



August 1, 2022

Upcoming Events

[Generation NEXT – Southside – August 26-27](#)

[Generation NEXT – Virtual Workshop – September 7, 8, 14 & 15](#)

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

[Fall Fire Academy – Western Region – September 13 – 16](#)

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

[Generation NEXT – New Kent Conference Center – November 2](#)

- ◆ 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

Welcome to VDOF

- ◆ Logan McGlothlin joined the Forest Inventory Analysis (FIA) team as a field assistant in the Western Region. Logan has a B.S. from UVA-Wise. He spent his first day doing OTJ training with Joey Collard (FIA specialist) & John Pemberton (FIA program manager) in Russell County. With Logan's hiring, the VDOF FIA program is currently fully staffed.

Stephen and Hannah Jasenak – Congratulations!

- ◆ Stephen Jasenak (area forester) and Hannah welcomed their newest family member a day before Stephen celebrated his own birthday! Willow Wren arrived Tuesday the 19th. She and her family have arrived home and are doing well. (Pictured)



Project Updates

Policy and Procedures

- ◆ [Policy and Procedures 07-02 Rural Forestry Assistance Program](#), was recently updated primarily to include the procedures for the new Hardwood Habitat Incentive Program (HHIP) and to remove the Forestry Quail Habitat Recovery Program, which has ended due to lack of DWR funding. There were also some changes made to the Federal Programs section by updating the application and plan checklist for the NRCS Conservation Activity Plan (CAP106), which was split to

become the Conservation Planning Activity (CPA 106) Forest Management Plan and the Forest Management - Design and Implementation Activity Plan (DIA 165). Plan reviewers will now use the new Form 7.16 Virginia Conservation Planning Activity (CPA106) and Design and Implementation Activity (DIA 165) Component Checklist to evaluate these new plans. You are encouraged to review these and several other minor changes [Employee Access Intranet](#).

Last Week

VDOF Firefighter Deployment Update

- ◆ VDOF's first crew of 16, who deployed to Texas on July 2, has safely returned to Virginia. The team was immediately swapped by a fresh crew who deployed last week. VDOF crews have remained busy in Texas thus far. They wrapped up a large fire near Uvalde, and are now working a 2,000-acre blaze north of Huntsville. Texas has already requested a third rotation of personnel in August and those planning efforts are currently under way.

Community Wildfire Defense Grant Funding

- ◆ This week, the U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service announced that \$1 billion in new funding will be made available over the next five years for critically important wildfire preparedness and mitigation work in at-risk communities nationwide. The Community Wildfire Defense Grant (CWDG) program, created by the bipartisan Infrastructure Law, will make approximately \$200 million available to communities in its first year. Selected CWDG projects will either develop or revise a community wildfire protection plan or implement wildfire risk reduction projects.

VDOF Purchases Tree Seedling Harvester

- ◆ VDOF has successfully concluded nearly a year of negotiations to purchase a tree seedling harvester machine from the J.E. Love Company of Garfield, Washington. This "seedling lifter," which is pulled by a farm tractor, loosens the soil under the seedlings and uses a set of precisely tensioned rubber belts to lift the seedlings out of the planting beds and up to a workspace for bundling and transfer. This custom-built machine takes two years to complete and costs \$850,500 to manufacture. VDOF has secured Master Equipment Lease Program funds, and the cost will be paid over 10 years using funds from the VDOF seedling nursery, not general funds. The machine is expected to last 20-30 years and replaces the nursery's current machine, which has been in operation since 1991. This type of machine was originally designed at the VDOF seedling nursery, but not patented.

Chesapeake Bay Programs Principals' Staff Committee

- ◆ VDOF staff recently attended the Chesapeake Bay Program Principals' Staff Committee meeting. Topics discussed included possible changes needed from the Chesapeake Assessment and Scenario Tool (CAST) 19 model to enhance CAST 21 and how states can accelerate progress on wetlands and riparian buffer implementation to meet the Watershed Implementation Plan III goals by 2025.

Virginia Security Corridor Sentinel Landscape Team Meeting

- ◆ VDOF hosted the second "Finishers" team meeting for the Virginia Security Corridor Sentinel Landscape. These meetings consist of a small team of members from non-profits, state and federal agencies to encourage progress on various projects in order to receive a Sentinel Landscapes designation by the end of 2022. The designation opens doors to landscape-level conservation and increased funding for project implementation around U.S. Department of Defense installations and other coastal areas.

Laurel Wilt Disease Survey and Joint Training with Tennessee Forestry

- ◆ VDOF staff traveled to southwest Virginia to survey for laurel wilt disease, which destroys plants in the laurel family. Laurel wilt was confirmed last July year on a sassafras tree in Scott County. While there, VDOF held a joint training with the Tennessee Division of Forestry at a site where the disease has been confirmed on both sassafras and spicebush. Over 20 representatives from nine agencies attended to learn about disease biology, identification and sanitation methods. After group discussion, teams surveyed surrounding areas for symptomatic sassafras and spicebush. A few samples were collected and sent to the Virginia Tech Plant Disease Clinic for confirmation.

Blue Ash Tree Treatment

- ◆ VDOF Forest Health and Urban and Community Forestry staff assisted Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation and Natural Tunnels State Park staff with the treatment of blue ash trees, a rare ash species in Virginia. In total, 20 blue ash were injected with emamectin benzoate, a chemical that protects the trees from the emerald ash borer (EAB) for approximately three years. EAB, an invasive insect responsible for the loss of millions of ash trees in the U.S., often moves to new areas in firewood, timber and nursery stock. Two champion blue ash trees (the two largest in Virginia) were included in the recent treatment project.

Fire and Emergency Response

- ◆ Jason Braunstein (GIS program manager) and John Miller (director of fire and emergency response) represented the VDOF at several sessions to update and revise the Commonwealth's Hazard Mitigation Plan. The effort, which was led by VDEM, provides an assessment of all of the various natural and man-made disasters that can affect the Commonwealth and provides mitigation strategies to help limit the overall impacts. Wildfire emergencies are an included section of the plan. The effort is a FEMA requirement for counties to receive recovery and hazard mitigation funding following a disaster.
- ◆ John Miller served as the VDOF representative for the initial steering committee meeting of the new Commonwealth of Virginia Incident Management Assistance Team (COVIMAT). The COVIMAT is a VDEM-led initiative to better utilize other agency personnel in support of statewide emergency response. The COVIMAT was formed based on the success of the VDOF's Incident Management Team-led response to COVID in 2020, as well as the VDOF's IMT-led management of large COVID vaccination centers throughout the Commonwealth in 2021. VDEM's goal is to provide training and development of other response agencies to increase the overall state agency capacity for emergency incident management throughout the Commonwealth. As Virginia's most experienced emergency incident management agency, VDOF will be expected to serve as an important partner to VDEM in this effort.

Forestland Conservation

- ◆ Lori Chamberlin (forest health program manager), Lara Johnson (urban & community forestry [U&CF] program manager), Katlin Dewitt (forest health specialist), Molly O'Liddy (U&CF partnership coordinator), and Amanda Conrad (emerald ash borer [EAB] program coordinator) traveled to Southwest Virginia to host a laurel wilt training. The training brought in participants from six different agencies and three different states. Laurel wilt was confirmed in Virginia July of 2021.
- ◆ Lori Chamberlin, Lara Johnson, Katlin Dewitt, Molly O'Liddy, and Amanda Conrad treated rare blue ash trees at Natural Tunnel State Park in Duffield. Over 20 trees were treated and a possible new state champion blue ash was identified during the trip.

- ◆ VDOF received the initial letter from the US Forest Service - Southern Research Station to notify us of the availability of supplemental stimulus funds to be used to increase the staffing of VDOF's Forest Inventory program to increase plot production.
- ◆ Sabina Dhungana (utilization & marketing [U&M] program manager) visited Blue Ridge Lumber Company to learn about their mill's operation, products they produce, and species they use, talk about the Timber Product Survey, and educate the company about the services that the U&M program has to offer.
- ◆ Sabina Dhungana met with Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP) representatives to discuss progress on forest industry recruitment efforts in the state and follow-ups to our old recruitment efforts.
- ◆ Sabina Dhungana met with Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS) representatives to discuss marketing materials needs and updates to the existing resources to help expand the wood products business for Virginia's wood products producers. Additional meetings have been scheduled to better understand their materials needs and development plans.

State Forest

- ◆ On Friday State Forest staff learned from the timber buyer that the contractor had inadvertently crossed the harvest sale boundary of a recent harvest on the Prince Edward-Gallion State Forest. The area inadvertently harvested was estimated as 4/5 of an acre with an estimated 64 sawtimber trees harvested along with some pulpwood. The trees harvested outside of the sale area were on the State Forest and the contractor immediately contacted State Forest staff when he discovered the error. Staff are working to determine what to charge for the trees harvested.
- ◆ Staff held a training for the Southside Master Naturalists on Charlotte State Forest.
- ◆ State Forest staff attended the Backcountry Hunters & Anglers' Muster in the Mountains event, held in Roseland at the Devil's Backbone Brewery. The State Forest was promoted for hunting opportunities, and specific conversation regarding the establishment of another disabled veteran hunt was discussed with attendees.
- ◆ Staff assessed the picnic shelter at Conway-Robinson State Forest and drafted specifications / needs for renovation of the existing roof over the structure. Plans are to put out a Quick Quote to replace the roof using donated funds from private citizens along with general funds given to improve and address recreational needs on the State Forests.
- ◆ The Conservation Fund agreed to the appraised value for the Phase 3 addition to the Charlotte State Forest which will add an additional 360 acres to the Forest.

Eastern Region

- ◆ On July 20th, Kendall Topping led an educational program for Norfolk's Teens with a Purpose. Kendall educated 10 teens, aged 13-17, about the importance of trees in urban areas and how they improve the quality of life in cities. Together, the teens took soil and core samples from their garden, Purpose Park, and learned how soil quality can impact plant growth. At the end of the week, in partnership with the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, the teens were presented with certificates, certifying them as protectors of the Chesapeake Bay.
- ◆ Scott Bachman joined Heather Tuck (regional fire specialist), Jim Schroering (longleaf pine/southern pine beetle [SPB] prevention coordinator), and Jeremy Faulkenau (senior area forester), along with several work campers as "actors," at the interagency FI-210 class at New Kent.

- The New Kent Forestry Center experienced a rash of “suspicious” fires the week of July 18. These small fires were necessary to train the next cadre of wildland fire investigators in Virginia and the southeastern part of the United States. The fires were part of an FI-210, Wildland Fire Origin and Cause Determination class.
 - This collaborative class was instructed by personnel from the United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service (USFS) and the Virginia Department of Forestry (VDOF). The 12-person training staff mentored the 29 students in fire ignition sources, fire origin determination, and the indicators that will help them identify where a fire began. The students were drawn from several southeastern states, from Texas to Virginia, with the majority having been in their jobs less than five years.
 - Lead instructors Jerry Hepler and Matt Swanson (USFS), both stationed in California, learned of the New Kent site through a relationship with Derek Kiser (water quality specialist). They have worked with Derek in the past, and when a training need arose in the southeast, the New Kent facility was proffered.
 - This class is a great example of partnering with our Federal agencies to benefit both the VDOF and the USFS. As the lead instructors said in passing, if you only train in one place you only see that type of fire behavior and indicators. Not only did they give our VDOF students some insight into Wildland Fire Origin and Cause Determination, they will go home with additional skills, having seen fire on the east coast.
- ◆ Lisa Deaton (area forester) met with several members of the Friends of Live Oaks (FOLO) group in Virginia Beach. She shared a presentation on VDOF's efforts to grow live oak seedlings and establish a "northern limit" live oak seed orchard at the Sussex nursery. The seed source is at the southern end of Mathews County. Peninsula Master Naturalists assisted with acorn collection in 2021 and Jim Schroering has had good success with growing the seedlings in containerized seedling trays. Historically, the Friends of Live Oaks have potted a limited amount of local live oak seedlings and provided them for public property and interested homeowners. FOLO is eager to partner with and support VDOF in growing live oaks for coastal resiliency efforts, particularly in urban settings.
- ◆ Kendall Topping (community forestry specialist), Evan Richardson (area forester), John Rose (forest technician) and Scott Bachman (senior area forester) were joined by Heather Tuck to present wildland fire prevention information at the second of this year's Suffolk Fire Department Youth Safety Camps. Twenty-five elementary school age students were introduced to the True Story of Smokey Bear as well as the tools of the trade for wildfire suppression. The lead instructor for the class stressed prior to our presentation that each student needed to prepare a fire escape plan for their home. Our message picked up on that and explained that knowing your escape route is number 4 on the Standard Fire Orders for wildland fire fighters. At the end of the morning, the class got to meet Smokey and see a VDOF fire plow unit. (pictured)



- ◆ Jeremy Falkenau (senior area forester) spoke with 20 students at New Kent Middle School's summer school program. Jeremy spoke about life as a forester, daily duties, and how to become a forester. (pictured)

Public Information

- ◆ Cindy Frenzel (Project Learning Tree [PLT] coordinator) led a PLT - Trees and Me training at Falls Church-McLean Children's Center for 17 participants.

Hallye Smith, Executive Director of the center, worked with Page Hutchinson a few years back at the Country Day School in McLean, VA. She helped the Country Day School become the first early childhood program in the country to become a PLT Early Childhood Green School. Ms. Smith would also like for Falls Church-McLean Children's Center to become a Green School



News Links

- ◆ [Emerald Ash Borer Entering Hampton Roads.](#)