Twelve VDOF staff participated in Blue Ridge Partnership or Regional Invasive Species Management's (PRISM) virtual "Meet Your Forester" webinar, designed to introduce the public to their local forester for help with invasive species issues or other forest management activities. Participating were Patti Nylander, Martha Warring, David Powell, Jordan Herring, Kinner Ingram (senior area foresters), Bill Perry, Cain Harbison, Zach Arnold, Pete Schoderbek (area foresters), Lindsey Long (community forestry specialist), Jim McGlone (urban forest conservationist), and Zoe Bergstrom (natural resource specialist).

Eastern Region

- ◆ The Capital work area hosted a bulldozer training day at the Zoar State Forest, to reacquaint the area's part-time firefighters and introduce the newest full-time employees to the newest equipment.



Eleven attendees split into two groups with mixed experience levels. Each group heard about general maintenance and standard operating procedures from Daren Williams (eastern region mechanic), had practice loading and unloading units, and got a chance to push and plow lines in the H and K model dozers. Each member of the Capital Work Team assisted with planning, setup, and/or instructing. Special thanks to Lisa Burke (program support technician) for setting up lunches for the day (pictured)!

Western Region

- ◆ Kevin Keith (senior area forester), Dan Cloeter, Bill Sweeney (area foresters), Erin Perry (forest technician), and Joe Rossetti spent two days with Department of Wildlife Resources (DWR) staff looking at potential hardwood demonstration sites on the Fairystone Wildlife Management Area. DWR offered several good locations where a variety of oak regeneration methods could be implemented side-by-side for demonstration. Staff also used the Hardwood Assessment Tool at two properties where the Hardwood Habitat Incentive Program (HHIP) could assist the landowners with management goals through CTR. Other sites visited included a stand of mixed Virginia pine/hardwood regeneration and a property that received the first HHIP cost-share.
- ◆ Russell Proctor (regional fire specialist) gave a presentation to the Principles of Fire and Emergency Services class at a local high school. The class had just completed the I-100 (introduction to incident command) module. Topics covered included different roles and responsibilities in the ICS system, as well as VDOF's role in fire and other emergency response.
- ◆ The Western Region conducted a law enforcement refresher training for all regional employees. Topics included fire law enforcement, fire reporting, and a FiResponse tutorial. Rocky Wood (forest technician) facilitated the fire law enforcement discussion. Russell Proctor facilitated fire reporting and the FiResponse tutorial. Patti Nylander gave a presentation on accomplishment reporting. Thanks to all for good discussion and great participation.

News Clips

- ◆ [VDOF urging extreme caution when burning debris](#)
- ◆ [Virginia Department of Forestry advises caution when burning debris](#)
- ◆ [Urging caution if burning yard debris from winter storms](#)
- ◆ [Clarke County's former planning director to receive conservation award](#)
- ◆ [Culpeper's Horseshoe Farm leads Northern Piedmont in 2021 conservation efforts](#)
- ◆ [Property acquisition helps longleaf pine, red-cockaded woodpecker conservation](#)
- ◆ [Virginia's 4 p.m. burn law takes effect starting Feb. 15](#)
- ◆ [Garage on Mountain Cut Road destroyed by brush fire](#)
- ◆ [VDF reminds citizens spring fire season is about to begin](#)