



**June 27, 2022**

## **Upcoming Events**

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*All vehicle mileages and equipment hours should be entered into IFRIS. – July 1*

*Teaching Trees Training for Middle and High School Teachers - July 13 – July 14*

*Project Learning Tree New Facilitator Training – July 26 – 28*

*Wood in Construction and Beyond Seminar – July 27*

*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**

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### *Leaving VDOF*

- ◆ Matt Poirot (water quality program manager) is retiring from VDOF on July 1, 2022 after 43 years of service. Congratulations, Matt! Enjoy your well-deserved retirement.
- ◆ Ricky Butler (forest technician) is retiring from VDOF on July 1, 2022 after 43 years of service. Congratulations, Ricky! Enjoy your well-deserved retirement.
- ◆ Martha Warring (senior area forester) is retiring from VDOF on July 1, 2022 after 35 years of service. Congratulations, Martha! Enjoy your well-deserved retirement.
- ◆ Neil Oberholtzer (area forester) is retiring from VDOF on July 1, 2022 after 30 years of service. Congratulations, Neil! Enjoy your well-deserved retirement.
- ◆ David Milby (area forester) is retiring from VDOF on July 1, 2022 after 30 years of service. Congratulations, David! Enjoy your well-deserved retirement.

## **Last Week**

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### *State Forester*

- ◆ Secretary of Agriculture and Forestry Matt Lohr joined Rob Farrell, Ed Zimmer (deputy state forester), Greg Bilyeu (communications director), Peter Eales (pine resource specialist), and Laura Guthrie (area

forester) on of tour of the Northern Virginia Electric Cooperative's (NOVEC) Halifax biomass power generation facility. The NOVEC facility is the only electrical cooperative owned facility of its type in the Commonwealth and is an important market for low-value timber in Halifax and surrounding counties. Serving 15,000 to 20,000 customers, it provides roughly 10% of the power NOVEC needs to meet customer demands.

- ◆ VDOF hosted a meeting with Mark Thomas with Aerial Vantage, a Virginia company providing unmanned aerial vehicle services. Aerial Vantage is currently working with agriculture clients and they are interested in developing new services in support of forestry as well. The meeting identified opportunities related to making use of drones for forest health assessment and controlling invasive plants

### **Forestland Conservation**

- ◆ Lara Johnson (urban and community forestry program manager) gave a talk on VDOF's Urban and Community Forestry Program to USDA Urban Service Center, Natural Resources Conservation Services and Soil and Water Conservation Districts staff focused on expanding conservation tools and support to address the unique needs of urban farmers and communities. Several program staff were invited to present including Virginia State University, Virginia Cooperative Extension and the Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation.
- ◆ The U&M Program is planning to coordinate site visits to Virginia's wood products companies (Meherrin River Forest Products and Flippo Lumber Corporation) for Wilson Engineering Services (<https://wilsonengineeringservices.com/>). Wilson Engineering has a long-term cooperative agreement with USFS to conduct wood energy project analysis for interested entities (private, and public). The analysis they conduct will result in a full feasibility analysis report with wood energy systems scenarios for companies to evaluate. It's a free service provided to the interested party by USFS and U&M team is planning to promote it in Virginia. The feasibility report will give a yes or no answer with full engineering design recommendations and how to move forward on wood energy systems, type of guidance, financial saving figures, etc.

### **Forest Resource Management**

- ◆ Lori Chamberlin (forest health program manager), Katlin DeWitt (forest health specialist), Amanda Conrad (forest health technician), Scott Bachman (senior area forester), and Kendall Topping (community forestry specialist) worked at Paul D Camp Community College in Franklin to treat 15 ash trees with insecticide to protect them from the emerald ash borer. This site has a unique stand of planted ash trees behind the college and VDOF forest health staff began treating a percentage of the ash in 2019 hoping that associated resistance would protect the entire stand. Some of the trees are starting to die/decline, but VDOF forest health staff will continue to treat the healthy trees.
- ◆ Joe Rossetti, (hardwood forest habitat initiative coordinator), met with Dan Hammond of H&H Forest Management to look at two hardwood stands on a property in Amelia County that Dan and the landowners are interested in harvesting. The stands have a considerable volume of White Oak, but past harvesting has yielded mixed results in regenerating oak. The Hardwood Assessment Tool may be used to help determine management prescriptions and apply for Hardwood Habitat Incentive Program cost-share if appropriate. Joe and Dan noted that 10 years following the last harvest, Yellow Poplar regeneration is found in areas that currently have 60 square feet of basal area or less, and advanced oak regeneration was found in areas with 80 to 120 square feet of basal area. Where there was more than 120 square feet of basal area, little desirable advanced regen was found

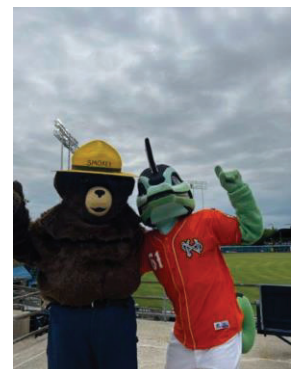
## Agency Lands

- ◆ Ed Zimmer (deputy state forester), Josh Bennicoff (nursery manager), and Trent Wilson (assistant nursery manager) attended a meeting with Pine View Forestry regarding last year's seedling season.

## Eastern Region

- ◆ Lisa Deaton (area forester) provided invasive species and forest health information at the Gloucester Master Gardeners' Tick Forum held at Brent & Becky's Bulbs on May 11. Old Dominion University researchers provided information on tick species, while the Virginia Department of Health provided an update on diseases and tick prevention. There were 60 people in attendance.
- ◆ Kathleen Ogilvy (area forester), Jack Kauffman and Dennis Gaston (state forests foresters), Brian Lacy (regional resource specialist), and Joe Rossetti (hardwood initiative coordinator) inventoried a 150 acre stand at the State Farm Correctional Center in Powhatan County using the Hardwood Assessment Tool. The area will likely be used as a demonstration area for hardwood management, and the inventory data will help Kathleen prepare the State Lands Plan for the property.
- ◆ InciWeb is an interagency all-risk incident information management system providing official emergency incident related information for the public. InciWeb is primarily used for wildland fires. Later this year, the current version of the InciWeb website will receive an update to a new content management system known as InciWeb Drupal. Richard Reuse (area forester), who is qualified as a public information officer, was one of three people in the country to recently test the new version. Bugs were identified and numerous suggestions made to improve the system for data entry by public information officers and improve the experience of the public visiting the website.

- ◆ Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) continues to impact ash trees across Virginia. As part of outreach efforts to inform the public of this invasive pest, VDOF HQ and Blackwater work area staff attended the Norfolk Tides baseball game. The Norfolk Tides are the minor league baseball Triple-A affiliate of the Baltimore Orioles. Lori Chamberlin, Amanda Conrad, Scott Bachman (senior area forester), Kendall Topping, Stephen Jasenak (area forester) and Smokey Bear had plenty of "goodies" to hand out and start conversations before the first pitch at the "business person special" day ball game. The crowd of almost 4500 spectators passed by the VDOF's display, saw the message of not moving firewood and honoring the national pastime by preventing EAB movement on the Jumbo Tron prior to the game. Nearly every youth in attendance went home with a "Slugger the Buzzer" ball to remind them to prevent the movement of EAB. (pictured)



- ◆ The Richmond Flying Squirrels, minor league baseball Double-A affiliate of the San Francisco Giants, also hosted a forest health awareness night during their home game versus the Erie SeaWolves. The Forest Health team and Capital work areas combined efforts to bring information about forest health and forest management to the 7,700 fans in attendance. By request, Smokey Bear made a special appearance to throw the first pitch. (pictured with Area Forester Dave Slack)



- ◆ Longleaf pine and its associated ecosystem is an important, yet highly diminished species in Virginia. On June 15, the Virginia Longleaf Pine Cooperators Group held its annual meeting at the Norfolk Botanical Gardens. The group is composed of conservation agencies, organizations, and individuals committed to longleaf pine restoration. Agenda topics were longleaf conservation highlights including seed and seedling production, prescribed burning, research, and outreach. The meeting included a field tour of the longleaf pine demonstration forest/garden at the Botanical Gardens. VDOF meeting participants were Ed Zimmer (deputy state forester) Bryant Bays (regional forester), John Hisghman (deputy regional forester), Jim Schroering (longleaf/southern pine beetle [SPB] prevention coordinator), Dennis Gaston (state forest forester), Scott Bachman (senior area forester), and Dean Cumbia (director of forest resource management).
- ◆ The Rappahannock Volunteer Firemen's Association, a fraternal organization of volunteer fire departments on the Middle Peninsula and Northern Neck, held their quarterly meeting at Mathews Volunteer Fire Department's Station 1. Ken Sterner (senior area forester) provided the meeting program and discussed Unified Command on brush fires, communications issues, and safe use of tractor-plows. The Peninsula work area also brought a transport, dozer, eight-foot tall inflatable Smokey Bear and other exhibit materials.

### Central Region

- ◆ In June of 2020 VDOF was contacted by a landowner in Prince Edward County with a timber trespass complaint. The landowner stated that a timber harvesting operation adjacent to their property had encroached and clear cut timber on their property as well. VDOF advised the landowner to appoint a timber estimator to determine the amount of damages, and notify the alleged trespasser per Virginia timber theft code.
  - A VDOF Special Forest Warden assisted the landowner with gathering information and statements from the parties involved. Information included county tax parcel records, reviewing documents provided to the landowner, obtaining timber sell contracts on adjacent property, providing a list of experienced timber estimators, and assisting with communicating with the hired surveyor. VDOF conducted interviews with the alleged, and gathered witness statements. Both parties involved experienced difficulty in finding a timber estimator due to the passage of time and type of estimation needed. Therefore VDOF assisted with contacting an experienced forester and obtaining a best estimate to be used as a basis for obtaining a value of the timber that had been harvested.
  - VDOF Special Forest Warden contacted the Prince Edward Commonwealth Attorney's office and presented all the facts and findings. The Prince Edward Commonwealth Attorney began to pursue timber theft charges in the form of a direct indictment. The alleged obtained legal counsel and the matter was resolved as a civil matter with an agreed settlement of \$65,000.

### Public Information

- ◆ Last week at Camp Woods and Wildlife, campers ages 13-16 learned about forestry, biology, wildlife and careers in natural resources at the Holiday Lake 4-H Education Center in the Appomattox-Buckingham State Forest. Between classes covering subjects ranging from tree identification to invasive species, campers enjoyed swimming, volleyball and other friendly competition.

