



May 30, 2022

Upcoming Events

[VDOF Baseball Night in Richmond](#) – June 10

[Softwood Lumber Grading Training](#) – June 13 – 16

[VDOF Baseball Afternoon in Norfolk](#) – June 16

[All Agency Meeting](#) – June 29

[Teaching Trees Training for Middle and High School Teachers](#) - July 13 – July 14

[Project Learning Tree New Facilitator Training](#) – July 26 – 28

[Generation NEXT: Legacy Planning Webinar Series](#) – September 7 – 15

[Forest Management Academy – East](#) – September 13 – 15

[Forest Management Academy – West](#) – September 27 – 29

- ◆ Visit <https://dof.virginia.gov/events/> for more public events and <https://dof.virginia.gov/events/category/employee-only/> for more employee only events.

Employee News

Congratulations Chris Sullivan!

- ◆ It is my pleasure to announce that Chris Sullivan has been selected as the Deputy Regional Forester for the Western Region. We were fortunate to have a large pool of highly qualified applicants, which made the decision a difficult one. Chris is a 1994 graduate of Virginia Tech with a Bachelor's Degree in Forestry and Wildlife Management. Chris has been with the Department for twenty years where he has served as an Assistant Regional Forester as well as a Senior Area Forester. Prior to joining VDOF, he held positions as a land management and procurement forester for private forest industry companies. Chris brings a wealth of knowledge and leadership experience to our Western Region leadership team. He will begin his new role on May 25th.

Welcome to VDOF

- ◆ The Eastern Region welcomes one of its own, Brenda Clark, as the newest Program Support Technician (PST) based out of the Regional Office in New Kent. Brenda has moved into this new role effective May 25. Formerly, Brenda served as the New Kent Conference Center coordinator (part-time), where she has served since 2018. Prior to coming to work for VDOF, Brenda worked as an office administrator and property manager for a variety of private companies.
- ◆ We would like to welcome Ember Jenkins to the VDOF family as the new Helpdesk Analyst. Ember has a Bachelor's degree from Virginia Wesleyan University. She comes from City of Newport News and is an experienced helpdesk technician supporting staff with IT needs. Ember's first day was May 25.



Project Updates

Urban Wood – Forest Health Project

- ◆ Last fall, Patti Nylander (senior area forester) was contacted by Augusta County Director of Parks and Recreation Scott Farris regarding the evaluation of some potentially hazardous trees at the Natural Chimneys Park and campground. This call was precipitated by a dead ash tree which fell on an unoccupied camping trailer during the 2021 summer camping season. Patti, Scott, and the park staff marked fifty trees, most of them emerald ash borer (EAB)-killed ash, that were in need of removal to better ensure camper safety. Patti also recommended contacting Joe Lehnen (urban wood utilization forester) regarding the best utilization of these trees.

- ◆ In November Joe visited Natural Chimneys Park to view the trees and assess the possibilities of using them as local wood products. Over the winter, park staff and a tree company felled and bucked the trees into logs that would be usable by local wood businesses. Over the past



three months these logs found homes at three different urban/local wood businesses located in the Shenandoah Valley. (pictured)



The Natural Chimneys Park staff was also provided the contact information for the VDOF Forest Health group regarding the possible treatment of numerous eastern hemlocks located on the property. Earlier this month, Katlin DeWitt (forest health specialist), Lori Chamberlain (forest health program manager), and Amanda Conrad (forest health technician) treated 22 hemlocks against damage by the hemlock wooly adelgid. These trees will now be protected for 5-7 years against feeding from this pest. (pictured)

Last Week

State Forester

- ◆ Secretary Lohr and Deputy Secretary Green joined Rob Farrell, Ed Zimmer (deputy state forester), Terry Lasher (assistant state forester) and John Colligan (chief of administration) in attending the Virginia Forest Products Association's (VFPA) 38th East Cost Sawmill and Logging Equipment Exposition at the Richmond Raceway Complex. Held every other year, this is the largest forest products trade show in the country. The Virginia Department of Forestry also participated by staffing booths which highlighted our Water Quality, Forest Health, Utilization and Marketing programs, and our Urban Wood Utilization efforts. Over 15 VDOF staff member interacted with the several thousand attendees

to promote a wide variety of department priorities and initiatives, including cross-laminated timbers, harvesting best management practices, and spotted lanternfly interdiction.

- ◆ The Board of Forestry held a meeting in conjunction with the Richmond Logging Expo. The Board reviewed the top issues of concern to the forestry community in order to plan for discussions at future meetings. Secretary Lohr and Deputy Secretary Green participated in the meeting and discussed current industry concerns, such as rising diesel fuel prices.
- ◆ Rob Farrell, Terry Lasher and Sabina Dhungana (utilization and marketing [U&M] program manager) visited Flippo Lumber Company with Secretary of Agriculture and Forestry Matthew Lohr and Deputy Secretary of Agriculture and Forestry Beth Green. The group was hosted by Board of Forestry chairperson and mill operator/owner Beth Hutchins. They toured the mill, discussing advancements at the facility and many of the concerns facing the industry. (pictured)
- ◆ Ed Zimmer, Terry Lasher, Sabina Dhungana, and John Pemberton met with company representatives from Forest2Market to discuss progress made to date on our yellow pine resource analysis study. They discussed resource heat map parameters, timeline, and additional information that the VDOF wants to see in the final study report. The completed study will give us a decision support tool for future businesses wanting to invest in pine resources in the state.
- ◆ Rob Farrell, Ed Zimmer, John Colligan, and Bryant Bays (eastern regional forester) spent a day in New Kent County with Department of Planning and Budget Analysts Robert Grier and Emily Barksdale. The day began with a tour of the New Kent Forestry Center and included a discussion of how potential funding for reopening the facility would be used to produce seedlings. After lunch, the group toured the mill of former Board of Forestry member Thomas Evelyn and visited the site of a recent harvesting job.



Fire and Emergency Response

- ◆ The VDOF has participated in the development of a new hurricane playbook to support state agency response in the Commonwealth. The effort, which was led by VDEM, focused on the development of a desk reference that better captures the specific actions expected of Virginia's response agencies in preparation and response to a major hurricane type of emergency. Agency responsibilities under the new plan are organized into 17 Emergency Support Functions (ESFs). Under the plan, the VDOF is the lead state agency for one ESF and is a supporting agency for six other ESFs. VDOF's main responsibilities under the plan include: provide incident management personnel to support the state EOC, respond to localities to coordinate infrastructure restoration, and coordinate the distribution of FEMA-based assistance; provide road clearing crews for tree and debris removal; assist in search and rescue efforts; complete damage assessments; provide Urban Forestry strike team resources; and provide support for both agricultural and law enforcement related activities.
- ◆ The VDOF completed an update and submission of a State Emergency Operations Center – related Agency Support Plan (ASP). All Virginia response agencies were required to complete an ASP in 2021 that detailed the operations of the agency in support of activities within the state Emergency Operations Center (EOC). This effort provided a more detailed update to the initial 2021 plan for the VDOF. The updated plan is designed to better detail VDOF operations during a state of emergency, both to document the likely activities of the agency as an informational tool for other agencies, and to serve as an internal agency reference of our typical operations during a state of emergency.

Forestland Conservation

- ◆ Deya Ramsden (James River Buffer Program [JRBP] coordinator) and Delaney Beattie, (JRBP riparian buffer specialist) are working with the town of Scottsville to establish a riparian buffer on a newly created open space easement within town limits. Deya and Delaney met with Nicola McGoff of Wild Ginger Field Services to discuss options for invasive plant treatment and buffer establishment through natural regeneration. This is one of several urban and community projects undertaken through JRBP with the help of matching funds from the Virginia Trees for Clean Water Program.
- ◆ John Pemberton (forest inventory analysis [FIA] program manager) attended the virtual National FIA Management Team meeting as a representative of the southern states' FIA programs for the Southern Group of State Foresters. The main topic of the meeting was the use of Supplemental Stimulus funding.
- ◆ Deya Ramsden met with Anne Marie Roberts of the James River Association (JRA) and Lisa Wittenborn of the Rivanna Conservation Alliance (RCA), along with several high school student volunteers, to install signage for a tree library at James Monroe's Highland. The library will serve as an educational component of a larger riparian buffer planting carried out jointly by JRA and the RCA. VDOF provided the QR code signs developed by Lara Johnson (urban & community forestry [U&CF] program manager). Highland is owned by the college of William and Mary, making it a state-owned property, and portions of the forest management fall under the jurisdiction of VDOF. (pictured)
- ◆ Jefferson Armistead, Joey Collard, Mason Jeffries, Chad Lykins, Lynwood Rogers, Vance Yates (FIA specialists), Ruby Stathers (FIA assistant) and John Pemberton attended the virtual "P2+" plot training along with the Tennessee FIA crew. P2+ plots are a subset of the normal inventory plots measured during leaf-on with additional measurements for down woody material (for fuel loading, wildlife, and carbon estimates) as well as vegetation structure and additional tree crown measurements.
- ◆ John Pemberton assisted Mike Skinner (forestry consultant) with summary data for a narrative on the Southwest VA forest resource, as it relates to The Nature Conservancy properties in SW VA.
- ◆ Rachel Harris (U&M specialist) along with Sabina Dhungana, Joe Lehnen (urban wood utilization forester), and Jennifer Leach (conservation, markets and public programs coordinator), attended the Richmond Logging Exposition from May 19-21. The VDOF exhibit showcased the work the Utilization and Marketing Team is doing in the state, and the event allowed them to meet with logging operation and sawmill owners to promote programs within VDOF and answer any inquiries.
- ◆ Sabina Dhungana participated in the 2022 Spring Allegheny Dry Kiln Club meeting that was held on May 18 at the Richmond International Raceway in Richmond, VA. Along with the welcome reception, industry experts gave presentations about the main three drying methods for drying hardwood lumber. Industry representatives for conventional steam, dehumidification, and vacuum kilns presented information about their drying technology. The three presentations were followed by a moderated panel question and answer session. The program served as a great venue to learn about the wood drying process and the technologies available. More than 15 industry partners attended the event.
- ◆ The Southern Group of State Foresters (SGSF) Urban and Community Forestry Committee hosted an Urban Forest Strike Team (UFST) training and mock disaster in Jonesboro, Arkansas last week. Jonesboro was selected because of a series of tornadoes that have impacted the surrounding communities, so attendees could do tree risk assessments on damaged trees. There were 11 states and Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) represented at the event. A SGSF



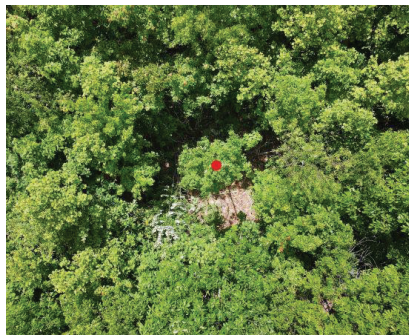
representative also served as Public Information Officer (PIO). VDOF staff Lisa Deaton (area forester), Lindsey Long, Meghan Mulroy-Goldman (community forestry specialists) and Molly O'Liddy (urban & community forestry [U&CF] partnership coordinator) received training. Drew Arnn (senior area forester) and Lara Johnson (U&CF program manager) were part of the teaching cadre.

Forest Resource Management

- ◆ A training session for the 2022 “Hardwood Class” of VDOF employees was held at Holiday Lake 4-H Center and the Appomattox-Buckingham State Forest (ABSF) on May 17-19. Approximately five representatives from each of the three regions participated. Primary topics were forest history, stages of hardwood stand development, silviculture, and instruction on the latest version of Hardwood Assessment Tool. The training featured both classroom and field visits and exercises. The session was led by Joe Rossetti (hardwood forest habitat initiative coordinator), Jerre Creighton (research program manager) and Dean Cumbia (forest resource management director). With staff trained in 2020, 2021, and 2022, there are now 33 field foresters in VDOF trained to deliver the Hardwood Habitat Incentive Program. Thanks go to Becky Woodson (program support technician), the ABSF staff, and the staff at Holiday Lake for their work in making this important training possible. If you'd like to be added to the growing number of foresters able to deliver this needed program, talk to your supervisor and Joe about being included in the 2023 class! (pictured)



- ◆ Jim Pugh (GIS/remote sensing analyst), Jason Braunstein (GIS program manager), Dean Cumbia, Tom Snoddy (area forester), Cory Swift-Turner (public information specialist), and Joe Rossetti met at a 13 year old stand on the Appomattox-Buckingham State Forest



following last week's hardwood training to release crop trees from competing trees and get pictures and video of the release in action. After selecting crop trees, Tom cut competing trees with Cory recording the work from under the canopy, and Jim recording the work from above the canopy with a drone. The images and videos will be used in publications, presentations, and outreach materials. For those keeping track, the staff present represented 5 different divisions within the Department of Forestry working together on the State Forest (a 6th division) to improve the forest and further the Hardwood Initiative through development of outreach and education materials. Thanks to everyone who helped. (pictured)

- ◆ Lori Chamberlin (forest health program manager), Katlin DeWitt (forest health specialist), and Amanda Conrad (forest health technician) met with Augusta County Parks Staff at Natural Chimneys Park on May 17th to treat 22 hemlock trees. These large trees were clustered around the parking lot and a grassy area in front of the Chimneys where many special events are held. This treatment will protect the trees from the invasive pest, hemlock woolly adelgid, for 5-7 years.
- ◆ On May 19th, Katlin DeWitt, Amanda Conrad, and Kendall Topping (community forester) met with natural resources staff from Langley Air Force Base to release 200 *Oobius* wasps on land owned by the

Base. These parasitoids act as biological control of the emerald ash borer, an invasive pest that attacks and kills ash trees. There will be more biocontrol releases at the Base this summer in an effort to establish the parasitoid population and protect the pumpkin ash, a rare ash species in Virginia.

- ◆ Amanda Conrad and Lori Chamberlin treated 30 small ash trees at Cumberland State Forest. These ash trees were identified a few years ago as part of a case study with Shannon Lewis (state forest forester) and Dean Cumbia investigating the feasibility of protecting small ash trees in a forest with basal bark sprays and encouraging their growth and survival with crop tree release practices.

Agency Lands

- ◆ Ones Bitoki (tree improvement program manager) oversaw the container sowing at the Sussex nursery of 7560 loblolly pine seeds from several orchards across the Southeast. The resulting seedlings will be planted in a study of the impact of pollen clouds on improved loblolly pine performance. This is the first time VDOF has been asked to raise seedlings for tree improvement research; in the past this has been done by other cooperator organizations or the tree improvement staff, but due to continuing resource constraints within the co-op, it has become necessary for Ones to take on this significant added responsibility.

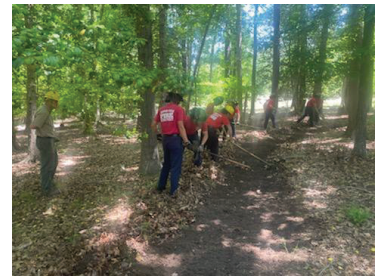


Central Region

- ◆ Kinner Ingram (senior area forester) spoke to a group of 25 prospective Master Naturalists. He presented updates on the state of our forests and other basic forestry topics. These students will be members of the Old Rag Master Naturalist Chapter once they have completed their series of classes.
- ◆ Zoe Bergman and Andrew Murray (area foresters) presented “Woods in your Backyard” to landowners at Crockett Park in Fauquier County. Their presentation dealt with managing small tracts of property.

Eastern Region

- ◆ John Rose (forest technician), Evan Richardson (area forester), Heather Tuck (regional fire specialist), and Scott Bachman (senior area forester) presented the Wildland fire chapter of Fire Fighter I to the most recent class of career fire fighter recruits at the Newport News Fire Department Academy. The class consisted of 25 recruit fire fighters from Newport News, James City County and the City of Williamsburg. During the day, the recruits received classroom instruction as well as an afternoon of field exercises. In the field, John demonstrated Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for wildland fire fighting. Evan put the recruits through a hand tool exercise creating a fire line. Heather covered water supply with a drop tank and our Eastern Engine. The final station was dozer logistics with Scott. (pictured)
- ◆ Kendall Topping (community forestry specialist) presented an educational talk to 35 members of the Eastern Shore Chapter of the Virginia Master Naturalists. She covered the challenge of maintaining biodiversity in an era of increasing urbanization. Discussions included the importance of habitat connectivity as well as the means to create wildlife corridors in the urban environment.



- ◆ Kendall Topping participated in the City of Hampton's Resilient Hampton Initiative Workshops. During these workshops, Hampton's Planning Commission and Community Development Department team interacted with various partners, such as developers, community leaders, consultant firms, non-profits, and state agencies, to discuss the challenges climate change poses to the city. A few challenges discussed included flooding, sea level rise, urban heat island, and equity issues. Kendall provided advice on strategic tree plantings, species lists, and other forestry related methods to address these challenges.

Western Region

- ◆ Teagan O'Brien (riparian buffer specialist) worked with a local Boy Scout to plant trees and establish a new riparian buffer in Augusta County as part of an Eagle Scout Project. Funds from the Mountains to Bay program were used to purchase the trees, shelters, and stakes. The local Boy Scout organized his troop and volunteer work days to plant the trees. On a warm Friday in mid-April, 15 scouts planted almost 700 trees. The new buffer is almost 2 acres and will improve the forest cover on a tributary of Christians Creek, which is in the Potomac River Watershed.
- ◆ The Mountain Valley Team, with help from Department of Wildlife Resources (DWR) staff, conducted an understory prescribed burn in the Lower Cowpasture Watershed area. Funds from the Joint Chiefs Lower Cowpasture Initiative covered the cost of the burn.
- ◆ Patti Nylander (senior area forester) participated in Public Works Day at Kate Collins Middle School in the City of Waynesboro as part of a Meaningful Watershed Experience for students. All 200 sixth-graders rotated through stations to learn about watershed management, soil conservation, fisheries management, and how trees grow from seeds.
- ◆ Emily Wotton and Collin Sapp (forest technicians) assisted Clinch Valley Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) in teaching a Kids in the Creek Program with 60 fourth-graders from Honaker Elementary at Slate Creek Farm in Honaker, VA. Emily and Collin taught tree/leaf ID, tree cookie biology, and riparian buffer importance/water quality. The kids got to do leaf rubbings and make tree cookie necklaces as well.
- ◆ Daniel Swisher, Chris Cahoon (forest technicians), Clint Folks (natural resource specialist), and Doug Morris (P14), did a wildland training for the volunteer departments in Rockbridge County. Training was held at the Goshen Scout Reservation. The cadre covered topics consisting of scene size-up, LCES, structure protection, and working around the dozer. Some field exercises sizing up structures around the scout camp were done.
- ◆ Smokey Bear visited Sandlick Elementary school (about 300 students). Rocky Wood and Emily Wotton (forest technicians) provided a fire prevention message.
- ◆ VDOF was requested to assist in the search for a missing person in Dickenson County on Thursday evening, May 19 (the search was cut short by thunderstorms). The search continued throughout the day on Friday May 20, and the missing individual was found unharmed. Rocky Wood assisted in the search utilizing a Department of Forestry UTV.

News Links:

- ◆ [Virginia Tech alumni fuel a burning desire to fight wildfires](#)
- ◆ [Virginia Century Forests](#)